

**THE SEVEN TRUMPETS OF JUDGEMENT ----- THE SEVENTH SEAL** (Revelation  
Ch8 to Ch11)

INTRODUCTION

Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall.  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
The entire King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put Humpty together again.

Isn't it a pity Humpty didn't meet Jesus!

This Morning we are here to continue with the unpacking of the wonderful book of the revelation of Jesus Christ. We were blessed last week by Dan, talking about the Seven Seal Judgements of Chapters six and seven of Revelation and we heard how the whole book was to do with the redemptive plan of Almighty God.

Last week, we had explained to us, six seals of judgement and we were left to go away contemplating on what the seventh seal might reveal and I am here today to do just that, by the help of the word and also by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ who is able to lead us into all truth. I have also sought the help of the commentaries on this subject by Ray C Stedman and also by John Stott and many other Bible commentators.

Since we are to deal with the opening of the seventh seal, I will like us to have a recap on what exactly the seals are. In Chapter 5, we read:

**1**Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. **2**And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" **3**But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. **4**I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. **5**Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." (Revelation 5:1-5).

We can all admit to the fact that we are living in a broken world with all its myriad of problems that need fixing. Men have been looking forward to solutions to our problems and we live day in and day out hoping to solve our personal problems. Every election year we have men come forward with their political manifestoes and perfect plans to put this mess that we in, in order. In fact, I am really surprised at the ease with which men come forward to give themselves up and with new ideas about solving the problems of the world.

We are definitely reminded of this when we look at the impending Presidential Election in America. With the global economic Systems in turmoil and on the verge of collapse, we have these two guys coming up to seek to be elected into office in order to sort the world out. Do you know what they

are saying? What are Barack Obama and John McCain saying to the American people? They are saying in effect “I am able to open the “scroll” and to bring into effect plans and programs that will sort out this mess!!”

For a long time, I did not comprehend what it meant when we read that John the Apostle, wept because no one was found worthy to open the scroll and even to look inside. I feel like weeping when I see mere men proposing to take on tasks they do not really understand themselves to start with. We are all at a loss when it comes to understanding the basic problems that we are saddled with. Men have tried throughout the whole of History to solve these problems but only to fail. Problems of war and wickedness; problems of child abuse; problems of teenage pregnancies and of what we have come to live with daily in this society, the problem of knife crime and teenage murders. Who is able to bring about the perfect world system? Who is able to fix this world system? Who has got the master plan to govern the world and to bring about the restoration of the whole planet earth? The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals. Jesus Christ is the only one who could bring about a permanent solution and usher in a new world order.

We could very easily be lost in the detail and lose the big picture of the 7 trumpet judgements.

Revelation 8:1-2 “When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God and to them were given seven trumpets.”

This half hour silence in Heaven is in direct contrast to the constant singing of praises in heaven. The Lord God Almighty Himself is going to make his move and so there is absolute silence and Trumpets are given to the Angels before His throne. These seven trumpets are all part of the consummate event which is the opening of the seventh seal. Revelation 8:3-5 tells us about a mighty Angel performing his priestly duties. This Angel can be identified as Jesus. He takes fire from the altar of brass, adds to it the prayers of the saints and offers them on a golden altar of incense before God.

### **The First Trumpet Sounds**

**ACTION:** Hail and fire mingled with blood cast from heaven unto the earth.

**RESULT:** A third part of all trees was burnt up and all green grass was burnt up.

This description is reminiscent of the seventh plaque that befell Egypt during Moses’ confrontation with Pharaoh, when hail and lightning came upon the whole land.

The plaques of the first four trumpets all fall on creation, causing massive environmental damage. But the destruction depicted here may also be powerfully symbolic.

### **The Second Trumpet Sounds**

**ACTION:** As it were, a great mountain, burning with fire was cast into the sea

**RESULT:** A third part of the sea became blood.

A third of all creatures were in the sea and had life, died.

A third of the ships were destroyed.

