

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

### Revelation 8:7-9:12 | Session 14 | The Seven Years Begin: Five Trumpets and a Woe

In the book of Revelation, there are seven pairs of visions given to John; we called this the divine outline. The first pair of visions pertains to events that are taking place in Heaven, and the second part of the pair concerns events taking place on Earth.

The First Vision in Heaven (4:1-5:14).

The First Vision on Earth (6:1-7:8).

The Second Vision in Heaven (7:9-8:6)

The Second Vision on Earth (8:7-11:14).

### THE SECOND VISION ON EARTH (8:7-11:14)

#### THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS



In our previous sessions, we saw the opening of seven seals. Each of the seven seals affected an event on the earth. The first four seals are precursors (birth pains) to occur before the seven-years of God's wrath (See sessions 10 and 11).

The opening of seal five begins the seven-years of wrath and is the consolidation of the entirety of *Jacob's Trouble*, or what is commonly called, The Tribulation (See session 12).

The opening of the 6th seal (Revelation 6:12-17) takes John (and the reader) to the time of the end and the coming of the Son of man, Jesus (Revelation 19:11).

The 7th seal forms an umbrella over the entire seven-years in which a new series of judgments, beginning in Revelation 8:7, will fill in the details of the 5th seal. These judgments are to begin with seven Trumpets, followed by the seven vials.

The entire seven-years of God's wrath, therefore, fall under the 7th seal.

Keep in mind that Revelation is not always sequential; it jumps forward and backward. The Trumpet and Vial Judgments, however, are continuous once they begin. They are only interrupted by information that shows why they are necessary.



## THE FIRST TRUMPET (8:7)

### THE DAY OF GOD'S WRATH BEGINS

As noted in previous sessions, I hold a (minority) position that the entire seven-years contain God's judgment upon the earth. The standard evangelical understanding is that the seven-years begin with peace, and it is not until the mid-point, when the Antichrist desecrates the Temple, that the Tribulation proper begins. I have questioned the so-called peace treaty<sup>1</sup> mentioned in Daniel 9:27 as perhaps not being a peace treaty at all, but a treaty with the nations who have conspired against Israel (See my notes from previous sessions).

The Lord revealed to the Old Testament Prophet Joel details of this first trumpet blast. He called it the "Great and the terrible day of the LORD" (Joel 2:31). Joel's prophecy states, "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke" (Joel 2:30).

Unless we spiritualize this, there is no other way to take this except literally. The entire *Tribulation* will be: "A cloudy day...the time of the heathen" (Ezekiel 30:3), and "The cloudy and dark day" (Ezekiel 34:12). This is the "day of God's wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm..." (Zephaniah 1:15).

<sup>1</sup> Someone, somewhere called confirming of a covenant in Daniel 9:27 a "peace treaty" or agreement with Israel, but the text never says that. That interpretation has been repeated over and over without question. The various interpretations center on the phrase "the many" to whom Antichrist confirms a covenant. Is "the many" referring to Israel? Or, is "the many" referring to nations who are set to destroy Israel?

This is the day which believers in Jesus Christ will be delivered from, as the apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: *“Wait for God’s Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”* (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

How **hail and fire** can be **mingled with blood** is unclear. But in the plagues of Egypt, as recorded in the book of Exodus (9:24), there was a similar plague; *fire mingled with hail*. Earlier, the Nile River and all the water sources were turned to blood (Exodus 7:19). Certainly, God will perform this great wonder again.

As the seven-years begin with this first trumpet blast, it could signal the war of Gog and Magog that is seen in Ezekiel 38 and 39, where the armies from the north will invade Israel<sup>2</sup>. We don’t have time to discuss this in today’s study (read those two chapters for yourself) but Ezekiel 38:22 says this regarding what God will do in that battle:

*“And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.”*

The result will be **a third part of the trees** burned, along with all the **green grass**.

