

REVELATION CHAPTER EIGHT

BOOK OF THE REVELATION

What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of the book of the Revelation. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The teachings of the Revelation represent a compilation of things learned from such men as Col. R. B. Thieme, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Charles Ryrie, Arno C. Gabelein, John Walvoord, Hal Lindsay, Dwight Pentecost, along with an exegesis of the Greek and Hebrew texts.

Revelation

Lesson 76

6-27-2001

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the book of The Revelation. We are in lesson seventy-six.

1.1 Before we do though let's remember the application of 1Jo 1:9 as might be necessary.

2. Last week I completed an analysis of the Doctrine of the Blood and then I taught verses fifteen through seventeen of chapter seven.

3. We have therefore finished Revelation chapter seven and are ready for chapter eight.

4. Before starting Revelation chapter eight let's look one more time at an expanded translation of Revelation chapter seven.

Rev 7:1 After the vision of the six seals evincing a summary of God's judgment of planet earth during the Tribulation, the scene seemed to return to the beginning of the Tribulation just after the rapture; here I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth; the winds were symbolic of the wrath of God just summarized by the six seals; the four were there to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree.

Rev 7:2 Then I saw a fifth angel coming up from the east, this angel had a special protective seal. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the earth.

Rev 7:3 "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put our protective seal on the foreheads of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists."

Rev 7:4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed; one hundred forty-four thousand were sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel.

Rev 7:5 From the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand,

Rev 7:6 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand,

Rev 7:7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand,

Rev 7:8 from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand and from the tribe of Benjamin there was sealed twelve thousand.

Rev 7:9 After hearing the sealing angel call out the names of the Tribes and the number to be sealed, I looked and there before me was a great mass of people, I mean there were so many you could not count them; they were absolutely nationally, linguistically and ethnically diversified. They were all standing before the central throne .looking up at the Lord Jesus Christ and they all were wearing white robes, signifying their positional righteousness and holding palm branches in their hands, to signify they were Royal Family.

Rev 7:10 They were loudly proclaiming: "Salvation belongs to our God, our Father who sits on the throne, and to His Son Jesus the Christ."

Rev 7:11 The innumerable elect angels earlier seen flying about the throne of God were now standing outside the throne room; inside I could see the church age saints who had been raptured and the four special angels, called "living beings." They all fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God the Father and His son Jesus Christ

Rev 7:12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

Rev 7:13 Then one of the raptured saints asked me, "Who are these people in white robes carrying the palms and from where did they come?"

Rev 7:14 I answered and said, "Sir, I have no idea." It was then the wily saint said, "These are martyred believers who were killed during the last three and one-half years of the tribulation; they have wisely washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, i.e. they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Rev 7:15 When Christ returns to earth to set up His Kingdom these martyred saints shall serve continually before His Throne in His earthly Temple and Christ who sits on the throne will spread his tent of protection over them.

Rev 7:16 Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. They will forever dwell in air conditioned comfort in ecstatic happiness.

Rev 7:17 For the Christ the Lamb who sits on the throne will be their Shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And never again will these Saints experience pain and suffering; He will make certain sorrow, tears and martyrdom are things of the past.

Now we are ready for Chapter eight and the beginning of the Trumpet Judgments.

1. Let me first given you a few introductory points:

1.1 We've seen that Revelation chapter six describes a seven-year reign of terror on earth, which precedes the Second Advent of Christ.

2. We have examined our Lord's successive breaking of six of the seven seals of the rolled-up scroll, and we've seen that seals two, three, four, five and six usher in a specific judgment on a Christ rejecting world.

3. The first seal releases a dictator, the Antichrist, who ultimately succeeds in subduing the entire world.
4. The second seal takes peace from the earth. "Russia" attacks the King of the South, a Pan Arabic Block, and in the process overruns and devastates the Israel: this begins an intense and wide ranging war.
5. The third seal results in a worldwide economic collapse.
6. The fourth seal precipitates a tremendous outbreak of death through famine, epidemics, and civil violence.
7. The fifth seal marks the beginning of the greatest persecution of all time a period when believers will be slaughtered in the streets.
8. The horrors of the first five seals seem to be the inevitable result of what happens when the collective unrestrained natures of mankind are left totally unrestrained.
9. The sixth seal unleashes a worldwide holocaust i.e. stars fall, numerous earthquakes, sun blackens and moon turns to blood; God's judgment falls in spades on the world.
10. Revelation chapter seven flashes back to the beginning of the Tribulation period, shortly after the Rapture but just before the judgments begin.
11. Though all believers will have been Raptured, God will provide a continuing witness for Christ by calling forth 144,000 Jewish evangelists, 12,000 from each tribe.
12. For seven years they will perform a remarkably effective job of "bringing people" to faith in the Messiah Jesus.

Now let's look at Rev 8:1 first in the KJV and then the NIV:

KJV

Rev 8:1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

NIV

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

Principles:

1. The chapter begins with the opening of the seventh seal.

2. This is the last of the seven seals which usher in the prophetic judgments of God. With the opening of the seventh seal a narrative of destruction resumes.

3. Though simply introduced, the seventh seal is clearly the most important development up to this point.

4. Contained in the seventh seal are all the subsequent developments leading to the second coming of Christ.

5. This would include the seven trumpets and the seven bowls/vials of the wrath of God. Scroggie, after a careful discussion of the chronological order of the Book of the Revelation, concludes:

“The trumpets, therefore, do not look back over all or some of the seals, but lie under the sixth Seal, and proceed from it. For this reason it is equally incorrect to speak of the trumpets as following the seals. They do not follow, but are the seventh seal.”

6. Walvoord adds “In like manner the bowls constitute the seventh trumpet.”

7. There are those who disagree.

8. These theologians take the position that the seventh seal and trumpet review the earlier seals. Alford is one of these principle expositors. He writes: "I place in the same category all that which regards it as taking up and going over the same ground again.”

