

REVELATION CHAPTER EIGHT

1. **In Revelation chapters 8-11 the scene changes.** Twice before we have gazed upon the panorama of the history of the church as it unrolled.
 - a. In Chapters 1-3 we saw the Lampstands and the Son of Man moving about among them.
 - i. We heard his voice of tender admonition, earnest reproof, and generous promise.
 - ii. In seven epistles he seemed to be drawing nearer and nearer to us until we saw him standing at the very door and knocking.
 - iii. Then, just as we were anticipating the full realization of his promise to come in and sup with us, the vision ceased.
 - iv. Yet, its imprint upon our soul is indelible. Through the bitterest tears we see our Savior, very near unto us, full of tender love and sustaining power. We see him as the light of the world. The light is shining through us: the congregations are the lampstands.
 - b. In Chapters 4-7, with wide-eyed wonder we beheld a door standing open in heaven.
 - i. Peering through the portal we saw a Throne out of which proceeded flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder. The surrounding heavenly beings were acknowledging in grateful anthems the sovereignty of the One whose countenance remained concealed behind the flashing luster of the jewels.
 - ii. Suddenly we witnessed that central event, namely, the coronation of Jesus, who took the scroll out of the right hand of the Throne-Occupant.
 - iii. We heard an elder saying, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed (has overcome, conquered) to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."
 - iv. Consequently, we were not at all surprised when, with the opening of the first seal, we saw that same Jesus going forth conquering and to conquer. But this Rider upon the white horse is ever followed by the rider upon the red horse: wherever our Lord Jesus Christ begins to wield his spiritual scepter, Satan begins to brandish his sword.
 - v. The seals describe the persecution of the church by the world. Not only persecution, but every form of trial and tribulation.
 - vi. In the vision of the souls underneath the altar we received the assurance that the slaughter of the saints will not remain unavenged.
 - vii. Although the final and complete retribution is reserved for the great day of the Lord, even now the seals of persecution are again and again followed by the trumpets of judgment. But before the trumpets of judgment are introduced, the church is assured that all things are in the hands of God.
2. **With chapter 8, we begin to see the sounding of the trumpets of Judgment.** Chapters 8-11 indicate a series of happenings, that is, calamities that will occur again and again throughout the dispensation. **They do not symbolize single and separate events, but they refer to woes that may be seen any day of the year in any part of the globe. Hence, the trumpets are synchronous with the seals.** Trumpets, however, are only meant to warn. It is God's intention

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that all men come to repentance, therefore the trumpets sound to bring this about. In chapter 9:20-21, however, even though man has been warned, we find that they “repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, etc . . .”

3. **The trumpets do not symbolize God’s final and complete judgment.** On the contrary, they indicate his **initial** judgments. They are charged with serious warning, not with final doom. Remember: trumpets **warn**; bowls are **poured out**. It is for this reason that the trumpets affect **a third part** – not the whole – of the earth, sea, waters, sun, moon, stars. The function of the trumpet here is to warn – Ezek 33:3 (KJV) “If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people.”
4. **These judgments are expressed in language which reminds us of the ten plagues in Egypt.** Notice the hail and fire (8:7), the darkness (8:12), and the locusts (9:3). Yet, the description which we find here in Revelation is far more terrible: the hail and fire are mingled with **blood**; the locusts do not hurt grass or trees, but **men**! These judgments fall upon the wicked, persecuting world, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified – Rev 11:8 (KJV) “And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”
5. **“There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.”** Again, if we were familiar with the prophets of the Old Testament, hearing this statement would weaken our knees and tremble our bodies. In the prophets, the going forth of the Almighty in judgment is again and again introduced by a reference to silence.
 - a. Hab 2:20 (KJV) “But the LORD *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.”
 - b. Zeph 1:7 (KJV) “Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD *is* at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.”
 - c. Zech 2:13 (KJV) “Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.”
6. **If we allow the same interpretation in this book of prophecy concerning this period of silence, we would understand this silence as an introduction to prepare us for the terrible character of the judgments that are about to be related.** This silence makes the manifestations of the wrath of God all the more impressive. So fearful and awful is even this initial retribution which is about to be inflicted upon the wicked that the inhabitants of heaven stand spell-bound, lost for a long time – half an hour – breathless silent amazement.
7. **Seven angels are then given seven trumpets.** Then another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer. Upon this censer the angel puts incense which was given unto him. In the Old Testament incense at the temple worship was often associated with prayers. Therefore, it does not surprise us to find that here too this incense is associated with the prayers of all the saints. The smoke ascends to the very presence of God. We saw in Chapter 6:9 that the saints who had been slain for the word of God were crying unto the Lord. Here we find that the one on the throne hears their prayers.
8. **An impression is left that God has heard the prayers of the saints, and the judgments upon earth are his answer to them.**
9. **After the prayers ascend up before God, the angel takes the censor, fills it with fire from**

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the altar and casts it upon the earth. After which there were “voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” Previously, this described that which was associated with divine acknowledgment.