The first trumpet judgement assaulted the earth. The second attacks the sea. This could be the result of a violent volcanic eruption or it could be a massive meteor falling out of space and flaming through the atmosphere, landing at last in the sea. Whatever this mountain-like object is, it will cause the sea to become blood-red. Again this judgement may have a symbolic meaning which I am not able to speculate on right now although different commentators on the subject have their own suggestions.

### **The Third Trumpet Sounds**

**ACTION:** There fell a great star from Heaven burning; as it were a lamp and it fell unto the third part of the rivers and upon the fountains of waters.

**RESULT:** (The name of the star is called wormwood). The third part of the waters became wormwood and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter. (Exodus 15:22-26)

Again, the destruction depicted here may have a symbolic as well as a literal meaning. This is designed to teach us God's truth about the invisible realm of man's internal being. This is a suggestion by Ray C. Stedman: "It appears from these symbols that some great person, widely recognised as a leader will suddenly reverse his policy. He will in essence, fall. Many people will be embittered by a turnabout of this influential leader. In the mass struggle that ensues, many will experience moral and spiritual death."

### **The Fourth Trumpet Sounds**

**ACTION:** The third part of the sun was smitten and the third part of the moon and the third part of the stars were darkened.

**RESULT:** The third part of the sun and the moon and the stars were darkened. The day lost a third part of its brightness and the night too.

Our Lord Jesus Himself relates to this event when He said in Luke 21:25-28 "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, look up for your redemption draws nigh."

Not only is these a literal event in which the sun, moon and stars are darkened or fail for a time to give their lights, this is also a powerful symbolic event. The sun the moon and the stars are used in various places in scripture to symbolise earthly authorities. The highest such authorities- Kings, Prime Ministers, Presidents---- would be portrayed as the sun. Lesser authorities would be portrayed as the moon and the stars. You remember when Joseph told his dreams to his family, about the sun and the moon and the stars bowing before him. His father, Jacob did not need anyone to explain to him what those symbols meant. Thus we see depicted here a hierarchy of civil authority— authority which somehow is eclipsed under the judgement of the fourth trumpet.

What does the darkening of these heavenly bodies mean in a symbolic sense? To quote Ray C, "It means that these authorities will be morally darkened. The light of truth and reason will be withdrawn from them. Instead of displaying sound moral judgement, their judgement will be darkened and evil. They will display no ethical restraint, no compassion, and no justice. People under their government will experience only deceit, cruelty treachery, oppression and merciless exploitation.

By the grace of God, this darkening will be limited to a third. Some restraint of evil will still be possible by the grace of Almighty God.

### **The Three Woes**

Now we are left with the last three of the trumpet judgements which are referred to in Revelation 8:13 as the three woes. It simply indicates the increase in intensity of the remaining judgements that are about to be relished upon the earth.

### **The Fifth Trumpet Sounds**

**ACTION:** I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth and to him (to the star) was given the key to the bottomless pit. This star opened the bottomless pit. This person falls from heaven unto the earth and he was given the key to the abyss.

**RESULT:** There arose a smoke out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace (fires erupted at an oil depot quite recently.) The sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. Out of the smoke, came locusts upon the earth. Unto the locusts was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power. This is quite interesting - Locusts with the powers of scorpions. The locusts were commanded not to hurt the grass of the earth. Locusts by nature destroy vegetation but this lot are commanded not to touch the vegetation or any green thing or any tree but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. So the locusts were commanded to hurt men who did not have the seal of God.

They were not to kill these men but they were to torment them for five months. Incidentally, five months we are told is the normal lifespan of locusts. And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it. Men shall desire to die and death shall flee from them.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCUSTS**

**Their Shape:** They are like horses prepared for battle.

**On Their Heads:** They wore things that look like crowns of gold.

**Their Faces:** They have human faces, which speaks of intelligence.

**Their Hair:** They had hairs like women's hair which speak of beauty and seduction.

**Their Teeth:** They had teeth as the teeth of lions, sharp and powerful.

**Their Breastplate:** They have breastplates of iron. This speaks of their covering.

**Their Wings:** Sounded like chariots of many horses running to battle.

Their Tails: They had tails like scorpions (segmented and curly) and with stings in them and their power was to torture men for five months.

