

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Let's turn to Revelation 8

Let's pray...

[Rev 8:1-13 NKJV] 1 When **He opened the seventh seal**, there was **silence in heaven for about half an hour.**

In the book of Revelation, we have the seven seals – we already saw six of the seals opened two weeks ago in chapter six – here we see the final seal opened by whom?

He who is alone is worthy to open the seals, Jesus Christ.

After He opens up the last seal, we will see seven trumpets and then we will find another group of seven(s) and that is the seven bowls.

There are some bible scholars that believe that seals, trumpets and bowls are all separate events that occur one after another.

However, there are others who believe that the trumpets and the bowls occur within the seals themselves.

And that is what I tend believe –

I believe that the opening of the seventh seal occurs at the midpoint of the 7 year Tribulation period and that is where we begin to see everything go haywire on the earth.

Now, as we have seen through our previous studies, when Jesus breaks each of the first six seals – things began to happen immediately either on earth or in heaven –

But when Jesus breaks the seventh seal – what happens? Silence for half an hour.

Heaven becomes silent –

Now, we might say that half an hour is not that long –

However, what makes this silence extraordinary is that back in chapter four – we were told that heaven is filled with nonstop worship and praise.

We were told that the four living creatures – the Cherubim with the four faces – they worship Him who sits on the throne night and day

Singing -

“Holy, holy, holy,

Lord God Almighty,

Who was and is and is to come!”

The 24 elders (the Old Testament and the NT saints)

What were they doing? Casting their crowns before the throne saying,

[Rev 4:11 NKJV] 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

But now, even the worship is paused.

Turn with me to Zephaniah –

Here we might get an explanation for the silence -

[Zep 1:7 NKJV] 7 Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD; For the day of the LORD [is] at hand, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests.

The silence that will take place is out of awe and respect before the Lord as He brings His judgment upon those who rejected the Lamb.

2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

There are ancient books that provide the names of seven archangels –

However, the bible only directly names Michael as an archangel –

It does tell us that there are more than one (Dan 10:13)

Well what about Gabriel?

When the angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias to tell him that he and Elizabeth were going to have a son and they were to name him John, he does tell Zacharias that he is one of the angels that stands before the presence of God – so Gabriel might or might not be an archangel –

We don't even know if these seven angels are archangels or if they are simply seven angels whose job is to blow the trumpets.

One of the reasons that trumpets were blown was to announce an impending attack.

Turn with me to Joshua 6,

Because there are many parallels between what we see here and in the book of Joshua.

So here in Joshua 6 – Joshua has led the children of Israel into the Promised Land – they have crossed the Jordan River and the first city they come to is Jericho –

Now, Jericho had these impenetrable walls that surrounded the city -

The angel of the Lord (Jesus) appears to Joshua and provides from him the battle plans on how they are going to conquer (bring judgment) to Jericho.

[Jos 6:2-5 NKJV] 2 And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, [and] the mighty men of valor. 3 "You shall march around the

city, all [you] men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. 4 "And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5 "It shall come to pass, when they make a long [blast] with the ram's horn, [and] when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him."

So we see seven priests holding seven trumpets – who are going to blow the trumpets at the time of judgment of Jericho.

By the way, look at verse 10 –

[Jos 6:10 NKJV] 10 Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, "You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout."

So just like in Revelation, we have a moment of silence before God pronounces His judgment upon people.

3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer [it] with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the

angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, **filled it with fire** from the altar, and **threw [it] to the earth**. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

When we studied the Book of Exodus, as we looked at the Tabernacle and all the furnishings, you might remember that one of the furnishings was the golden altar of incense.

And it was the responsibility of the priest to burn incense day and night – and it couldn't be any incense but there was a special recipe of spices, frankincense and stuff.

Incense is symbolic of our prayers, when we put the right ingredients in our prayer, it is a sweet smelling aroma before God.

This is why God told Moses that he was to build the Tabernacle exactly like He told him because it was supposed to represent what heaven looks like.

So here in chapter 8, we see the real altar of incense in heaven,

So the question is – what are the prayers that are being offered in heaven at this time?

And I believe that these are the prayers of the saints for God's kingdom to come.

So what the deal with the angel taking some of the incense – adding fire to it and throwing it back to the earth???

Fire speaks of refinement / purity.

And the reason they are thrown back to earth is not because these prayers have been rejected – they are being thrown back at the earth because God is answering the prayers of the saints –

Before God establishes His kingdom, there must be judgment.

So when we pray, thy kingdom come –

We are praying for God's judgment to come on the earth.

6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

So the first angel blows his trumpet – and we see a mixture of hail and fire mixed with blood raining down on the earth.

Remember, John is describing what he sees – and I think he describes it in a way to remind the believers of the judgments that God brought against Egypt back at the beginning of Exodus.

