

End of Time Study

God's call to urgency

The Great Tribulation - Seven Trumpets and Seven Vials

Revelation 8:3-6 And 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. 4 And the smoke of the incense, [which came] with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. 5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast [it] into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

This activity in heaven precedes events on earth. Seven angels prepare to sound trumpets signaling disastrous events on earth, but first a glimpse of Heaven is given to remind us that God is in control. The prayers of the saints mingled with incense ascends to God. It may appear to the suffering believers on earth that God has forsaken them, but they can be sure that He has received their prayers.

Revelation 8:1-2 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

The silence in Heaven dramatizes the anticipation of the heavenly observers as the intensified judgments of the second half of the seven years is about to begin.

The seventh seal of the scroll by the Lamb is an introduction to the next portion of the vision, the Seven Trumpets. The trumpets don't happen until after all seven seals are opened since the angels aren't even given their trumpets until the seventh seal. We are at the midpoint of the seven years of tribulation and the beginning of the Great Tribulation, when God expresses His full wrath. There will be seven trumpets followed by seven vials. As each of the trumpets sound, a corresponding judgment begins on earth. The sounding of the trumpets can be found beginning in Revelation 8.

Revelation 8:7-11 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. 8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were

destroyed. 10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

The events of the Seven Seals were events caused by human activity and natural, earthly disasters. This next series brings what might be called supernatural judgments. These first three appear to be the result of volcanoes and meteors or comets. These are also natural, but in the sense that they are divinely directed judgments on the earth, they have a supernatural element. There seems to be a progression of disasters; first hail and fire mixed with blood, then what seemed like a large mountain, and later, a star.

These three trumpet judgments could be caused by a nuclear war just as well. Hal Lindsey thinks it is more likely that the events of this chapter are the result of nuclear activity than supernatural activity; that they are the result of man's evil actions once the restraining hand of God is removed. (Hal Lindsey, There's A New World Coming, p.117)

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

This first catastrophe in this series could, also, be caused by a comet, a super-volcano or by very severe weather conditions. The fire could be extraordinary displays of lightning, which, in turn, could start forest fires in many places.. All of these events have happened before, but never to the extent of this plague, burning up one third of the earth's vegetation.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

The second judgment could be caused by an asteroid plunging into the sea. Even a small asteroid crashing into one of our oceans would cause utter devastation. The fiery impact would burn and crush all life in a large portion of the ocean, and the resulting tidal waves would be beyond comprehension. These waves could capsize ships in every direction for hundreds of miles.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

The Greek word for star is *aster*, from which we get our word asteroid and the name "Esther." Thus, it is not a star as we know it, but perhaps a large asteroid that is in view here. As in the previous plague, the asteroid strikes earth, but, in this case, on land, causing widespread destruction and poisoning of the waters in a large area. The scientific scenario theorizing "acid rain" following a large comet or asteroid impact with Earth is the best explanation for the "Wormwood Star" prophecy existing today. When an asteroid enters earth's atmosphere there are two occurrences of extreme shock. The first occurs as the asteroid enters the atmosphere. The second, more important one, occurs when the ejected debris caused by an impact enters the atmosphere. This shock causes the breakdown of the oxygen and the nitrogen molecules found in our atmosphere. Through a series of chemical reactions the dissociation of the nitrogen and oxygen forms NO which is then converted into NO₂. These two molecules can produce acid rain (HNO₃) Such information enhances the credibility of the "Wormwood Star" prophecy and New Testament writings with scientific theory. This scenario may be another instance of "Science catching up with Biblical prophecy".

Revelation 8:12-13 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. 13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

This judgment affects the entrance of light from space. The amount of light from the Sun, Moon and stars is diminished by one third. If an asteroid or comet strikes the earth the debris from the impact will be suspended in the atmosphere of months, creating this effect. The eagle flying through the heavens with a message of woe is most likely a symbolic image of an angelic being. The message is a warning of the dreadful nature of the next three trumpet judgments. These are the Three Woes!

Revelation 9:1-12 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. 5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment [was] as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. 6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from

them. 7 And the shapes of the locusts [were] like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads [were] as it were crowns like gold, and their faces [were] as the faces of men. 8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions. 9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings [was] as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. 10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power [was] to hurt men five months. 11 And they had a king over them, [which is] the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue [is] Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath [his] name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past; [and], behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

In this case the falling star is actually an angelic being. Satan fits this description best since he was created as the Anointed Cherub, a position of prominence among the angels. Satan is given the key to the Abyss.