9. The position of Walvoord and Scroggie would seem in my view to hold the correct position. The trumpet judgments and bowls constitute the seventh trumpet. They are the Seventh Seal.

10. In fitting recognition of the importance of this seal, the Scriptures record that there is silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

11. Though thirty minutes is not ordinarily considered a long time, when it is a time of absolute silence portending an ominous development such as is about to come, it will seem like an eternity for those in heaven.

12. It is an indication that something special is about to take place.

13. It may be compared to the silence before the foreman of a jury reports a verdict; for a moment there is perfect silence as everyone awaits that which will follow.

14. In the Greek "about half an hour" is 'Hos Hemiorion'. Hos is an adverb meaning "like as" or "like" and Hemiorion is a compound. Hemi means one-half and Hora means hour thus a good translation "about one-half an hour.”

15. Hal Lindsey has written of the half hour period of silence:

"Verse one of this chapter speaks of a half-hour interlude of eerie silence in heaven just after the seventh seal is opened and before its judgment is released. This silence is awesome in its significance and stands in stark contrast to the joyous sounds of Elders and Angels crying their praises in Chapters 4 and 5. This half-hour pause might be called "the lull before the storm" because the seventh seal, which has just been opened, will bring the greatest judgments yet. I'm sure the enormity of what is about to take place causes even God to pause and soberly assess what must be done to His errant creature, man."

Now let's see what we can learn from Rev 8:2-6:

KJV

Rev 8:2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

Rev 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

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

Rev 8:5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Rev 8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

NIV

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

Rev 8:3 Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne.

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

Rev 8:5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

Rev 8:6 Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

Principles:

1. In verse two John records his vision of the seven trumpets given to the seven angels standing before God.

2. Though there has been some speculation as to the character of these angels, the best interpretation is to take the revelation in its ordinary sense, that is, that these are indeed seven angels appointed by God to direct the series of judgments symbolized by the seven trumpets.

3. These angels are to be distinguished from those who pour out the seven vials or bowls and are not to be confused with the seven spirits of God of Revelation 5:6.

4. The fact that these angels stand before God indicates a place of prominence.

5. The use of trumpets by the angels has considerable background in the Scriptures. In Scripture trumpets were used in various ways.

6. They were sounded at times of public assembly, used to direct soldiers in war and to signal important events on the calendar.

7. Trumpets were used in the Old Testament on the occasion of the giving of the law and were sounded by the Levitical priests on the first of the month.

8. Let's review a few points about Trumpets:

9. The word translated trumpet is used in the New Testament as follows:

9.1 of the natural instrument, 1Co 14:8;

1Co 14:8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9.2 of the power and judgment of God at Sinai, Heb 12:19;

Heb 12:19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the words; which they heard made them ask that the words be taken away:

Heb 12:20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touched the mountain, it had to be stoned, or thrust through with a spear:

Heb 12:21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I am absolutely terrified."

Heb 12:22 But you in contrast have been lifted up and brought to mount Zion unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, even to an innumerable company of angels who serve you as ministering spirits,

9.2.1 Let me give you 10 points concerning the context of the "trumpet" of Heb 12:19.

1. The anonymous writer of the Book of Hebrews is found begging the believers of Jerusalem to hold fast their confession of Christ and refuse the secular benefits of returning to Judaism and their Sabbath ritual.

2. Sinai and Mount Zion are placed in contrast to each other.
3. The setting of the giving of the Law was (1) a mount that burned with fire, enveloped in black darkness and a frightening tempest, and (2) the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of loud and frightening words.
4. In this setting Moses was so overcome by the presence of God that he greatly feared and trembled.
5. "But you are come" says Heb 12:22. This statement introduces all the blessed realities and personages of grace.
6. Heaven is set against earth, the phenomenal against the earthly, the glory of Sinai against the infinitely greater glory available to church age saints.
 - 6.1 Described as our coming not to the mountain and the law but to Zion ... the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem ... hosts of angels ... the church of the firstborn ... God the Judge ... being declared just men made perfect.
7. Jesus, God declares, is the mediator of grace and the author of the perfect law of liberty - those things listed in contrast to the mountain and the law make a purposely impressive list because of the contrast intended.
 - 7.1 The Mediator has made possible our new status and the writer of Hebrews desperately reminds the believers in Jerusalem to not neglect the new by wallowing in the old.
8. Again, the thought is transparent. Surely these new blessings far outweigh the temporary advantage to be gained through returning to Judaism just to escape legalistic persecution.
9. Men of faith have a far brighter hope and future under the new covenant.
10. Men of faith have already entered that glad company of the firstborn, the just men made positionally perfect.
11. Now let's return to our principles.
12. The seven angels who stand in the presence of God are real personalities Ñ not just figments of someone's colorful imagination.
 - 12.1 The Bible indicates that angels are grouped in clearly defined ranks, much as in a military command structure.

12.2 Many have concluded these seven who are seen standing in the presence of God are the highest of all angelic beings.

12.3 These are the ones who will announce with trumpet blasts God's next seven judgments on the earth. These seven trumpet judgments are all a part of the seventh seal.

12.4 But before they can blow their trumpets to begin the judgments, "another angel" appears on the scene. He stands at the altar holding a golden censer filled with a special kind of incense the prayers of saints."

12.5 These He offers to God. Although many good Bible scholars believe that the "other angel" here at the altar is simply another high ranking angel, there are others like Walvoord and Lindsay who believe this "angel" is none other than Christ Himself functioning in His ministry of The High Priest.

12.6 The golden censer was only used in the Holy of Holies by the high priest in the ritual of prayer. Walvoord writes "It was this prayer-offering function of the coming Christ which was pictured by the Old Testament altar of incense."