The 7th plague that God brought against Egypt – hail and fire rain down and Exodus 9 says every herb was struck and every tree was broken as a result

The first plague upon Egypt – Water becomes blood.

So we can see the effect that this trumpet is going to have on the food supply here on earth.

By the way – if a third of the trees are gone – guess where toilet paper comes from.

And you think there are shortages now.

8 Then the second angel sounded: And [something] like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Again, we are reminded of Nile turning to blood in Egypt.

We can speculate to what this burning mountain may be – a comet, a meteor, a ballistic missile with a nuclear war head on it???

Remember, John is trying to describe this.

And as it makes impact on the sea – 1/3 of the sea became blood, 1/3 of the fish and whales die and 1/3 of the ships were destroyed.

Note that the judgments under the trumpets seem to affect 1/3 of everything.

Now, back in chapter 6, when the 4th seal was open – when death comes in riding the pale horse, it said that ¼ of the world population was going to die, so what we see here with the trumpets is God's judgment increasing in intensity.

When we get to the bowls in Rev 16 – we will find out that the entire sea becomes blood and every living creature in the sea will die.

God is trying to get the attention of the people.

He is doing it so that they will repent.

That is why His judgment is increasing because He is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

10 Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

While the 2nd trumpet poisons the world's oceans, the 3rd poisons the world's supply of fresh water.

1/3 of the vegetation gone

1/3 of all the sea food gone

And now, a third of all the fresh, drinkable water on earth gone.

Think about the chaos that is going to take place during this time.

John sees a great star –

Again, we can speculate that it could be a comet – and as it blows over the atmosphere, it pollutes the drinking water.

Turn with me to Jeremiah 9

Once again, I am showing you how the best way to translate the bible is using the bible

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Here in Jer 9, God is bringing judgment to His people as they have turned to worshipping other gods.

[Jer 9:13-16 NKJV] 13 And the LORD said, "Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, 14 "but they have walked according to the dictates of their own hearts and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them," 15 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. 16 "I will scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them."

So even in the days of Jeremiah, God's judgment upon His people included making their drinking water undrinkable by making it bitter and unsafe to drink.

12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.

The fourth trumpet sounds and it brings darkness to the earth.

Turn with me to Exodus 10 –

We are going to see the ninth plague that fell upon Egypt.

[Exo 10:21-23 NKJV] 21 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness [which] may even be felt." 22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. 23 They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

It was so dark that it could be felt –

But God spared the Children of Israel from the darkness.

So something happens in the atmosphere that dims the light of the sun and the stars.

It could be a volcanic eruption

It could be dust from the impact of a comet or meteor

Once again, this will cause food shortages, this will cause weather patterns to be affected.

13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

There are three remaining trumpets and there are three "woes".

One woe for each trumpet. The point is this – if you think these things are bad, just wait for what's ahead!

Now – I want to provide a little more insight on these four trumpets.

The first four trumpet judgments – results in the loss of 1/3 of the trees, seas, fresh water and the light.

As big as 1/3 may seem – we have to remember that 2/3 are left.

That means that God spares more than He smites.

We focus so much on the destruction that we miss out on His grace.

And as God begins to judge the world, He doesn't simply cut off His grace from the people all at once.

He gradually begins to restrain His grace from the multitudes so that people can see what life is like without Him.

Because if they don't repent, they are headed toward an eternity without a shred of grace.

One day, in answer to humanity's long rebellion & rejection of God, He will give them what they want.

Some will turn to God during the Tribulation Period – and there will be some who despite seeing God's judgment will choose to hide from Him.

How is it 2 people can look at the same thing and come to such radically different conclusions?

The same sun that melts wax, hardens clay.

And the same judgments that moves some to faith in God will harden the rest against Him.

I want to end tonight with this -

Pompeii!!!

On October 24th in the year 79 Mt Vesuvius on the West Coast of Italy erupted.

Thousands of people in the cities of Pompeii & Herculaneum were killed by the intense heat, toxic gas & ash.

The ash came down the mountain so fast and so thick that it preserves the cities until the 18th century when archaeologists began to excavate them.

And as the dug, they encountered thousands of human bodies as if they were frozen in time doing whatever they were doing that day when Vesuvius erupted.

When Vesuvius erupted, it made no distinction between rich and poor, men and women, old and young.

The real tragedy is that these people did not have to die.

Scientists have confirmed that ancient writers recorded that for week, there were warnings that Vesuvius was going to erupt.

There were tremors that were being felt – increasing in intensity and magnitude

In fact, just days prior to the eruption a huge plume of smoke ascended into the sky.

The mountain was warning the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum – but they paid no attention and perished.

What we see today – are the signs that judgment is coming.

All the pieces are coming together and the time is drawing closer each day.

There is nothing left to be fulfilled before Jesus Christ comes for His church and then judgment begins.

And I pray – that we may be ready and that we have the burden in our hearts to tell others about what is going to happen.

Let's pray...

