

# Revelation Part 7 | 6/4/17

- Interlude between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> seal reveals God's grace and mercy during the tribulation.
  - After the 6<sup>th</sup> seal there is an interlude in chapter 7 before the 7<sup>th</sup> seal is opened in chapter 8.
  - At the end of chapter 6 a question was given.
    - Revelation 6:17
      - “for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”
    - Chapter 7 provides us with a glorious answer to the question of who can stand.
  - Even though the tribulation is a time of God's wrath being poured out upon the world, He still has not completely cut off the lost.
    - **God' intention is not only judgment, but also to bring about repentance.**
    - God will still provide a way of salvation even during this time.
- The 144,000 of Israel Sealed | Revelation 7:1-8
  - **Read Revelation 7:1-8**
  - The 144,000 are redeemed Jews who will be instrumental in sharing the Gospel during the tribulation.
    - There are many different perspectives of who these 144,000 are, but I take the literal interpretation that they are Jews.
      - The breakdown of the tribes lends much more credibility to a literal interpretation
      - Although the tribe of Dan is omitted and the reason for that is not known.
        - There are always “12 tribes” and here Dan is omitted but one of Joseph's sons “Manasseh” is listed.
        - Usually the tribe of Levi (priesthood) is omitted.
    - Israel who has always been a reluctant witness for Christ will now take up the missionary and evangelical role that had been primarily been bestowed upon the Gentiles.
    - The Church will have been raptured, but God will use these Jews to spread the Gospel to all who will listen during the tribulation.
  - These 144,000 will be sealed with the name of God on their forehead.
    - Contrary to the mark of the beast they will have the mark of God on their forehead.
      - Revelation 14:1
        - “Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.”
      - Revelation 13:17
        - “so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.”
    - **How are people “sealed” today by God? What is our guarantee that we are saved?**
      - Hint: Ephesians 1:13-14
        - “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”
    - The 144,000 sealed will not be effected by God's judgment and His wrath.

- These evangelists will be allowed to spread the Gospel and be a witness without having to suffer the punishment of all of God’s wrath that He brings upon the world.
  - Revelation 9:4
    - “They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.”
  - **Do you think this will give “proof” that their message they bring is true and from God?**
- The “great multitude” that will be saved during the tribulation | Revelation 7:9-17
  - ***Read Revelation 7:9-17***
  - The great multitude is separate from the 144,000.
  - These are made up of “tribulation saints” it is sinners who once were lost, but during the time of tribulation they came to know Him and he showed them mercy and grace.
    - They are explicitly identified in verse 14
      - Revelation 7:14b
        - “...These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”
      - This is a special group who will come to Christ even when it is very difficult.
    - Even though it is more difficult for people to come to Christ during the tribulation, there will be a “great multitude that no one could number”.
      - **The witness of the 144,000 and the seeds planted by the raptured church, will have a profound impact.**
        - Those seeds that we plant today are critically important no matter what time or age we live in.
        - **Does this help us to understand the importance of “planting seeds” today even when we may never see the fruit of our labor?**
      - These are Christians who refuse the mark of the beast.
        - Because of this their time of suffering in the tribulation will be even greater because they will not be able to buy or sell.
          - Revelation 13:17
        - While being saved they will still have to endure the time of judgment, but they will ultimately stand before the throne of the Lamb.
          - Revelation 7:9-10
    - While there will be many saved during the tribulation, there will be many who will still curse God and refuse to repent.
      - Revelation 9:20-21
      - Revelation 16:9
        - “They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.”
    - **What does God’s plan of redemption for the lost during the tribulation tell us about Him?**
- The opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> seal | Revelation 8:1-5
  - ***Read Revelation 8:1-5***
  - The 7<sup>th</sup> seal is a lot more involved than the others as it breaks out into several other “symbols” of God’s wrath.
    - The 7<sup>th</sup> seal has seven trumpets.

- The trumpets are of greater intensity than the first 6 seals but not as great as what will come with the bowls during the great tribulation.
- Trumpets 1-4 bring destruction upon the earth's ecology (land, water and sun etc)
- Trumpets 5-7 bring demonic devastation against the earth's inhabitants that torment then kill.
- The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet
  - It also contains seven bowls.
    - These bowls are released during the time of great tribulation. (Chapter 16)
    - This all leads up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ in chapter 19.
- Trumpets are used throughout Scripture for things that are very important.
  - Examples
    - Trumpet at Mount Sinai when the law was given.
    - Trumpet at Jericho when the walls fell down
    - Trumpet when kings were anointed.
    - Trumpet when coming disaster was announced.
  - Here God has given these trumpets as symbols for these angels to execute judgment upon the earth.
- The opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> seal begins with a time of preparation.
  - It begins with silence.
    - Things had been quite busy in heaven up until this point, now at the opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> seal and just before the trumpets we have 30 minutes of silence.
    - This seems to be a time of anticipation for the following trumpets and bowls which will be severe.
    - Zechariah speaks to silence before God when he is moved.
      - Zechariah 2:13
        - “Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.”
    - **Why do you think this time of silence might be significant?**
  - Seven angels were given seven trumpets before God.
    - After the 30 minutes pause the seven angels who were before God were given seven trumpets.
    - Not ordinary trumpets, but those that would symbolize the next stages of God's judgment upon the world.
  - An angel offered up the prayers of the saints on the golden altar before the throne.
    - As we have this scene unfold of the silence and preparation of the angels for God's wrath, we have yet another angel who is offering up the prayers of the saints on the altar before God.
    - This is quite similar to the priestly sacrifices that were done during the Old Testament.
      - The priest would take the censer (golden pan) tied to a chain that would be used to carry fiery coals from the brazen altar to the altar of incense.
      - The incense would then be lit and symbolized the prayers being sent to God as a sweet aroma.
        - Psalms 141:2
          - “Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!”

