

Session 8 - The Seven Seals And Seven Trumpets

*An overview of the first 3 chronological sections of the book of Revelation and their
angelic interpretations*

I. THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

- A. The book of Revelation is comprised of 4 parts:
 - 1. John's Commissioning (1)
 - 2. The Seven Letters to the Seven Churches (2-3)
 - 3. John's Vision of the Throne Room and the Transition of Power from the Father to the Son (4-5)
 - 4. The Transition Period Between This Age and the Next (6-22)
- B. In this section we're going to begin a survey of the fourth part. This fourth part is comprised of **5 chronological "scenes."** Each chronological scene contains the description of a future literal event. And each event is further explained by an angelic interpretation. Thus the fourth part of the book of Revelation is comprised of **5 chronological scenes** and **5 angelic interpretations.**
- C. The 5 Chronological scenes and their angelic interpretations are in this order:
 - 1. **The Tearing of the Seven Seals** (chapter 6)
 - 1. *The Protection of the Elect* (chapter 7)

2. **The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets** (chapter 8-9)
2. *The Promise of Prophetic Leadership and Direction* (chapter 10-11)

3. **The 7th Trumpet & Commencement of the Second Coming** (11:15-19)
3. *The Rage of Satan, the Beast and the False Prophet* (12-14)

4. **The Seven Bowls of Wrath** (15-16)
4. *The Harlot's Religious and Economic Empire* (17-19:5)

5. **Jesus' Entrance into Jerusalem** (19:6-21)
5. *The Restoration of All Things* (20-22)

(*which includes Jesus' 1,000 yr. reign and Satan's final defeat at its end)

- D. In this session we're going to deal with the first 3 chronological scenes and their angelic interpretations:
1. The Seven Seals
 2. The Seven Trumpets
 3. The Seventh Trumpet and the Commencement of the Second Coming

II. THE NATURE OF THE SEALS TRUMPETS AND BOWLS

- A. The 3 judgment series are ***literal*** events that must not be explained away symbolically or historically. Our method of interpretation is the ***plain, literal, common sense*** approach. All the events and numbers in the Book of Revelation are to be understood in their plain meaning unless they are specifically indicated as symbolic as in Rev. 1:20; 5:6; 11:8; 12:1, 3, 9; 17:7, 9.
- B. The 3 judgment series are ***future***. They have not yet occurred in history.
1. The ***Preterists view*** wrongly sees much of Revelation as having been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of Rome (in the first three centuries after Jesus' death).

2. The ***Historicists view*** wrongly interprets Revelation as a progressive unfolding of Church history in seeing many of these prophecies as being already fulfilled in history.
 3. The ***Idealists view*** does not see a unique end-time application of the Book of Revelation, but wrongly interprets it merely as a symbolic picture of the spiritual conflict between good and evil that has occurred throughout history.
- C. The 3 judgment series are **numbered** according to the chronological order in which they occur. For example, the first seal is followed by the second seal, which in turns leads to the third and so on. Because God’s judgments occur according to a numbered sequence, the Church will become greatly unified. Momentum will build as the Church sees them released according to their order.
1. It’s important that we honor the way John say the vision unfold and the way the Lord gave it. Many want to do away with the strict chronology that John received the vision in. They attempt to overlap the 3 judgment series or separate them from each other to fit their timeline. We must read it as it was written.
 2. The fact that they are numbered puts down any notion of recapitulation, overlap or randomness. These judgment events were intentionally communicated as being sequential and chronological from the 1st Seal to the 7th Bowl.
- D. The 3 judgment series are **redemptive**. They will create a global crisis that results in many crying out for salvation, while hindering the Antichrist’s persecution of the saints and destroying all the evil governments on earth.
1. Revelation is not a doomsday prophecy about the world coming to an end. It is about Jesus beautiful leadership in transitioning this present evil age into another age under His rule and authority.
 2. The Great Tribulation is the “birth pains” that precede the “birth” of the coming age.

- E. The 3 judgment series are **progressive** in that they increase in intensity as each series is released. The 7 seal judgments are surpassed in severity by the 7 trumpet judgments which are surpassed by the 7 bowl judgments. For example, 1/4 of the human race dies in the fourth seal (Rev. 6:8), yet at a later time this increases to 1/3 dying in the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:15).
1. The **seals alert us** of something important to come. They are **preparatory** in being analogous to the wrapping on a gift that conceals the contents inside the package. The wrapping anticipates that which is mysterious. The nature of a seal is to keep private something that is anticipated. The contents inside of a scroll are always much more important than the seals that secure its privacy. The 7 seals around the scroll **must** be broken to open the scroll to release the mysterious contents inside (Jesus' war strategy).
 2. The **trumpets warn us** of something more severe to follow. They speak of impending disaster that requires extreme, desperate, emergency actions. The trumpets, like the seals are designed as a mercy tactic. That is, they are meant to shock, shake and warn people of the wrath to come. Note that God does not inflict anyone directly until the 5th trumpet. Prior to that He just sets the context (the 7 seals) and touches natural elements (1st four trumpets). How incredible is that!
 3. The **bowls pour out in fullness** without any delay or hindrance. They are comprehensive. They are not redemptive. The bowls are poured out to annihilate and to cleanse. Think of them as God's final airstrike that takes 30 days.

