

"SILENCE IN HEAVEN"

Rev. 8

INTRODUCTION:

The lamb of God opened the last and seventh seal, and there was silence in Heaven. It is unusual, because Heaven is never silent. It is filled by day and by night. And through the unending ages, with the worship and the praise, and adoration of the Heavenly Hosts.

Now we have come through some wonderful experiences here and I've searched this book of God, and there is not one ray of hope for men and women who leave this world rejecting Christ. I have never been able to find anything in the Bible that would even cause one to think of this. Even the wildest dream of a man called Russell, promising a second chance after death. But I have never found one statement in the Bible, that is, based on God's Word where there would be any hope for a man who rejects Christ. This is the only world in which God is offering salvation to Christless men. And if you refuse the message of his grace now, you deliberately steal your heart against the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. And will go down to a Christless grave.

I think the most awful picture in the Bible given us, of the doom and the lost, is the book of Jude. It is the preface book to the book of Revelation. Where he says, that there will be some - as wondering stars.

And we have seen here that a great thing has taken place. There stands the four angels holding back the corners of the earth. The wind of judgement is about to be turned loose. And God has offered them an interlude in which a 144,000 -

the Tribes of the children of Israel, and then a vast multitude in that 9th verse of Chapter 7. Who had washed their robes in the blood of the lamb. They were made secure. They were taken care of because they were sealed. With God's seal, and the concluding statement was -- that he was going to wipe away all tears from their eyes.

You sit down and think and meditate about that and that is enough to grow a great soul.

In Chapter 8 we are approaching today a chapter that I am going to divide it up into two things. There are many truths here as the seventh seal - we might have used something in organizing this chapter. By talking about the seventh seal and the seven trumpets. But I have decided that we'd use it this way. First, the events during the silence in Heaven. V. 1-5. Second, the judgements following the silence in Heaven. V. 7-13.

I, Events during Silence in Heaven - 1.1-5

First, the opening of the seal. V. 1. "And when he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in Heaven that was about the space of half an hour." We are told that the lamb takes this book of inheritance and he has opened now six seals - and we have seen the results. And now he is opening the seventh seal, and things are absolutely silent in Heaven.

Why this silence in Heaven. This is divine power at work. I remember the forces are struggling against evil. Now, would anyone be able to survive the judgements that are sent down upon the church and upon this earth. Now there are those who are safe because they have been sealed. And now that God's people are safe, the destructive

elements of judgement are about to come and here is the breaking of the seal. And when this seal is broken, there is silence for half an hour. Now that may have been a very brief time up in Heaven. And it could have had several meanings. So you hunt around and you try to find what is this silence all about.

You know a flying rumor never has any trouble making a landing. Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil. And you will never be a success at a tea party. Gossip is unlike river waters -- it flows both ways.

When you are in deep water, it is a good idea to keep your mouth shut.

Calvin Coolidge once said, you don't have to explain something that you haven't said.

Now, Gandhi instituted what he called silent Mondays. On that one day each week, he did not speak. Think about that.

W. T. Grant, of the chain store, owner once suggested that it might be well for a man to spend time in jail or a rotating basis - where he could have an opportunity to think. Now some men get relaxation from going fishing. And they tell us that some executives also take a hotel room, and do not stir from it for a week. Anyone driven by work and worry will show wisdom when he obeys the ancient command. Go ye apart into the desert and rest awhile.

An old Danish peasant on his death bed, asked of his son, one promise. That he should sit alone for half an hour each day, in the best room in the house. The son

did this and became a model for the whole district.

As you hunt around for the answer to this question here -- you will find many amazing and sometimes amazing answers.

I read or heard somewhere that the (reason) there was silence in Heaven, for half an hour was, that the women had not arrived yet! Now you can take that for what it is worth. I have probably said too much of how women ought to dress at church, last Sunday night in our study of Ephesians.

But, nevertheless, John says there was a (half an hour) in which there was (absolute silence).

Then lets see if we can understand this. It was first, intense (expectancy). Look, the last drama of the ultimate mystery of Almighty God, was about to take place. The ultimate seal - the seventh seal. And the expectation in Heaven - they were saying to themselves. What now will God do? - and what will be the final disposition, of his judgements on this rebellious and blasphemous world.

We are told, in the 22nd chapter of the book of Acts, that Paul stood on the steps of the tower Antonio--and before a mob, raised his hands and spoke. To them in the Hebrew tongue - and there followed a great silence.

