

## THROUGH THE BIBLE REVELATION 6-8

Imagine yourself at a heavyweight boxing match.

The champ climbs into the ring, and the announcer screams to the crowd, “Let’s get ready to rumble!”

That’s how Revelation 6 opens. Yet, surprisingly, God’s champ appears as a little Lamb... Verse 1, “Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.” This Lamb is going to throw a massive punch! The Lamb roars like a lion!

God’s judgment is about to fall on the rebel planet!

In Chapter 5 we saw the title deed to all the universe.

On the cross Jesus paid to redeem the Earth. Now in chapter 5 He takes title - Jesus alone is worthy to open the scroll... But purchasing a parcel and taking possession are two different tasks. Satan is a squatter, and he isn’t going to relinquish control without a fight.

Thus, as Jesus opens the scroll He pops each of its seven seals, and Chapters 6-19 record the devastating judgments that follow. Satan is about to be evicted.

“And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.” Here is the first of the infamous four horsemen of the apocalypse.

John sees four horses... *a white horse, red horse, black horse, pale horse*. These are hefty, war horses. They're snorting, stomping, raring to bolt from the gate

The white horse carries *the Antichrist*, the red horse *war*, the black horse *famine*, and the pale horse *death*.

Some Bible teachers mistake the rider on the white horse as Jesus, and this is exactly what Satan intends.

If you want to fake a \$100 bill you don't put Obama on the front. Try to spend an Obama buck and it won't fool anybody. You want the bogus bill to look authentic.

And this is the devil's strategy. He wants *the false-Christ* on the white horse, to look like *the true Christ*.

It is true, that in Revelation 19 we see the Lord Jesus returning to this Earth riding on a white warhorse.

But that's where the similarities end...

Jesus returns at the end of this period of judgment - after the seventh seal. This guy rides in at its outset.

Recall from Chapter 1 Jesus has a sharp sword, but this false-Christ carries a bow. In Genesis 11, Nimrod the hunter, was the first rebel to revolt against God.

Tradition says he was the inventor of archery.

After the flood God hung up His bow of judgment in the clouds. He'd never again judge the world with water. The *rainbow* was the symbol of His promise...

But Nimrod hated God, and tried to draw men to himself. His bow was a symbol of his conquest over the hearts of men. This is the goal of the rider on the white horse. He has a bow, but no arrows. Apparently, he conquers the nations without firing a shot. He'll be hailed as *a man of peace* - an expert in diplomacy. He designs *a sinister shalom*, and deceive the nations.

There's also a difference in the crown that he wears. His is the laurel wreath or *competitor's prize*. In Revelation 19 Jesus wears a *diadem*, or *kingly crown*.

The rider on the white horse steals his authority - *and it only lasts briefly* - Jesus has the right to rule!

I read of an Israeli tour guide who confessed to his group, "I'm so desperate, I'd sign a deal with the devil if it would mean peace." That's exactly what the Israelis will one day do! Daniel 9 tells us the period of history called *Great Tribulation* begins when Israel signs a treaty with the white horse rider... *aka, the antichrist*.

Verse 3, "When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see."

Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword." It doesn't take long for the false peace of the white horse to crumble.

Paul predicts in 1 Thessalonians 5:3, "For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them..." Today, the world chants, "Give peace a chance." But *this peace* will be short-lived.

This second horse speaks of war and bloodshed.

It foreshadows all the skirmishes that lead up to the final battle of Armageddon. Notice, its color is appropriate - it's blood red. The death toll will be astronomical. Millions upon millions will die violently.

And as the world suffers from war Jesus pops another seal. "When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see."

So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand." In John's day scales were a symbol of commerce. All buying and selling was done with the use of balances and scales.

"And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine." In the Roman world a denarius was a typical day's wage. Here, basic food staples cost huge sums of money. Inflation has sky-rocketed.

Global famine will drive up the price of food.

Living in America we're sheltered from the conditions in which most of the people on this planet live. It's frequently stated, "One-third of the world's population has plenty to eat (that's America), one-third is under-nourished. And one-third is on the verge of starvation."

In recent years *super-storms* have become the *norm*.

Imagine a storm so severe, or perhaps a global drought, that wipes out a entire growing season. Worldwide famine is not that hard to envision.

Suddenly, your kids would join the African children you see on TV with the sunken eyes and exposed ribs.