12.7 After the believers are taken up to heaven at the Rapture we will apparently share in Christ's priestly ministry of interceding for the Tribulation saints just as we today intercede for any number of people and things.

12.8 Revelation 8:3 specifies that all the saints in heaven, as well as believers still on earth at that time, will offer up prayers to God for the suffering brothers going through the Tribulation.

12.9. That the prayers are limited to only those saints of the Tribulation is problematic, there is certainly nothing to limit the bowl to only these saints; it is possible the censer is filled with prayers of all saints from all ages.

13. This is a beautiful picture of the prayers of the saints as seen from heaven.

13.1 In the Old Testament order the priests would burn incense upon the altar of incense, and the smoke would fill the Temple or the Tabernacle and would then ascend to heaven.

13.2 Saints for ages have asked in various forms for help and release from the trials and pain found in the devil's world.

14. Incense used in the Tabernacle and later the Temple was symbolic of worship and prayer and a reminder of the intercession of the Lord.

15. Expositors and commentators differ as to whether the altar is the altar of burnt offering or the altar of incense, although in my view the reference is clearly to the altar of incense.

15.1 To illustrate the difficulty in ascertaining which altar is in view let me review and comment on the uses of altar in the Apocalypse.

Rev 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

Rev 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

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

Rev 8:5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Rev 9:13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

Rev 9:14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

Rev 14:18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

Rev 14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Rev 14:20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Rev 16:7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

Rev 16:8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

Rev 16:9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

End Lesson Taught 6-27-2001

Revelation

Lesson 77

7-18-2001

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the Book of The Revelation. We are in lesson seventy-seven.

1.1 Before we do though let's remember the application of 1Jo 1:9 as might be necessary.

2. On the 27th of June I completed an analysis of verses one and two of Revelation chapter eight.

3. Since we have been away for some time, I want to give you a few introductory points but first an expanded translation of verses one and two:

Rev 8:1 When the Lord Jesus opened the last of the seven seals, there was silence in heaven for about a half an hour.

Rev 8:2 And then I saw seven very powerful angels stood before God the Father, and they were given seven trumpets.

Introduction:

1. We've seen that Revelation chapter six describes in a general sense a seven-year reign of terror on earth; the seven years precede the Second Advent of Christ and called in Scripture, a time of Jacob's trouble.

2. We have examined our Lord's successive breaking of six of the seven seals and we've seen that seals two, three, four, five and six usher in a specific judgment on a Christ rejecting world.



3. The first seal releases a dictator, the Antichrist, who quickly succeeds in becoming ruler of a ten nation federation with his headquarters in Rome.

3.1 He signs a treaty with Israel guaranteeing them peace in their Promised Land and freedom to worship Jehovah God in a newly constructed Temple.

4. The second seal takes peace from the earth. "Russia" late in the Great Tribulation attacks the King of the South, a Pan Arabic Block, and in the process overruns and devastates the State of Israel: this begins an intense and wide ranging war.

5. The third seal results in an economic collapse. There is great poverty in the land, a natural result of war.

6. The fourth seal precipitates a tremendous outbreak of death through famine, epidemics, and civil violence.

7. The fifth seal marks the beginning of the greatest persecution of all time a period when believers will be slaughtered in the streets.

8. The horrors of the first five seals seem to be the inevitable result of what happens when the collective old sin natures of mankind are left totally unrestrained.

9. The sixth seal unleashes a worldwide holocaust i.e. stars fall, there are numerous earthquakes, the sun blackens and the moon turns blood red; God's judgment falls in spades on the world.

10. Revelation chapter seven flashes back to the beginning of the Tribulation period, shortly after the Rapture but just before the judgments begin.

11. Though all believers have been Raptured, God provides a continuing witness for Christ by calling forth 144,000 Jewish evangelists, 12,000 from each tribe.

12. For seven years they will perform a remarkably effective job of "bringing people" to faith in the Messiah Jesus.

13. Chapter eight begins with the opening of the seventh seal.

14. The seventh seal ushers in the prophetic judgments of God.

15. Though simply introduced, the seventh seal is clearly the most important development up to this point.

15.1 The events of chapter six were a summary of those things which occur in the Great Tribulation.

16. Contained in the seventh seal, the trumpets and the vials are all the specific developments leading up to the second coming of Christ.

17. This would include the seven trumpets and the seven bowls/vials of the wrath of God. Scroggie, after a careful discussion of the chronological order of the book of The Revelation, concludes:

“The trumpets, therefore, do not look back over all or some of the Seals, but lie under the sixth Seal, and proceed from it. For this reason it is equally incorrect to speak of the Trumpets as following the Seals. They do not follow, but are the Seventh Seal.”

18. Walvoord adds, “In like manner the bowls constitute the seventh trumpet.”

18.1 There are those who disagree.

18.2 These theologians take the position that the seventh seal and the trumpet/vial judgments review the earlier seals.

19. The position of Walvoord and Scroggie would seem in my view to hold the correct position.

20. The trumpet judgments and bowls constitute the seventh trumpet. They are the Seventh Seal.

21. In verse two John records his vision of the seven trumpets given to the seven angels standing before God.

KJV

Rev 8:2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

22. Though there has been some speculation as to the character of these angels, the best interpretation is to take the revelation in its ordinary sense, that is, that these are indeed seven angels appointed by God to direct the series of judgments symbolized by the seven trumpets.

23. These angels are to be distinguished from those who pour out the seven vials or bowls and are not to be confused with the seven spirits of God of Rev 5:6.

24. The fact that these angels stand before God indicates a place of prominence.

25. The use of trumpets by the angels has considerable background in the Scriptures. In Scripture trumpets were used in various ways.

26. They were sounded at times of public assembly, used to direct soldiers in war and to signal important events on the calendar.

27. The seven angels who stand in the presence of God are real personalities not just figments of someone's colorful imagination.

