

# UNDERSTAND THE REVELATION

## SESSION THREE

### THE SEVENTH SEAL

Let us now return to the mainstream of the prophecy, back to the seals.

**The 7th seal, remember, has still to be opened.**

Chapter seven was inserted between the 6th and 7th seals simply because that is when the sealing work will occur in the stream of time.

**But once the 144,000 are sealed, the four angels standing at the four corners of the earth are allowed to release the four winds which will *hurt the earth, the sea and the trees.***

The hurting of the earth, the sea and the trees is in fact the beginning of the 7th seal.

**The 7th seal is divided into seven sub-sections, each introduced by a Trumpet blast.**

The seven Trumpets, in other words, constitute the 7th seal; they are the 7th seal in terrifying detail.

Remember this important point, for great confusion will result if the seven seals and the seven trumpets are treated as two separate prophecies.

**The 7th seal is introduced with these words:**

***Rev.8: 1: And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2: And I saw the seven angels which stood before Yahweh; and to them were given seven trumpets.***

### The First Trumpet

***The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. (Rev. 8:7)***

At this Trumpet, mighty continents housing millions of human beings will be devastated by hail and fire mingled with blood.

Similar scenes, though on a much smaller scale, were witnessed in ancient times at the destruction of Sodom and Egypt. (Gen. 19:24, Exodus 9:24)

The Elohim of Israel then literally rained hail and fire on mankind because of their grievous sins and stubborn refusal to acknowledge His authority.

**The same thing is due to happen at the 1st Trumpet.**

We are also told that one third of the world's forests and all the green grass will be burnt up.

**As foretold in Rev. 7. 1-3 the *four winds* are beginning to *hurt the earth and the trees*.**

What these events do to the agricultural output of the world is difficult to imagine:

**but it is quite obvious that this 1st Trumpet ushers in the terrible Time of Trouble!**

A time of international turmoil and terror unparalleled in the history of humanity.

**Note that the hurting is against the earth, not people.**

## The Second Trumpet

***Rev.8: 8: And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9: And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.***

At this Trumpet one third of the earth's oceans will congeal like the blood of a dead man.

**The sea, like the earth and trees before it, is being hurt as foretold in Rev. 7.1-3.**

All the traffic on the ocean/s involved will stop; and all the fish in those waters will perish.

In addition to these immediate effects, there will be other awesome repercussions, such as freak weather conditions, lack of rain water, fresh air.

The oceans of the world, as any ecologist will confirm, regulate the weather and help purify the very air we breathe.

**So the death of even one ocean is a catastrophe of unimaginable magnitude.**

This Trumpet, in short, will disrupt the weather, the agricultural output, the economy and the physical welfare of the whole human race.

At about this time the sun will begin to scorch the earth, for the cooling effect of the oceans will have diminished and drought will become a world-wide problem.

**Hunger and thirst will then become as common in the West as they are today in the East.**

The Great Tribulation will have then entered its second terrifying stage.

## **The Third Trumpet**

***Rev.8: 10: And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11: And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.***

Like the 1st and 2nd Trumpets before it, the 3rd Trumpet causes untold damage and distress on earth.

**A third of the rivers and fountains of water are now polluted and many people die as a result.**

The question is often asked, Could not the terms *earth, sea, trees, grass, ships* and *fish* be symbolic?

**We do not deny that possibility for it obviously does exist.**

Indeed, some of the terms (*trees, grass, fish* etc.) could easily be taken to represent people and scriptural texts found in support.

The main reason why we favor the literal translation, however, and avoid references to people, is because 'a third of mankind' is scheduled to die under the 6th Trumpet.

That frightening fact by itself, which is expressed twice in Revelation 9 verses 15 and 18, compels us towards the opinion of that **the hurting of a third of the sea, a third of the ships, a third of the rivers, a third of the trees and all the green grass** cannot also refer to people, but must at least on a lower plane refer to the literal sea, ships, rivers, fish, trees and grass.

Indeed, it is difficult to imagine what else they could be, especially when we remember that a third of the human race is scheduled to die at the 6th Trumpet.

Nevertheless, and we say this without reservation, symbolic representation may still be present here; but I have not come across any person capable of explaining away the anomalies such an interpretation would create.

## The Fourth Trumpet

**And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. (Rev. 8:12)**

The punishment up until now confined to this planet now mounts up to the heavens.

**The sun, moon, and stars are somehow attacked and begin to shine with a greatly diminished beam.**

How this almost unimaginable catastrophe is brought about is not explained, but it is obvious that if this trumpet is understood in a literal sense, then physical light as we know it will be greatly reduced on earth.