A second thing that might have caused this silence -- the foreboding. Even the

Almighty God - paused before the onward rush of that great and final judgement.
The first seal, the second, the third, and the fourth - they came forth by war,
by famine, by pestilence, by blood-shed, by violence, by storm. And now comes
that last and that final seal - what does it mean for the remainder of the
dwellers on earth. Why the crowds have been gathering - the storm has been making
up. And here is the calm here on this earth.

3- Third, this was a breathing space in the narrative. It was a moment of
preparation for the shattering revelation to come.

4- A fourth thing, it might have been that the prayers of the saints were going
up to God and there needed to be a silent time in their behalf.

Now, I know that here is something that everyone of you has had experience with.
It may be the calm before the coming storm. The most awful storm that will ever break
on this poor world. You remember a thunderstorm - how often it is on a hot summer
day. Suddenly it gathers in the heavens. The clouds become heavy, they become dark,
and you thought you heard thunder. And then comes peel after peel with intensity.
And then you observe some lightning flashes. And there is terror that comes in your
heart. And then suddening, everything, all becomes still. There seemed to be not
even the breath of wind. To move the leaves upon the trees. And yet there is the
overcast and threatening sky. Why the chickens are running to a hiding place. Cattle
are moving in out of the fields. Uneasy. And all of nature is expectant. A few
moments pass - and there is a flash of lightning. And then there is the dread crash
upon crash that follows. And the windows of Heaven seem to open up. And you see
in the distance, that storm, pouring down in a deluge. Water - and it reaches you.

You know, I believe that is just what we have here - it is similar. In Chapter 4 and 5, the saints had gathered around the throne of God. And around the lamb. And then the seals were broken one after another in quick succession. Upon the poor world. And God gathered his beloved people and then following the sixth seal, that was not the climax. And he is going to deal with this world. And the last seal is broken and we will find what side God is going to take in the affairs of the earth. And he is going to judge according to the holiness and the drama of the great tribulation. No wonder, there is silence in Heaven, for half an hour. But the seal is broken.

And though all of Heaven, is waiting in breathless expectation, we seem to say in our own hearts - what will the lamb do next? What will be God's next move toward this rebellious world.

V. 2
And we go to the second event during this silence - in V. 2. We find that here are seven trumpets. Seven angels in the divine presence of God. They stand and are given these seven trumpets.

You will understand that there are going to be seven bowls of bile. You remember, we connect in the Bible with the fall of Jericho - that great city just across the Jordan. There was a barrier to the progress of the people of Israel to the Promised Land. The city fell with the blast of God alone. Now the priests of Israel were given the trumpets of judgement. And for seven days they marched around the city blowing the trumpets. Seven times on the seventh day, they did so. And at the seventh, the walls fell flat.

Now Jericho is a type of this present world. In its estrangement from God. Jericho fell at the sound of the seventh trumpet. And the world, as you and I know it, is going to fall at the sound of the seven trumpets. Blown by the angels of Judgement.

Why a trumpet -- because in the Scriptures, we have that the trumpet was used for various things.

First, it was an awakening signal of divine visitation.

Second, it was sounded when ceremonial processions took place. Joshua 6:1-21.

Third, the accession of a king. I Kings 1:34.

Fourth, to sentence Israel to repentance, in the face of divine Judgement. Isaiah 58:1.

Fifth, to announce religious ceremonies. Ex. 19:16.

So for festival days, the year of the jubilee, the decent from Mt. Sinai - the sound of war. When one expected war even in the last battle - the Almighty is going to sound his trumpet. To get a complete run-down on these trumpets that were delivered to these angels, during this silent time - you will read Numbers 10:1-10.

And Ezekiel 33:1-7.

3 A ~~third~~ thing that happened during the silence in Heaven is concerned with the prayers of saints. V. 3-5.

Everything in Heaven is halted - so that the prayers of the saints may be heard. The needs of the saints are more to God than other things that are going on in Heaven at this time. So that God may catch even a whispered prayer.

And God would hear the prayers of his struggling and afflicted people. Because his judgement will go forth against their enemies.

There is something to note - no prayer will be forgotten.

And secondly, no prayer will go unanswered. Does not every Christian pray, thy kingdom come, thy will be done. And this will be the great day when that prayer is going to be answered.

So the introduction of these seven angels is followed here by this one - they do not sound their trumpets immediately. But here is another angel who appears and he is ready. And he has a golden censor in his hand. And with this, the prayers of all the saints upon the golden alter.

