

The Seventh Seal

Revelation 8:1-6

The seventh seal begins, and contains, the seven trumpet judgments of God. These follow the sixth seal – they do not happen simultaneously.

The first six seals (or five of the six) are not actual judgments of God. The Holy Spirit is gone (2 Thess. 2), the church is gone, and the influence for good upon mankind and the world is gone with them. Once that takes place, the Devil has complete control over the world and man, and because of his demonic influence on man, the world begins to turn on itself. There are a couple of events in these five seals that are from God (the earthquake for one) but they are not seen as the judgment of God's wrath – at least not at this point. This is important to understand for the church today so that we can understand the influence we still have on the world and to understand how much easier it ought to be to influence them for Christ now.



I. THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SEAL – VS. 1

A. This seal was introduced with a span of "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour"

1. The silence is seen (or heard) by John "in heaven" – that is where the angels were coming from and that is where the previous vision had ended
2. The silence was to make a pause between what John had just seen and what he is about to see – it was given, it would appear, to allow him time to soak in what he had just seen and prepare his mind for what is about to happen

B. The aspect of silence is not seen in John's vision elsewhere, so it is to be understood as a very dramatic event – 30 minutes is a long time for there to be no noise – just calm

II. THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE SEAL – VS. 2-4

A. Seven angels

1. These are simply seven angels – there is no implication otherwise – it is just seven angels
2. These are not the "seven spirits of God" of Rev. 4:5 either – these are real, genuine angels
3. These angels are seen as standing "before

God” – they are at the throne awaiting His command to sound the alarm

B. Seven trumpets

1. The seven trumpets are given to the angels
2. “Trumpets were used on the occasion of the giving of the law, were sounded on the first of the month, and served to announce almost every important occasion” (Walvoord – pg. 152)

Exodus 19:19

(19) And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

Leviticus 23:24

(24) Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first *day* of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

Numbers 10:2-10

(2) Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.

(3) And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

(4) And if they blow *but* with one *trumpet*,

then the princes, *which are* heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee.

(5) When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.

(6) When ye blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys.

(7) But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm.

(8) And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.

(9) And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

(10) Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I *am* the LORD your God.

Joel 2:1

(1) Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for *it is* nigh at hand;

3. The seven trumpets will bring to mind Joshua taking Jericho – they marched

around seven days, on the seventh day they marched around seven times and blew the trumpets and the walls came down

C. "Another angel"

1. Who this angel is is not given – some say it is just another angel and some say it is the Angel of the Lord of the OT – none other than the Son of God Himself
2. It is interpreted by most theologians that we would agree with as being the Son of God but since He is seen as the Lamb both before and after this portion of the vision it would be odd that He would be seen as an Angel here
3. We cannot say with any certainty who it is other than to just interpret him as being another angel

D. The altar

1. This altar is to be considered in relation to the work this angel is doing with the golden censer and the incense
2. The Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple worship involved the altar of incense where the priest would burn incense upon the altar and the smoke would fill the Temple or Tabernacle and would then ascend to heaven

Exodus 30:1-10

(1) And thou shalt make an altar to burn

incense upon: *of* shittim wood shalt thou make it.

(2) A cubit *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits *shall be* the height thereof: the horns thereof *shall be* of the same.

(3) And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.

(4) And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal.

(5) And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with gold.

(6) And thou shalt put it before the vail that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

(7) And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.

(8) And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

(9) Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

(10) And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it *is* most holy

unto the LORD.

3. Incense in the context of the Old Testament worship was a type of the prayers of the saints and a reminder that intercession to the Lord has the character of sweet incense (Walvoord)

E. A golden censer

1. The censer was used in the Old Testament worship to take the coals from the altar to be carried into the Holy of Holies where the incense was added

[Exodus 37:25-28](#)

(25) And he made the incense altar *of* shittim wood: the length of it *was* a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit; *it was* foursquare; and two cubits *was* the height of it; the horns thereof were of the same.

(26) And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it: also he made unto it a crown of gold round about.

(27) And he made two rings of gold for it under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two sides thereof, to be places for the staves to bear it withal.

(28) And he made the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold.

[Hebrews 9:4](#)

(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;

2. The censer is seen in verse 5 as being used to cast fire to the earth which then caused the catastrophic events listed

F. Incense

1. The prayers of “all saints” – most likely, all saints of the tribulation period that were praying for judgment to fall upon their enemies
2. “The smoke of the incense” – vs. 4 – this is said to be “with the prayers of the saints” – the smoke contained the prayers and they reached God “out of the angel’s hand”
3. Our prayers are seen today as a sweet smell to God, just as they were in the OT and just as they will be in the Tribulation – He hears our prayers and He knows our burdens

[Psalms 141:2](#)

(2) Let my prayer be set forth before thee *as* incense; *and* the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

[Psalms 56:8](#)

(8) Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: *are they* not in thy book?

G. The throne – same throne as has been seen in the vision – the throne of God

H. Fire of the altar – cast to the earth to cause an impact

III. THE IMPACT OF THE SEAL – VS. 5-6

A. *The impact and effect of this seventh seal, before the seven trumpet judgments began, was felt over all the earth*

B. *When the impact and effect of the prayers of the saints reached heaven, and God is seen acting upon them, the fire of the altar is cast "into the earth" and the outcome is catastrophic*

1. "Voices" – the noise many voices make – this would have caused great panic on earth
2. "Thunderings" – loud, rolling thunder over all the earth
3. "Lightnings" – and the catastrophic damage that goes with it
4. "An earthquake" – over all the earth – there was a great earthquake in the sixth seal – here is another one and there are more to come

C. *I believe that all the world will be able to see the seven angels as they are about to sound the seven trumpets – and God's wrath is just beginning*

Conclusion: What is given here as the introduction to the 7 trumpet judgments is so that we will know that God is about to bring judgment upon wicked

man. The prayers of the saints have been offered and He has heard, and He will answer.

The same is true today as far as our prayers go. He will hear, and He will answer (as long as it is in His will to do so). There is no need to pray today, on this side of the Rapture, for the judgment of God – it will not come for that would go against the Age of Grace. However, the saints on earth during the Tribulation will pray and God will hear, and God will answer.