**The Time of the End**

**A Study About the Book of Revelation**

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Chapter Eighteen

Silence in Heaven (3)

*When He opened the seventh seal*, *there was silence in heaven for about half an hour*.

*And I saw the seven angels who stand before God and to them were given seven trumpets* . . .

*The first angel sounded* . . . .(**Revelation 8:1**, **2**, **7a**)

(The previous chapter in this book, Chapter 17, covered part of the judgments seen when the seventh seal of the scroll was broken [the first five trumpet and bowl judgments]. This chapter will carry the matter to completion [covering the sixth and seventh trumpet and bowl judgments].)

As previously seen, the sounding of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the corresponding seven bowls describe conditions that will exist in the kingdom of Antichrist immediately following the completion of Daniel’s seventieth week, after Christ has returned. That which is revealed by and through these trumpet and bowl judgments provides detail and commentary for that which is revealed when the preceding fifth and sixth seals were broken, particularly the sixth seal. And that which is revealed when the fifth and sixth seals were broken, in turn, provides detail and commentary for that which is revealed when the preceding first four seals were broken (having to do particularly with the end result of the breaking of these four seals).

Thus, in a respect, that which is revealed when the seventh seal is broken — the trumpet judgments and the bowl judgments — provides detail and commentary for that which is revealed when all of the previous six seals were broken.

The preceding is the integrally related manner in which the judgments of the seven-sealed scroll are structured (ref. Chapters 13-17 in this book).

At the point in the book of **Revelation** following the sounding of the fifth trumpet and the pouring out of the fifth bowl, the kingdom of Antichrist is seen *in complete disarray*, *awaiting destruction*.And this destruction, seen in the sounding of the final two trumpets and the pouring out of the final two bowls, brings the whole matter surrounding judgments pertaining to the redemption of the inheritance to a close. More specifically this destruction is seen in the sounding of the sixth trumpet and the pouring out of the sixth bowl, with the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the pouring out of the seventh bowl bringing matters to *a complete end*, *announcing the finality of that which will have been accomplished*.

Once all the judgments of the seven-sealed scroll have been brought to pass, matters will be *exactly* as described when the seventh trumpet sounds and the seventh bowl is poured out:

*The angel* [the angel with the seventh trumpet] *whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand* [lit. his right hand] *to heaven*

*and swore by Him who lives forever and ever*, *who created heaven and the things that are in it*, *the earth and the things that are in it*, *and the sea and the things that are in it*, *that there should be delay no longer*,

*but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel*, *when he is about to sound*, *the mystery of God would be finished*, *as He declared to His servants the prophets*. (**Revelation 10:5-7**)

*And the seventh angel sounded*; *and there followed great* [loud] *voices in heaven*, *and they said*, “*The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ*: *and He shall reign forever and ever*.” (**Revelation 11:15**, ASV)

*Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air*, *and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven*, *from the throne, saying*, “*It is done*!” (**Revelation 16:17**).

The thought in **Revelation 10:5-7**; **11:15** (cf.**10:1-6**) is not that “*the kingdom of the world*” *is about to become* “*the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ*.” Rather, when the seventh trumpet sounds, “*great* [‘loud’] *voices in heaven*” *will clearly state* that the kingdom, ruled by Satan up to this point in time (Satan through his Christ — Antichrist — during the last half of the Tribulation), *has become* “*the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ*.”

*It will all be over at this point in the book*. Not only will the kingdom have previously been delivered into the Son’s hands by the Father (**Daniel 7:13**, **14**), but a repentant and converted Israel will have been restored to the land, the Gentile armies of the earth will have been destroyed, Satan and his angels will have been put down, Satan will have been bound in the underworld, and *Christ can now take the scepter and*, *with His co-heirs*, *reign over the earth for 1,000 years*.

The scene presented when the seventh trumpet sounds takes one to the point in time following **Revelation 20:3**.

And *this same thing* is clearly stated another way in **Revelation 16:17** by the words voiced *in a loud manner by God Himself*, *from His throne in heaven*, “*It is done*.” These words are the translation of a perfect tense in the Greek text, indicating action completed in past time and existing during present time in *a finished state*.

