

A Journey Into the Heavens
The Sixth Trumpet
February 10, 2016

As has been mentioned several times thus far in this study, the book of Revelation is mostly a description of judgement to come. That judgement begins in chapter six with the opening of seven seals and ends in chapter nineteen.

Thirteen of the 22 chapters of this book deal with the terrible judgements that result from the breaking of the seals of the seven-sealed scroll. At the opening of the seventh seal in 8:1, the seven trumpet judgements begin. These trumpet judgements do not follow the seventh seal - they ARE the seventh seal. The entire period of judgement upon the earth is a trio of sevens - seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials (bowls) of wrath. Thus, the seventh seal has fourteen parts: seven trumpets and seven vials of wrath.

Thus far we have studied through the fifth trumpet, which is the first of the three woes mentioned in 8:13. These three woes are the final three trumpets and are called such because they are more severe than any previous judgements.

When the fifth trumpet sounded, the fallen star, Satan, was given the key to the bottomless pit. When Satan opened the door, evil spiritual beings were loosed to torment the human race for five months. Now lets consider the Sixth trumpet.

I. The _____ of 200 Million (9:13-21)

At the sounding of the sixth trumpet, John... heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. To understand the imagery here, we must remember there were two alters in the tabernacle. The golden altar of incense stood in the holy place, just before the veil to the Holy of Holies where God was. This alter represented the prayers of God's people.

Then, in the outside courtyard was the brazen altar of sacrifice. Fire was taken from this altar and carried in the golden censer to the golden altar of incense where incense was burned. (Exodus 30:7-10).

As the blood was taken from the altar of sacrifice and sprinkled on the four golden horns of the golden altar of incense, the people were taught symbolically that prayer and worship are based upon sacrifice, because without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin.

It is from ...the four horns of the golden altar... that the voice comes in verse 14, saying, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. Since these four angels are bound, they are fallen angels and not holy angels. The release of these four fallen angels is precisely timed - for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men (9:15). This simply means there is an exact hour in God's calendar when these fallen angels will be loosed and the third part of men will be killed.

At the opening of the fourth seal (6:7-8), one-fourth of the population of the world was killed, and here an additional one-third will die. Therefore, these two judgements alone will result in the death of one-half of the worlds population.

In Revelation 9:16 John sees an immense army numbering 200 million. This army might be taken literally, or it might be equally interpreted as an army of demons. A literal interpretation cannot be overlooked because such an army is indeed possible today, for it was reported years ago that China claimed to have an army of 200 Million.

The description of the army as having breastplates of fire and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone... has been interpreted symbolically, but it could very well be a literal picture of modern warfare.

The use of terms such as horses with breastplates of fire and heads of lions was apparently the closest comparison John could make in describing this awesome picture. Whatever John saw, it resulted in terrible destruction because twice he states the third part of men were killed.

Concerning those who were not killed at the sounding of the sixth trumpet, John says they...repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood...(9:20).

Then in verse 21 John lists the sins they would not repent of - murders...sorceries...fornication...thefts. The word translated sorceries is the word from which we get our English word pharmacy, which has the root meaning of "drugs". This indicates there will be widespread drug use during the tribulation period. Fornication refers to all forms of sexual immorality and probably the disregard of the sacredness of marriage. The word thefts characterizes a general practice of dishonesty and the disregard for the rights and property of others.

It is clear the trumpet judgements become progressively more devastating, yet there is no evidence there will be any change on the part of most of humanity. These judgements produce fear and suffering, but not repentance.

II. The Angel and the Little _____ (10:1-11)

In chapter ten, as in chapter seven, we have an interlude between judgements, this time between the sixth and seventh trumpets.

In 10:1, John sees another mighty angel come down from heaven... The description of this angel is strikingly similar to the one of Christ in the first chapter. This angel... had in his hand a little book open...(10:2). Apparently, the little book contains the rest of the message John will deliver (10:11).

The angel...set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth (10:2), which is the posture of a victor defeating an enemy, and would indicate that possession of the entire world is about to be accomplished. In verse three the angel cries...with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

While the book of Revelation is usually considered an unveiling of God's coming plan, in verse four John is commanded to seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. We are not told why John was forbidden to write down what the seven thunders said, and it would be futile to speculate since no definite facts are given about the contents of the seven thunders.

In verses 5-7 John describes a solemn scene of the angel lifting his hand to heaven and swearing that there should be time no longer. This phrase has been misunderstood to mean that time will cease at this point. However the Greek word used here can be translated "time" or "delay". It is obvious that "time" is not the meaning here, since time continues on earth after this event. Therefore, the idea here is that there should no longer be an interval of time or "delay" because the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets (10:7).

This statement refers to the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies concerning the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. The time is about to come when Satan will no longer be in power, and the prophecies of the Old Testament will be fulfilled. (Zechariah 14:3-5; Isaiah 9:6-7)

In Revelation 10:8-9, John is commanded to take the little book and eat it. This command is a beautiful, symbolic truth often found in Scripture. We find a similar situation in the book of Ezekiel. (Ezekial 3:1-4)

The symbolism is obvious. The eating of the book means that before John could continue to be a spokesman for God, he must eat, digest the Word of God. Christians must always digest the Word of God before we can be His spokesmen. John took the scroll, and he ate it because he was to carry on his message to prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings (10:11).

When John ate the little book, he said, ... it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter (10:10). At this point it seems John was to assimilate the rest of the book of Revelation before he wrote it down. However, why was the little book both sweet and bitter? It may be because the Word of God is always sweet to believers, but to those who have rejected God and His Revelations, the words are bitter.

True prophecy is always like that. It is sweet to those who accept it and bitter to those who reject it. There is REWARD for every believer, but there is REBUKE for the unbeliever. How wonderful prophecy is for the Christian, but how tragic for the nonbeliever. Thus, the message of the book of Revelation is both bitter and sweet