

## Revelation 8

- A. Review. Overview of the Judgment Program of the Lord upon a rebellious and wicked population here on earth. After the rapture of the Church and from the confirmation of the covenant of peace by the antichrist with many nations until the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the earth and the astronomical heavens will experience what has never happened before nor will it happen again. This is the great tribulation “which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth (those who were left behind or those who were not included in the Rapture).”

During this period, there will be a succession of 3 sets of 7-judgments each. (Slide 1 – Order of Seal, Trumpet and Bowl Judgments) The first set is 7 Seal judgments (Chapter 6) with the 7<sup>th</sup> seal containing the following set of 7 Trumpet judgments (Chapter 8,9,11). The 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet contains and, lastly, followed by 7 Vial or Bowl judgments (Chapter 16). During the whole tribulation period, judgments will be cast upon this earth successively with increasing severity until the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ when He would by then destroyed all wickedness here on earth by the sword that comes from His mouth.

1. Chapter 6. The 7 Seal Judgments (Slide 2 – Chronology of the 7 Seals Judgment). The opening of the scroll with 7 seals by the Lamb in the heavenly throne, the Lord Jesus Christ, begins the series of judgments during the tribulation period. The first 5 seals (false peace, war, hunger, death and persecution of the tribulation saints) of judgments from the hand of the Lord may appear to the apostate people here on earth to be natural and man-made catastrophes. But the 6<sup>th</sup> seal and the succeeding 7 Trumpet judgments and 7 Bowl judgments make it very clear that these are judgments from the hand of the Lord poured out upon this rebellious earth. We will come to the 7<sup>th</sup> seal in Chapter 8.
2. Chapter 7
  - a. This is the sealing on the foreheads of the 144,000 servants of God from the 12 tribes of Israel (Slide 3 – The 144,000 Jews Servants of God) before the four angels will unleash the four winds to cause cataclysmic

events like those experience during the opening of the 6<sup>th</sup> seal when the heaven and earth were shaken and the kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men and the chief of captains, the mighty men (men of authority and power) hid themselves by asking the mountains and the rocks to fall on them to hide them from the face and wrath of the Lamb for no one can stand before the Lamb on the day of the wrath of the Lamb.

b. After this, John saw a great multitude (saved by the evangelistic call of the 144,000 Jews) which cannot be numbered of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, before the throne and the Lamb and here we saw again a 3-level of heavenly praise as in Chapter 5:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Level (v. 9-10) - a great multitude (those evangelized by the 144,000 Jews) that no one could number crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Level (v.11) - all the angels were standing around the throne and,
- 1st Level (v.11-12) - the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

This great multitude of souls are those that came out of the tribulation killed by the antichrist who fought the good fight of faith for the word of God and for the testimony they held unto and they refused to worship the world ruler. Those who come in faith on the Lord Jesus Christ during the tribulation will be faced with a choice and a large percentage would be executed for refusing to worship the antichrist, also called the first beast in Chapter 13.

## B. Sermon

1. Chapter 8. The second set of the judgments of the Lord is revealed through the blowing of 7 trumpets. In the Bible, trumpets are blown for different purposes. (Slide 4 – The Meanings of the Blowing of the Trumpet in the Bible)
2. With the opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> seal, there was deafening silence for half an hour and the judgment becomes visible on the scroll. A very foreboding silence is contrasted to the previous pictures of lightning and thunder

coming from the throne of God and the four creatures did not cease to say Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come” in chapter 4 and chapter 5, John hears the three levels of praise in heaven and on earth and under the earth. There is also the angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals? We also hear the loud voice of the tribulation saints crying, “How long O, Lord before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then there is the roar of the great earthquake when the 6<sup>th</sup> seal was opened. In chapter 7, John hears the loud command of the angel saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bondservants (144,000 Jews) of our God on their foreheads.”