28. The Bible indicates that angels are grouped in clearly defined ranks, much as in a military command structure.

28.1 Many have concluded these seven who are seen standing in the presence of God are the highest of all angelic beings.

28.2 These are the ones who will announce with trumpet blasts God's next seven judgments on the earth. These seven trumpet judgments are all a part of the seventh seal.

Now let's see what we can learn from Rev 8:3-6:

KJV

Rev 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

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

Rev 8:5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightning, and an earthquake.

Rev 8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

NIV

Rev 8:3 Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne.

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

Rev 8:5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

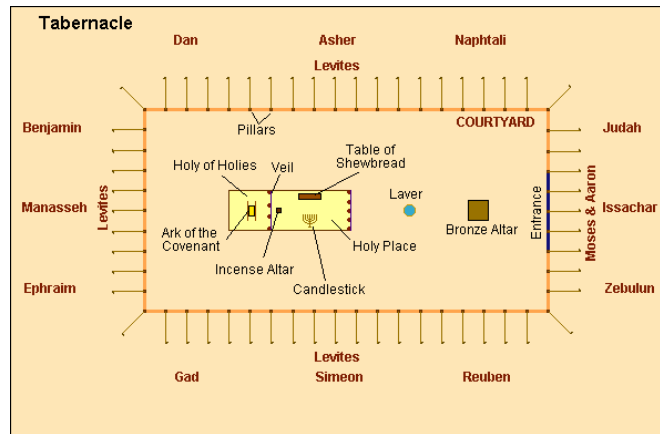
Rev 8:6 Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

1. Before the angels can blow their trumpets to begin the judgments, "another angel" appears on the scene. He stands at the altar holding a golden censer filled with a special kind of incense the prayers of the saints.

2. Revelation 8:3 specifies that all the saints in heaven, as well as the believers still on earth at that time, will offer up prayers to God for those suffering in the Tribulation.

3. This is a beautiful picture of the prayers of the saints as seen from heaven.

3.1 In the Old Testament order the priests would burn incense upon the altar of incense, and the smoke would fill the Tabernacle/Temple and would then ascend to heaven.



3.2 Saints for ages have asked in various forms for help and release from the trials and pain found in the devil's world.

3.2.1 The events of eschatology represent God's answer - our vindication.

4. Incense used in the Tabernacle and later the Temple was symbolic of worship and prayer and a reminder of the intercession of the Lord.

5. Commentators differ as to whether the altar is the altar of burnt offering or the altar of incense, in my view the reference is clearly to the altar of incense.

6. Because the angel was given incense to make his worship possible, some have concluded that this is only an angel designated for this work in heaven.

7. Because His work as a mediator serving in the role of a priest, others have argued that it must be the Lord Jesus Christ because mediation is not be a proper function of an angel.

8. The fact that Christ appeared in the Old Testament frequently as the Angel of Jehovah lends further support to the point of view that this "other Angel" is none other than Jesus the Christ, the only Mediator.

8.1 I am swayed to subscribe to Walvoord, Thieme and Lindsey's position that the angel is none other than "The Lord Jesus Christ".

Gen 16:7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

Gen 16:8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

Num 22:22 And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.

Num 22:23 And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

Jdg 2:1 And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

Jdg 2:2 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

Jdg 2:3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

Jdg 2:4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

1Ki 19:7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

1Ki 19:8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, a mountain near Mount Sinai in Arabia, called the mount of God.

1Ki 19:9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Isa 37:36 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

Isa 37:37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

9. There is no way to determine with finality which of these two views is correct though the preponderance of opinion seems to favor regarding the angel as Christ, a Christophany.

9.1 Though nothing is said as to the nature of the incense, it is reasonable to suppose that it fulfills the same function as incense used in Old Testament worship practices.

9.2 It was composed of the four spices mentioned in Exodus 30:34-38 and regarded as so holy that the people of Israel were forbidden to use it for any common purpose.

Exo 30:34 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices... with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight:

Exo 30:35 And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy:

Exo 30:36 And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.

Exo 30:37 And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.

Exo 30:38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

10. The incense would seem to speak of the perfections of Christ as the only worthy Mediator; further the believer's prayers are only effective when bathed in the sweetness of Christ's perfect intercession and thus our need to pray in the name of Christ.

10.1 Prayer to the Father is made possible by the efficacious acts of Christ during His incarnation.

11. Attention is also directed in verse five to the censer, apparently corresponding to the instrument used to offer incense in the Old Testament worship.

KJV

Rev 8:5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

12. It was made of gold (Heb. 9:3-4), and it was used to take fire off the altar to be carried into the Holy of Holies where the incense was added.

Heb 9:3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;
Heb 9:4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

13. Here the angel is said to take the censer filled with fire and to cast it into the earth. The incident is followed by voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

14. The clear implication is that the casting of the contents of the censer is here used as a symbol of judgment, apparently in response to the intercession and prayers of all saints throughout the ages; certainly to include the suffering saints in the midst of the great tribulation.

15. The scene, therefore, is set for the judgment symbolized by the seven trumpets about to sound according to verse six.

KJV

Rev 8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

Now let's see what we can learn from Revelation 8:7.

KJV

Rev 8:7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

NIV

Rev 8:7 The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

Principles:

1. In response to the sounding of the trumpet held by the first angel, a scene of desolation is spread abroad upon the earth caused by hail and fire mingled with blood.

1.1 The judgment seems to be directed to vegetation, and a third part of the trees and all the green grass are burned.

2. The tendency on the part of many has been to read into this judgment a symbol of divine chastening rather than literal hail and fire.

3. The obvious parallel, however, is found in the tenth plague in Exodus 9:18-26.

Exo 9:18 Therefore, at this time tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on Egypt, from the day it was founded till now.

