

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 22ND, 2024 // REVELATION

SILENCE IN HEAVEN (REVELATION 8:1-5)

"WHEN HE OPENED THE SEVENTH SEAL..."

The **scroll and the seven seals** were introduced in Ch. 5, then opened one by one in Ch. 6. In Ch. 7, we paused the opening of the seals and were **introduced to the 144,000 and the multitude** coming out of the Great Tribulation.

- This pause between the first six seals and the seventh is **emphasized by a moment of silence in heaven lasting about half an hour.**

"THERE WAS SILENCE IN HEAVEN"

Now that **the seals have all been broken** by Jesus, the scroll containing God's will for the universe **can be opened, unleashing judgment upon the earth.**

- This dramatic pause would have come in the midst of worship, but now worship would be interrupted in **a solemn moment of silence for the things that are to come.**

THE 7 ANGELS ARE EACH GIVEN A TRUMPET

After the dramatic pause, John sees **the 7 angels** standing in the presence of God, **each holding a trumpet.**

- A trumpet was used to sound the alarm for war and warn the enemy, sending them into a panic, or to call a gathering of God's people. **The 7 trumpets will signal God's battle alarm during the Great Tribulation.**

PRAYERS AND OUTCRIES ASCENDING TO GOD

When the fifth seal was broken (6:9-11) John saw an **altar with the souls of the martyrs** under it crying out for justice.

- In v. 3, John sees another angel given **a golden censer filled with the prayers of the saints**, standing at the golden altar where **the prayers of the saints and cries of the martyrs are ascending to the presence of God.**

FILLED WITH FIRE AND HURLED TO THE EARTH

Before anything happens, the prayers of the saints and cries of the martyrs come before God. The angel's act of hurling the censer to Earth shows that **God's judgment being hurled at Earth was in direct response to those prayers.**

- Christians should not be scared of this scene, we should be grateful **God hears our prayers and cries and will avenge us.**

THREE OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS (REVELATION 8:6-11)

PROPHECY OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

These events with the trumpets have not happened yet, but we believe they will take place someday. **It doesn't seem these events are simply nature taking its course** but are God bringing judgment. There will be **people who blaspheme the name of God** (16:9; 16:11; 19:19) **because they know these things are from Him and not just natural disasters.**

TRUMPET ONE: HAIL, FIRE, AND BLOOD

The first trumpet will begin a series of disasters that will directly affect the earth. This will be a worldwide ecological catastrophe where a third of the earth will be "burned" up, destroying a third of vegetation on earth.

- This event was prophesied in Joel 2:30-32, where he says, **"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."**

THE FIRST TRUMPET IS NOT FATAL...YET

These verses do not show that the hail, fire, and blood of the first trumpet will directly kill, but since we cannot live long without healthy vegetation, this event sets up for fatality later.

- This will serve as **a merciful warning to humanity**, pleading with them to repent. **It is not God's heart to destroy people but to save them** (2 Peter 3:9).

TRUMPET TWO: THE GREAT MOUNTAIN

Not a literal mountain but **something like a mountain falling into the sea and bringing ecological disaster.** Possibly a large meteor or asteroid surrounded by flaming gases hitting the sea.

- The first trumpet was catastrophic to land, and **the second will be catastrophic to the world's oceans.**

CATASTROPHIC EFFECTS OF THE GREAT MOUNTAIN

A third of the sea will **"become blood,"** most likely not turning into blood but becoming blood-colored due to contamination.

- A third of the **"creatures in the sea"** will die and a third of all of the world's **"ships [will be] destroyed"** most likely due to giant waves capsizing large vessels at sea and sinking them at ports and harbors.

TRUMPET THREE: A GREAT STAR

More than likely a meteor or asteroid will impact the earth in a body of fresh water. Because of its deadly effects **the "star" will be called "Wormwood,"** which is a very bitter medicinal substance that can make someone sick if too much is ingested.

- This makes a **majority of the freshwater on Earth undrinkable, similar to how God tried to get the attention of the Egyptians** (Exodus 7:14-24).

A WARNING CRY (REVELATION 8:12-13)

TRUMPET FOUR: THE SKY DARKENS

As the fourth trumpet sounded, John's attention shifted to the sky, and he saw a third of the sun, moon, and stars being struck making a third of the day and night without light.

- John doesn't tell what struck the sky, but if **God can speak these things into existence, He also can speak them out.**

AT THIS POINT, THE END WOULD BE NEAR!

If we were to literally lose a third of our light and power from the sun, we would not be able to sustain life for very long. The darkening of the sky signifies that the end would be quickly approaching.

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

"I LOOKED AND HEARD AN EAGLE"

As severe as the first four judgments were, the worst has yet to come. The next judgments will directly affect humanity, killing a third.

- John sees and hears **an eagle flying "high overhead," crying out "Woe to those who live on the earth."** The eagle is most likely an angel **warning people of the coming judgments of God.**

A WARNING BEFORE THE END

Do we see God's mercy in His judgments through the first four trumpets? **The first four trumpets have only been partial** in that only a third of the vegetation, the sea (including creatures and ships), the freshwater, and the sun, moon, and stars were affected.

- God is mercifully trying to warn the world before it's too late.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS

- Revelation has shown us (5:8; 8:3-5) that the prayers of the saints on earth have a direct effect in the very presence of God.
- What have our prayers been focused on this week?**
- Have distractions and the busyness of life kept us from praying? What's keeping us from praying in faith?**

ARE WE LOOKING UP?

- Has God been trying to get our attention?**
- Is there something in our lives that He is prompting us to remove so He can produce more through us?**
- God will achieve perfection (chs. 21-22), but first He must tear down what went wrong.
- To be who God wants us to be, we must let Him tear down what's wrong in us.