- This is God’s reminder to us of how important our prayers are to Him.
  - Who are the saints?
    - The saints are ALL Christians not just a special group.
    - The prayers of Christians throughout time that have been offered up to God are kept.
    - Our prayers do not go into the abyss, but God cherishes them.
  - **Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth.**
    - Having been reminded of the prayers of the Christians, God begins the next stage of His divine judgment.
- The four trumpets of God’s judgment upon the Earth – Revelation 8:5-12
  - **Read Revelation 8:5-12**
  - These first four trumpets of God’s wrath were actually targeting the world that He created.
    - 1/3 earth including trees were burned up.
    - 1/3 sea became blood
    - 1/3 of the living creatures in the sea died
    - 1/3 rivers and springs of water became wormwood
    - 1/3 of the sun, moon and stars were darkened.
    - ALL the green grass was burned up.
  - **Interestingly God choose to bring destruction upon the very thing He created in the beginning that was a source of life for humanity.**
    - **Genesis 1:1-13**
    - God created the world and said it was good, it was to be a blessing and benefit for humanity.
    - In fact, it was their source of life.
    - But now God is intentionally taking it away as punishment.
  - **What kind of message do you think this would have sent to the world?**
    - The Lord gives and He takes away.
  - The parallelism with the plagues against the pharaoh in Egypt.
    - **What do these different events of wrath remind you of from the Old Testament?**
    - They bear a striking resemblance to the plagues that God sent against Pharaoh in the book of Exodus.
      - Exodus 9:13-35
    - However, these were on a much grander scale, they didn’t effect just Egypt but 1/3 of the entire world.
    - In fact, when people today reference things like “a flood of biblical proportions” these will be to the extreme as nothing we have never seen before.
  - Trumpet 1 - Hail, fire and blood | Revelation 8:7
    - **Read Revelation 8:7**
    - **What do you think this even might look like if it were to happen today?**
    - This is a supernatural event by God so we can but only speculate but some possibilities are:
      - Mass severe storms with hail and lightening that would cause the fire.
      - Or perhaps volcanic eruptions.
    - The blood is likely to symbolize God’s wrath and is mentioned in several places in the Old Testament.
      - Ezekiel 21:32
        - “You shall be fuel for the fire. Your blood shall be in the midst of the land. You shall be no more remembered, for I the LORD have spoken.”

- While everything else is decimated by 1/3 it says that ALL of the green grass was burned up.
  - Trumpet 2 – A great mountain burning with fire | Revelation 8:8
    - ***Read Revelation 8:8***
    - **What do think of this one, what is the “great mountain”**
    - This is likely a meteor or asteroid would be the most likely contender.
    - This would of course cause great devastation and would kill a significant amount of the life that was in it.
      - This is only a pre-cursor in the bowls in 16:3 ALL marine life is destroyed.
    - The blood could be from many reasons either red ties caused by billions of dead micro-organisms or actual blood.
    - This would create a tidal wave that would wipe out 1/3 of the ships.
  - Trumpet 3 – Great star fell from heaven | Revelation 8:10
    - ***Revelation 8:10***
    - **What do you think the “great star” is?**
    - This sounds very similar to the previous verse could likely be a comet.
    - This one though targeted the drinking water on the earth.
    - “Wormwood” means “bitter” which was a poisonous substance derived from a root that caused drunkenness and eventually death.
    - Many people would obviously die with contaminated drinking water.
  - Trumpet 4 – Sun, moon and stars were darkened | Revelation 8:12
    - ***Read Revelation 8:12***
    - **What do you think this will look like or what is happening here?**
    - God will be doing something to the heavens to cause them to lose their light.
    - This will cause a drastic reduction in heat and change the climate on the earth.
    - The 4<sup>th</sup> trumpet is interesting as it was the 4<sup>th</sup> day when God created them.
      - Genesis 1:14-19
    - Don’t worry if it’s cold it will soon warm up
      - This darkening is only temporary and soon God will scorch the earth.
      - Revelation 16:8
        - “The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire.”
- Woe, woe, woe | Revelation 8:13
  - ***Read Revelation 8:13***
  - As bad as these were the next 3 trumpets are even worse!