Exo 9:19 Give an order now to bring your livestock and everything you have in the field to a place of shelter, because the hail will fall on every man and animal that has not been brought in and is still out in the field, and they will die."

Exo 9:20 Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried to bring their slaves and their livestock inside.

Exo 9:21 But those who ignored the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the field.

Exo 9:22 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt--on men and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt."

Exo 9:23 When Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, the LORD sent thunder and hail, and lightning flashed down to the ground. So the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt;

Exo 9:24 hail fell and lightning flashed back and forth. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

Exo 9:25 Throughout Egypt hail struck everything in the fields--both men and animals; it beat down everything growing in the fields and stripped every tree.

Exo 9:26 The only place it did not hail was the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were.

3.1 Inasmuch as in the account of Exodus there was literal hail and fire, and the result of the judgment here is the burning up of the third part of trees and all the green grass,

3.2 there is no solid reason for not taking this judgment in its literal sense.

4. The only problem which seems to remain is the meaning of the term "blood." Here we have another helpful suggestion from the plagues of Egypt.

5. The hail was of such character according to Exodus 9:19 and 25 that it destroyed not only vegetation but also men and beasts who were caught in it.

6. Whether or not blood was actually included in the hail and fire cast on the earth, the result was bloodshed of man and beast, though the main burden of the judgment seems to be that of destroying vegetation.

7. If, however, it is held that the hail, fire, and blood are merely symbols, the result and meaning are almost the same.

7.1 That is to say such symbolic meaning would teach a severe destruction as if hail and fire had fallen on the earth.

8. This judgment, great as it is, is only the introduction.

8.1 Six more trumpets are yet to sound.

9. There is little justification for commentators to try to designate which portion of the earth is thus judged.

9.1 Walter Scott for example attempts to explain the passage as a description of the destruction of the western world.

Now we are ready to analyze Rev 8:8 and Rev 8:9.

KJV

Rev 8:8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

Rev 8:9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

NIV

Rev 8:8 The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood,

Rev 8:9 a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Principles:

1. At the sound of the trumpet held by the second angel, another great judgment falls on the earth, this time dealing with the sea.

2. John, in his vision, sees a large object compared to a great mountain burning with fire which is cast into the sea. A third part of the sea becomes blood, a third part of the creatures of the sea die, and a third part of the ships are destroyed.

3. As in the interpretation of the other trumpet, the tendency of expositors is to give a symbolic meaning to this great judgment. It is not impossible, however, to suggest a reasonable literal interpretation.

4. It is earlier indicated in the sixth seal (a summary of the events of the Great Tribulation) that stars fall from heaven and that there are various disturbances of this character during this period.

4.1 This in fact provides evidence that a literal interpretation should be used.

4.2 It would certainly seem that the great mountain, instead of being a symbol of a government, as is sometimes the case in Scripture, is actually a large object falling from the heavens.

5. Again there seems to be a parallel to the plagues of Egypt.

5.1 Just as the River Nile and all other bodies of water in Egypt were turned to blood when Aaron stretched out his rod over the waters of Egypt, so this object apparently had a similar effect upon the sea.

6. Though some believe that the sea becoming blood is the language of appearance, that is, that the sea through some chemical change turns blood red, the natural effect is devastating in that the judgment destroys a third of the ships and a third of all sea life.

6.1 The probability is that all life and all ships are destroyed in one portion of the earth, the area nearest to the impact of the great burning mountain.

7. The interpreter of these and later judgments is constantly faced with the problems of how far to take the literal and the symbolic.

7.1 The point of view here expressed is that these judgments should be interpreted literally insofar as this can be reasonably followed.

8. To make the mountain a form of human government, the sea the Roman Empire, and the ships that are destroyed the church or organized religion, is to read into the passage far more than is justified.

9. Though all questions cannot be answered, the unmistakable implication of these judgments is that God is dealing in righteous wrath with the wicked earth.

Now let's see what we can learn from Rev 8:10-11.

KJV

Rev 8:10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

Rev 8:11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

End Lesson Taught 7-19-2001

Revelation

Lesson 78

7-25-2001

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the book of The Revelation. We are in lesson seventy-eight.

1.1 Before we do though let's remember the application of 1Jo 1:9 as might be necessary.

2. Last week I completed an analysis of Rev 8:3-9. Before proceeding with verse ten let's look at an expanded translation of Rev 8:1-9.

Rev 8:1 And when our Lord opened the last of the seven seals there was silence in heaven for about one half hour.

Rev 8:2 And I saw the seven angels standing before the Father's Throne. And they each were given a trumpet.

Rev 8:3 And then I saw the Lord Jesus Christ come and stand over the altar; He was holding a golden censer. And there was given to Him a large packet of incense in order that he might mix it with the prayers of all the saints; He mixed it over the altar of incense which had been placed before the central throne.

Rev 8:4 From the hand of our Lord the smoke of the incense wafted heavenward, the smoke being a symbol of the prayers of the saints.

Rev 8:5 Then Christ filled the golden censer with the burning coals taken out of the altar, and He threw the burning contents of the censer toward the earth. As a result there followed loud claps of thunder, booming voices, terrible lightnings and a major earthquake; all of which served as a warning of impending wrath to come.

Rev 8:6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound their trumpets of judgment and wrath.

Rev 8:7 The first angel then sounded his trumpet, and from heaven fell great hail stones mixed with fire falling in a shower of blood.

Rev 8:8 And a third part of the earth was burned and a third part of the trees was burned, and a third part of all the green grass was burned.

Rev 8:9 And the second angel sounded his trumpet. And a large mass, as large as a great mountain, burning with fire was thrown into the sea.

Now let's see what we can learn from Rev 8:10-11.

KJV

Rev 8:10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

Rev 8:11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

NIV

Rev 8:10 The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water--

Rev 8:11 the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.