Because of this description - this priestly ministry. In the Old Testament - we

link the pre-incarnated Lord Jesus Christ. With this one. The Lord appears in the first chapter as the Son of Man. In the fifth chapter, as the lion of Juda, and the root of David. And the lamb slain. In the 19th chapter, as the Word of God. And here, as the angel priest.

Seven angels stand ready while the angel priest stands by the great burnt offering of sacrifice. Both altars are mentioned here - as in the Tabernacle worship and in the temple. Fire upon which never died, day or night on the great brazen altar. On the inside of the holy place, before the veil, was the golden altar of incense. And this was where they went and morning and evening, the sacrifices were made - and the incenses on the golden altar while the people prayed outside.

So the golden altar of prayer is mentioned here - and the angel priests stands at the brazen altar of sacrifice.

In V. 4 - with the prayers of all of God's saints, all of them - yesterday, today, and til the time shall close - no prayer is ever lost. It is kept before God.

Now the reason for the appearance of the angel priest, is first the great and final judgement of the earth is in answer to the prayers of God's people. To their intercession. Spiritual appeal of God's people through the ages. They pray thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in this earth as it is in Heaven. And we notice here that a second thing is that those who are doomed and those who have resisted the faith, prayers are going up for them.

V. 5 - Now look, the angel peace has come back to the altar of judgement. He has an empty censor and he has poured out the prayers on the golden altar. And now he refills it with fire and coals.

But this time, he does not go back before God. He flings the censor into the earth.

And this he empties on the earth. The prayers have gone up to the Father. Now the judgement is going to come down. And lightning, earthquake, and the final storm, is about to break. And the judgement and the damnation is now visiting this earth. For if you sin against God, there is no more sacrifice. And vengeance belongeth to me saith the Lord. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

And so following intercession - there comes judgement. Why would a man chose to be lost. When God's grace and God's mercy can take away death now and forever for men.

II. JUDGEMENT FOLLOWS THE SILENCE

First, the first trumpet sounds - V. 6-7.

LAND

V. 6 - The angels with their trumpets prepare the sound. You remember the trumpet is an alarm. It is to announce a summons to battle. And all the forces of nature are going to be thrown here in this great blast. And each blast of the trumpet - some part of this world will be attack. And there will be partial destruction. And some of these

things that are taking place, might go back and come forth from the plagues that were sent upon Egypt. The first trumpet is a terrible storm. The land is judged. The earth.

Exodus 9:18-26 - the seventh plague of Egypt - I believe what happened then - God can bring again in judgement upon his people. There is just a hint here for those who refuse the Gospel. Remember, that grass is used as the symbol of man. Isaiah 40:6. It is trampled under the foot of man. It is a picture of man's frailty and weakness.

Trees represent the pride of human greatness. It is a picture of man. He thinks he can get along independent of God. You remember Nebuchadnezzar. He is likened to a great tree. The rulers of Israel spoke of the great cedars. John the Baptist spoke of how the axe is layed to the root of the tree. And every tree that beareth not good fruit is cast into the fire. Grass is like a man's weakness. The tree is like his dignity or his greatness. And here the judgement that is sounded from this trumpet is - that he is going to be cut down. Think of this - when there is a war. Who goes to war. The best of the land. The flower, the fruit, the finest that we have. At Annapolis, West Point, or the Air Force Academy in Colorado. Men go - and so, here he says - the judgement is going to fall. And a third part is going to be burnt up.

v. 8-9 Second, the second trumpet - V. 8-9. Now the great mountain is cast into the sea. The restless mass of humanity. Here is judgement on the sea. And we will discover that in Jeremiah 51:25 - the same symbol, a great mountain cast into the sea. You know the Bible somewhat explains Revelation - somewhere else in the Bible we find - and now here the Old Testament. A great mountain, burning with fire, is the symbol of Babylon. Now in the New Testament, here is amountain destroyed and cast into the sea.

JeA

The spiritual Babylon. That is the fountain head of idolatry. Root is in Babylon and that is why these mystic religions - Babylon is much today on the market. You will find people running after emotionalism, they will run after ritualistic things, services. And that are used in some supposedly Christian Churches. Now the angel sounds this trumpet - and says that Babylon will be cast into the great sea. God's wrath is going to fall on the false church and utterly destroy.

