

THE REVELATION

MAY 26, 2024

Chapter 8

Special Note: THE REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE

With the completion of the Sixth Seal, we must make a note at this point. Soon, Israel will begin to trust a new empire. This empire is not new at all. It is the remnant of the Old Roman Empire. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed about this new empire, and Daniel interpreted the dream. It has been partially fulfilled through the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires. With the fall of the Roman Empire, ten countries were formed. In the dream, those ten countries will unite, and Israel will begin to trust the empire enough to make a seven-year treaty with it. To date, in 2024, that empire still has not united together. The Revelation does not speak of the forming of this last empire. However, the Revelation does speak of Israel's trust in it and the peace treaty. As we have mentioned before, it takes time for things to develop with humanity for prophecy to be fulfilled. The same is true for this Revived Roman Empire. It will take time to develop. It must be in place for the next part of the Revelation to be fulfilled. Therefore, sometime during the seals, this empire must unite and begin to build a relationship with other empires and nations of the world, and especially the nation of Israel.

4. Seal Seven – Silence (8:1)

Rev 8:1 When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

Then, the Lamb broke the seventh seal, and John heard nothing for about 30 minutes. It was just enough time for him to write into the pages of this last book of the Bible all that he had seen up to this point. He does not know what will come next. He does not know that it is time for the *tribulation of Israel*, also called in Scripture *the time of Jacob's trouble* to begin. The LORD's Church is protected and now it is time to engage Israel and bring her into the relationship she had long since missed. At this point, there are no human Christian witnesses left on earth for them to deny. The Word of God is still in print, but the LORD has a much better plan to get Israel's attention. He has two special witnesses who will soon be on their way. But more than that, the trouble for the new empire on Earth will begin with the blast of the first trumpet. The Church, the "great multitude," is in heaven; it is time to bring Israel back to the LORD.

The breaking of the seventh seal immediately brought 30 minutes of rest and silence in heaven. The first horse of Seal One brought about an attempt to capture as much of the world as possible without the use of force. The second horse of Seal Two saw the actions of the first horse as an opportunity to conquer an undefended population by taking the peace from the world. Both actions have consequences, and the horse of Seal Three was the natural and logical result of Seals One and Two. The population involved began to starve in the famine. With famine comes death, and the horse of Seal Four brought just that. With death comes eternity, and the fourth horse was part of that, too, sending all those who died to their eternal rewards, with most entering the place of *torment*

in Hades. The sadness of this whole movement of humanity is that it sought its own salvation without the Almighty's being involved in any of their precepts. The 30 minutes of silence in heaven were probably for John's benefit, allowing him time to write down everything he had seen up to this point. But it is also 20.83 years for tiny Israel to begin to trust the Revived Roman Empire that surrounds it.

E. The Trumpets in Heaven (8:2-5)

1. Seven Angels with Trumpets (8:2)

Rev 8:2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

As the vision resumed in heaven, John made a most revealing statement, “And I saw the seven angels who stand before God.” Here we come to a statement we have waited for in our past lessons. Here, John tells us that “the seven angels who stand before God” were given “seven trumpets.” To this point in the story, John has not specifically mentioned seven angels on the throne of God. Yet, he has mentioned in different terms seven spirits that are before God’s throne by different names. He first called them “seven spirits” (1:4; 3:1), then the “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne,” (4:5). He then associated them with the Lamb of God and called them the “seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God,” (5:6). Zechariah agreed with John’s statement and said, “the seven eyes of the LORD that range throughout the earth” (4:10). At this point in the story, we discover that they are “the seven angels who stand before God,” (8:2). These seven *spirits-lamps-eyes-angels* were given seven trumpets to blow in heaven when signaled by the Lamb of God. But something else must happen before these angels begin to blow the trumpets.

2. Angel with Golden Censer (8:3-4)

a) Prayers of the Saints (8:3)

Rev 8:3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne.

When John says, “Another angel,” he means an angel who was not one of the seven angels who had just been given one of the seven trumpets. We might better define the “golden censer” as a golden fire pan like those Moses had replicated at the foot of Mount Sinai for worship in the Tabernacle. For the best picture, think of a large saucepan that has small holes in its side to allow air to enter the pan. It also has a lid containing holes to allow the smoke of the burning incense to escape as the coals and incense are being consumed. First, the pan would be filled with hot coals from the altar of God. Then, incense was sprinkled on top of the hot coals, and the lid was put upon it. The smoke would then escape through the holes in the lid and rise to fill the room with the distinct odor of that specific incense. The exact formula for this incense is given in Exodus.

Exodus 30:34 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each.³⁵ With it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy.³⁶ You shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting where I will meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.³⁷ The incense which you shall make, you shall not make in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be holy to you for the LORD.³⁸ Whoever shall make any like it, to use as perfume, shall be cut off from his people.”

These prayers were added to the prayers of the martyred saints at the altar before God the Father.

b) Prayers to God (8:4)

Rev 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

As the smoke rises before God the Father, the smoke contains all the prayers of the saints. We must address this point here; the smoke does not contain the prayers of the Jews or the prayers of the Gentiles who have failed to accept the LORD as Savior. These prayers are specifically the “prayers of the saints,” which require a personal relationship with the LORD. Prayers do not go away; they are always before the LORD. Therefore, these are the prayers of all the saints of all the ages from the Day of Pentecost until the saints of the Church were snatched away to be with the LORD. One important point we must remember is that the prayers of the saints of all the Church age have been the same concerning the Second Coming of the LORD, and the LORD has saved them for use at this moment. He is about to fulfill His prophecy that the Church has prayed for hundreds and hundreds of years ... “Even so, Lord Jesus, come!

3. Censer Thrown to Earth (8:5)

Rev 8:5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

Down to the ground on the earth, the censer was thrown, and the fury that surrounds the throne of God pealed out in the heavens, thunder and lightning on Earth, and an earthquake occurred. Some associate this earthquake with the one mentioned in the sixth seal, but it cannot be so. It was a new quake on earth that inaugurated the authority given to the seven angels to blow the trumpets. It takes some extreme juggling of the Scripture to justify the two as one, and it is not needed. The LORD Himself warned of the repetition of earthquakes as well as wars and rumors of wars at the beginning of the pageantry leading to His Second Coming. It does no good and makes no sense to expect one earthquake to fill that bill.