Principles:

1. When the third trumpet sounds, John witnesses a great star burning like a lamp falling upon rivers and fountains of water.

2. It is named "Wormwood" and apparently causes the water to be bitter, resulting in the death of many.

2.1 The word Wormwood can be found only here in the New Testament.

2.1.1 The Greek word is Apsinthos; it is a plant which is both bitter and often poisonous; it usually grows in desolate places. It is from this Greek word we get our English word "Absinthe", a green liqueur with a bitter licorice taste.

2.2 In the KJV the Hebrew word Laanah is translated "wormwood"; notice also the translations in the NIV:

KJV

Lam 3:15 He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood (laanah).

NIV

Lam 3:15 He has filled me with bitter herbs and sated me with gall.

KJV

Amo 5:7 Ye who turn judgment to wormwood (laanah), and leave off righteousness in the earth,

NIV

Amo 5:7 You who turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground

3. In interpreting all the trumpet judgments, expositors have had a field day in assigning symbolic meaning to the components of this judgment.

3.1 Hal Lindsey takes the position that all the calamities of both chapters eight and nine are the result of nuclear war and the ecological disturbances which would naturally follow a nuclear holocaust. He writes for example:

"Now such things as John described are not only possible, but could happen within thirty minutes! There are already enough nuclear-tipped missiles on station and ready for launching to do everything predicted ..."

"Dr. W. H. Pickering of Cal Tech confirmed this when he warned, "In half an hour the East and the West could destroy civilization..".. Lindsey goes on to say: "I personally believe that all the enormous ecological catastrophes described... are the direct result of nuclear weapons ... In fact if the Book of the Revelation had not been written we might well predict these very catastrophes within fifty years or less."

4. Others claim with reference to this third trumpet that the meanings are only symbolic, there is no consensus among these types as to the total interpretation however several have concluded that the great star is the Antichrist or Satan himself and the waters are symbolic of the peoples of the earth.

5. It seems preferable, to view this prophecy with a reasonable literalness, as in the case of the second trumpet.

5.1 The star seems to be a heavenly body or a mass from outer space, understandably burning as it enters the atmosphere of earth, and falling with contaminating influence upon the rivers and waters.

6. The reference to wormwood seems to draw the parallel of the experience of the children of Israel at the waters of Marah (Exodus 15:22-25). There the tree cast into the bitter waters made them sweet.

Exo 15:22 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water.

Exo 15:23 When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.)

Exo 15:24 So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

Exo 15:25 Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them.

7. Here, in the book of The Revelation the wormwood cast into the sweet water made it bitter.

7.1 Such also is the contrast between Christ on the cross atoning for sin and making that which is bitter precious and sweet as over against the Christ coming in judgment when He turns the vain hopes and ambitions of men into bitterness and despair.

8. The result of this trumpet is to inflict a divine judgment from God upon men themselves.

Before moving to verses 12 and 13, let me give you an expanded translation of Rev 8:10 and 11.

Rev 8:10 The third angel sounded his trumpet and a blazing meteor fell from the heavens. It broke in pieces landing upon a third of the rivers and upon a third of the springs from where the earth's waters originate.

Rev 8:11 The name of the star was Wormwood. As a result of its falling to the earth a third part of the planet's water supply turned unpotable and many people died because they drank from the contaminated water supply.

Now let's see what we can learn from Rev 8:12 and 13.

KJV

Rev 8:12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

Rev 8:13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, 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!

NIV

Rev 8:12 The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, 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 turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.

Rev 8:13 As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!"

Principles:

1. In contrast to the first three judgments having to do respectively with land, sea, rivers, and fountains of water, the fourth trumpet relates to the heavens themselves.
2. As John witnesses the scene, he sees a third part of the sun, a third part of the moon, and a third part of the stars darkened, an eclipse that extends to a third part of the day and a third part of the night.
3. The symbolic interpretation of verse 12 usually regards this prophecy as portending a disruption of human government and society extending to a third part of the earth.
4. Here again, however, it is probably preferable to interpret what we have literally; thus we have a disruption of light from heaven as a solemn warning of other judgments which are yet to fall upon the earth.

J. B. Smith has written:

“It is of considerable interest to note the progress one third of the green trees and grass, one third of marine life and shipping, one third of the waters, and one third of the heavenly bodies. Food is destroyed; distribution is crippled; water supply is limited; production is hampered.”

5. This interpretation is given support by the next verse, which indicates that the first four trumpets are not only judgments in themselves but warnings of the last three trumpets which will be far more severe in character.
6. John writes that he both beheld and heard the loud voice of an angel pronouncing a triple woe on the inhabitants of the earth because of the three trumpets which were yet to sound.
7. In the best manuscripts, "eagle" (**Aetos**) is substituted for "angel (**Angelos**)."
Whether announced by an angel or an eagle, the effect of the trumpet is much the same.
 - 7.1 An **Aetos** can be either an eagle or a vulture; both are carnivorous.
 - 7.1.1 Thus the meaning: "A large carnivorous bird" flying above the earth announcing pending judgment.”
8. The earth then is uniquely warned of judgment to come.

8.1 The trumpet judgments, which have their beginning in this chapter, confirm the predictions of Christ and the Old Testament prophets of the coming time of tribulation.

8.2 A period of time far worse than anything the human race had ever experienced before.

9. The first four trumpets deal with aspects of the physical world which are taken more or less for granted. The beauty and benefit of the trees, the luxury and growth of green grass are seldom occasions for thanks-giving to God.

10. In a similar way, we are prone to take for granted the blessings of water, whether it be the beauty of the sea, the majestic flow of great rivers, or the pure fountains and springs which abound in the natural world.

10.1 These too are gifts from a loving God to an undeserving world, and they come under the blight and judgments described in the second and third trumpets.