These creatures have a King over them who rules and controls them. He is the very angel of the bottomless pit. His name is Abaddon in the Hebrew and Apollyon in the Greek.

In the judgement of the third angel with the third trumpet, we saw a great star fall into the sea. In this fifth trumpet judgement, another angel falls but this time onto the earth. Here as in previous depictions of judgement, we are probably witnessing a literal event. The passage makes it clear however that this is also a symbolic event. The star represents an individual who is given a key by which he opens up the bottomless pit, the gateway to hell.

### **The Sixth Trumpet Sounds**

**ACTION:** I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. This voice from the four horns of the golden altar says: "Loose the four Angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates."

**RESULT:** 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 of men. That is to say that, the timing of their release has been preordained by Almighty God to the very second of time. The four Angels were released for the main purpose of killing a third of men living on the earth during this time. It is interesting to note that, the fifth Angel was only to torment for five months but the sixth Angel was for these four wicked Angels, who have been chained in the river Euphrates to kill a third of men. This depicts the activities of four wicked Angels of death. These demonic Angels had under their control and power, an army of two hundred million horsemen. John says that he heard the number, two hundred million.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE HORSES AND RIDERS THAT JOHN SAW IN HIS VISION**

**The Covering of the Riders:** They had body armour of fire and Jacinth and brimstone.

**The head of the horses:** They had heads as that of lions- lion-headed horses.

**The Mouth of the Horses:** Out of the mouth of the horses issued fire, smoke and brimstone.

A third part of men were killed by these, that is, the fire, the smoke and the brimstone, for their power is in their mouth. The power of the horses is located in their mouth and in their tail and with them, they do hurt.

Amazingly, the rest of the two-thirds of men which was not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands which goes to say that punishment does not change men and in most cases, it only goes to harden their hearts. These men did not repent of the works of their hands that they should not worship devils and that they should not worship idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood: which neither can see nor hear nor walk. They did not repent of their murders and their sorcery and their fornication and their thefts.

Now we have come to the tenth Chapter of revelation and this is where we get the answers to the question I posed at the beginning of this talk. Everywhere you go; people are wondering if there is any hope at all for the world we are in. People are looking up to great men who can solve our problems. Can anyone offer the human race any hope. Why doesn't God intervene in human affairs? Is God really in control? Or is the world taking an uncontrolled plunge to destruction?

These are the questions that we confront in Revelation 10. In revelation 8 and 9, we saw the terrible judgements that are in store for our world but with the beginning of Revelation 10 and into chapter 11, we find a kind of intermission that divides the sixth and seventh trumpet judgements.

Revelation 10 presents us with three mysteries which are the mystery of the mighty Angel; The mystery of God which the mighty Angel proclaims and the mystery of the little scroll which is held in the Angels hand. This is found in Revelation 10:1-4.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MIGHTY ANGEL

**His Garment:** That is to say His covering or what He wore. He wore a cloud (of glory). This Angel was wearing for a covering, the very glory of God.

**His Crown:** He had on His head a crown of the rainbow. The last time we saw the symbol of the rainbow was in Revelation 4, where a rainbow encircled the throne of God. This rainbow appears as a crowning adornment.

**His Face:** His face was as it were the Sun. (God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.) These details of the vision recall John's initial glimpse of Jesus as He stood amid the churches in Revelation 1.

**His Feet: His Legs:** His legs were like fiery pillars.

In His hands, He had a little book open and he set His right foot of a pillar of fire on the sea and his left foot of pillar of fire on the land.