Once the Abyss, or Bottomless Pit is opened, its demonic inhabitants are set loose for the purpose of torturing people. Like locusts, they are numerous and destructive. Like scorpions, they inflict pain. But they are not allowed to kill. Those who have the seal of God on their foreheads can not be harmed by these demonic mutations. The pain inflicted by this judgment is so severe that men who are afflicted would rather die than suffer the continuous torment, but they are not allowed to take the easy course of death.

The descriptions of these creatures are symbolic of some aspect of their power and activity. They are like horses prepared for battle: descriptive of **strength**. They seem to have crowns of gold, standing for **power and authority**, limited as it is by God's order that they may not kill their victims. Human faces imply **intelligence**. Hair like a woman's hair would be totally unnatural for insect-like monsters and would add to the confusion about their nature. The lion's teeth picture **ferocity**, breastplates of iron show that they are **invincible**. Like normal locusts, they have wings. Wings symbolize **mobility and speed**. Because of their extraordinary powers, their sound in flight is loud and terrifying like horses and chariots in battle.

Perhaps the most terrifying aspect of this fifth trumpet judgment is that these monstrosities are actually the demons which have been imprisoned in the Abyss, or Bottomless Pit.

[Jude 1:6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.](#)

They have a leader of their fallen ranks, named Abaddon, or "Destroyer." This is a Hebrew word which is used in connection with hell, and normally refers to it as the place of destruction. It occurs only here as the name of a person. Apollyon is the exact Greek equivalent of the same name.

Revelation 9:13-21 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. 16 And the number of the army of the horsemen [were] two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses [were] as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. 18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails [were] like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. 20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet 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: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: 21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The Sixth Trumpet is also the Second Woe. It is a judgment of great magnitude. It begins with the release of four evil angels (demons) from the area of the Euphrates River. They are allowed to kill a third of the people on the Earth. They accomplish this by mobilizing a force of 200 million soldiers. It is only in recent times that it would be conceivable to raise an army of that size. Today China has that many people who could serve as soldiers. Each of these 200 million troops has equipment resembling modern weaponry, with fire, smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. They employ horses, symbolic of modern tanks, with "tails" able to inflict injury.

Even after all the agony and death inflicted by these judgments, the survivors are not willing to repent or to stop worshipping demons and idols. There is a process of hardening of one's heart. It is illustrated in the case of Pharaoh during the days of Moses. Since the Trumpet judgments appear to take place during the Great Tribulation, the second half of the seven years of the Tribulation, these people will have received the Mark of The Beast, which is an unforgivable act of worship of Antichrist. This helps to explain why none of them are willing to repent.

The events are now taken up in Chapter 15. There is a break between the Sixth Trumpet and the Seventh Trumpet. God pours out His wrath with seven angels with Seven Bowls or Vials.

Revelation 15:1-8 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. 2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, [and]

over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous [are] thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true [are] thy ways, thou King of saints. 4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for [thou] only [art] holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. 5 And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: 6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. 7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels **seven golden vials full of the wrath of God**, who liveth for ever and ever. 8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

Revelation 16:1-2 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. 2 And the **first** went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and [upon] them which worshipped his image.

If our idea of active RFID chips, powered by lithium ion batteries, is correct; the they will rupture and cause this sore.

Revelation 16:3-12 And the **second angel** poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead [man]: and every living soul died in the sea. 4 And the **third angel** poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. 7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous [are] thy judgments. 8 And the **fourth angel** poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. 10 And the **fifth angel** poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. 12 And the **sixth angel** poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

Remember the he Sixth Trumpet. It begins with the release of four evil angels (demons) from the area of the Euphrates River. They are allowed to kill a third of the people on the Earth. They mobilize a force of 200 million soldiers. This may be the army from China.

Revelation 16:13-17 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs [come] out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, [which] go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. 17 And the **seventh angel** poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

When the Seven Vials which are poured out in rapid succession, culminating in Judgment of Babylon (chapters 17 and 18) and the Battle of Armageddon, and the glorious return of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (chapter 19).

Back to the Trumpets

We are now at the crescendo of the End Time. God's wrath is complete and the Battle of Armageddon is about to begin. This will usher in the Glorious Return of Jesus. He will come with His saints and will finish it all. The Seventh Trumpet, like the Seventh Seal, does not introduce an activity on earth, but looks to Heaven in anticipation of the next series of events. In this case, the next step is God taking His great power and beginning to reign on earth. Thus this last trumpet introduces the events leading up to the Battle of Armageddon.

Revelation 11:14-19 The second woe is past; [and], behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become [the kingdoms] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. 16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, 17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. 18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. 19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

As the time approaches for Christ to return, it is also nearing the time for judging the dead and rewarding the faithful (chapters 20 and 21).