(This is the same tense used when Christ cried out from the Cross, “*It is finished*” [**John 19:30**]; and it is the same tense used in **Ephesians 2:8** relative to man’s eternal salvation, based on Christ’s finished work at Calvary — “. . . *you have been saved* . . . .” A person having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ *has been saved in past time*, *based on a finished work in past time*. Both man’s salvation and the finished work that makes this salvation possible *exist during present time in a finished state*. And, since that is the case, *man*’*s salvation is just as secure*, *complete*, *and unchangeable as the finished work upon which it rests*.

This is the reason why that once a man has been saved, God *never* deals with him on the basis of his eternal salvation again. To do so, God would have to go back and deal with His Son’s finished work — an impossibility. At this point in time, *everything has been finished*, completed; and, accordingly, everything related to man’s eternal salvation can only continue to exist forever *in that same finished state*. All of God’s dealings with saved man *can only have to do with present and future aspects of salvation* [with the Messianic Era in view], *never with the past aspect of salvation* [with eternal salvation in view].)

In the preceding respect, when God Himself one day proclaims, *in a loud voice*, “*It is done*,” matters surrounding the judgments of the seven-sealed scroll will be just as complete as His Son’s finished work at Calvary when the Son cried out, “*It is finished*.” The work surrounding God’s redemption of the inheritance will, at that point in time, exist in the same finished state as His Son’s prior redemptive work at Calvary, the same finished state in which man’s salvation presently exists.

Sixth Trumpet, Sixth Bowl (**9:13-21**; **16:12-16**)

Both the sixth trumpet and sixth bowl judgments have to do with *the great river Euphrates*.

When the sixth angel sounded his trumpet, the command went out, “*Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates*.” And these four angels are said to have been “*prepared for the hour and day and month and year*, *were released to kill a third of mankind*.” Then the actual slaying is seen being carried out at the hands of an army of two hundred million.

When an angel poured out the sixth bowl upon the great river Euphrates, the waters were dried up to make way for the kings of the East. Then three unclean spirits — demonic spirits — are seen going forth “*to the kings of the earth and of the whole world* . . . *to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*,” to “*Armageddon* [meaning, ‘the Mount of Megiddo’].”

The picture is that of the armies of the earth, the armies of a kingdom in complete disarray and collapse, being gathered to the Middle East, to the land of Israel. And they are being gathered by demonic spirits, for *a single purpose on Satan*’*s part*, as well as *a single purpose on the Lord*’*s part*.

*On Satan*’*s part*, they will be gathered to the land of Israel in order to destroy a converted and re-gathered people (the Jewish people) and their King (the Lord Jesus Christ, who will be residing in their midst in that future day).

*On the Lord*’*s part,* they will be gathered to the land of Israel in order to themselves be destroyed, bringing an end to Gentile world power.

Through God’s sovereign control of all things, He will allow Satan to effect a gathering of the armies of the earth to the Middle East in order to, in turn, bring to pass that which He has decreed. God will have brought the kingdom of Antichrist into complete disarray and collapse during the Tribulation. Then, immediately following the Tribulation, following His Son’s return and the subsequent conversion and restoration of the Jewish people, the military leaders and armies of an already decimated kingdom will be brought into the land of Israel *to be destroyed*.

(Bible students viewing this end-time sequence of events often see the armies of the earth being gathered to the Middle East and coming against the Jewish people before the end of the Tribulation. Once they are gathered, Christ then returns and destroys the armies of the earth in the land of Israel, delivering His people through this means.

However, that is *not* the biblical picture at all. Such a sequence of events is completely out of line with anything seen in the Old Testament — in biblical typology or in the Prophets.

One thing that would preclude such a sequence of events is the fact that the Jewish people in the land during time covered by Daniel’s seventieth week will be uprooted from their land in the middle of the Tribulation and driven back out among the nations. Aside from a possible small scattering of Jews, there will be no Jewish people in the land of Israel during the latter part of the Tribulation for Gentile armies under Antichrist to come against near the end of the Tribulation. Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles throughout this time [**Luke 21:24**; **Revelation 11:2**].

The correct sequence, as will be shown, is Christ returning before the armies are gathered to the Middle East, with an unconverted Jewish people still scattered throughout the Gentile nations. The national conversion of Israel will occur *following* Christ’s return while they are still scattered among the nations [the order seen in Old Testament typology, the Prophets, and the Jewish festivals of **Leviticus 23**], and Christ will then send His angels out to re-gather His people back to the land [**Matthew 24:30**, **31**].

*Then*, the armies of the earth will be gathered into the Middle East. And once they have been gathered, Christ, beginning His march into battle from the Mount of Olives, will go forth and destroy these invading armies, delivering His people [**Zechariah 14:1-9**].)