He cried in a loud voice as a lion. He roared as a lion in a loud voice. (In heaven, everything is done in the open and in loud voices I suppose. What is done in secret shall be shouted from the rooftops.)

From the above description we can safely identify this mighty Angel as the Angel of the Lord that accompanied the Israelites as they were led by Moses from the Land of Egypt. From various inferences from the Bible we can identify this Angel as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appearing in His pre-incarnate form as the Angel of Jehovah.

In Revelation 10:5-7 we read "Then the angel I had seen on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. And he swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it and said, "There will be no more delay! But in the days when the seventh Angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as He announced to His servants the prophets."

What the scripture says here is that, the end of the ultimate mystery is about to be revealed.

The final answer to the questions of men is about to be answered with the blowing of the seventh trumpet. The long wait is over!!

God is sovereign and He rules over the universe, but He does not reign on earth. When He finally establishes His reign, all sin and all suffering will cease. That is our eternal hope for which we pray whenever we repeat the words, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

We will see the actual inauguration of that reign in Revelation 11:17, when the twenty-four elders praise God, saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.” That will be the moment of fulfilment for the prayers of all the centuries of saints, and for the predictions of all the millennia prophets.

One such prophet was Ezekiel, who described the beginning of God’s reign on earth in Ezekiel 36. In that passage, the prophet says that God will call the nation of Israel back into prominence. He will take out the evil heart of flesh and put His Spirit within them and He will forgive all their sins.

We then have the mystery of the scroll which we see in Revelation 10:8-11.

We now move to the final chapter for today which is Revelation 11. In this chapter we learn about how the program of God is going to be actually carried out in the last days, and through whom it will be performed.

In the first two chapters of chapter 11 John is given a task to perform. He was told to measure the temple

### **The Seventh Trumpet Sounds**

In Revelation 11:15-19, the seventh Angel sounds the seventh trumpet, the final blast of the trumpet series of judgement. This close-up view of the great tribulation draws to a close and a new phase of God’s program comes into view.

Revelation 11:15-19 “The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The Kingdom of this world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever.”

And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying:  
“We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, The one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. The nations were angry and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your Name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.”

Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within His temple, was seen the ark of His covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumbling, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

## CONCLUSION

We can now understand that the seals, the trumpets and the bowls as relating to the same period between Christ's comings but from different points of view. The seven seals describe what Christ allows in His world (since things happen only when He breaks the seals). The seven bowls, which is still to come, describe how Christ judges His world. But the seven trumpets (which come between the seals and the bowls) describe how Christ warns the world and summons them to repentance.

How do you feel about the judgements of God? Does the idea of God's wrath make you uncomfortable? We like the idea of God's love and grace and forgiveness, but we often try to skirt the issue of His justice and holiness. It is part of our fallen nature that we do not squarely, honestly face the fact that sin has consequences and that righteousness and justice are not matters to be taken lightly. Our sin cost Jesus a trial of suffering and death upon the cross plus the unimaginable torment of separation from God the Father. The triumph of resurrection overshadows but can never erase the horror of those hours upon the cross. In the same way the triumph of God at the end of revelation does not erase the horror that will come upon the human race during God's climatic judgement of sin at the end of history.

The judgements that we see here in Revelation are only unprecedented in degree, not in kind. God has been sending such judgements to the earth throughout history. In Revelation however, these judgements come to an apocalyptic climax. Our task is to seek to understand these judgements and learn the lessons God would teach us through them.

What a privilege God has given us in this book of revelation. He has allowed us a glimpse into the last chapters of human history. We can watch world events unfold before our very eyes and we will not have to wonder where its all going, because God has already shown us the conclusion of the trends and events that already surrounds us.

We are assured that a time is coming when Jesus will reign over all the earth. Unlike the days we live in, those times will be characterized by righteousness and peace. In that day, all drug traffic and all teenage pregnancies will cease. Divorce, domestic violence and child abuse will be no more. Our children will bring us the joy and expectations that we have of them.