11. Still another area of blessing from God is the light of the sun, moon, and stars. The handiwork of God in the heavens is mentioned frequently in Scripture as a reminder of God's power, sovereignty, and wisdom.

12. David, in writing Psalm 19, declared, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night shows knowledge."

13. The very presence of these aspects of nature so essential to human life and existence reveal God in His eternal power.

Rom 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

14. The Prophet Jeremiah spoke of the sun and moon as tokens of God's faithfulness to His promise to the nation of Israel and as symbols of their continuance as long as the earth endures (Jer. 31:35-36).

Jer 31:35 Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

Jer 31:36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

15. These very tokens of blessing and revelation of the glory of God are affected by the fourth trumpet.

15.1 So dramatic are the judgments and so unmistakably an evidence of the power and sovereignty of God that blaspheming men on earth can no longer ignore the fact that God is dealing with them.

16. Fearful as these judgments are, they are only the beginning of God's dealing with the earth; and as indicated in a special announcement, three great woes (the last 3 trumpet judgments) are still to fall.

17. As in the case of the seals, the first four trumpets would seem to form a special unit in contrast to the last three trumpets. Alford states:

“It has been before observed, that as in the case of the seals, so here, the first four are marked off from the last three... It is in the kind of the exercise which their agency finds, that these four trumpets are especially distinguished. The plagues indicated by them are entirely inflicted on natural objects: the earth, trees, grass, sea, rivers and lights of heaven: whereas those indicated by the two latter are expressly said to be inflicted on men, and not on natural objects... ”

18. Though it is difficult in this day of grace to imagine such catastrophic judgments, the Word of God is plain, and men are called everywhere to avail themselves of grace before it is too late.

19. Let me give you an expanded translation of verses twelve and thirteen:

Rev 8:12 The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third part of the light of the sun was obliterated, and a third part of the moon was darkened, and the light from a third of the stars fell silent. Even more disconcerting, a third part of the day was without light, and a third part of the night turned pitch black.

Rev 8:13 As I watched, I heard a large carnivorous bird while flying in mid-air call out in a loud voice: There are three terrible calamities coming "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth because of the last three trumpet blasts about to be sounded!"

Chapter Eight Conclusion:

1. We've seen that Revelation chapter describes in a general sense a reign of terror on earth called in Scripture, a time of Jacob's trouble.

2. We have examined our Lord's successive breaking of six of the seven seals of a scroll, and we've seen that seals two, three, four, five and six usher in a specific judgment on a Christ rejecting world.

3. The first seal (White Horse rider) releases a dictator, the Antichrist, who quickly succeeds in becoming ruler of a ten nation federation with his headquarters in Rome.

4. The second seal (Red Horse rider) takes peace from the earth.

5. The third seal (Black Horse rider) results in an economic collapse. There is great poverty in the land, a natural result of war.
6. The fourth seal (Pale Green rider) precipitates a tremendous outbreak of death through famine, epidemics, and civil violence.
7. The fifth seal describes the beginning of the greatest persecution of all time, a period when believers will be slaughtered in the streets.
8. The sixth seal unleashes a worldwide holocaust i.e. stars fall, there are numerous earthquakes, the sun blackens and the moon turns blood red; God's judgment falls in spades on the world.
9. Revelation chapter 7 flashes back to the beginning of the Tribulation period, shortly after the Rapture but just before the judgments begin. Though all believers have been Raptured, God provides a continuing witness for Christ by calling forth 144,000 Jewish evangelists, 12,000 from each tribe.
10. For seven years they will perform a remarkably effective job of "bringing people" to faith in the Messiah Jesus.
11. Chapter eight begins with the opening of the seventh seal.
12. The seventh seal ushers in the prophetic judgments of God.
13. Though simply introduced, the seventh seal is clearly the most important development up to this point.
14. The events of chapter six recall were a summary of those things which occur in the Great Tribulation.
15. Contained in the seventh seal, the trumpets and the vials are all the specific developments leading up to the second coming of Christ. Chapter eight tells us of the first four trumpet judgments.
16. Christ first offered the prayers of the Saints and then He filled the Censer with fire and then hurls it to earth.
17. The thunder, lightning and more which ensues is a warning of the wrath to come.
18. Like the one-half hour of silence the thunder and lightning gives mankind adequate opportunity to think on what they have already seen and experienced.
19. Time is drawing nigh, the Great Tribulation is in session but God in Grace has provided time for repentance.

20. There unfortunately is no such repentance forthcoming.

21. The trumpets and bowls are on the way.

22. In one sense these "woes" are the direct answer to the prayer of God's martyred Saints.

Now let's see what Revelation chapter nine has for us.

Introduction:

1. The first four trumpet judgments were directed toward the earth's ecology, but the last three judgments found in chapter nine are directed toward man himself.

2. Each of these judgments increases in scope and magnitude as they unfold. It appears that God is putting the pressure on man, a little more each time, to try to get him to repent and turn to Jesus for salvation.

3. Even the word "woe" which the carnivorous bird pronounces on mankind is a solemn warning in itself. The word means: "sorrow, calamity or affliction." If only mankind would heed this somber pronouncement!

4. But the indication is that most will not. It may seem a little confusing at first, but let me try to make clear the order of the next judgments.

5. The first woe that is set loose on man is actually the fifth trumpet judgment (Revelation 9:1-12).

KJV

Rev 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

Rev 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.

Rev 9:3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Rev 9:4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Rev 9:5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

Rev 9:6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

Rev 9:7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

Rev 9:8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

Rev 9:9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

Rev 9:10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

Rev 9:11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

Rev 9:12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

6. The second woe which man has to endure is synonymous with the sixth trumpet (Revelation 9:13-21).

KJV

Rev 9:13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

Rev 9:14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

Rev 9:15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

Rev 9:16 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

Rev 9:17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth (hyacinth), and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

Rev 9:18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

Rev 9:19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

Rev 9:20 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:

Rev 9:21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

7. The third woe is the seventh trumpet, and this judgment contains the final and most awful catastrophes of all times, called the "seven bowl judgments").