10. **Chapter 8:7** – The **first angel** sounded the trumpet. In all probability this first trumpet indicates that throughout the period extending from the first to the second coming, there will be disasters that will take place upon the earth. When we say earth, we are to understand earth as is contrasted to sea. All these calamities, remember, are cast upon the earth to bring people to repentance. To think that God does not behave in this way shows that we really have not learned from the Old Testament how God does behave. I would much rather believe that the Almighty God in heaven is in control of all the calamities than to believe that Satan is in control. I do not believe that we have a third alternative.
11. **Chapter 8:8-9** – When the **second angel** sounded, what looked like a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea. As the first trumpet sounded its warning upon the land, the second trumpet now sounds its warning upon the sea. All disasters that take place on the sea throughout the dispensation are under consideration. The figure of a mountain has often been used in prophetic literature. It symbolizes great trouble and commotion.
- a. Psalms 46:2 “Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;”
 - b. Isaiah 34:3 “Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.”
 - c. Isaiah 54:10 “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.”
 - d. Ezekiel 38:20 “So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.”
 - e. Micah 1:4 “And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.”
 - f. Job 9:5 “Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.”
 - g. Nahum 1:5 “The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.”
12. **When the third angel sounded, there fell a great star from heaven, burning like a lamp would burn.** It fell upon the waters that were upon the land. God’s call to repentance is heard everywhere. The star has a name: Wormwood. This is not the only place in scripture where this word is used. Wormwood suggests bitterness and calamity.
- a. Jeremiah 9:15 “Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.”
 - b. Jeremiah 23:15 “Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land.”

- c. Lamentations 3:15 “He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.”
 - d. Lamentations 3:19 “Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall.”
 - e. Amos 5:7 “Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth,”
13. **Chapter 8:12** – When the **fourth angel** sounds his trumpet the familiar description of the Sun, Moon, and Stars being darkened is used. Do not forget that the purpose of the trumpets are to warn.
14. **Four angels have blown their trumpets.** Now there is an intermission. John sees and hears an eagle. It is flying through the midst of heaven. Not the heavens (the sky), but heaven. This eagle speaks saying, “woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

REVELATION CHAPTER 9

1. **The three remaining woes will be worse than the first four.**
2. **John sees a star that has fallen out of heaven to the earth.** That is the devil’s present condition. We will see in Revelation 12:7-11 that Satan, having fought against Michael and his angels and lost, he can no longer come in the presence of God accusing man. He is overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11). Remember that at one time, even though he was evil, Satan was able to have audience with the Almighty. In the vision, the apostle now observes that the prince of darkness receives the key of the shaft of the abyss. In other words, he receives power to open the abyss and to let the demons out. He is allowed to incite evil. He fills the world with wicked influences and operations.
3. **Revelation 9:2** “And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.” In verse two John sees that the shaft, as soon as it is unlocked, begins to belch forth columns of dirty smoke just like a great furnace. It is so thick and murky it blots out the light of the sun and darkens the air. But we must remember that the power to bring this about is GIVEN unto him. By God’s permissive decree he is not prevented from carrying out his wicked designs in the hearts of the children of men, a wickedness for which he – not God – is responsible. Remember that this is one of the trumpets. God uses even the work of the devil as a punishment and as a warning for the wicked. It is a warning saying that they better repent.
4. Under the **fifth trumpet** we also see that locust descend on the earth. Imagine, if you will, locust which will cause men to seek death, and not find it. The shape of the locust was like unto horses prepared unto battle. They had breastplates like iron, the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. This devastation, possibly war, is described as a punishment and a warning for unbelievers.
5. When the **sixth trumpet** sounded, there was a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. Remember in Chapter 6:10 that the prayers of the saints ascended up unto God during the fifth seal, well, here when the sixth trumpet blows, God is shown to answer the prayers of those who were hanging on to the horns of the altar.

