**THOUGHT FOR TODAY: Ponder how valuable your SOUL must be for Satan to tirelessly pursue it, and the King to lay down his own life for it!**

**RECAP OF THE FRIST 6 SEALS**

* **1st** seal **- White Horse –** Antichrist
* **2nd** seal **- Red Horse -** take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.
* **3rd** seal **- Black Horse -** and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.”
* **4th** seal **- Pale Horse -** And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.
* **5th** seal **- Souls Crying Out from Under the Alter -** the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.
* **6th** seal **- Great Earthquake -** there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

**THE 7th SEAL AND THE 1st FOUR TRUMPETS**

**Silence in heaven.**

[**Revelation 8:1**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/1/s_1175001) **(NKJV) When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.**

1. **When He opened the seventh seal**: The sealed scroll was introduced in [**Revelation 5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/5/1-14/s_1172001), and the seals were opened one by one up to the 6th seal in [**Revelation 6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/6/1-17/s_1173001).
	1. We waited for the last seal to be opened and the contents of the scroll to be revealed — but then, we were given a pause with [**Revelation 7**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/7/1-17/s_1174001), the revealing of the 144,000 and the great multitude out of the great tribulation.
	2. Now the idea of a pause between the 6th and **the 7th seal** is emphasized by this **silence in heaven for *about half an hour***.
	3. This **silence** is striking; some have seen it as “breathing space,” or, that the angels are silent so the prayers of the saints can be heard, perhaps even the cry of the martyrs of [**Revelation 6:9-11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/6/9-11/s_1173009)(the 5th seal).
	4. More than likely, this **silence in heaven** demonstrates a sober, awestruck silence at the *judgments to come*.
2. **Silence in heaven for about half an hour**: A half-hour silence is not long, but things seem long or short in their context.
	1. If a preacher were to stop his sermon and remain silent for ten minutes, it would seem like an eternity.
	2. Since heaven is a place of constant praise and worship to God ([**Revelation 4:8-11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/4/8-11/s_1171008)), **silence** for **about half an hour** is a long, long time.

**Seven angels with seven trumpets.**

[**Revelation 8:2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/2/s_1175002) **(NKJV) And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.**

1. **The 7 angels who stand before God**: According to Jewish tradition, there are seven angels who stand in God’s presence.
	1. Apparently, based on this verse, that traditional idea was accurate.
2. **And to them were given seven trumpets**: In the Old Testament, trumpets sounded the alarm for **war** and threw the enemy into a panic, or called an **assembly** of God’s people.
	1. These **seven trumpets** will sound as God’s battle-alarm during the great tribulation.

**The other angel with the golden censer.**

[**Revelation 8:3-6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/3-6/s_1175003) **(NKJV) Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.**

1. **Then another angel**: Some see this **angel** as Jesus, functioning as a mediator and because of Old Testament references to Jesus as “the Angel of the LORD.”
	1. Others say it could only be a mere angelic being because the specific ancient Greek word for **another** means “another of the same kind.”
2. **A golden censer… the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God**: Prayer and incense are often associated in the Bible. The idea is that just as incense is precious, pleasant, and drifts to heaven, so do our prayers.
	1. So here, before anything *happens* at the opening of the 7th seal, the prayers of God’s people come before the Lord God.
	2. (L. Morris quoting Torrance) “More potent, more powerful than all the dark and mighty powers let loose in the world, more powerful than anything else, is the power of prayer set ablaze by the fire of God and cast upon the earth.”
	3. (Clarke) “It is not said that the angel presents these prayers. He presents the incense, and the *prayers ascend* with *it*. The *ascending* of the *incense* shows that the prayers and offering were accepted.”
3. **Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth**: As God’s people pray for the resolution of all things, their prayers were touched by the **fire from the altar** in heaven, and then “thrown” back down to earth. All things will not be resolved on this earth until judgment comes, and when the prayers of God’s people “come back” to earth, they bring the outpouring of judgment (**noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake**).
4. **So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound**: We waited for the seven seals to be opened and saw them loosed one by one. But when the seventh seal was finally opened, it set in motion **seven trumpets** that would **sound** upon the earth.
	1. In considering how the seals and the trumpets relate to each other, some believe they are *poetic and repetitive*, and John describes the same events with different words and details in both the seal and trumpet judgments.
	2. (L. Morris) “This is typical of John’s method. He goes over the ground again and again, each time teaching us something new. There is more to the End than we can readily take in. Every series of visions brings out new facets of it.”
	3. Considering how the seals and the trumpets relate to each other, some believe they are *sequential*, and that the seventh seal contains the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet contains the seven bowls of judgment.
	4. Since John brings a report from eternity, it is difficult to assign a chronological and sequential element to these judgments. It is most important to emphasize that they are *real*, even if their sequence is hard to pin down with certainty.