Notice too, the irony in verse 6. Basic foods will be depleted, but there's still an abundance of luxury items like oil and wine. It's God's sarcasm on man's priorities.

We'll have *boos to drink*, but no *bread to eat*.

It's even more profound if the oil in verse 6 refers to petroleum, not just olive oil. We'll have gasoline to fill up and drive our fancy cars, but no food in our belly.

There's coming a time when Jesus will rock this planet... **False peace** is followed by **war**... war is followed by **famine**... and famine is followed by **death**...

Verse 7, **"When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come and see.' So I looked, and behold, a pale horse."**

The Greek word translated **"pale"** is **"chloros"** - from which we get our words *chlorine*, or *chlorophyll*. It's a greenish-yellow color. Think of the flesh tones of a person who's seasick, or a corpse without make-up.

**"And the name of him who sat on (this fourth horse) was Death, and Hades followed with him."** Death has an entourage. Hades fills up on the heels of Death.

The Pale Rider is thinning out a wicked population.

In recent years we've read of people contracting mysterious flesh-eating bacteria - *needing their limbs amputated - even dying*... World Health Organizations warn of future antibiotic-resistant super-plagues that could easily kill millions of the human family... The pale rider will have plenty of diabolical tools at his disposal.

Add together the cumulative effect of all four horses, and the impact is staggering. John writes, “And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” A quarter of the world’s population will die.

Currently, the global population is a tad over 7 billion people. Thus, 25% equals 1.75 billion. It’s hard to imagine 1.75 billion of anything, let alone, dead bodies.

If you counted one number per second it would take 11 days to reach a million. That seems like a long time, but it would take 56 years to count to 1.75 billion. *Now imagine that many corpses littering the planet.* These four horsemen will kill one out of every four humans.

And all the while this carnage is occurring on Earth remember what John saw happening in heaven.

Believers from every tribe, tongue, people, nation - who’ve been redeemed by the blood of Jesus - are before God’s throne singing, “Worthy is the Lamb...”

That’s the church. That’s you and me. Before this *judgment comes down*, the *church will go up*. We’ll be **raptured** or *snatched away*. As Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5, “God did not appointed us to wrath.”

But there’re seven seals, not four. And in verse 9 Jesus breaks another. “When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.” As Jesus pops the seals and judges the Earth, guess where the rebels vent their frustrations?

Rather than take responsibility for the consequences of their own sin, they shift the blame on the believers. Followers of Jesus will become the brunt of their anger.

During this time of Great Tribulation folks will recognize God's judgment and turn to Jesus. *They'll be saved, but not so safe.* The rider on the white horse will criminalize Christianity. Anybody who takes Jesus as Lord is silenced. There'll be a multitude of martyrs.

Today, the world glorifies tolerance for all religions, *except Christianity.* Faith in Christ is the sticking point.

And it's a small leap from *bigotry* to *brutality.* The *false-Christ* will hand down his death penalty...

We see the martyrs that result in verse 9 - their souls not bodies, are crying out under the altar in Heaven.

This means they've missed the rapture.

When Jesus retrieves the Church *He'll be a body snatcher.* He raptures not only our soul, but resurrects our body. Thus, these bodiless souls were left behind.

They put their faith in Christ after the rapture.

The Tribulation believers are camped under the altar. They've been brutalized. They're victims of injustice.

And they let us know it in verse 10, *"They cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* Realize they sing a familiar refrain.

*Isn't this a lot like the prayers we've prayed?*

When we see a criminal walk out of a courtroom because of a technicality... or watch justices uphold rules that sanction the murder of innocent babies... or realize evil men enslave young girls in the sex trade... or hear of deviants who make millions off child porn...

*Don't you get angry, and cry out for vengeance?*

Isn't there a righteous recoil in you whenever you see evil prosper, and good despised? *It should be.*

In Psalm 58 David saw evil men going unpunished. He prayed, **“Break their teeth in their mouth, O God!”** *And we've all prayed for a few teeth to be broken!*

**“Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”** In Revelation 19 Jesus returns, and when He does the martyrs' blood gets avenged - their pain gets eased. *But for a time they'll have to wait...*

And this word **“wait”** is the challenge for our faith as well... Jesus will right all wrongs, but not on our timetable. Verse 11, **“Rest a little while longer...”** is as relevant to us today, as it will be for *these* future saints.