1) Symbolism Used in the Sixth Trumpet and Bowl Judgments

The angel sounding the sixth trumpet is commanded to “*release*” four angels that were “*bound at the great river Euphrates*.” These angels were being held for a particular mission that was to occur at *a previously set time* — “*an hour and day and month and year*.” And this would be in complete accord with the manner in which God acts — *at set times that He Himself has previously established*.

These angels are apparently synonymous with the three demonic spirits seen when the sixth bowl is poured out (two ways of describing the same angels), which are to go out into the entire world and gather the kings of the earth, with their armies, into the Middle East.

*Four* and *three* — referring to the angels, the demonic spirits — are evidently *representative numbers*; and *meaning* would be provided from the numbers referenced, like the twenty-four elders in **Revelation** chapter **four**. And, as with the twenty-four elders, a much larger contingent of angels would undoubtedly be in view.

“Four” is a number having to do with *the earth*, and “three” is the number of *divine perfection*. The former shows the extent of their mission (the four corners of the earth, the four points of the compass); and the latter, as seen in the text, has to do with a counterfeit divine perfection, coming “*out of the mouth of the dragon*” (Satan [**Revelation 12:9**], who sought, in time past, to be as God [**Isaiah 14:13**, **14**]), “*out of the mouth of the beast*” (who will declare himself to be God [**2 Thessalonians 2:4**]), and “*out of the mouth of the false prophet*” (who will direct all worship toward the beast [**Revelation 13:12**]).

The Euphrates River, where these angels are said to be bound, is the largest river in the Middle East (abt. 1,700 miles long), forms the northern boundary of the land in the Abrahamic covenant, and forms a natural divide between the land of Israel and the nations beyond. It is apparent that the Euphrates is being used in a metaphorical sense in the preceding respect, and a literal river or a literal drying up of that river is evidently not what is in view at all.

The reason given in the text for the drying up of this natural divide is “*that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared*” (**16:12**). The way modern armies move, rivers wouldn’t stop them; nor would the drying up of rivers help them to any degree. The reference is undoubtedly to the removal of anything that would prevent various Gentile armies worldwide from moving into the Middle East.

Numerous metaphors are also used to describe the armies making their way into the Middle East (“*army*,” KJV, NKJV [**9:16**] is plural in the Greek text; ref. NASB). These armies are seen as horsemen, wearing breastplates described by the words *fire*, *brimstone*, *and blue smoke issuing forth from the brimstone* (that which is referred to by the word translated “*jacinth*” [KJV] or “*hyacinth*” [NASB]). And the horses that they ride have *heads as lions*, *with fire*, *smoke*, *and brimstone issuing forth from their mouths*.

A “*lion*” would portend *qualities of majesty or courage*. The lion is the king of the beasts, and these individuals are being led forth in this majestic and courageous manner by an individual Scripture refers to as a “*beast*” himself (**Daniel 7:7**; **Revelation 13:1**). Then, the description of the breastplates worn by the horsemen and that coming from the mouths of the horses — *fire*, *smoke*, *brimstone*, *blue smoke from the brimstone* — would all have to do with *judgment*.

The power of those being led forth into battle is said to be in the mouths of the horses; but the horses are also seen to have tails “*like serpents*,” with heads on their tails. A “serpent” has to do with *deceit and subtlety*.This was Satan’s chosen vehicle when he exhibited these qualities following man’s creation in **Genesis**.

Now in the book of **Revelation**, when the reason for man’s creation in the beginning is about to be realized, the matter comes full-circle. By and through the armies that Satan leads — armies led by a beast described in a similar metaphorical way, a beast having seven heads and ten horns (**Daniel 7:7**, **8**; **Revelation 13:1**) — he will launch his final thrust in his vain efforts to destroy the King and His people in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

All of this is an apparent reference, by and through metaphorical means, to the modern-day methods of travel to the battlefield, the vast array of modern-day weapons of warfare, etc. All-in-all, the multifaceted reference to that which will climactically occur can only be a horrific and unimaginable scene of judgment, bloodshed, and death.

2) The Order of Events in the Sixth Trumpet and Bowl Judgments

Armies numbering 200,000,000 are seen being led into the land of Israel, and they are seen being led to a particular place in the land referred to *in the Hebrew tongue* as “*Armageddon*,” a word derived from two Hebrew words (*har Megiddo*), meaning, “Mount of Megiddo.”

