



REVELATION: THE DARK IN A NEW LIGHT

"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 seven trumpets were given to them. Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all God's people, on the golden altar in front of the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake. Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them. The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down on the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water— the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter. The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night. As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: 'Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!' The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes. During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them. The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. They had tails with stingers, like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon (that is, Destroyer). The first woe is past; two other woes are yet to come." (Revelation 8:1-9:12, NIV)



HOW DO WE SEE GOD IN LIGHT OF ALL THIS DARK?
WHAT DO WE DO WITH GOD & JUDGEMENT/TRIBULATION?

REVELATION OF Jesus Christ
THE CROSS CHANGES EVERYTHING!
“WHO GETS TO DIE?”...JESUS!

INVITATION: HAVE A _____ PERSPECTIVE IN THE _____

Romans 8:31-32 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

#1. GOD IS GOOD...Therefore His:
JUDGEMENT IS _____

REVELATION SHOWS GOD’S JUDGEMENT IS

1. PROGRESSIVE IN THAT IT’S _____

Notice the limits (1/3...5 Months... “Don’t touch the sealed...”) The judgement comes in waves/ “contractions” (seals, trumpets, bowls, battle)

2. PROGRESSIVE IN THAT IT’S _____

Trumpets, woe’s and warnings, large periods of time, slow responses from the people who “did not repent.”

3. PROGRESSIVE IN THAT IT’S _____

Trumpets, large periods of time, woe’s and warnings, slow responses from the people who “did not repent.”

What could God be saying to you in your trials?

“Pain insists upon being attended to. God whisper to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” (C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain)



Questions worth asking ourselves in trials:

1. Of Progress: What is God currently NOT letting happen to me?
2. Of Purpose & Patience: What “trumpet” is God sounding for MY response?

#2. If GOD IS GOOD...Then His:

JUDGEMENT IS _____ & _____

“The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.’”

(Revelation 11:15, NIV)

WOE’S or WELCOME, A CALL OF WARNING OR WORSHIP? A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE.

“It is very important to observe that the trumpets, the warning judgments, are sounded for a particular slice of humanity. In 8:13, John speaks of ‘those who dwell on the earth.’ He uses the same phrase in 6:10, in the cry of the martyrs, that ‘those who dwell on the earth’ should be judged. It refers to those who stand in the way of the coming of God’s kingdom. It refers to those in rebellion against God and his ways. The phrase ‘those who dwell on the earth’ refers to those who ‘are at home in the present world order (of power and violence), people of earth-bound vision, trusting in earthly security, unable to look beyond the things that are seen and temporal.’ The warning judgments are directed toward those who oppose the Lamb and his ways. Toward those who violate God’s will and thus, knowingly or unknowingly, destroy God’s creation. The judgments of the seven trumpets are not against all. Indeed, in the fifth trumpet, the locusts from the bottomless pit are told not to hurt those who ‘have the seal of God on their foreheads’ (9:4). Just as the plagues, which came on Egypt to warn Pharaoh, did not come on the Israelites, the judgments of the seven trumpets are directed against the unrepentant opposers of the in-breaking kingdom of God. This explains why the seventh trumpet, the ‘Hallelujah Chorus,’ is experienced as a woe. The voices of heaven shout, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he will reign forever and ever’ (11:15). How is that a woe? It is a woe only if you do not want the kingdom of God to come.” (Darrell Johnson)



ASSESSING THE TIMES:

GOD'S LIGHT IN THIS PRESENT DARK

1. It's time for us/you to shine the light of God's goodness on our/your _____ or _____ dark times.
2. It's time for us/you to shine the light of God's goodness on other people's dark times.

3 APOCALPYTIC QUESTIONS:

1. HEAVEN'S TRUMPETS Is it possible God is calling you to something? Calling you from something? What is He saying through the dark?

2. OUR TRIALS How does the light of God's goodness change how I see my dark times?

3. GLOBAL TROUBLES What ways can I shine the light of God's goodness, sound the trumpet of God's invitation for others?