As the *Day of God’s Wrath* begins, immediately nature is disturbed. This is actual climate change. With a third of the trees destroyed by fire, carbon dioxide cannot be distributed adequately. With burned roots, the soil will be susceptible to massive erosion affecting the oceans, destroying coral reefs, and other marine habitats. Smoke from the fires will no doubt cover the planet like a yellowish, deathly pall, creating an atmosphere like Zephaniah described, of clouds, darkness, and gloominess.

The arrogance of elitists and global governors will cause them to deny God's existence, leading to man being blamed. But they will be sorely mistaken; as it is God who will inflict His punishment upon the earth with the sounding of this first of 7 trumpets and with each subsequent blast. Even today, there is a willful ignorance and denial by these same elitist snobs that God is ultimately the King of the earth and the universe (1 Timothy 1:17).

It will not be until well into the pouring out of the fourth, fifth, and seventh vials (Revelation 16:8-21) that these blind men will finally open their eyes and recognize there is a God, but instead of worshipping him, they will shake their fist at Him and blaspheme His name.

#### THE PURPOSE OF THE DAY OF GOD’S WRATH

While the entire earth and all who dwell on it are being affected by this and subsequent judgments, ultimately, the seven-years of God’s wrath will accomplish three things<sup>3</sup>:

1. To make an end of wickedness and wicked ones (Isaiah 13:9; 24:19-20).

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<sup>2</sup> This is speculative since it is not known when the battle of Gog and Magog will occur, but there are some who hold to the view of it taking place at the beginning of the Tribulation (after the Rapture). See Thomas Ice, “Ezekiel 38 and 39 (Part 1). Cited in Dr. Andy Woods, *The Middle East Meltdown* (Taos, NM: Dispensational Publishing House, 2016.) p.32.

<sup>3</sup> Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. *The Footsteps of the Messiah : A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events*. Rev. ed., Ariel Ministries, 2003.

2. To bring about worldwide revival as seen with the sending out of the 144,000 (Revelation 7:1-17). This will fulfill the prophecy found in Matthew 24:14.
3. To scatter (i.e. smash or break) the power of the Holy People (Daniel 12:7). The Holy People refer to God's elect, His chosen nation, Israel. God will break the power of the Holy People in order to bring about a national regeneration and He will do it, according to Ezekiel 20:33-38.

While the entire earth will be affected by the events of the seven-years, the subject is always Israel. It is Israel to whom Antichrist will attempt to destroy, as we will see in chapter 12. (Also see Daniel 8:24).

Ultimately, Israel will repent, acknowledge the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and say, "*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord*" (Matthew 23:39). Revelation 19 describes the fulfillment of Jesus's prophecy of His return.

### THE SECOND TRUMPET (8:8,9)

We can be certain when John uses simile because he tells us. Here he says not a mountain, but **as it were a great mountain**. Whatever John sees, it is something like a **mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea**.

Who can pick up a mountain and cast it into the sea? No one except for God. In Mark 11:22, Jesus prophesied this very event when he instructed Peter to "have faith in God" or more literally, "have the faith of God (Mark 11:22). Jesus makes a veiled prophecy that God alone can pick up a mountain and cast it into the sea (Mark 11:23).

The **sea**, however, is literal since John does not say *something like a sea*. What is exactly does John see? Here we have to speculate: A massive meteor? Will God allow mad men to simply have their way and create a nuclear explosion? Or is this solely a supernatural act from God since He does not need manmade weapons to do anything? When Sodom was overtaken by God's wrath, science today has proven, based on the debris field, that it was accomplished by some kind of cosmic blast that originated over the Dead Sea and obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24,25).

We don't know how God will do this, but to John, he could only describe it as a **great mountain**. The result is severe in that **a third part of the sea became blood...the third part of the creatures...in the sea...died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed**. While the destruction is only a **third** of the sea is affected, but when we get to Revelation 16, "*every living soul (or, life) died in the sea.*" The day of wrath begins horrifically with the first and second trumpets, but it's only going to get worse. As we have already seen above, He is doing these things to *end wickedness, bring about worldwide revival, and break the stubborn will of Israel*.

