

A Journey Into the Heavens
The Seventh Seal (Trumpets 1-5)
January 20, 2016

After the first six seals were opened in chapter six, there was an interlude in chapter seven to seal the 144,000 and explain the innumerable white-robed multitude.

Now the breaking of the seals continues with the final, or seventh seal. The opening of this seventh seal in 8:1 introduces the seven _____ judgments. The seven trumpets do not follow the seventh seal - they are the seventh seal, along with the seven vials, or bowls, of judgement that follow the trumpets in chapter 16.

The Great Tribulation is a trio of _____: Seven Seals, Seven Trumpets, and Seven Vials of Wrath.

In chapter seven we found heaven filled with praise and worship of God, but at the opening of the seventh seal in chapter eight and verse one we find out that heaven became silent for about a half an hour. All the choruses of the angels, the elders, and the innumerable multitude cease, and heaven is in suspense and awe as they wait to see that will happen when the seventh seal is broken.

Before the first of the seven angels mentioned in 8:2 blows the first trumpet, “another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne” (8:3). The altar was so close to God the smoke from the incense, representing the prayers of the saints, rises up before God (8:4), indicating God _____ them and is about to answer.

In 8:5, the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth.... This represents God’s answer to the prayers of the saints in 6:10, “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

The incense and fire from the altar also represents the saints of the tribulation who are living on earth and who are praying, “Thy Kingdom come, they will be done.”

According to verse 5, when the angel casts the fire from the altar on earth, “there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” Now, as the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound, the most horrible part of the Great Tribulation begins...

I. The _____ Trumpet (8:7)

The first four trumpet judgements alter the natural parts of creation - the land, salt water, the fresh water, and the heavenly bodies.

At the sounding of the first trumpet, one-third of all the vegetation of the earth will be destroyed.

Many of the judgements described in the book of Revelation happened on a smaller scale in _____ during the ten plagues. The first trumpet is very similar to the seventh plague God sent upon Egypt. (Exodus 9:23-25)

Again we should mention that the judgements in Revelation may come by a natural source, such as a severe electrical or hail storm, or through nuclear warfare.

II. The _____ Trumpet (8:8-9)

At the sounding of the second trumpet, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood...(8:8). This judgement parallels the first of the ten plagues in Egypt in Exodus 7:20-21.

What appears to John to be a massive mountain burning with fire could have been a giant burning meteorite, or possibly a nuclear missile aimed at a fleet of enemy ships, since the third part of the ships were destroyed (8:8-9).

Again whatever the cause, the result will be the destruction of one-third of sea life, one-third of the ships of the sea, as well as one-third of the sea becoming blood. The effects of the sounding of the first and second trumpets alone boggle our mind, but this is just the _____.

III. The _____ Trumpet (8:10-11)

At the sounding this trumpet there fell a great star from heaven that causes one-third of the fresh water to become bitter..."and many men died of the waters..." (8:10-11).

The name of this star is _____, referring to a bitter herb in the Near East and is often used in the Old Testament synonymously with bitterness, sorrow, and calamity. (Jeremiah 9:15; Lamentations 3:15; Amos 5:7)

Whether this star is a large meteor, an actual star, or a chemical weapon of nuclear warfare cannot be specified, but whatever it is, Wormwood will poison one-third of the earth's fresh water, causing much death.

IV. The _____ Trumpet (8:12-13)

"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten..." (8:12). At this fourth trumpet the light of the sky was reduced by one-third. "Thus, the day shone not on a third part of it, and the night likewise." (8:12). This parallels the ninth plague in Exodus 10:21-23.

This judgement is only temporary because the fourth bowl judgement will reverse it, and the sun's light will greatly intensify (Revelation 16:8-9).

Revelation 8:13 says a messenger flies through heaven proclaiming, “Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth... There is disagreement as to whether the Greek word translated angel should instead be eagle, but either way, this is a remarkable messenger who will announce three woes. Apparently the coming judgements are going to be so severe the terrors of them demand prior warnings, perhaps so those on the verge of repentance will _____ God’s face. The first four trumpet judgements were merely preliminary, for much worse judgements are about to come!

V. The _____ Trumpet (9:1-12)

As the fifth trumpet sounds, John sees a star (the Greek indicates had fallen from heaven),...and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit (9:1). The star obviously has great authority in order to be able to open the bottomless pit. He is also described as a “king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit” (9:11). Thus, this star must be Satan himself.

The Greek word translated “bottomless pit” ABYSS means “darkness.” In Luke 8:31, when Jesus met the Gadarene demoniac, the demons in him cried out to Jesus “that he would command them to go into the deep. The word translated deep in the Greek is ABYSS. Jude 6, tells us why fallen angels are kept in ABYSS, or darkness.

ABYSS is evidently a prison from which there is no release, except by divine permission.

When the pit was opened, smoke saturated the sky as though the door of a huge furnace had been opened (9:2). This would be consistent with Jesus’ comparison of hell to a furnace of fire in Matthew 13:42&50.

Coming out with the smoke is an army of demons, compared to locusts, which is similar to the eight plague in Egypt. (Exodus 10:4-6)

These creatures in Revelation are not to be literally interpreted as locusts, nor symbolically, but rather _____, because they are spiritual creatures. Lets look at Revelation 9:3-5 and see what they are given power to do and what are the limits of that power.

It interesting as we have been comparing this with the plagues of Egypt that we see a parallel with the sealed ones in Revelation and God's people in Exodus. (Exodus 8:2-23; 9:26; 10:22-23)

In reading the description of these creatures in Revelation 9:7-10, which is obviously symbolic, one cannot help but see these are demonic beings that will be part of the horrible Great Tribulation to come.

In 9:11, we find that the king of the bottomless pit had two names - Abaddon ("destruction") in the Hebrew and Apollyon ("destroyer") in the Greek. This reminds us of his description in John 10:10.

This reveals the true character of the Evil One - he desires to destroy the human race, God's crown of creation.

Revelation 9:12 says, One woe is past: and behold there come two woes hereafter. After the fifth trumpet, the first woe has prevailed on earth five _____, and what a woeful experience! How could the next two woes be worse? We shall see next week...