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6. **The four angels (or messengers) that were released are quite clearly evil angels.** They relish the idea of plunging mankind into war. Yet, remember, that they can do nothing unless God permits it. The number of the army, two million, is symbolic indicating a tremendous host. The war horses had breastplates of fire, their heads were as heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. And that which issued out of their mouths killed. The power was in their mouths and in their tails.
7. **But with all these warnings, men did not repent.** “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: 21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts” (Revelation 9:20-21).

REVELATION CHAPTER 10

1. **The general meaning of these trumpets is clear.** Throughout this entire period, extending from the first to the second coming, our exalted Lord Jesus Christ, who rules all things in accordance with the scroll of God’s decree, will again and again punish the persecutors of the church by inflicting upon them disasters in every sphere of life. The blood of martyrs is precious in the sight of the Lord. The prayers of all the saints are heard. God sees their tears, their suffering. Yet, in spite of all these warning voices, mankind in general does not repent. Foolish and stubborn men continue to transgress. The persecuting world becomes the impenitent world. It is impenitence that brings about not only the outpouring of the bowls of final wrath, Chapters 15-16, but also the culmination of this wrath in the final judgment.
2. **If we have been but the least bit attentive, we should be able even before we read it, to know what is coming next.** If you reason the **Judgment**, you have rightly reasoned. But before the Judgment is depicted, John sees another angel appear. This angel is a giant. His feet are as pillars of fire: columns so immense in size that while the left foot is firmly planted on earth, the right foot rests far out on the ocean, so that, let us say, he is able to step across with one tremendous stride. His face is like the sun and a cloud produced a rainbow which encircled his head. The symbolism clearly indicates that this angel is very closely associated with the Christ (Revelation 1:7, 15, 17; 4:3). I do not believe, however, that they represent the same person. Jesus is never called an angel in Revelation.
3. **Why does this angel stand upon the sea and upon the land and why does he utter a great sound like the roar of a lion?** Because his message concerns the entire earth and must be heard by all. The angel declares that the final judgment is about to come.
4. **The mighty angel cried out with a loud voice accompanied by “seven thunders” which “uttered their voices.”** As John is about to write, a voice from heaven told him, “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.” It is never revealed to us what the seven thunders uttered. A word of caution is in order here. Though we might clearly understand the representation of the lampstands, seals, trumpets, and bowls, we must also clearly understand that we cannot clearly understand ALL THE WORKINGS OF GOD. Whatever understanding we may have of the future is an understanding that is clearly devoid of all the facts.

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We do not know all the agencies, factors, and circumstances which come to play on the future. We must therefore humbly trust in God. Let us therefore be very careful in making predictions about the future; we may be leaving out a very important factor.

- 5. **The message that is recorded from the mighty angel is that “there shall be time no longer.”**
- 6. **In the mighty angels hand is a book.** The voice from heaven tells John to take the book which is in the hand of the angel. The angel tells John to **eat the book**. It is not unlikely that the little book which John is told to eat is like unto the one which Ezekiel ate in Ezekiel 3. Ezekiel ate the word of God and “it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.” But when he spoke it unto the house of Israel, they did not hearken unto it for they were hardhearted. It is not unreasonable to believe that the Book which John ate was also the word of God. Remember, that the persecution always follows the proclamation of the Gospel. Therefore, in John’s belly it was bitter. Nevertheless, John is told that he “must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

REVELATION CHAPTER 11

- 1. **We do not know who it is, but someone gives John a measuring rod.**
- 2. **The angel tells him to measure the temple (NAOS - sanctuary) of God and the altar and those who worship in connection with it.**
- 3. **The measuring which John does of the temple of God likely does not refer to the literal temple of God, for it was destroyed in 70 A.D.** It is possible and likely probable that the **temple being measured is the church** “and them that worship therein” (Verse 1). Throughout Revelation believers (those washed by the blood of the lamb), are either being **numbered, sealed, marked, or measured**, all terms evidently used to distinguish, identify, and bring together. Those who are numbered, sealed, marked, or measured receive the final victory and are rewarded. All others, like tares, are gathered up to be burned, or like grapes, gathered up and cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God.
 - a. 1 Cor 3:16-17 (KJV) “Know ye not that ye are the **temple** of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the **temple** of God, him shall God destroy; for the **temple** of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.”
 - b. 2 Cor 6:16-17 (KJV) “And what agreement hath the **temple** of God with idols? for ye are the **temple** of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,”
 - c. Eph 2:21 (KJV) “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy **temple** in the Lord:”
 - d. Rev 3:12 (KJV) “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the **temple** of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.”
- 4. **In verse three we are introduced to “two witnesses.”** When looking for the identity of the two witnesses, we need go no further than chapter 11 itself. I do not believe that the two witnesses