### THE THIRD TRUMPET (8:10,11)

**There fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp. The name of the star is called Wormwood.** God places judgment on the fresh water supply. The word **wormwood** is one of those words that cannot be

interpreted except by context. Here, it is construed as *something bitter* affecting the fresh water supply; since the result is that **the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many died of the waters because they were made bitter**.

### THE FOURTH TRUMPET (8:12)

It was prophesied in Genesis 1:14 that the sun and the moon were to be *signs*. Luke 21:25 quotes Jesus: “*And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations...*” (also Matthew 24:25; Mark 13:29). It shouldn’t come as a surprise that God will show signs in the sky again during the Tribulation. The result is that **the third part of the sun...moon...and stars** will be affected. Will it be because of the smoke and debris in the atmosphere from the previous judgments? It is not beyond God’s capability to change the course of His creation. During the millennium; God’s kingdom on earth that will last 1,000 years, the moon will be as bright as the Sun and the Sun will be seven time brighter (Isaiah 30:26). Day and night cycles will be disrupted.

### THE THREE WOES ANNOUNCED AND THE FIFTH TRUMPET (FIRST WOE) (8:13-9:12)

Verse 13—

The fourth trumpet is still in play. The word **woe**, is an interjection and is an *exclamation of grief*, as in “*woe is me!*” An angel (messenger), not an eagle <sup>4</sup>, introduces the three woes. Modern translations state *an eagle flying through the midst of heaven*. This is because of a *textual variant* between the Textus Receptus and the Critical Text. **Angel** is correct in this verse. In other passages where there is no textual variant, angels speak or say **with a loud voice** (for example, Revelation 14:6; 19:17). There is no need to take this as an eagle. Either way, it does not change the message of **woe, woe, woe**. And why this triple message of **woe**? Because the next three trumpets (5,6,7) are about to be sounded. Just like the 7th seal that was opened encompassing all the seven years, the 7th trumpet will introduce the next seven judgments (the pouring out of seven vials).

## Chapter 9

Verse 1 —

The interpretive rule we want to use in the book of Revelation is to interpret everything literally unless the literal translation makes no sense, or we are told otherwise. Here, **a star fallen from heaven unto earth** makes sense, but then it says, **to him, was given the key of the bottomless pit**. Because of the pronoun, we know this is not a literal star; it represents someone. It could refer to Satan, whom we will see in Revelation 12:9, who is cast down to the earth. Jesus also spoke of Satan falling from heaven (Luke 10:18). More likely, this **star** is an angel brought down from heaven to earth. The text doesn’t tell us, but whoever it is, **to him was given the key to the bottomless pit**.

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<sup>4</sup> The corrupted Greek text (the critical text) of all modern translations incorrectly replaces the word *angelos* with *aetos*. See my chart, *Greek Manuscripts Simplified* at, <https://rogerfeenstra.com/rogers-charts-and-graphs/>

Verse 2 —

The Greek word translated **bottomless pit** is *abussos* or abyss. It means a deep gulf or chasm in the earth's lowest parts. It is separate from *hades, Sheol, or hell*. It is a place of **smoke** and fire. It is where demonic forces are imprisoned (As we will see later; Revelation 17:8; 20:1-3).

The angel opened this pit, and **the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.**

Verse 3 —

Demonic forces are being released from the bottomless pit, **out of the smoke locusts upon the earth.** These are not common locusts since the insect locust does not have a king—in verse 11, their king is named. They are called locusts but are likely supernatural and have great power.

I have an opinion on this and some people I know don't agree. A view I hold is that these demons, while not specified, are fallen angels found in Genesis 6. The story itself is not completely germane to our passage in Revelation, but in Genesis 6 these demons apparently fell with Satan, left their natural abode in the spirit world to procreate with sinful women in order to tamper with the genetics of humanity.

