

Handout Revelation Lesson 11

A review of the “sevens” thus far in the Book of Revelation:

1. In the Preamble section in Chapter 1, there were: 7 titles for Christ, 7 churches, 7 Spirits, 7 lampstands, 7 stars, and 7 messengers to the churches (angelos, in Greek).
2. In the Historical Prologue section of Chapters 2-3, there were: 7 stars, 7 lampstands, 7 letters, and 7 Spirits.
3. In the Ethical Stipulations section of Chapters 4-7, there were: two prayers with seven themes (5:12 and 7:12), 7 lamps, 7 Spirits, 7 seals, 7 horns, and 7 eyes.
4. In the Sanctions section of Chapters 8-14, there will be: 7 angels, 7 trumpets, 7 peals of thunder, 7 thousand people killed, a 7 headed dragon, and 7 crowns on the dragon’s heads.

1 The Lamb then broke the seventh seal, and there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

Other Biblical passages referring to silence in Heaven or silence in the presence of God:

1. *But Yahweh is in His Holy Temple: Let the whole earth be silent before Him* (Hab 2:20).
2. *Silence before the Lord Yahweh, for the Day of Yahweh is near. Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests* (Zep 1:7).
3. *Let all people be silent before Yahweh, now that He is stirring from His Holy Dwelling* (Zec 2:17).

In Scripture, silence during worship can signal profound reverence as in the Jerusalem Temple liturgy or the Catholic Mass; however, as in the case of Revelation 8:1, the silence can also be ominous.

The seven “Angels of the Presence” (Rev 8:2) have a well-documented history in Sacred Scripture and in Jewish Oral Tradition and literature. Holy Scripture only names three of these archangels:

1. Gabriel, “God is my strength” (Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26)
2. Raphael, “God has healed” (Tobit 5-6; 11:1-17; 8:1-3; 12:15)
3. Michael, “who is like God” (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7)

The other names come from apocryphal texts and Jewish oral tradition (the Jewish Talmud):

4. Uriel, “fire of God”
5. Raguel, “friend of God”
6. Remiel, “thunder or height of God”
7. Sariel, “prince of God”

There is a division between the first four and last three Trumpet Judgments similar to the division in the Seal Judgments.

TRUMPET JUDGMENT	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
First Trumpet judgment on the land	Revelation 8:7
Second Trumpet judgment on the sea	Revelation 8:8-9
Third Trumpet judgment on the fresh waters of the earth	Revelation 8:10-11
Fourth Trumpet judgment in the sky	Revelation 8:12-13
The first four trumpets bring judgment/destruction on the land, sea, and sky described in one or two verses while the last three involve forces that destroy human beings described in twelve, nine, and five verses.	
Fifth Trumpet judgment by demon forces on humans	Revelation 9:1-12

Sixth Trumpet judgment by an invading army	Revelation 9:13-21
Seventh Trumpet judgment is destruction by forces of nature against humans	Revelation 11:15-19

1. Trumpets called the faithful to worship in liturgical ceremonies and on feast days.
2. Trumpets proclaimed the coronation of a new King.
3. Trumpets sounded an alarm, warning of approaching war, or judgment, or urging national repentance.

God instructed Moses to use two silver trumpets “for summoning the congregation” to worship and “for having the camps set out” in battle against an enemy (Num.10:1-9). The irony in Revelation is that now God is ordering the trumpets of holy war blown against Israel herself!

There are four ironic reversals in Revelation Chapter 8:

1. From the Throne of God, called the “Mercy Seat” in association with the Ark of the Covenant, we expect “mercy.” However, in Revelation Chapter 8, it isn’t mercy that comes from the throne but the wrath of God!
2. The incense used in holy worship is a “soothing aroma” to Yahweh (Lev 1:13), but in Revelation Chapter 8, it becomes an agent of death!
3. The trumpets called Israel to worship or war against her enemies (7 trumpets brought destruction to the pagans of Jericho), but in Revelation Chapter 8, the trumpets herald her destruction; Israel has become the enemy!
4. God appointed earthly liturgy that reflected heavenly liturgy for Israel’s sanctification, but in Revelation 8, heavenly liturgy becomes the means of Israel’s overthrow and dissolution!

SEVEN TRUMPET JUDGMENTS in the Book of Revelation	PLAGUES ON EGYPT in the Book of Exodus
On the Land: 1/3 earth, trees, grass burned (8:7)	Boils (6 th plague: Ex. 9:8-12)
On the sea: 1/3 sea becomes blood, 1/3 sea creatures die, 1/3 ships destroyed (8:8-9)	Waters become blood (1 st plague: Ex 7:17-21)
On rivers and springs: 1/3 waters become wormwood (8:10-11)	Waters become blood (1 st plague; Ex 7:17-21)
Cosmic events: 1/3 of sun, moon, and stars darkened (8:12)	Darkness (9 th plague: Ex 10:21-23)
Demonic locusts tormenting men (9:13-21)	Locusts (8 th plague: Ex 10: 4-20)
An army from the Euphrates kills 1/3 of the people (9:13-21)	Invasion of frogs from the river (2 nd plague: Ex 8:2-4)
Voices, storm, earthquake, hail (11:15-19)	Hail (7 th plague: Ex 9:18-26)

In verse 13, *an eagle, calling aloud as it flew high overhead* warned of wrath to come. Like many other covenantal symbols, the eagle has a dual nature of salvation and destruction (Gen 15:9-12; Job 39:30; Dt 28:26, 49; Jer 4:13; 7:33-34; 16:3-4; 19:7; 34:18-20; Ez 39:17-20; Lam 4:19; Hos 8:1; Hab 1:8; Mt 23:27-28; Rev 19:17-18).