In verse 12 Jesus breaks the scariest seal yet...

**“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like**

**blood.”** This earthquake is the Big One. It blows up the richter scale. The Earth convulses soot and smoke that turns the sky black and the moon red.

**“And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.”** The Greek word translated **“stars”** is **“asteres.”** It applies not only to stars, but to *asteroids* or *meteorites* - any cosmic projectile streaking through outer space.

Just as autumn winds rustle the trees and leaves fall to the ground - one day, Jesus will shake the heavens above us, and celestial bodies will pummel the Earth.

**“Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.”** This upheaval is almost beyond description.

Obviously, when He cracks open the sixth seal Jesus takes the gloves off. It's a rough, bare-knuckled strike.

Jesus unleashes massive, cataclysmic judgments upon the rebel planet. *We won't be...* but if we were on the Earth, experiencing these judgments, it would make us want to take back all our cries for vengeance.

All I can say is **“pity on you,”** if you miss the rapture, and you're still here when the sixth seal breaks.

Take all the Meteorite movies of recent years... *it's become a film genre...* **Armageddon, Deep Impact, Night of the Comet, Doomsday Rock, Asteroid, etc.**

All the Hollywood special effects combined are too tame to illustrate the damage such an event would do.

I've got a movie... *not a Hollywood flick - a National Geographic Special* - titled, "[Asteroids Deadly Impact](#)."

It's a documentary, on not just the *possibility* of a major meteorite strike in our future, but its *inevitability*.

Do you realize, every day the Earth gets bombarded with 20 tons of cosmic rock. Most of it is space dust, but larger strikes occur. Geologists can take you to over 140 craters all around the globe that are the result of incoming asteroids, and comets, and meteors.

And according to verse 13 it'll happen again.

Recently, CBS News ran a special report. It quoted astronomers who estimate that there are over 400,000 [NEOs](#), or [Near Earth Objects](#), up to 1000 meters wide, that could strike planet Earth with little or no warning.

You might recall an asteroid exploded over Russia last year. It was 60 feet wide, and injured 1500 people.

This past Tuesday CNN ran a story, "[A Close Call In Space Tonight: Asteroid Zips By Earth](#)." This rock was the size of 3 football fields. Only in space is two million miles considered a "[close call](#)," but it caused alarm.

Well, when Jesus breaks the sixth seal it will happen!

The stars fall... Then a super-quake creates massive fissures in the Earth's crust... Continents shift... Islands vanish... As the ground shakes under their feet the inhabi-

tants of the Earth look up and the sky is receding or rolling up like a paper party horn after a blast...

In the movie, “[Deep Impact](#),” the US Government sets up a survival village in the caves of Missouri called “[The Ark](#).” I wonder if the script’s writers read verse 15.

“The kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!’ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” What a phrase, “*the wrath of the Lamb!*”

Here’s the ultimate-oxymoron. No other animal is as docile and gentle as a lamb! Likewise, no one is more gentle and tender with *the trusting heart* than Jesus.

But the day will come when He’ll be gentle no longer. *The rejecting heart* will taste His wrath! The Lamb will roar! *This is a side to Jesus that we all need to see...*

The Sixth Seal closes with God throwing a flurry of punches. He has the Earth on the ropes. It appears to be a knockout. It raises the question, “*For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?*”

Well, Chapter 7 provides us the answer.

“*After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth...*” It’s figurative for the four points of the compass... *east, west, north, and south.*

The four angels are “holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree...” Wind is a mighty force, yet just four angels wrestle the jet streams to submission.

And suddenly the Earth grows quiet...

A few seconds earlier, the winds of judgment were howling, but now God has a few issues for us to weigh and consider. *Judgment is not all that's on His mind...*

You'll notice a structure in Revelation 6-19.

God's wrath comes in in three waves... **seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls**. In between each seven John inserts a brief vignette of a person or persons central to the events that occur in the Great Tribulation.

In Chapter 7 John sees two groups...

Verse 2, “Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea...”

The angels who had harnessed the wind, and will harm the Earth, are first given a special mission. God orders them, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” Jesus is about to seal *the fate* of the wicked world, but first He seals *His own*. He reveals His heart - Jesus suspends judgment to show mercy.

Recall a seal was an insignia stamped into hot wax. It was a mark of ownership. The seven seals on the scroll spoke of Jesus' proprietary rights to planet Earth.