Angels, by the way, can take human form (Hebrews 13:2; See also Genesis 19:1). Why would these fallen angels, or demons, want to mess with human DNA? To stop the Redeemer from coming by corrupting his genealogical line. More simply put, their goal was to stop the birth of Jesus Christ. To keep them from accomplishing their goal, God destroyed them by a worldwide flood, saving the only uncorrupted man, Noah, and his family.

From that time on, these specific demons have been incarcerated in this abyss since the time of Noah. You ask why? Because God is going to use them for his divine purpose during the Tribulation to inflict pain on the inhabitants of the earth for five months.

Verse 4 —

It seems these supernatural locusts (fallen angels who took on human form, now relegated by God to the form of a locust) were designed for a different purpose than simply eating vegetation. Instead of devastating plant life, these locusts have human beings in sight. While they have power, it is limited. God always holds demonic forces in check (See Job 1:12). These **locusts** are instructed not to hurt the men **with the seal of God on their foreheads.** You should remember these with the seal of God are the 144,000 Jewish evangelists. They will not be touched—All other humans are their target for five months.

Verse 5,6 —

They are limited in how far they can go in afflicting humans. Their **torment** will not be deadly, but may be worse than death. For **five months**, the pain they inflict is great that **men will seek death, and shall not find it. Men shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.**

## THE DESCRIPTION OF THE DEMONS

Verse 7,8,9,10 —

I don't think we should sensationalize the description of these demons. For example, when I was a teenager, I attended a conference where Hal Lindsey was speaking. Hal Lindsey was extremely popular in the late 1960s and early 1970s because of his bestselling book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Everyone, even non-Christians, knew something about, or had heard about, that book. By 1999, it had sold over 35 million copies. While the book was pre-tribulation, literal, and dispensational, it took liberty with some comparisons. At the conference, I remember Mr. Lindsey's description of these demons as Cobra helicopters. The Cobra helicopter was fresh on everyone's mind since they had only been put into service in 1967. Surely, that's what these demons/locusts are, people said, and there were a lot of interpretations based on that. But one problem is that Cobra helicopters were replaced and taken out of service, and were replaced by the Apache and later Blackhawks, and now a new V-280 Valor. A second problem is that the demon/locusts come out of the abyss, where these helicopters come out of the United States—which may seem like the *abyss* these days, but not the one found in our passage. So we have to be careful and should look at these locusts as supernatural as described.

Their **shapes were like unto horses prepared unto battle with crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men**. Their size is not given. **They had hair as of women...teeth were as... of lions'. Breastplates...of iron**. They have **wings as the sound of chariots pulled by horses running to battle**. And their power, the **sting**, was in **their tails**. **And their power was to hurt men five months**.

Verse 11 —

Their **king...which is the angel of the bottomless pit: Abaddon** in Hebrew and **Apollyon** in Greek. The word refers to *a Destroyer*.

The book of Proverbs 30:27 says that *"The locusts have no king, yet all of them go out in ranks."* So apparently they are not literal locusts, but are like them, as John perceived and described them. They are fallen angelic beings.

But there is a military like order even among demons. The apostle Paul wrote that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Therefore, we need the *armor of God in order to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might!*

These judgments are horrific, and people should note them and fear them. But there is a way of escape! It is through the gift of grace given to us by God. This gift requires no payment from us. Receiving this gift keeps us from the day of wrath and from any condemnation from God. Romans 8:1 states: *Therefore, there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*

The Philippian jailer ask, "What must I do to be saved?" The apostle Paul replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved...". Have you believed in the Savior? If not, do it now. Today is the day of salvation.

Verse 12 —

**One woe is past, and behold; there come two woes more hereafter.** The second woe comes at the completion of the sixth trumpet (11:14), and the third and most terrible of the three woes will come in 12:12 when Satan is cast down to the earth in his last-ditch effort to eradicate the Jews.

In our next session, we will finish chapter nine and all of chapter ten!