

“HEAVEN’S SILENCE”

Revelation 8:1-5

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

INTRODUCTION

Read 8:1—Different Views

Real Explanation: “The calm before the storm”; all Heaven awaits the opening of the 7th seal with bated breath. *The Son is about to carry out the long anticipated wrath upon the Earth.*

I. THE SILENCE OF HEAVEN

The seal opened:

- No elder or angel gives a word of explanation (chapter 7).
- No living creature cries ‘come’ (seals 1-4).
- No loud ‘shaking’ of the universe (seal 6)
- No loud cry of martyred saints (seal 5)
- No loud chorus of praise of the angels or of the saints (chapter 7)
- The actions of vv. 2-5 may well take place during this silence.

Suddenly, the silence was broken by the peals of thunder, and sounds, and the earthquake (v. 5) and the blaring of the seven trumpets (vv. 6ff).

“One half hour”—not very long. Yet, at such a critical time, it seemed like **ages!**

II. THE SEVEN ANGELIC SERVANTS (V. 2)

A. Who are they?

B. What do they do?

C. What are the trumpets?

D. What is **the relation of the trumpets with the seals and vials?**

- Not consecutive
- Not really complete in themselves with no connection—each does lead to the end and anticipates the final state; yet, as a literary development, and as the carrying out of judgments they are interrelated.
- Each series of judgments is organized under the 7th of the preceding series.
- The 7th seal and the 7th trumpet do not contain their own judgments.
- There is considerable restatement—yet much development of detail.
- The next series does not go back to the beginning of the preceding series.

- Each series clusters judgments closer to the end; *the closer to the consummation, the greater the enlargement.*

How about the episodes between and around the series of judgments?

Like a guide in an art gallery:

- *Students stand back to get a general impression—the 7-fold visions.*
- *They move up closer to study the details—the unnumbered visions.*

III. THE SACRIFICE OF PRAYER (vv. 3-4)

- A. The Identity of the angel: not Christ
- B. The Identity of the altar, censor, incense, and activity
- C. The identity of the prayers and the saints—cf. 6:9-10: “How long, O Lord?”
- D. The trumpet judgments are a response to the saints’ prayers; **our prayers are remembered and are effective!**

IV. THE SOUNDS AND FLASHES OF LIGHTNING (v. 5)

The anticipation of judgments—cf. 11:19; 16:17-18; each one turns more toward actual effects upon the wicked.

CONCLUSION

Look out! Here they come!

We’ll see them in the next message from Revelation.

Are you ready, my brother, sister?

The trumpets shall sound! Will you be secure in the arms of Jesus?