

PREFACE

These notes are to serve as a blessing and help to those studying the word with Pastor Neil Spencer. Pastor Neil does not claim to fully agree with all the thoughts, beliefs, writings, or teachings of every named source/person in these notes. The Bible is the ultimate authority & ALL believers are to be Bereans (Acts 17.10-11).

INTRODUCTION

1. One of the most predominantly clear characteristics of God throughout His Word is that He is long-suffering...
 1. I grew up in church
 2. I remember a guest speaker who would often frequent Coastline GB— Gayle Erwin
 1. **(PP)** Remember him? — Cartoon
 2. *In Old Testament (and somewhat New Testament) days, names tended to have true meaning, often actually describing the person. If you knew the person's name and the meaning of the name, you knew the person. As I have often shared, God defined his name to Moses as "**Compassionate, Gracious, Slow to Anger, Abounding in Mercy and Faithfulness, Mercy to Thousands, Forgiving Wickedness, Rebellion and Sin.**" I hang on to that for dear life. — Exodus 34*
 3. I love that description of our God...
2. Apostle Peter wrote about this characteristic of God even w/in the context of the Judgment that God would one day bring to the earth. — **1 Peter 3.8—10**:
 1. **(PP)** *But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. 9 The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.*
 2. **(PP)** *But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.*
 3. As God — He is HOLY & JUST — He will bring judgment — this is a theme throughout the Bible.
 4. But, also, it's as if He waits as long as He possible to do so b/c He does not want anyone to be destroyed.
3. I want us to keep that in mind as we walk through the 8th chapter of Revelation, today, b/c this morning:
 1. We're going to see Judgment... but, we're also going to see Mercy
 2. You may know that in the book of Revelation we see sets of judgment: 7 Seals + 7 Trumpets + 7 Bowls
 1. In CH 6, the 1st 6 Seals opened
 2. In CH 8, Jesus, known as the Lamb, opens the 7th Seal which gives way to the 1st 4 Trumpets,
 1. We'll see, as horrific as they are, they're partial, only striking only 1/3 of what they could.
 2. They're meant to warn/bring a rebellious world to repentance
 3. One author puts it this way, in Ch8, *God actually spares more than He smites.*
 3. That's true of the age of grace that we live in, & in what's to come in the GREAT TRIBULATION (6—19).
4. Let's jump into CH8

REVELATION 8

PAUSE

1 When the Lamb broke the seventh seal on the scroll, there was silence throughout heaven for about half an hour.

1. Now, I think that when most ppl think of heaven... they think of... Quiet, Serene, Soft...
 1. You know you can YouTube “Heaven Sound Effect”
 2. You may get something like this: **(PP)**
2. Is that what heaven normally sounds like... idk?
 1. But it is what most ppl seem to initially think...
 2. But, do you remember the scene in heaven in chapter 7?
 1. Shouting — “Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!”
 2. Singing — “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen.”
 3. Greg Laurie: *Heaven is rocking. Heaven is hopping. Redeemed people and angels are running a thousand different directions, serving the Lord. There is worship, there are announcements being made, and there are victory shouts going up every time someone on earth gets saved.*
3. That definitely seems to be the case in CH7...
 1. Angels are singing... a massive sea of ppl are shouting...
 2. But as Jesus opens the final seal... everything stops... and there silence is for 1/2 hr. What is this about?
 3. Greg Laurie: *The fact that the heavenly pause lasts for half an hour reminds us that God is in no hurry to release His wrath. This is no rush to judgment. Rather, it’s a final accounting after a long, long, patient wait.*
 4. Skip Heitzig —
 1. **(PP)** *Some commentators have suggested that the half hour of silence in heaven—just before the trumpets blow—represents God’s final thirty minutes of grace and signal His final chance: “I’m about to pour out judgment, but before I do so I’m going to wait for just another moment, just half an hour.” God is never in a hurry to judge anyone. One of the Lord’s main attributes is His longsuffering, patient nature. He is not anxious to judge, not willing that any should perish (see 2 Peter 3:9).*
 2. **(PP)** *The prophet Ezekiel insisted that the Lord takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:32; 33:11). In fact, God has waited for thousands of years to bring this judgment, issuing warning after warning to a world that has consistently rejected the gospel message. But now, finally, the long wait is over. God’s patience & longsuffering have come to an end. The time for judgment has arrived.*
 5. I love that picture of God giving as much time/grace as possible... that’s who He is...
 6. John doesn’t tell us why, could be His grace or that heaven is awestruck at the judgment that’s coming
4. But, look at what happens next...