3. After the silence, John saw the (unique) seven angels who stand before God (in the presence) and seven trumpets were given to them. Each of the seven trumpets unleashes a specific judgment of increasing severity and rapidity but still less destructive than the succeeding seven bowls in chapter 16. However, before the trumpets were to be sounded, the prayers of the tribulation saints whom John saw in Chapter 6:9-11 must be answered. Another angel stood before the altar having a golden censer and he was given incense to be offered with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar before the throne. The prayer of the tribulation saints in the opening of the 5<sup>th</sup> seal will now be answered. Their prayers were for the destruction of satan, negation of sin and their deaths to be avenged. This imagery encourages us to pray because it shows us that no prayer of the saints is unanswered for the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save or his ear dull that it cannot hear” (Isaiah 59:1). The cumulative effect of the prayers of the innumerable righteous men is very effective. James 5:16 says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” After the lifting of the prayers of the tribulation saints to the Lord, the censer is then filled with the fire of the altar and it was thrown on the earth and the silence was broken by the rolling sound of thunder and cracking sounds of flashes of lightning and by the shaking of an earthquake.
4. There is a wide divergence in the symbolic interpretation of these trumpet judgments that interpretation becomes more dependent on

the person than the real meaning of the verses. It is best, therefore, to take the verses in the literal sense. It will be observed that the first four of the 7 trumpet judgments are separated from the last three which are called the three “woes” judgments. Let us look at the first four. (Slide 5 – The Trumpet Judgments)

5. **The 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet (8:7).** Dr. John MacArthur has this to say in his book, Because the Time is Near<sup>1</sup>, “The specific cause of the hail and fire is not revealed but from a scientific standpoint, an earthquake of the magnitude and extent of the one in verse 5 would likely trigger worldwide volcanic eruptions. Besides spewing vast quantities of flaming lava (which could be blood red in appearance) into the atmosphere, the disturbance caused by those eruptions could trigger violent thunderstorms that would produce large hail. Such thunderstorms would be in keeping with the imagery of verse 5.” The result is that 1/3 of the earth was burned with the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. Destruction of vegetation could easily destroy agricultural crops and animals.
6. **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet (8:8-9).** John MacArthur further explains<sup>2</sup>, “The massive object plunging through the sky which terrifies observers because it is “like a great mountain burning with fire.” This is a giant asteroid or meteorite surrounded by flaming gases set ablaze by the friction of the earth’s atmosphere. Because all the world’s oceans are connected, the devastation will spread across 1/3 of the ocean waters causing 1/3 of the sea to become blood. Three catastrophic, supernaturally designed effects result from the collision: (1) 1/3 of the sea became blood; (2) as a result, 1/3 of the creatures in the sea died; (3) and giant waves (tsunamis) will destroy 1/3 of the ships on the world’s oceans capsizing huge vessels. These events will result in disrupting commerce and transportation causing economic chaos.” The first two trumpets brought judgment on the land and the sea.
7. **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet (8:10-11).** A great star fell from heaven. Its burning debris fell on the springs of waters, polluting freshwater. The name of

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, Because The Time Is Near, 2007, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, 156

- the star is wormwood. John MacArthur describes wormwood<sup>3</sup> as a shrub whose leaves are used in the manufacture of absinthe, a liqueur is so toxic, its manufacture is banned in many countries. The lakes and reservoir will be filled with toxic water. Wormwood destroys a third of the freshwaters.
8. Fourth Trumpet (8:12-13). Here judgment of the Lord shifted from the earth to the heavens. a third of the heavenly bodies will be darkened and 1/3 of the day would not shine and the night the same way. John MacArthur writes<sup>4</sup>, “At this point, the loss of heat from the sun will cause temperatures to plunge drastically all over the world. That will severely disrupt the earth’s weather patterns and the seas’ tides leading to violent unpredictable storms and tides, the destruction of crops and further loss of animal and human lives.
  9. Then the apostle John sees an eagle flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth because of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! This warning shows that the last three trumpets will be more devastating than the first four. The Lord’s wrath and judgment.
- C. Conclusion. Woe is an expression of judgment and condemnation in the Bible. For example, the Lord Jesus pronounced 7 woes to the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew chapter 23 saying, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone” (Matthew 23:23) People are destroyed because they fail to hear the warning of the trumpets of “woe” of the coming judgment of the Lord Jesus. The Bible is replete with reminders and here is to quote from the Book of Hebrews:
- Heb 3:7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice,
- Heb 3:8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness,

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<sup>3</sup> ibid, 157

<sup>4</sup> ibid,158-159

Heb 2:1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

Heb 2:2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,

Heb 2:3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard,

Heb 2:4 while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

Heb 12:25 See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.

Heb 12:26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.”

Heb 12:27 This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain.

Heb 12:28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,

Heb 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire.

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