Once again we ask the question:

Could it be that this Trumpet presents a *symbolic picture* of heavenly powers, and that the sun, moon and the stars in this instance actually stand for spiritual agents of light and energy perhaps angel beings?

The possibility obviously must exist, especially in view of the plain statement like:

**The seven stars are the angels of the seven assemblies. (Rev. 1:20)**

If this were the case, then this Trumpet's reference to darkened stars could well present a drastic reduction in angelic authority throughout the universe.

**A third of the angelic host would be struck by Yahweh, and their privilege and ability to radiate spiritual light taken from them.**

This Trumpet, then, may be the prelude which is mentioned in Revelation 12:9.

***And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.***

Yes, the 4th Trumpet could well have symbolic overtones; but whatever its interpretation, it sets the scene for another dark age a spiritual twilight zone in time when light from heaven will diminish greatly and Satanic activity on earth will increase sevenfold.

The picture presented so far is undoubtedly grim and you are probably wondering if there is any good news in this catalogue of catastrophe; any protection for the true believer in the terrible Time of Trouble.

I am happy to report that there is a great deal of good news and a most encouraging degree of protection; but these blessings are conditional, being reserved for those who genuinely endeavor to obey Yahweh.

**(Read Deuteronomy 28 for proof of the principle that the blessings of Yahweh are reserved for the obedient.)**

**We have already seen that the Seal of YAHWEH the Elohim of Israel is His law, and that His Sign (signature) is the Sabbath commandment in His law.**

We have also seen how that 144,000 believers will at that time accept the Almighty's Seal in their minds, and will begin keeping the commandments of Yahweh with faultless dedication and effect.

The blessings which follow that kind of obedience will be beyond comparison and will manifest themselves in many miraculous ways during the Time of Trouble.

**One of the blessings will be that of divine protection.**

A perfect example of the protection afforded the 144,000 sealed believers in the Time of Trouble is given in Revelation chapter 9, which outlines the event of the 5th Trumpet.

In verse 4 we note with great relief that at that time all sealed believers (those who obey Yahweh's law) will be supernaturally protected from torture and abuse.

**All others will suffer.**

This matter of divine protection is dealt with later.

Yes, there will be protection during the Great Tribulation, but it will be reserved for those who obey the Almighty Yahweh and bear His Seal.

Of all mankind, they alone will be kept from Satan at the time of the end, and will walk unscathed through the fiery trials just as Hananyah (Shadrach), Misha'el (Meshach) and 'Azaryah (Abednego) did in ancient Babylon. (Daniel 3)

Indeed, those bygone experiences in Daniel's day were especially staged by the Eternal as *miniature demonstrations, prophetic prototypes* of a mighty deliverance which is to be repeated on a world-wide scale before the entire universe, when the Almighty will once again miraculously protect His obedient servants from the terrors of the Evil One.

Bearing these reassuring thoughts in mind, let us now return to the prophecy of the seven seals, for there are still three trumpets to explain.

The last three Trumpets (5, 6 and 7) are so fearful that even by angel standards they are classified as **'Woes.'**

- The 5th Trumpet is the 1st Woe.
- The 6th Trumpet is the 2nd Woe.
- The 7th Trumpet is the 3rd Woe.

And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! (Rev.8:13)

## The Fifth Trumpet (Woe one)

Rev.9: 1: And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2: And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3: And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4: And it was commanded them that they should not hurt

the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of Yahweh in their foreheads. 5: And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man. 6: And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

No one will deny, but that here before us is a picture of absolute terror, when for 5 months earth's mighty population, all except the sealed servants of Yahweh, will be tormented by a host of merciless beings who are to arise from the bottomless pit.

For obvious reasons we will not dwell on this frightening aspect of the prophecy once having presented it.

Instead, we will briefly answer the following questions and point to a way of escape.

1) What is the bottomless pit?

2) And who are the beings that ascend out of it?

The general lack of interest in the Revelation has over the years resulted in a dearth of information about the bottomless pit.

But it is obviously a subject which all the world should know about; for is not mankind going to be tormented for 5 months by beings which come out of the bottomless pit?

The answers to those two questions about the bottomless pit and its occupants are of vital importance, so let us closely study the matter.

The original Greek word *abussos* is translated in the Bible (in Rev. 9:1) as bottomless pit.

Some Bible dictionaries render *abussos* as 'abyss.'

The word abussos means exceedingly deep gulf or pit.

**Abussos is also used in Luke's gospel where it is translated simply as the deep.**

In the incident recorded in Luke 8. 26-36 we are given an important clue as to what the abyss is and how frightened evil angels are of being sent there.

