

20230903 Righteous God and the purpose of His judgement

Revelation 8:1-13

Back to the Future Part 18

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

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

3 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.

4 The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand.

5 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.

6 Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

7 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.

8 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,

9 a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

10 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—

11 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.

12 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.

13 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 book of Revelation as an apocalyptic literature,

- is logical in its flow of the plot,
- its form and format is easily understandable once we get used to it,
- its the repetition of the main theme from various angles can help us to get the message, both clearly and urgently. Because what's repeated many times also implies its significance and urgency.

The purpose of God's judgement (suffering upon the world)

Their rejection of their King (Jesus Christ)

Luke 19:38

38 Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

40 "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it

42 and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

43 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side.

44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls.

They will not leave one stone on another, **because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.**"

The mystery of God: Building the Church (The Body of Jesus Christ in between God's prophetic time for the nation Israel)

Matthew 16:18

"I will build my church."

Romans 11:25-27

25 I want you to understand **this mystery**, dear brothers and sisters, so that you will not feel proud about yourselves. Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but **this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ.**

26 And **so** all Israel will be saved. As the Scriptures say, “The one who rescues will come from Jerusalem, and he will turn Israel away from ungodliness.

27 And this is my covenant with them, that I will take away their sins.”

The purpose of the Great Tribulation:

God’s calling is irrevocable. Israel had been called to be the witness of God’s glory to the world. So, for the prophesied 7 years,

(1) Along with judging this wicked world in great severity,

(2) God will establish His plan for the nation Israel, which is calling them as the witness of His glory, righteousness, and holiness, by getting them face this moment of absolute crisis, **so that they may turn to Him and Him alone.**

Matthew 24:22

22 “If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

God can use sufferings in life to call us back to Himself for our eternal joy.

John 3:17

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.