Now He's about to seal a group of people.

For in this time of tribulation there'll still be folks who embrace Jesus as Lord - and He'll seal them with the Holy Spirit. He'll put His mark of ownership on the foreheads of His servants. *This reveals the Master's heart - in the midst of judgment He still shows mercy.*

Verse 4 reads, "And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed."

It's funny how many cults lay claim to the 144,000...

For a time Jehovah's Witnesses identified themselves as the 144,000 - that is, until their roles swelled to more than that number. That's when they modified their view - *the 144,000 are only "elite" JWs.*

The Worldwide Church of God claimed to be part of the 144,000... as did some Seventh Day Adventists...

Yet you have to ask, *“Does anyone read verse 4?”* For it clearly identifies this group as *“144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel...”* These guys are Jews!

If someone tells you they’re one of the 144,000 - ask them, *“which tribe?”* There’re 12,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel! This group is an exclusively Jewish fraternity!

Realize there’re three types of people in the world today... **Jews, Gentiles, and the Church.** And only one of these three groups will be spared the wrath of God.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 states, *“God did not appointed us to wrath.”* 1 Thessalonians 1:10 says of Jesus, *“Who delivers us from the wrath to come.”* Both verses speak of **Christians.** A great escape awaits believers.

The Great Tribulation is for unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. It’s the final opportunity for both. Apparently, this is the jolt needed to open eyes blind to God’s truth.

These 144,000 Jews will believe. God will seal them, equip them, and use them to spread the Gospel.

Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He told His followers, *“Go and make disciples of all the nations...”* Here’s the job of all believers - preach the Gospel.

But in the Great Tribulation the Church is in Heaven. God will still use the Gospel. It alone is the power to salvation, but in the Church’s absence the delivery system for the Gospel changes. He uses other means.

In Revelation 14 God sends angels flying through the skies declaring to humanity the everlasting gospel...

Revelation 11 speaks of two witnesses who grab the world's attention by performing miracles... And here in chapter 7 He empowers 144,000 Jewish evangelists...

And imagine their effectiveness!

Jews converted to Jesus... sealed and filled with the Spirit... in Chapter 9 they're armed with supernatural protection... they preach in the wake of the rapture...

And up against the backdrop of horrible judgments, we can expect millions of people to come to Christ...

Did you know that everywhere in the world today, *apart from North America and Europe*, Christianity and the Church are experiencing unprecedented growth.

South Korea, Africa, China, India, Indonesia, even traditional Muslim countries - all across the planet the Church is growing... one estimate is by 80,000 members per day - 3500 churches start every week.

Yet the largest, most sweeping spiritual awakening is still future. And ironically, it won't occur until the Church is raptured. In Matthew 24:14 Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."

Jesus foresaw a final worldwide burst of evangelistic activity prior to His return. And it gets carried out largely by this supernaturally sealed army of Jews.

Notice the immediate results of their efforts... Verse 9, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number...” Here’s another group of believers - now a horde of Gentiles.

Remember this is not the Church. We’re in heaven.

This group consists of people who believed in the Gospel witness of the 144,000, and embraced Christ.

And pay attention to the size of this group... John calls it “*a great multitude which no one could number...*”

Later in Revelation 9 John will see an army he numbers at 200 million. If *this group* is a size that can’t be numbered it has to exceed 200 million. Perhaps a billion people will be saved in the Great Tribulation.

And this great multitude is no longer on Earth. Now they’re before the throne in Heaven. Apparently, many people will die for their faith. These are future martyrs.

I’ve heard well meaning preachers imply that after the rapture all hope is lost. You’ve missed the bus.

That’s not biblical. You can be saved, but it’s a deadly proposition. By this future point, there’s no more tolerance. Christianity will be made a capital crime.

And it’s not just martyrdom that you should fear.

Throughout history evil men have devised tortures that make death welcomed. It’s been said, “**The Great Tribulation will be the Christian holocaust.**”

Notice though, not only the *number* of people who get saved, but the *nationalities* of this crowd in Heaven... “of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...”

Recall the question at the end of the Sixth Seal, “Who is able to stand?” *Folks who believe the Gospel.*

It’s no surprise that everyone who stands before the throne and the Lamb is there because of the Gospel!

