

Eschatology 11

The Great Tribulation 2

- 1) **The Seventh Seal:** (*Revelation ch.8*) Scroll unrolled
 - a) “Silence in heaven for about half an hour”
 - i) Some suggest that this silence is seen as a silence so that the prayers of the saints can be heard, perhaps even the cry of the martyrs.
 - ii) More likely, this silence in heaven demonstrates a sober, awestruck silence at the judgments to come, now that the seals are off and the scroll can be opened.
 - iii) A half an hour doesn’t appear to be a long time until you put it into the context of silence and worship. Imagine a 30 minute period of silence in the middle of worship service or during a sermon. In a context of worship to God, this silence would seem like a long time!
- 2) **The Seven Trumpets:** As we have read through Revelations and the revealing of each trumpet we have anticipated the 7th seal to be the “end” of and final judgment. However as the seal is torn, the scroll is opened and the “contents” of the Seventh Seal is the Seven Trumpets. They are connected to each other in that the Seventh Seal introduces the Seven Trumpets, and we will learn that the Seventh Trumpet will introduce Seven Bowls. The first 4 Trumpets are Gods Supernatural judgments upon the world...caused by God not from mans sinfulness, The next two trumpets are demonic. The seventh trumpet introduces the 7 bowls of God’s wrath.
 - a) **The First Trumpet – Scorching of the Earth:** The first trumpet causes hail and fire that destroys much of the plant life in the world (*Revelation 8:7*)
 - i) A third of the earth, tree’s and all the grass was burned.
 - b) **The Second Trumpet - Slaughter in the sea:**
 - i) John says “something ‘like’ a mountain”. We must recognize when a metaphor is used to determine a literal or symbolic understanding. This was not really a mountain but something that resembled a blazing mass as large as a mountain.
 - (1) “This judgement could be caused by an asteroid plugging into the sea. Icarus, one of the smaller asteroids known to us is about one mile in diameter and is sometimes described as a small flying mountain. Other asteroids are may be as large as Ceres, which is about 580 miles in diameter. Even a small asteroid crashing into one of our oceans would cause utter devastation. The fiery impact would burn and crush all life in large portion of the ocean, and the resulting tidal waves would be beyond comprehension. These waves could capsize ships in every direction for hundreds of miles” (Connecting the dots 192)

c) **The Third Trumpet – A Plague on Fresh Waters:**

- i) “A great star fell from heaven burning like a torch”, this can easily be seen as a meteor or a comet colliding with the earth.
- ii) The name of the star is Wormwood: Wormwood is a very bitter substance, and proverbial for bitterness and sadness.
- iii) A third of the rivers . . . a third of the waters: The proportion of ecological disaster stays the same. In each one of the trumpets, a third of an ecological system is destroyed in judgment.

d) **The Fourth Trumpet- A Plague on the Heavens/Darkness from the Earth**

- i) A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night: This does not just describe a one-third lessening of light, but one-third of the day and night are plunged into absolute darkness. As Jesus said: the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light (Matthew 24:29).
 - (1) This would affect the earth's heat system causing temperatures to cool which would result in crop failures and great ecological disaster.
- ii) Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet: The angel's woes are well founded, because one-third of the earth's population will die in the next three trumpets.
 - (1) The eagle is a symbolic image of an angel. “The ancient Greek words for angel and eagle are very close in spelling. Some ancient versions say that it is an eagle flying through the midst of heaven, making this cry.” (Connecting the Dots 192)
 - (2) The three-fold repetition of “woe” is a biblical way of intensifying the terrible nature of the impending doom soon to follow.