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

1. The mention of these 7 Angels w/ their 7 Trumpets is striking...
2. When we think of angels, we can tend to think in cartoon or even figurine pictures
 1. And also, I think it's safe to say... they're not commonplace for us...
 1. I've not heard in our morning staff, someone say, well an angel spoke to me last night...
 2. But for those to whom this was 1st written, angels weren't all that unfamiliar.
 1. V2 indicates that there are these high ranking angels involved
 2. From what we can tell from Scripture, angels are not only real, but they have ranks
 1. In Daniel 10, a low ranking angel, needed an archangel — Michael to help him
 2. When J the B's birth was to be announced, God sent Gabriel to Zacharias.
 2. Psalm 103 shows us that angels serve God & carry out His commands.
 1. In Daniel 10 & Acts 12, God sent angels to answer prayer
 2. PS 34.7- *The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him & delivers them (serve/protect).*
 3. God uses angels as instruments of judgment on the unbelieving & rebellious
 1. Genesis 19 — Lot // Sodom & Gomorrah
 2. Acts 12 — King Herod, struck w/ sickness by an angel b/c he received worship.
 4. We see this all throughout the book of Revelation — here 7 Angels are given 7 Trumpets
3. Our idea of a trumpet is different than theirs (Charlie Brown's Parents // Nawlins Jazz)
 1. In Scripture, trumpets are spoken of often, in fact in Num 10, we see at least 3 important uses:
 1. Called God's people together (Num. 10:1-8)
 2. Announced war (Num. 10:9)
 3. Announced special times (Num. 10:10)
 2. In Exodus — trumpet sounded at Mt Sinai when the law was given
 3. In 1 Kings — trumpet sounded when the king was anointed & enthroned
4. So in Rev 8, 7 Angels are God's instruments of judgment & they're given these trumpets of judgment.
5. Then we're given a description of heaven that these primarily Jewish believers would've been familiar.

3 Then another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar.

1. The tabernacle & temple had a golden altar before the veil & was used for burning incense
2. Burning incense on this altar was a picture of prayer ascending to God — v3 unpacks this for us:

And a great amount of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God's people as an offering on the gold altar before the throne. 4 The smoke of the incense, mixed with the prayers of God's holy people, ascended up to God from the altar where the angel had poured them out.

1. On the altar before the throne, this incense is mixed w/ the prayers of God's ppl/saints...
2. What prayers are these? — we don't know definitively, but most definitely includes the prayer in CH6.10 — *"O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they have done to us?"*
3. We'll see in v5-6 this interesting correlation between GOD'S JUSTICE & OUR PRAYERS.
4. But this imagery begs the question — What happens to our prayers?
 1. That all depends... I don't know that God hears all prayers:
 1. Remember the story Jesus told about a Pharisee & a tax collector who prayed in the temple?
 2. He said, *"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'"* (Luke 18:11-13)
 3. Jesus said that God heard the sinner but not the Pharisee.
 4. Why? Because this proud religious leader didn't really pray to God; he *"prayed thus with himself."*
 5. Greg Laurie: *The truth is, his prayers had nothing to do w/ God. They were little more than self-congratulations.*
 2. But God does hear sincere & humble prayers to Him. So remember these 3 paramount truths of prayer:
 1. Don't Underestimate the Power of Prayer — God hears & keeps your prayers!
 1. Prayer is POWERFUL
 2. 1 Sam 1 — Hannah was childless, prayed
 3. Joshua 10 — Joshua prayed, and the sun stood still...
 4. Acts 12 — Peter was imprisoned, James had been killed, church prayed
 2. God's Timing is Not Always Our Timing
 1. They martyrs we read about in CH6 were asking how long Oh God, until you avenge...
 2. God's delays are not always His denials
 3. Prayer requires patience, persistence, perseverance.
 4. Psalm 27:14 encourages us to "wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait I say, on the Lord!"
 3. God's Will, Will Be Done
 1. In our study, we'll get to CH20 — Millennial Reign & Final Judgment
 2. God will accomplish His will ultimately, His will, will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.
5. Look at v5-6 — this interesting correlation between GOD'S JUSTICE & OUR PRAYERS.