**The first 4 trumpets.**

**The 1st trumpet brings a plague on vegetation.**

[**Revelation 8:7**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/7/s_1175007) **(NKJV) The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.**

1. **Hail and fire followed, mingled with blood**: **Blood** may indicate the *color* or the *result* of the phenomenon described here. We don’t know if the **hail** and **fire** was red in color or if it brought forth red blood, but one way or another this should be understood directly, without escaping into a creative symbolism.
	1. (Clarke) “Many eminent men suppose that the irruption of the barbarous nations of the Roman empire is here intended. It is easy to find coincidences when fancy runs riot.”
	2. (Seiss) “The truth is, if *earth, trees,* and *grass* do not mean earth, trees, and grass, no man can tell what they mean. Letting go the literal signification of the record, we launch out upon an endless sea of sheer conjecture.”
2. **A third of the trees were burned up, and *all* green grass was burned up**: Because of this **hail** and **fire**, **trees** and **grass** are destroyed — **1/3rd** of the trees are burnt and **all** of the grass is burnt.
	1. Question - How will this affect the farmers, Cattle men, sheepherders, etc.?
	2. Question - How will this affect food supplies to the stores?
	3. *How* will this happen? Many wonder if it will happen through a phenomenon we know today, like *nuclear war*, *fallout*, *pollution*, *meteors*, and so forth. These ideas are interesting and possible, but they should never obscure the essential truth: *God brings judgment*. God isn’t a passive bystander. This is **not** “nature” taking its course, GOD is in control.
	4. God will use *whatever* *method* He desires to bring judgment, but people on earth will *know* these events are from **God**, and won’t think them to be merely natural disasters
		1. *How will mankind feel toward GOD after many of these judgements?*
		2. [**Revelation 16:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/16/9/s_1183009)(NKJV) **And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.**
		3. **Rev** [**16:11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/16/11/s_1183011) (NKJV) **They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.**

**The 2nd trumpet brings a plague on the sea.**

[**Revelation 8:8-9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/8-9/s_1175008)(NKJV) **Then the second angel sounded: And *something like* a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.**

