

**BOOK OF REVELATION, WEEK 5**  
**CHAPTERS 9, 10, AND 11**

*As John's vision moves from the effects of the seals being broken to the sounding of the trumpets, we experience a shift from a simple description of the consequences of sin in the world, including those that the Church and the faithful must also endure, to the execution of God's Divine and active judgment against those who oppose Him. As has happened before, when we approach the sounding of the final trumpet, there is an interlude that is not so much a pause in the action, but a shift in scenery.*

**BRIEF REVIEW OF THE MOVEMENTS IN THE FIRST 8 CHAPTERS**

Recalling the different senses (or dimensions) of biblical interpretation, it's worth taking a moment to recall what has happened in the book of Revelation and the different levels of interpretation:

*MESSAGES TO THE CHURCH AND THE FAITHFUL*

- 1- Reassurance that Christ is Living and His Church remains present on earth, fulfilling a grand mission in serving as God's presence, eyes and light in the world, and Jesus, the lamb of God remains in its midst.
- 2 and 3- The angel gives encouragement, teaching and warnings to the local churches and the entire body of the Church.
- 4 and 5- Gives a vision of Divine worship in heaven and places the work of the angels, saints and faithful within a Cosmic and truly universal context, reminding the faithful that what takes place on earth is connected and a reflection of what takes place in heaven.
- 6- The Seals reveal what prevents salvation from being realized and describes the conditions of the world that are the result of sin and the consequences of opposing God.
- 7 and 8- A return to the vision of heaven reveals a more integral relationship between the events in heaven and on earth, and moves from witnessing the consequences of sin to Divine Judgment on those who oppose God.

*TEACHING IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE*

- 1-
- 2 and 3- In the letters to the 7 Churches we see:
  - Description of the identity of Jesus Christ
  - Commendation for the completion of good work
  - Chastisement and warning of particular sins
  - Particular remedy provided for overcoming the form of sin
  - Illustration of the progression of sin: Leading from temptation to lukewarmness and death.
- 4 and 5- Witness the relationship between worship in heaven and on earth and through the 4 Living Creatures, signs of virtue, the marks received in Christ and mission for the Church.
- 6- The breaking of the seals reveals the kinds of sin that prevent salvation from being fulfilled, universally and personally: (Earthly Power, wrath and anger, gluttony, greed and lust, sloth and despair, envy, and unrepentance.

- 7- A more detailed vision of worship in heaven and contrast between those who love and those who oppose God.
- 8- In the sounding of the first 4 trumpets, we again are reminded of the consequences of sin, which effects all, then given a warning for those who remain unrepentant, that Divine Judgment will soon follow. This begins a segment which is a reverse of the spiritual life, such that it follows the life of one who continues to follow the way and descend the path of sin.

#### *WITH REGARD TO SALVATION*

- 1- Though put to death, Jesus Christ raised from the dead, continues to live and is the source of Salvation.
- 2 and 3- The sure victory of Salvation can be won through the Church, present on earth and to those who persevere.
- 4 and 5- Praise and worship of God has continued in heaven since the beginning of time. While no man who has ever lived, nor any angel in heaven, has conquered sin, the lamb who was slain is found worthy and gives joy and hope to the people of God.
- 6- All undergo the suffering and consequences of the continuation of sin on earth. While some have given their life for Christ, more will still follow.
- 7- Salvation comes to both the Saints from the people of God (144,000) and a greater multitude that consists of people from every nation.
- 8 and 9- None of the inhabitants on earth repent.

### **LOCUSTS OF THE 5TH TRUMPET**

#### *REMEDY NOT PUNISHMENT*

The Locusts of the 5th trumpet harken back to two episodes of the Old Testament: the plagues inflicted against Egypt in the days of Moses and the prophecy of Joel. In Exodus (chapter 10) the plagues are meant to be remedial, that is, in order to turn the hearts of the Egyptians and change their behavior, rather than intended as punishments. In Joel (chapter 2), the plague of the Locusts is meant to bring about the repentance of Israel from her unfaithfulness.

They are allowed only to afflict those who do not have the seal of God. This is a sign of God's Judgment that was not present in the breaking of the seals or the sounding of the first 4 trumpets.

They are ordered not to kill, but only to torment. Death is regularly reserved as the final punishment.

The span of 5 months is equal to the natural life span of locusts. It also indicates a limited time such that the suffering is not eternal (ie not a punishment). God is trying to bring conversion.

They will cry out for death but will not taste death: This is a sign of God's mercy and again, His desire for conversion. Death would equal true death, the second death which is permanent. However, with torment, there is the opportunity for repentance.

#### *SYMBOLISM IN THE LOCUSTS*

There is clear symbolism and indication that those who do not receive the seal of God are troubled and attacked by demonic spirits:

The cloud rising out of the Abyss

The Angel of the Abyss is "Destruction" by "One who Destroys"

Demons are described by Jesus as scorpions and serpents (Lk 10:19)

Crowns: Sign of power and ambition for power  
Human Face: Pleasure seeking  
Hair: Vanity  
Teeth: Desire for violence  
Breastplates: Heart-heartedness  
Chariots: Pride  
Tails like Scorpions: Idolatry.

\*\*Concluding thoughts: Idolatry ultimately is the worship of demons and the evil one  
Those who deny Christ, practice evil, or worship idols become prey to demonic spirits. The woes are describing what happens when you flee from the protection of God.

\*\*\* Remember, in baptism you received the seal of adoption as sons and daughters of God.  
You received the seal of God, which is inviolable (eternal).

## **CHAPTER 10**

7 Thunders: That John was commanded to seal up what he heard, indicates that all is not yet revealed and is not to be revealed until the end. There is an idea of “Delayed Expectation” that runs throughout Revelation.

The *small scroll* is similar to the scroll that Ezekiel received. Both taste sweet but sours the stomach. This is the scroll of the sins of the world and a sign that God is giving another chance to the inhabitants of the earth: by the command “You must again prophesy ...”

## **CHAPTER 11**

Those who are not of the people of God will trample the outer court, but not the Holy of Holies (Dan. 8:10-13)

The term of 3 1/2 years also comes from Dan. 7:25. It represents a determined time, but that is less and diminutive next to the fullness represented by 7.

While John measures the Temple at this time, an Angel later measures the Temple with a golden rod. Suggesting again that what is on earth reflects heavenly reality and this is a sign and tie of incompleteness: The Church on earth is not yet full (recall the promise made to the elders and martyrs who rose from underneath the throne).

The testimony of the two prophets is given to the Gentiles in the Outer Courts

Sackcloth is the sign of mourning and repentance

Symbolized in Zec. 4 by 2 Olive Trees and Lampstands

Old Testament and New Testament (2 Witnesses) give testimony to the same God.

7th Trumpet marks completion, meaning that what comes after is a retelling of what has been told.