And notice the composition of the crowd... They’re from “*all nations*” - not one of the Earth’s 169 countries is missing... “*All tongues*” - not a single language group ends up unreached... “*All peoples*” - every race, skin tone, culture is represented! Heaven is rich in diversity.

Yet though this multitude is *culturally-diverse*, they’re *spiritually-united*. Before the Lamb they’ll come “*clothed with white robes...*” Heaven is multi-cultural...

You’ll see flowing dashikis, and hoodies, and capes, and wraps - lots of robe styles... But everyone’s robe will be the same color - “*white*” represents the purity that’s in Christ. Isaiah puts it, “*though your sins are like scarlet they shall be as white as snow.*” Jesus is the commonality that’s greater than our differences.

And notice in Heaven we all worship alike. The crowd stands, “*with palm branches in their hands...*”

In Heaven it’s Palm Sunday every day!

The Lamb hasn’t saved us and cleansed us just so we can go to heaven. There’s a job to do once we arrive. *Heaven’s chief occupation is to praise the Lord!*

*And this is what John hears...* Verse 10 describes a deafening roar that goes up from the multitude - “crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Heaven is the most racially and culturally diverse place you’ll ever go. But spiritually, it’s homogenous. All Heaven is in total agreement. Everyone got there the same way... “*Salvation belongs to God and the Lamb!*”

Muhammed or Mormonism didn’t get them to Heaven... Roman Catholicism, and the Pope, and the Virgin Mary didn’t help... The Buddha can’t get them to Heaven. Only God and the Lamb gets you to Heaven!

Verse 11 is an avalanche of praise... “All the angels stood around the throne...” That’s billions and billions... “And the elders and the four living creatures, fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.” Notice, their praise is framed by two *Amens!* It’s a double affirmation.

The most commonly-held concept in the universe is that God is worthy of glory, and honor, and thanks - forever. Only Satan and stubborn men resist the truth.

Verse 13, “Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” I’m sure John is a little stunned. *Why does an elder in Heaven ask him?* He’s the new kid. John is still wearing his visitor’s badge.

He replies, “And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” John tosses it back.. “So he said to me, (and the elder answers his own question...) “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Here’s an oxymoron, “*made... white in the blood...*”

Normally, blood doesn’t turn a robe white. But the blood of Jesus has *holy hemoglobin*. It takes out *the grimmest grime* and *the dirtiest dirt*. The only way to be spiritually clean is to wash your robe in Christ’s blood.

In chapter 8 the Lion will order the angels who are holding back the wind to stand down. Judgment will resume. But chapter 7 is breathing room to ponder and consider... *the Lord’s desire to show mercy, His trust in the Gospel, diversity in Heaven, hardship on Earth...*

And in the next three verses we get a glimpse at the conditions in Heaven - *this will blow your mind...*

Verse 15, “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.”

The elder is speaking of “*the great multitude*” that come out of Great Tribulation - but these pictures are in the travel brochure Heaven sends to all believers...

Notice first, the focus in Heaven isn’t the glassy sea or streets of gold. Heaven spins around God's throne.

*And what will we be doing? We'll "serve Him day and night."* We'll have specific assignments - projects - vital activities. We won't be trampolining on cumulus clouds, or learning to play the harp. We'll be busy - not bored.

*"And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them."* This is what makes Heaven heavenly. We're finally with our Lord Jesus unhindered, unencumbered.

Verse 16, *"They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore..."* This was the problem for believers who came out of the Great Tribulation. Remember the black horse of famine. But now in Heaven there's lots to eat and drink. Heaven is a land of second-helpings.

And there's protection from the harsh environment the judgments cause on Earth. Heaven brings relief...

*"The sun shall not strike them, nor any heat..."*

Verse 17 conveys one of the most beautiful thoughts in the Bible, *"For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters."* **The Lamb will be our Shepherd!**

*"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

But there will be tears to wipe away. Folks that come out of Great Tribulation will have suffered much! Don't be one of them - make the Lamb your Shepherd today!

Chapter 8, *"When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour."*

I've heard the crude suggestion that verse 1 proves there's no females in heaven... *since no woman could ever stay silent for 30 minutes...* Shame on any pastor who would make such a statement! *I would never...*

Actually up until now, heaven has been a very loud and noisy place. Everywhere people are falling down before God's throne. They worship the Lamb. About the time one voice fades out, another praise erupts.