5 Then the angel filled the incense burner with fire from the altar and threw it down upon the earth; and thunder crashed, lightning flashed, and there was a terrible earthquake. 6 Then the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepared to blow their mighty blasts.

1. Wow! What's happening here?

1. Well, the Jews celebrated annually the day of Atonement

2. The high priest would put incense on the coals in the censer and, with the blood of the sacrifice, he would enter the Holy of Holies (Lev. 16:11–14).

3. Here, the angel put the incense on the altar — presented as the prayers before God — and then cast the coals from the altar to the earth!

4. God's judgment is coming... thunder crashing, lightning flashing... terrible earthquake.

2. **(PP)** *Wiersbe Like it or not, the prayers of God's people are involved in the judgments that He sends. The throne and the altar are related. The purpose of prayer, it has often been said, is not to get man's will done in heaven, but to get God's will done on earth—even if that will involves judgment. True prayer is serious business, so we had better not move the altar too far from the throne!*

3. This morning we've considered:

1. The **PAUSE** we see in Heaven (v1)

2. How powerful **PRAYER** truly is (v2-6)

3. Now, let's look at the **PUNISHMENT** that is to befall the earth (v7-12)

1. These 1st 4 Trumpet judgments are brought upon the environment

2. Interestingly they are very similar to the plagues that came upon Egypt under Moses

4. But, before we do... everyone okay? Need to see a picture of bunny or something? — this has nothing to do with our message... but if you google, “cutest dog picture on the internet” this pops up **(PP)**

5. Let's look at these 4 Judgments.

PUNISHMENT

7 The first angel blew his trumpet, and hail and fire mixed with blood were thrown down on the earth. One-third of the earth was set on fire, one-third of the trees were burned, and all the green grass was burned.

1. The Earth is struck with judgment

1. *Hail & fire mixed w/ blood* this is reminiscent of the 7th plague that God sent against Egypt (Ex. 9:18–26)

2. Also, the prophet Joel also promised “blood and fire” would come in the last days (Joel 2:30).

3. This means that ultimately, global warming is coming in a VERY real way.

2. This trumpet judgment targets the 1/3 of earth's vegetation — crops & forests

1. The food supply & the global economy will all be **HEAVILY** impacted

2. 1/3 of earth's trees & all the green grass will be gone!

8 Then the second angel blew his trumpet, and a great mountain of fire was thrown into the sea. One-third of the water in the sea became blood, **9** one-third of all things living in the sea died, and one-third of all the ships on the sea were destroyed.