III. THE SEVEN SEALS & ANGELIC EXPLANATION

- A. Rev. 6 – ***Chronological Storyline***: the ***SEAL JUDGMENTS*** against the kingdom of darkness.
1. 6:1-17 – The Lamb tears the seven seals
 - a. **1st Seal**: The Beast Begins His Military Campaign
 - b. **2nd Seal**: Global Military Conflict Begins

- c. **3rd Seal:** Economic Crisis and Food Shortage
 - d. **4th Seal:** Widespread Death from the Impact of the Other Seals
 - e. **5th Seal:** Prayer Movement Strengthened by Mass Martyrdom
 - f. **6th Seal:** Cosmic Disturbances Vindicating the Prayer Movement
 - g. **7th Seal:** Signals the Seven Angels with the Seven Trumpets
- B. Rev. 7 – **Angelic Explanation:** we receive **PROTECTION** from judgments and falling away.
- 1. In this parenthetical section we find answers to these two questions: “What is happening to the saints as the seals are being torn?” & “What is happening to the Jews as the seals are being torn?”
 - 2. 7:1-8 – 144,000 ethnic Jews are sealed as first fruits. They are saved and regenerated at the beginning of the Tribulation as first fruits of the national regeneration (Is. 66:8) that occurs at the end of the Tribulation (Zech. 12:10; 13:8-9).
 - 3. 7:9-17 – And an innumerable “multitude” comes up “out of” the Tribulation as martyrs as the Tribulation begins. God’s way of preserving His saints is by giving grace to love their lives not unto death (12:11). Our protection from the judgments includes martyrdom.
 - 4. The protection of the 144,000 Jews and the multitudes of saints is the “sealing” that occurs before the trumpets sound.

IV. THE SEVEN SEALS & ANGELIC EXPLANATION

- A. Rev. 8-9 – **Chronological Storyline:** the **TRUMPET JUDGMENTS** against the Antichrist’s empire.
- 1. 8:1-5 – We see that the agent that releases the trumpet judgments is the prayers of the saints.
 - 2. 8:6-9:21 – The first six trumpets sound:

- a. **1st Trumpet:** burning 1/3 of the earth's vegetation (food supply)
 - b. **2nd Trumpet:** destroying 1/3 of the sea (food supply)
 - c. **3rd Trumpet:** poisoning 1/3 of the earth's fresh water (water supply)
 - d. **4th Trumpet:** darkening 1/3 of the earth's light (energy supply)
 - e. **5th Trumpet:** releasing demonic locusts that torment for 5 months
 - f. **6th Trumpet:** releasing demonic horsemen that kill 1/3 of the earth
- B. Rev. 10-11 – **Angelic Explanation:** we receive **DIRECTION** by great increase of prophetic ministry.
1. 10:1-11 – John is told to “eat to scroll” and to “prophesy” concerning the end of the age. John is a model of the preparation of end time prophets. This section is also a promise from God that He will raise up and commission prophets to give clarity in the hour when the nations require it. When the trumpets are sounding and when the 3 woes (5th, 6th, and 7th trumpet) are impacting the earth, God is committed to speaking clearly to the nations.
 2. 11:1-14 – John sees the ministry of two prophets that God promises to raise up. They minister in Jerusalem for 1260 days and do amazing exploits; including shutting up the heavens, calling down fire and raising from the dead. These two prophets will be instrumental in those final years.
- V. **THE SEVENTH TRUMPET AND THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SECOND COMING**
- A. Rev. 11:15-19 – **Chronological Storyline:** the **COMMENCEMENT OF THE SECOND COMING PROCESSION** (which includes the Rapture).
1. 11:15-19 – The seventh trumpet sounds and the replacing of every world government begins.

2. The 7th and Last Trumpet Jesus raptures the elect and gives them resurrected bodies (1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 10:7; 1 Thess. 4:16).
 3. In His Procession, Jesus travels:
 - a. Across the sky to rapture the saints (Matt. 24:29-31; Rev. 1:7)
 - b. Through the land of Edom (modern day Jordan; Is. 34:1-10; 63:1-6; Hab. 3:3-18; Deut. 32:2-5)
 - c. Into Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives (Rev. 19:11-16; Ps. 24; Zech. 14:1-8).
- B. Rev. 12-14 – **Angelic Explanation:** the **CONFRONTATION** against the saints by the Antichrist’s system and persecutions requires that all his governments be taken over.
1. 12:1-6 – John sees a vision of the age long conflict between Israel and the kingdom of darkness. He sees that God’s plan for Israel at the end of the age is sure. Here we see the level of attack that is waged on ethnic Jews in the final generation. And we see how God is committed to preserving a remnant.
 2. 12:7-17 – John sees that Satan is thrown out of heaven and denied access causing him to attack the Jews and regenerate believers with rage and hatred. Here we see the level of attack that Satan will wage on us. And we see how we overcome him and emerge victorious.
 3. 13:1-10 – John sees a vision of the coming Antichrist and the level of attack that he wages on the planet. He even makes war with Jesus and His saints. Here we are told how to overcome him and what his ministry will look like.
 4. 13:11-18 – John sees another figure called the “false prophet” who will rally nations behind Antichrist. We are also told of the “mark of the beast.” This passage will be so precious in the days ahead because of how much it will prepare us for what is to come.