The number comprising the armies being led into the land — 200,000,000 — literally reads in the Greek text, “two myriads of myriads” (the Greek word *murias*, “myriad,” appears in the plural twice in the text, preceded by the number “two”). *Murias* is used in the New Testament in seven different references, and it is used mainly, if not exclusively, referring to a large indefinite number (e.g., **Luke 12:1**; **Hebrews 12:22**; **Jude 14**). And the number “two,” used in connection with the myriads of myriads is possibly a reference to the only two directions that land armies comprised of myriads of individuals can be brought into the land of Israel — from the north and from the south. In other words, “two” could possibly refer to the myriads that will come from one direction and the myriads that will come from the other direction (cf. **Ezekiel 21:19-27**).

The reference to the Mount of Megiddo in **Revelation 16:16** would call attention to more than just one mountain in the land of Israel. The entire surrounding area, the valley of Megiddo, which would include the Plain of Esdraelon (the valley of Megiddo is in this plain), would have to form part of the area referenced. The Plain of Esdraelon is about twenty miles long and fourteen miles wide, forming a natural battleground where opposing armies have met at different times over the centuries.

Because of the size of the invading armies, the central point for this battle could very well be the area surrounding Megiddo. But vast areas beyond this would have to fit into the equation. Note that blood from this battle is going to run “*up to the horses*’ *bridles*, *for one thousand six hundred furlongs* [about 180 miles]” (**Revelation 14:20**). And this battle — God’s Son *treading the winepress*, “alone” — will extend all the way down into Edom (**Isaiah 63:1-6**).

Thus, is it any wonder that the Spirit of God has gone to great lengths to describe this climactic scene, through the use of numerous metaphors, when the sixth trumpet sounds and the sixth bowl is poured out? Non-descriptive language simply would not do justice to the scene at hand.

(In the preceding respect, “*Armageddon*” in **Revelation 16:16** is apparently used in a metaphorical sense, drawing from the type of battleground and the history of this battleground rather than to the actual geographical location of the battle itself.

The point toward which the invading armies will move is Jerusalem, located some fifty miles south of the Plain of Esdraelon. And it is from Jerusalem, beginning from the Mount of Olives, that the Lord will go forth to tread the winepress [cf. **Joel 3:1**, **2**, **12-16**; **Zechariah 14:1-4**].)

a) The Battle in Biblical Typology

To see the proper timing and sequence of events in what is often referred to as “the Battle of Armageddon,” note two Old Testament types in the history of Israel, separated by a forty-year period — the leading of the Israelites out of Egypt under Moses, and the leading of the Israelites into the land under Joshua.

The death of the paschal lambs, the proper application of the blood, and the Lord passing through the land of Egypt the night of the Passover (executing the death of the firstborn if it had not already occurred vicariously by and through the death of a lamb from the flock) occurred while Israel was still in Egypt. This occurred immediately before the Israelites began their march toward the Red Sea.

The Passover is the first of the seven Jewish festivals in **Leviticus** chapter **twenty-three** and has yet to be fulfilled insofar as Israel is concerned. The Jewish people have slain the Lamb, but they have yet to apply the blood. And this application of the blood will occur while they are still in the land typified by Egypt, seen in **Exodus** chapter **twelve**. This (a proper application of the blood by and through their believing on the Lord Jesus Christ) will occur while the Israelites are still dispersed throughout the Gentile nations, prior to their restoration. The fifth festival, the feast of Trumpets, has to do with a removal from the nations and a restoration to the land; and that to which these festivals point will be fulfilled in the order of their occurrence.

Then note the sequence of events that followed in the Exodus under Moses. The armed forces of the Assyrian of that day, the Pharaoh of Egypt, *were destroyed in the Red Sea* following the Israelites removal from Egypt by *their passing safely through the Sea* (**Exodus 14:21-31**).

And exactly the same thing is seen forty years later when the Israelites were led through the Jordan under Joshua. They had been keeping the Passover year by year in the wilderness; and once they had been led into the land, Gentile power was then to be progressively destroyed, beginning with Jericho (**Joshua 3ff**).

