

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 10TH-11TH, 2018 // BOOK OF REVELATION

A DRAMATIC PAUSE (REV 8:1-5)

BACK TO THE SEALS

Chapter 7 shows what is happening with the church during the time of the first 6 seals. Chapter 8 takes us back to a heavenly perspective of how God is trying to get people to repent through extraordinary measures.

- Before the 7th seal is broken, there is a dramatic pause in heaven for “about half an hour.”

DEAFENING SILENCE AFTER THE LAST SEAL

We have now read on several occasions about the volume and scope of the praise and community in heaven, but now, and possibly for the 1st time ever, everything pauses in heaven in anticipation of something huge after the 7th seal is broken.

- We have no reason to believe the “half hour” is not literal.

REMEMBER THE POSSIBLE ORDER OF EVENTS?

It makes sense to believe the sequence is 6 seals, 6 trumpets, 6 bowls, then one final earthquake, but here it gets cloudy. The 7th seal seems to set up the trumpets, though the 7th seal is exactly like the other 7th trumpet and 7th bowl.

- Regardless of where it takes place, it must have mesmerized John.

“THEN I SAW SEVEN ANGELS...”

These are angels we have not read about until here. Jewish and Christian tradition has names for these angels, though they aren't biblical (except Michael and Gabriel). Each angel has a trumpet like one used to signal war.

- An 8th angel was also present and held a golden incense burner.

THE 8TH ANGEL STOOD BY THE ALTAR IN HEAVEN

The 8th angel approached the same altar we read about in chapter 6 that housed the martyrs of Christ. The angel adds the “prayers of all the saints” to the cries of the martyrs before the throne.

- The incense (the prayers of the saints and cries of the martyrs) is accepted by God and now He will answer them.

THE WAIT IS ABOUT TO BE OVER

In ch. 6 the martyrs are told to wait for justice. Here, justice begins. Fire from the altar is mixed with the incense and “peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake” took place.

- This terminology and severity make many believe this is the end (7th of all series are the same).

AN INTERESTING PERSPECTIVE

- David Pawson believes the 7th seal is broken and the pause is a figurative amount of time where other events take place and the saints pray “Your kingdom come.” He believes this to be the calm right before it all ends and Christ comes back.

THE FIRST THREE TRUMPETS (REV 8:6-11)

V6 HAS STIRRED SOME DEBATE

Some biblical scholars believe the 7 years of the Great Tribulation start with the 7 trumpets. V6 would be referring to the time from the crucifixion until the 7 years begin.

- If one believes this, they would think the 7 seals have been happening for thousands of years. I do not personally believe this.

TRUMPET 1: HAIL, FIRE, AND BLOOD

The 1st trumpet marks an ecological catastrophe that takes place worldwide. It says, “a third of the earth was burned up,” meaning 1/3 of the vegetation on earth is destroyed. This could be fallout from the 6th seal.

- Joel 2:30-32 prophesied this and says, “everyone who calls upon the Lord will be saved.”

THE 1ST TRUMPET IS NOT FATAL...YET

It does not directly kill people and animals, but because we cannot live long without healthy vegetation, it sets up fatality later. **This event is to be a divine warning of worse things to come.**

- If scientists believe earth cannot exist with just mild ecological variations, what will society make of these events?

SOME POINTS ABOUT THE FIRST 3 TRUMPETS

- Though we don't know for sure the mechanism for this destruction, it is easy in our nuclear age to see how this is possible.
- God has struck vegetation before due to sin (Genesis 3:17-18).
- **John isn't concerned about the mechanism, just that God is getting mankind's attention.**

TRUMPET 2: THE GREAT MOUNTAIN

The “great mountain ablaze” is interpreted to either be a large meteorite or a volcano. The sea that it falls into is more than likely the Mediterranean Sea because it extends to all oceans and has been the focus of the Romans, Greeks, and Middle East for centuries.

TURNED TO BLOOD?

The “great mountain” that was “hurled into the sea” will contaminate 1/3 of the water on earth. It'll not literally turn to blood, but the color of the water may change due to contamination.

- Now we see a death toll. 1/3 of the “creatures in the sea” and 1/3 of the ships will be destroyed.

TRUMPET 3: A “GREAT STAR” FALLS

This is more than likely a large meteorite that will fall into “a third of the rivers and springs of water.” It does not say exactly which rivers, but the Nile and Amazon make sense because of their size and how many people are affected by them.

“THE NAME OF THE STAR IS WORMWOOD”

Wormwood is an extremely bitter but medicinal plant. Though it is not poisonous, if one were to drink too much, they would get extremely sick. So, now much of the fresh water on earth is contaminated and unfit to drink.

- In Exodus 7 God did something similar to get the attention of the Egyptians.

THE NEAR EARTH OBJECT RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

NASA has an entire team of people that are working on solutions for a catastrophic impact from a large meteor. They conclude that if a large asteroid were to hit, it would dramatically impact the environment.

- www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/postsecondary/features/F_Near_Earth_Program.html

A WARNING CRY (REV 8:12-13)

THE FOCUS TURNS TO THE SKY

John has already witnessed the destruction of a third of the land's vegetation and animals along with devastating events in the oceans and fresh waters. Now, God will turn His attention to the sky.

- There is a possibility that the effects of the sky are due to what has already happened on earth.

IT COULD VERY WELL BE A COSMIC CHANGE

God spoke the universe into existence, and He has the ability to speak it out. Maybe the text is literal when it says the sun will be a third darker and so will the night sky.

- What John was seeing was the beginning of the end. Revelation 21 tells us that the heavens will be wiped away.

WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ENDURE THIS

If we were to literally lose a third of our light and power from the sun, we would not be able to survive very long. This signifies that the end would be very near.

- **The reason God is dismantling the earth and the sky above it is to bring people to a place of repentance.**

“I LOOKED AND HEARD AN EAGLE”

The eagle that John sees is actually an angel that is flying “high overhead” warning people of the coming judgments of God.

- The word woe means catastrophe. The remaining trumpets are going to be even more severe than the previous 4, and this angel is sent to warn any who will listen.

HOW THEY HAPPEN IS IRRELEVANT

Though we don't know exactly how each trumpet will come to fruition, **we do know that they will most definitely happen.** These events also seem to be very close together.

- **Remember the overall theme of Revelation: Jesus is coming back and we must be prepared.**

CATASTROPHE

- Ch. 8 shows us the beginning of God's dismantling of the land, sea, and even the sky in order to get our attention.
- The will of God is that “none perish.” So, **God will go to extraordinary lengths to provoke people to repentance.**

BREAKING DOWN TO BUILD UP

- God will tear all creation down in order to build back perfection.
- If we are to be what we have the potential to be, God must break us down as well to build us up to look more like Him. **In order to find our lives, we must first lose them.**

ARE WE PAYING ATTENTION?

The question is, have we become too hardened to be molded? Are we too distracted to hear the warning cries? Are we so self-centered that we miss God trying to get our attention? **Has God sent an “eagle” to our skies, but we are not looking up?**