1. The 2nd trumpet blasts the seas/oceans 1/3 of the water — which all the oceans cover 3/4 of the earth — the water becomes as blood.
 1. Again reminiscent of water turning to blood in the 1st Egyptian Plague.
 2. It's possible that this could be red tides caused by billions of dead microorganisms poisoning the water.
2. In v8 John describes a great mountain burning w/ fire thrown into the sea.
 1. Most likely not a literal mountain, but he's using 1st century language to describe what he sees
 2. This could be an asteroid or a meteor, which of course would bring devastating results on our planet.
3. Devastating impacts 1/3 of the water, 1/3 all living things in the water, 1/3 of shipping commerce destroyed.
4. As w/ the 1st Trumpet, the food supply & the global economy will all be HEAVILY impacted

10 Then the third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from the sky, burning like a torch. It fell on one-third of the rivers and on the springs of water. **11** The name of the star was Bitterness. It made one-third of the water bitter, and many people died from drinking the bitter water.

1. The 3rd Trumpet reaches inland touches all rivers & sources of fresh water.
2. **(PP)** Greg Laurie — In v10, the description of the falling star named Wormwood might be describing a devastating exchange of nuclear weaponry. The scenario we read about here actually parallels what scientists call a nuclear winter, which follows nuclear warfare with more debating effecting than the battle itself.
3. Just a couple of weeks ago, USA Today published an article “Nuclear war between US, Russia would leave 5 billion dead from hunger”
 1. The article reads, as many as 5 billion people worldwide – 75% of the global population – would die from famine and hunger after a nuclear war between the U.S. and Russia, a new study says.
 2. The detonation of a nuclear weapon would cause massive fires and inject soot into the atmosphere, blocking sunlight from reaching the surface & limiting food production, leading to the deaths.
 3. Alan Robock, a professor of climate science at Rutgers University and co-author of the study, said “This research is the first of its kind, “No one has done this calculation before,” “No one has tried to calculate the numbers of people who would die.”
 4. This is a real concern as there are still 9 countries with more than 12k nuclear warheads among them.
4. Why do I share this? For centuries Critics & even some Christians looked at the book of Revelation with a raised eyebrow... held in suspect... couldn't see how what was written could become reality, but today... it's possibility was in a nationally publicized article just 2 weeks ago.

12 Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet, and one-third of the sun was struck, and one-third of the moon, and one-third of the stars, and they became dark. And one-third of the day was dark, and also one-third of the night.

1. In the 4th Judgment the atmosphere is impacted — sun, moon, stars — darkness
2. Listen to the word of Jesus concerning these end times...
3. **(PP)** LK 21.25-26 *There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*
4. After all this horrific JUDGEMENT... there is a proclamation...

PROCLAMATION

13 Then I looked, and I heard a single eagle crying loudly as it flew through the air, "Terror, terror, terror to all who belong to this world because of what will happen when the last three angels blow their trumpets."

1. There is a proclamation from what appears to be an eagle...
2. Some translations say an angel... some suggest this could be the eagle-like creature that John saw worshipping before the throne in CH4... we don't know...
3. But, what we do know that it's like the Lord is saying I have already released wrath on the earth, and there is more to come, and it is terrible."
4. Why does He give this warning to the earth? Because—even at this late date—He wants people to repent.

CONCLUSION + APPLICATION

1. As God — He is HOLY & JUST — He will bring judgment — this is a theme throughout the Bible.
2. But, also, it's as if He waits as long as He possible to do so b/c He does not want anyone to be destroyed.
 1. All of this will happen b/c the world will have pushed away Christ and rejected the gospel for so long.
 2. God has been so very, very patient. But the day is coming when His patience will run out.
3. You see in this chapter this morning we see:
 1. This **PAUSE** in Heaven
 2. The impacts of the **PRAYERS** of God's People
 3. The **PUNISHMENT** that is coming to those who stay in their sin
 4. This **PROCLAMATION** that more is to come... so the time to REPENT is NOW!
4. Our Heavenly Father, as Gayle Erwin would say, "**Compassionate, Gracious, Slow to Anger, Abounding in Mercy & Faithfulness...**" — Ex 34
5. FINAL JUDGEMENT is coming, now is the time to turn AWAY from SIN and to JESUS! **(PP)** 2 Cor 6.1-2, *we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God's kindness & then ignore it. For God says, "At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you. Indeed, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation.*