

The Revelation

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Revelation 8:1-13

Vss. 1-5

- The Lamb breaks the seventh seal and the immediate result is silence. There is a pause. The music of heaven is ceases. The thunder is still. Everything is quiet, for the prayers of God's people are about to be lifted up to Him.
- (save vs. 2 for vs. 6)
- An angel comes with a golden censer and filled with prayers, and more incense is added with the prayers. In chapters 6, 9, 14, and 16 we again see an angel standing near the alter of God. The picture here is that our prayers are offered as sacrifices to God. People may think they have nothing left to offer God, but we do not realize how God values even the simplest of prayers.
- Then the angel takes the burning coals from the altar and through the fire to the earth. We see similar images in Ezekiel 10:2 and Isaiah 6:6.
- "The prayers of the saints return to the earth in wrath." (H.B. Swete). Pain and suffering fall on those who brought pain and suffering to the people of God.

Vss. 2, 6

- In verse 2 John sees the seven angels who stand before God and they were given seven trumpets. In the Catholic Bible, in the Book of Tobit (written 225-175 BC), the angels are named Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sariel, Gabriel, Remiel.
- Each angel has seven trumpets. In both the OT and NT, the trumpet was used to denote God's intervention into Creation (Ex. 19:16-19; 1 Cor. 15:52). John's church would understand that the trumpets may signal an alarm, a fanfare celebration, or be a call to battle.

Vss. 7-12

- Here with each of the four trumpet blasts the basic forces of nature are used as judgement against the world. With each blast a different part of the world was attacked, but the destruction is only partial, not total, merely a prelude to what was coming.
- What John is seeing is reminiscent of the plagues of Egypt (Ex. 9:23-26; 7:20-21; 10:21-22) and during the Exodus (Deut. 20:14-18) and of the judgements of Jeremiah (9:14-15; 23:15).

Vs. 13

- Not an angel, but an eagle, flying straight up above, crying out with a message for both heaven and earth.
- In the Syriac Orthodox Bible is the book of 2 Baruch, a 1st or 2nd century Jewish apocryphal writing, which also tells of God sending an eagle with a message to the Jews in exile in Babylon. Again, Creation is the Lord's, and He is free to use it for any purpose He wishes.