1. **Something like a great mountain**: John carefully said that this is not an actual mountain (note the use of **like**), but it was a blazing mass as big as a **mountain**.
2. **A third of the sea became blood**: This disaster is, perhaps a meteor that crashes into the sea and results in great oceanic disturbance with residual pollution. Researchers today say that this sort of phenomenon has happened before in the history of the earth, sometimes resulting in great ecological upheaval and disaster.
	1. NASA scientists say it would take an asteroid only *60 miles wide to totally wipe out life on Earth*.
	2. The **Arizona** Meteor Crater is about 3,900 ft in diameter and 560 ft deep
	3. **Chicxulub** crater in Mexicois estimated to be approximately 110 miles in diameter and approximately 12 miles in depth
	4. NASA - How big is the **July 21st 2027** asteroid, it’s between 330 and 1000 feet and what are the chances of it hitting the Earth – **96%**
	5. Here, the result is that **1/3 of the living creatures in the sea died, and 1/3 of the ships were destroyed**. The **blood** may be either the *cause* or the *effect* of the widespread death in the oceans of the world.
		1. What will this do to the Fishing industry that catch’s 1 to 2.8 trillion fish each year.
	6. **The sea** may be a specific reference to the Mediterranean and not a reference to all oceans. In the world of the Apostle John, the Mediterranean Sea *was* the sea and they really had little knowledge of other oceans.
	7. **Like a great mountain**: It isn’t uncommon to take this **great mountain** as a symbol for a nation that will be judged. Mountains are sometimes used as figures of governments or nations ([**Jeremiah 51:25**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/jer/51/25/s_796025)**,** [**51:27**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/jer/51/27/s_796027)**,** [**51:30**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/jer/51/30/s_796030)).
	8. But in this context, the symbol doesn’t make sense. What does it mean that the **great mountain** is burning with fire? What does it mean that it **was thrown into the sea**? What does the **sea** symbolize? Who are the **living creatures in the sea**? What are the **ships** on the sea? What is their destruction a symbol of?
	9. All these questions make us say that the best solution is to see this as some literal mass of land with probably something like a meteor or asteroid falling into the sea and bringing ecological disaster.

**The 3rd trumpet brings a plague on fresh waters.**

[**Revelation 8:10-11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/10-11/s_1175010)(NKJV) **Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.**

1. **A great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch**: We may easily associate this with a comet or meteor crashing into the earth and bringing ecological disaster. But God may have something else in mind also.
	1. (Clarke) “Some say the star means *Attila* and his Huns; others, Genseric with his Vandals falling on the city of Rome; others, Eleazer, the son of Annus, spurning the emperor’s victims, and exciting the fury of the Zealots; others, Arius, infecting the pure Christian doctrine with his heresy, [and so on and so on]. It certainly cannot mean *all these*; and probably *none* of them. Let the reader judge.”
	2. **The name of the star is Wormwood**: **Wormwood** is a very bitter substance, and well-known for bitterness, convulsions and death.
		1. It’s used to flavor some spirits and wines, including bitters, vermouth, spice mead and a substitute for mint in Moroccan tea.
		2. It’s also the English translation for the Russian word, *Chernobyl*.
	3. **A third of the rivers… a third of the waters**: The *proportion* of ecological disaster stays the same. In each one of the trumpets, **a third** of an ecological system is destroyed in judgment.

**The 4th trumpet brings a plague on the heavens, and darkness on the earth.**

[**Revelation 8:12-13**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/8/12-13/s_1175012)(NKJV) **Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”**

1. **A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night**: This does not describe a one-third lessening of light, but one-third of the day and night are plunged into absolute darkness. As Jesus said: *the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light* ([**Matthew 24:29**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/mat/24/29/s_953029)**).**
2. **Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet**: The angel’s woes are well founded, because one-third of the earth’s population will die in the next three trumpets.
3. The ancient Greek words for *angel* and *eagle* are very close in spelling. Some ancient versions say that it is an *eagle* **flying through the midst of heaven**, making this cry.

**Observations on the first 4 trumpets.**

1. These first 4 trumpets reveal the severity of God’s judgment. He attacks all the ordinary means of subsistence, such as food and water; and He attacks all the ordinary means of comfort, and knowledge, such as light and the regular rhythm of days.
2. Man has come to see these aspects of the created order as impersonal, perpetual forces. During the great tribulation, God proclaims His Lordship through their agonizing disruption.
3. We know the great humility that comes upon men in the midst of something like an earthquake, because they know that “nature” is not as reliable as they had thought. With these four trumpets, that effect will be multiplied greatly.
4. The first 4 trumpets also reveal the *mercy* of God’s judgment; these are partial judgments striking only 1/3rd, and are meant to *warn* and lead a rebellious world to **repentance** before the final curtain.
5. For now, **God *spares* more than He *destroys*.**