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are the Old Testament and the New Testament for when we read chapter 11 as if these are the two witnesses it just does not make sense with all that is said. I do not believe that they are two distinct men that rise up somewhere in time. Again, what is said about the two witnesses just does not fit. Chapter 11:18 likely identifies the two witnesses as “thy servants the prophets” and “the saints.” Let us read chapter 11 as if these are the two witnesses always asking “does this understanding violate anything we know to be true in the Bible?,” and “does this understanding fit what is said about them in this chapter?”

5. **“Perhaps the meaning is, that as, under the law, two witnesses were required, and were enough, to establish any fact . . . , such a number would during those times be preserved from apostasy as would be sufficient to keep up the evidence of truth; to testify against the prevailing abominations, errors, and corruptions; to show what was the real church, and to bear a faithful witness against the wickedness of the world. The law of Moses required that there should be two witnesses on a trial, and this, under that law, was deemed a competent number (Num 35:30; Deu 17:6; Deu 19:15; Mat 18:16; Joh 5:30-33).” Barnes.**
6. Revelation 11:3 – **The two witnesses are clothed in sackcloth as they prophesy.**
7. Revelation 11:4 – **They are two olive trees, two candlesticks.** Two olive trees and two candlesticks speak of the same two witnesses, they are one and the same. As candlesticks (lampstands) we might think of them as shining lights, giving the light of God’s word. Zechariah chapter four comes to mind.
8. The retaliation of the two witnesses upon those who persecute them is not physical, but **“fire proceedeth out of their mouth.”** It is the word of God that will judge their enemies.
9. There is the likely allusion to the works of **Elijah** (1 Kings 17:1; Luke 4:25; James 5:17) and **Moses** (Exodus 7:20) in Verse 6.
 - a. 1 Ki 17:1 (KJV) “And Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, **there shall not be dew nor rain these years**, but according to my word.”
 - b. Luke 4:25 (KJV) “But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when **the heaven was shut up** three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;”
 - c. James 5:17 (KJV) “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: **and it rained not on the earth** by the space of three years and six months.”
 - d. Exo 7:20 (KJV) “And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and **all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.**”
10. Revelation 11:7 – **The work of the two witnesses is to give testimony.** Giving testimony of the word of God, however, is always followed by persecution.
11. Revelation 11:8 – The references to **Sodom and Egypt** are not unique to this chapter. Throughout scripture the city Sodom is used in speaking of wickedness and the nation Egypt is used of rebellion and defiance. In reading this verse consider the words of Jesus and Stephen:

Mat 23:34-35 (KJV) “Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise

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men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city: 35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.” Mat 23:37 (KJV) “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!” Acts 7:52 (KJV) “Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:”

12. Eventually we see the **spirit of life coming into those who were slain** and they ascending up to heaven (vs. 11,12). Attending this “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”
13. **The dead are judged** “And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest **give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints**, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth” (v. 18).

REVELATION CHAPTER 12

1. As in each of the preceding sections, so here **we return to the beginning of our present dispensation** in order once more to traverse the same ground. In each vision we make a journey that takes us through the entire course of this era, from the first to the second coming of Christ. In unmistakable symbolism the seer carries us back to the moment of **Christ’s birth and ascension, 12:1-5**. The vision does not end until we see “One sitting like the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle” (14:14ff). The judgment day has again arrived.
2. Yet, as we have already indicated, **chapter 12 is the beginning** not only of another minor section, namely, the fourth, but also **of the second major division of the book**. This major division covers chapters 12-22. It forms a unit. The main characters that arise in opposition to Christ and his church are introduced in chapters 12-14. They are:
 - a. The dragon.
 - b. The beast out of the sea.
 - c. The beast out of the earth.
 - d. Babylon.
 - e. And the men that have the mark of the beast.
3. The visions that follow show us what happened to each of these anti-Christian forces: to those having the mark of the beast (Chapters 15,16); to the harlot Babylon and to the two beasts (Chapters 17-19); and, finally to the dragon (Chapters 20-22).

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