If the reader will turn to Luke's gospel he will see (in verse 31) how certain devils who had taken possession of a man were themselves terrified of being ordered into the abyss.

They literally begged the Messiah for permission to enter a herd of swine rather than be sentenced to the abussos~ the exceedingly deep pit.

From this incident we can see that the abussos, the bottomless pit is a place or condition which evil angels dread;

a kind of spirit penitentiary or dungeon which existed thousands of years ago.

Strong's concordance describing the 'bottomless pit' says it is a:

"pit of immeasurable depth, a very deep gulf or chasm in the lowest parts of the earth used as the common receptacle of the dead and especially as the abode of demons."

It is from somewhere within that unlit dungeon that a myriad symbolic locusts will arise at the 5th Trumpet or 1st Woe. (Rev. 9:1-3)

What are these locusts that torture mankind for five months?

They are evil angels, devils of mind-bending depravity who were sentenced to the abyss long before the early Messianic era.

At this very moment they are still chained and completely immobilized within the blackness of the abyss, held there in total darkness awaiting the judgment of the Great Day.

Here is proof of this astounding fact.

For if Yahweh spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; (2 Peter 2:4)

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6)

Yes, fallen angels are at this moment held captive in the abyss, the bottomless pit, fettered in a way we humans do not properly understand, so the symbol of a 'chain' is used to help us.

At the 1st Woe, a mighty angel (star) will be divinely authorized to open the abyss, and out will pour this host of devils like the smoke of a great furnace. (Rev. 9:1-5)

The only people on earth who will be protected from their sadistic onslaught will be the ones who bear in their foreheads the Seal of the Elohim of Israel.

All others will be tormented.

Here is proof of this frightening fact.

And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of Yahweh in their foreheads..(Rev. 9:4)

Without laboring the point, we will at this stage again respectfully remind you to seriously consider accepting Yahweh's Seal, for fearful indeed will be the lot of those who reject it.

References in this woe to Abaddon, the king of the bottomless pit (verse 11) are covered later where the identity of this king who is to ascend from the bottomless pit is considered.

Revelation 9:12 brings us to the end of the 1st woe (the 5th Trumpet).

You will have noticed that even though the scenes portrayed here are fearsome, divine protection is assured to those who have Yahweh's Seal, especially from the terrors of **Abaddon the Destroyer** from the Abyss.

## The Sixth Trumpet (The 2nd Woe)

Rev.9: 12: One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. 13: And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before Yahweh, 14: Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15: And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. 16: And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. 17: And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. 18: By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

The events that occur at the 2nd Woe are so catastrophic that nothing we can say will adequately describe them.

Here is a woe that defies the imagination and leaves even the enlightened believer aghast; and because of this we will simply list the three main events scheduled to occur at this Trumpet and then very briefly explain them.

To begin with, the reader must bear in mind that the record of the 2nd Woe begins in **Rev. 9.12**, continues right through chapter 10 and ends at **Rev. 11 verse 14**.

The events that are described between these two scriptural boundaries, therefore, are contemporary, they occur during the same period of time, that is - during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Woe.

This is an important point to remember, especially when trying to interpret the events of Revelation chapter 11, which deals initially with the overthrow of Jerusalem and the work of the Two Witnesses.

**The three main events scheduled to occur at the 2nd Woe (the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet) are as follows:**

- **First Event:** four mighty angels will be released from the Great River Euphrates. Leading a force of some 200,000,000 they will slay one third of mankind! (Rev. 9:13-15)
- **Second Event:** the prophet is given a measuring rod and told to measure the Temple of Yahweh, the altar and them that worship therein. He is instructed not to measure the outer court of the Temple, for it is given over to the gentiles, who will be allowed to trample the holy city under foot for a period of 42 months. (Rev. 11:1-2)
- **Third Event:** during this same 42 month period (1260 days) Yahweh's Two Witnesses will preach to the entire world. At the end of that time they will be murdered by the Beast who is to arise from out of the Abyss (Rev. 11:3-7) But after three and a half days they will be raised to life and will ascend to heaven. The 2nd Woe (6th Trumpet) ends at the resurrection of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:8-14)

**Let us now consider these three events and discover what is going to happen on earth at the 2nd Woe.**

The Great River Euphrates mentioned in Revelation 9: 14 is not the natural stream of water which flows in the Middle East, but a great spiritual outflow upon which sits that mighty metropolis of evil, **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS!**

The literal Euphrates on earth, real enough though it is, is merely the physical replica or shadow of the Great River Euphrates above.

At this point we will briefly explain the second, vital clue to understanding Bible prophecy.