V. 10 3. The third trumpet is sounded in V. 10. There fell a star from Heaven - burning as though it were a lamp. And there will never be a time like this. And it will cover the earth - he says, with poison. And it will come and be wormwood. *Drinking Water*

The religious dignitaries who turn from righteousness, will be cast down. The spiritual and religious world leadership - when they fall, a third part of men are poisoned.

Now, who knows - this might be in the minds of professing Christians today. They might say this is the Pope. Can you imagine what would happen if we said Christianity or religion is just fraud. There would be thousands who look upon him as infallible. As Leo X did this privately - suppose the Pope today would do that openly. Do you see what could happen when a professing Christian leader gives up what he has stood for when a Christian layman, or a Christian woman has given up. It has a tremendous influence for evil upon people. You will notice that this had a judgement on the fresh waters, the rivers, the fountains, and this was the drinking water. Now the first trumpet, and the earth was touched - the lamb. The second trumpet and the sea was touched. And the third trumpet, the fresh water - the drinking water was touched.

SKY

V. 12
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Fourth, the fourth trumpet is sounded - V. 12. And at that - as the trumpet is sounded, we discover that the sky is smitten. The third part of the moon and the stars are darkened. What does it mean. If the light that is in me, be darkened. How great is the darkness. That is why many people go after Christian Science and many other spiritisms. They call it new theology. Do you know why so few people ever get out of these things - it is because of this. They have the opportunity to receive life from God. And they rejected it. And it is written in God's Word - that God sends them a strong delusion - and they should believe a lie. 2 Thess. 2:11-12.

When God presents his truth to people, responsibility comes with it. God presents Christ to you - you have a tremendous responsibility. If you hear the message and reject Christ, do not be surprised. You are caught in one of these unholy ideas of this present day. And perhaps, you will never be delivered from it. Until you wake up lost in eternity.

All this shows how God needs the stars to shine, his lamps to burn, his teachers to teach. And he still gives opportunity to those that will let him. The ninth Egyptian plague, Exodus 10:21-23 - says it was a darkness. A calamity. That plague was limited. And so here we find that when the light is withdrawn, what is going to happen on this earth.

Where the Gospel comes to people, and it is coldly received, it does not have the proper effect on their hearts. God gives warning to men and he gives them an alarm. He gives them a conscience. Now, don't you be surprised now - it will be your own fault. When the judgement of God takes effect and his wrath is stirred up against corruption.

V.13 CONCLUSION:

V. 13 - The end of the fourth trumpet. He heard an eagle flying through the midst of Heaven. Saying with a loud voice, woe, woe, woe. Within the evidence of the earth, and to the inhabitants of the earth and within reason to the other voices of the trumpet. Of the three angels which are yet to sound. Now these three following trumpets, are terrible. So terrible, horrible in intensity - the angel sound - and before the judgement falls the great warning is being made to the earth.

You remember the Lord delayed judgement in Noah's day by a few years - but he gave ample warning. And this is woe, the judgement is going to take on an intensified form.

And he pauses and looks - and there is one single eagle in mid-heaven. He is as the sky is empty. But here is a flying eagle - Matt. 24:28. A symbol of judgement. And this - Rev. 14:6 - an angel flies in mid-Heaven with the everlasting Gospel. Here is a triple cry of woe. And he is scanning the earth.

A preacher once said that in the Bible there are 600 warnings about Hell. He added that if a man were going down a road, and there were 600 signs on that road saying - this road leads to Hell. Then when the man got there, he would be - because of his own choice, his own decision, his own pre-determined will.

That is exactly what is going on with God in this whole world. God has made his way plain and God has said, you follow that wrong road - and it leads to damnation, judgement, and to Hell. That is why God warns. I beheld and heard this flying eagle.

In the sky, and he said, look - stop - consider - woe, woe, woe. The Lord God doesn't want to give up on his people.

Why does God let sinful man continue in his terrible way

Why does he do it. Because he is long-suffering. He is the Almighty. He wants man to turn, to hear, to listen, to repent.

This eagle flying - says woe, woe, woe. Woe to whom. There are two words here in the Greek language about dwellers of people in this earth.

One word is that he is a sojourner. A man who just dwells here but he is just passing through.

There is another Greek word that means to settle down. Now that is the word used here. It is addressed to those people who make this world their home. Whoe, unto those that have lost their Heavenly vision. They are pilgrims no longer. They do not have God in their heart. We like it down here - we are pleased with this. This is our paradise and we no longer feel the upward pull.

The remaining trumpets - they are going to be terrifying. As they deal with the spiritual rather than the material. And they are directed on those who dwell on this earth.