7.1 The record of the "seven bowl judgments" begins with verse one of Revelation chapter sixteen.

8. All of the woe judgments occur very near the end of the Tribulation.
Now let's get specific and see what we can learn from Rev 9:1-2:

NIV

Rev 9:1 The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss.

Rev 9:2 When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss.

Principles:

1. The rising crescendo of judgments on the earth now introduces the first woe, a dramatic event described by John in the first twelve verses of this chapter.

2. As the trumpet of the fifth angel is sounded, John records that he sees a star fallen from heaven having the key to the bottomless pit.

2.1 Earlier in the Book of The Revelation, in connection with the sixth seal (Rev 6:12-15) and the fourth trumpet (Rev 8:12-13) record is made of unusual disturbances in the starry heavens.

Rev 6:12 I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, Rev 6:13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.

Rev 6:14 The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

Rev 6:15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

Rev 8:12 The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, 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 turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.

Rev 8:13 As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!"

3. In chapter 6, the stars of heaven fall even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, and heaven itself departs as a scroll when it is rolled together.

3.1 In chapter 8, a great star from heaven described as "burning as it were a lamp" falls upon rivers and fountains of waters.

4. In these instances, as we have seen, it is probable that reference is made to material stars or fragments of them, and their falling on the earth is a form of divine judgment upon a wicked world.

5. The star is described as "fallen" in more accurate translations rather than falling.

6. The word fall is in the perfect tense and signifies a completed action with an emphasis on a completed result. For the event itself, see Revelation Chapter 12.

6.1 Hal Lindsey has written of this passage: "The star of Revelation 9:1 has to be a person rather than a literal star, since "he" is given a key with which he opens the bottomless pit. I believe this fallen star is none other than Satan himself, described in Isa 14:12 as "Lucifer" or "Star of the Morning." Satan receives the key from Christ Himself, since Christ is the possessor of the key to hell (Rev 1:18).

Rev 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

6.2 John Walvoord has written: "The star here mentioned ... seems to refer to a person rather than a literal star or meteor."

7. J. B. Smith notes there are two passages which anticipate this event: Isa 14:12-17 and Luke 10:18.

Isa 14:12 How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!

Isa 14:13 You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.

Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

Isa 14:15 But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.

Isa 14:16 Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble,

Isa 14:17 the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?"

Luk 10:18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

8. The person referred to as the star is given the key of the bottomless pit, or the pit of the abyss, as it is better translated.

9. No explanation is offered in the passage itself concerning the identity of this person, but the occasion may be the aftermath of warfare in heaven mentioned in Rev 12:7-9, where the devil is cast out into the earth.

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

Rev 12:8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

10. This act of God, probably at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, terminates the ability of Satan to accuse the brethren in heaven as he has been doing through previous ages.

Let me give you a point of two by way of further identification:

1. Lets' see if we can identify the creatures of Revelation 9 who ascend out of the pit.

1.1 Their purpose would seem to be to punish the earth. I have attempted to shed some light on their identification.

1.2 As John writes about this judgment the locust are a visual presentation of a panoply of demons running amok on planet earth. It has been written " they are uncanny denizens of the abyss, locust of a hellish species, animated by devilish instincts and equipped with infernal powers." Another has written "... the locust army is a symbolical representation of judgment of a superhuman kind ..."

1.2.1 The locust are commanded, probably by God not to hurt the grass of the earth or any green thing, or any tree, but only men who do not have the seal of God on the foreheads."

1.3 It would seem the locust here represent a divine judgment upon a wicked world. They torment men in a way comparable to the torment of a scorpion.

1.3.1 All except the sealed of God are subject to their torment. It is impossible then for any believer in that day to be subject to the torment of the locust; the torment is rather a judgment upon those who reject Christ.

1.4 The graphic description of the torment is compared to that of a scorpion's sting. Scorpions in some places grow so large that their venom has been known to not only be painful but even deadly to infants, the aged and the infirm.

1.5 The torment is said to last 5 months and best interpretation would seem a literal five months. Five months is the ordinary time during which locust commit their ravages although the five may be symbolic of "a short time."

1.6 This is a horrible picture of a pervasive supremacy by a divine plague to such an extent that men are dominated in agony of body. The natural plagues of the first four trumpets are now joined by a torment of demons.

2. Rev 9:1-2 by way of Expanded Translation with comment:

Expanded Translation:

Rev 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw Satan in his fallen state on earth; Jesus the Christ authorized one of His angels to give him the key to the bottomless pit.

Rev 9:2 And Satan opened the pit; and there arose out of it a great smoke, like the smoke from a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke.

2.1 John devotes more space to this "woe" [the fifth trumpet] than to all the preceding judgments combined.

2.2 Apart from the exact identification of Babylon in chapters 17 and 18, the meaning of the two judgments in this chapter presents the most difficult problem found in the Book of the Revelation.

2.3 The star falling from heaven, to whom was given the key of the pit of the abyss, is none other than the super angel Satan himself. Satan is but an instrument for carrying out God's purpose with reference to an ungodly world.

2.3.1 Most grace scholars would provide little argument otherwise.

2.3.2 The abyss is a place no doubt but what place is the question.

2.4 Could this be Tartaros, the place of confinement of the angels who sinned just before the flood or is it just a special abyss where reserve forces of Satan are made to reside until needed in God's timing.

Gen 6:1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

Gen 6:2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

Gen 6:3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Gen 6:4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

Gen 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Gen 6:7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

2Pe 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartaros), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

2Pe 2:5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

1Pe 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1Pe 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

1Pe 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

Jud 1:6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation (**Oikos**), he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

End Lesson Taught 7-25-2001