But now a holy hush falls over the halls of heaven.

For half-an-hour it's so quiet you can hear a pin drop. It's as if heaven gasps over what's about to happen...

Verse 2, **“And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.”**

Remember the structure of the judgments John sees in Revelation... **Seven seals** are popped... **Seven trumpets** are blown... **Seven bowls** are poured out... **Seven thunders** are mentioned, but aren't revealed...

Here the seventh seal becomes the seven trumpets.

**“Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.**

**And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar,**

and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.”

This heavenly angel is acting like a priest. In fact, what John calls an “*angel*” - *which is really just another word for messenger* - could actually be the Lord Jesus.

We know from Hebrews that Jesus is the Great High Priest who serves before God in the heavenly temple.

This angel grabs the censer that’s full of our prayers for truth, justice, righteousness, and fairness - prayers launched in response to life’s hardships and heartaches - prayers prayed from your desperation. Prayers that right now you think are going unheeded.

All your prayers - your deepest feelings - will mix with the fire of God’s wrath, and turn into judgment.

Like popcorn they’ll start hopping out of the pan. *Thunder claps. Lightning strikes. The earth quakes.*

That’s when the violent brew is tossed out onto the Earth. The *censer* is emptied to *censure* the wicked. It's God's answer to our cry for a more righteous world!

There’re folks today who are able to beat the system. They avoid judgment, and get away with their crimes.

*But that will all end when these trumpets blow.* God will see to it justice is served up once and for all!

And in verse 6 the angels warm-up, “**So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.**” The reeds are put to their lips...

Verse 7, “The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.” Is this an asteroid? Is it a nuclear bomb? *Did Iran make good on its threats?*

*Did some terrorist get its hands on a loose nuke?*

Some kind of firestorm is responsible for a third of the Earth’s trees and vegetation burning to a crisp.

It’s estimated the detonation of just 25 thermonuclear warheads could scorch an area the size of mid-America - from the Appalachians to the Rockies.

A nuclear explosion compresses the humidity, shoots it into the upper atmosphere, where it freezes and falls to Earth as ice. Thus, the “*hail and fire*” of verse 7.

“Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.

And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.” With each of these trumpets judgment intensifies. These are global events that’ll rock our planet off its foundations - *and they’re prophetic*. God has written them into our future.

Here “*a third of the sea*” would amount to all the world’s oceans except the Pacific and the Indian.

In verse 8 John sees “*a great mountain burning*” thrown into the sea. Is this an incoming meteorite?

Currently, NASA is tracking as many as 4000 NEOs or “near Earth objects” streaking through space. As we noted, very month we hear of another potential strike.

Recently, I saw a National Geographic Special which referred to these projectiles in terms that John uses. It called them, “mountains tumbling through space.”

Donald Yeomans, an astronomer at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, made this statement, “Space is filled with objects that threaten Earth... Earth runs its course about the sun in a swarm of asteroids. Sooner or later, our planet will be struck by one of the them.”

Even now it’s as if God keeps firing warning shots across the bow of our ship to encourage us to repent.

In verse 10 another trumpet blasts, “Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven...”

Here again, the Greek word translated “*star*” is “*astera*” or “*asteroid*.” It refers to any heavenly body...

It plummets, “burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood...” which means “bitterness.”

“A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.”

Whatever this star is, it has a devastating effect. It contaminates a third of the world's fresh water supply.

*A third of vegetation scorched... A third of the oceans ruined... Now a third of the fresh water contaminated...*

“Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.”

If a giant comet or meteorite impacted Earth it could tip our planet further on its axis - and somehow altering its orbit - thus, reducing exposure to the sun by a third.

There is another way to think of these catastrophe...

At times the Bible uses [the language of observation](#). It describes a phenomena as it appears to the viewer.

We do this when we speak of *a sunrise* or *a sunset*. The phenomena is actually caused by a rotating Earth, but it appears to us as if the sun is rising and setting.

Here it could be that some obstruction - a thick cloud perhaps - blocks out our view of a third of the sky.

Verse 13, “And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!” In short, the angel is warning the inhabitants of Earth, “[You ain’t seen nothing yet!](#)” Three more shrill trumpets remain...

What a contrast, in Heaven the angels sing, “Holy, Holy, Holy” - while on Earth they say, “*woe, woe, woe.*”