Viewing these two types together, it is an easy matter to see that the Jewish people, yet future, must not only apply the blood of the slain Lamb but be removed from the nations and be placed back in the land *before* Gentile world power under the latter-day Assyrian is destroyed.

b) The Battle in the Prophets

The matter is presented the same way in the Prophets — national conversion, removal from the nations, and the destruction of Gentile world power, in that order. Some of the Prophets present the whole of the sequence, some just part.

**Ezekiel** chapters **thirty-six** through **thirty-nine** would suffice to illustrate the whole of the matter from one of the Prophets. The latter part of chapter **thirty-six** (vv. **17-38**) deals with the reason for the dispersion of the Jewish people, their national conversion, and their restoration to the land. All of chapter **thirty-seven** then provides more information concerning their national conversion and restoration to the land. Then chapters **thirty-eight** and **thirty-nine** have to do with the destruction of Gentile world power once they have been restored to the land, with these two chapters ending at the same place as the previous two chapters — Israel in the Messianic Era, as seen more in detail in chapters **forty** through **forty-eight**.

That events in chapters **thirty-eight** and **thirty-nine** can occur only after Israel has been restored to the land, following the Tribulation, is evident from things stated in these chapters. For example, conditions seen in **38:8**, **11**, **12**; **39:12** (cf. **38:23**; **39:21-23**) *cannot possibly exist before that time*. These conditions don’t exist today; nor can they exist any time before or during the Tribulation.

(For additional information on the correct understanding and interpretation of **Ezekiel 38**, **39**, refer to Chapter 32, pp. 391, 392, and Chapter 34, pp. 409-411, in this book.)

And the slaying of “*a third of mankind*” at the hands of the two myriads of myriads (**Revelation 9:15-18**) would undoubtedly have to do with *the armies themselves* rather with mankind in general (ref. **Ezekiel 38:21**;cf. **Judges 7:22**; **1 Samuel 14:20**).

Then note the same sequence of events in the book of **Joel**, having to do with the Jewish people re-gathered to the land and Messiah in their midst before Gentile world power is destroyed (**3:1-21**). Further, in **Joel**, these events are seen occurring beyond Man’s Day, in the Lord’s Day (**1:15**; **2:1**, **2**; **3:14**).

And this same sequence of events can be seen in Prophet after Prophet in the Old Testament.

Seventh Trumpet, Seventh Bowl (**10:1-11**; **11:15-19**; **16:17-21**)

Both the seventh trumpet and seventh bowl judgments, as previously seen, have to do with *a full and complete end*.

When the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, time in relation to Man’s Day no longer existed, the mystery of God was brought to completion, the kingdom of this world became that “*of our Lord and of His Christ*,” *and there were “lightnings and voices and thunderings and an earthquake* [‘a shaking’] *and great hail*.”

When an angel poured out the seventh bowl “*into the air*,” *a loud voice* came out of the temple in heaven, saying, “*It is done*.” Then, the same thing is seen that followed the announcement concerning the transfer of regal power after the seventh trumpet sounded. There were “*noises and thunderings and lightnings*; *and there was a great earthquake* [‘a great shaking,’ unlike anything seen since man’s creation]” and “*great hail*.”

*The full measure of God*’*s judgment* will have fallen upon the final form of the kingdom of Babylon; and the full revelation of God (**Revelation 10:7**), made known through a full revelation of the Son (**Revelation 1:1**), will be realized at this point.

Israel will have been brought to the place of repentance and belief, the inheritance will have been fully redeemed, and the kingdom will have become that “*of our Lord and of His Christ*.”

*A rainbow* is seen two times in the book of **Revelation** (**4:3**; **10:1**). The rainbow, as first seen in **Genesis 9:13-16**, appeared *following the storm*. And the rainbow is used after a similar manner, in relation to *judgment*, in the book of **Revelation**. It is seen surrounding God’s throne in chapter **four** in connection with *a past judgment of Christians* (chapters **1-3**), and it is seen in chapter **ten** on the head of the “*mighty angel*” who sounds the seventh trumpet, in connection with *a past judgment of Israel and the nations*.

In both instances, *judgment* will be over. By and through the first judgment, *the bride* will have been made known (chapters **1-3**); and, by and through the second judgment, *Israel* will have been brought to the place of repentance, *the inheritance* will have been redeemed, and *the bride* will have become the Lamb’s wife (chapters **6-19**).

(The next chapter in this book, Chapter 19 — from the perspective of things seen in the book of **Revelation** — deals more fully with events occurring at the time that the seventh trumpet sounds and the corresponding seventh bowl is poured out.)