The first clue is to realize that certain prophecies in Yahweh's Word are written in symbolic language.

To understand them one must compare scripture with scripture and allow the Bible to interpret itself.

This process was explained earlier.

The second clue is to know that certain realities in the spirit realm above are reflected or duplicated in some physical way on this earth.

In other words, here below, in a very real and measurable form, we find miniature models, transient earthly counterparts, scaled-down physical replicas of the mighty spiritual originals which exist in the realms above.

**There is, then, this significant difference between a symbol and a model.**

**Symbols** are used in Bible prophecy to represent the qualities, characteristics, procedures, work and purposes of human or spiritual agencies.

Whereas **models** are miniature copies or replicas of the agencies themselves.

For example, consider a candlestick.

It is used in Bible prophecy to *symbolize* the assembly's duty or purpose to shed spiritual light.

**A candlestick is a *symbol* of a assembly group, not a replica of one.**

The literal Euphrates, on the other hand, is a model, a scaled-down *physical replica, a miniature copy of the spiritual Euphrates above.*

The prophecy of the Revelation has a great deal to say about these *earthly counterparts*; and as we study them here below we are able to learn a great deal about what is happening in the realms above.

Returning to the prophecy with this second clue in mind, we find that at the 2nd Woe four mighty angels are released from somewhere within the Great River Euphrates.

They are obviously beings of awesome authority and power, and in the echelons of evil they stand as near to Satan as the four living creatures do to Yahweh.

**(see Rev. 4:6-8 where the throne of the Almighty is briefly described)**

### **One Third of Mankind Slain**

Marshalling an army of some *two hundred thousand, thousand* (200,000,000) these four demons slaughter one third of mankind!

Statisticians tell us: that in the year 1500 the world's population stood at around 500 million.

**By the year 1800, just 300 years later, it had doubled and topped the 1000 million mark.**

By the year 1930, a mere 130 years later, it had doubled again and stood at 2,000 million (2 billion).

**And by the end of the century, it had rocketed to over 6,000 million (6 billion) souls!**

That's how fast the world's population is growing.

**This prophecy states that at the 2nd Woe, one third of mankind will be slain.**

**That's 2 billion people!**

Let's pause for a moment and consider that stunning fact; for it means that in the near future, even at the present count, some 2,000,000,000 people are going to die at this Woe.

**This colossal figure of two thousand million represents the combined populations of China, and India.**

**Or, put another way, all of Europe, the U.S.A Canada, Russia, Japan and several other nations besides.**

How this coming holocaust will be brought about is not fully explained; but it is going to happen nonetheless, for the scripture must be fulfilled.

**I repeat: One third of earth's population are scheduled to die under this 2<sup>nd</sup> Woe!**

We could, of course, speculate as to what type of warfare, if any, will bring this about (nuclear, biological, chemical, radiological, electronic or conventional) but we will not, because we could be totally wrong.

The prophecy simply states that:

**And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. (Rev. 9:15)**

Strange as it may seem, the remaining two thirds of mankind do not link this massive slaughter with personal or national sin: for we are told that at that time people will still be unrepentant and will continue in their witchcraft, idolatry, deception and blasphemy. (Rev. 9:20-21)

**Here is spiritual blindness (or is it stubborn pride?) as its worst.**

Chapter 10 is inserted into the mainstream of the prophecy at this stage and the scene changes somewhat.

The reader must, however, bear in mind that the 2nd Woe is still in progress and will remain so till Revelation 11 verse 14 is reached.

**In chapter 10 we read of how the prophet is given a little, open book.**

**He is told to eat it.**

The open book could either be the prophetic book of Daniel, which was to be kept sealed or shut till the time of the end when it would be understood (Daniel 12:4).

Or it could be the seven-sealed scroll which the Lamb had just taken from the Almighty's hand and opened seal by seal (Rev. 5:1-5).

Either way, the message of the open book is sweet to the taste; that is, to those who figuratively eat, understand and believe it.

But the reality of this Woe, when witnessed, is very, very bitter indeed.

**'One third of mankind is slain!'**

That, dear friend, is a bitter prospect by anyone's standards.

The bitterness will be bearable, however, especially when one considers that the prophecy does not have long to run.

The end of all things will take place, we are told, **in the days of the seventh angel, when he begins to sound his trumpet.** (Rev. 10:7)

The message of Revelation 10 is one of great encouragement, for it reminds all believers of two things:

- That the 2nd Woe, though bitter, will end.
- That the end of this wretched system of human suffering and pain is at hand.

Having briefly considered the message of Revelation chapter 10, let us now return to the mainstream of the prophecy and continue with the events of the 2nd Woe.