

Midweek Bible Study

Exposition of Revelation

The Seventh Seal and the Prayers of the Saints

Rev. 8:1-5

I. Seventh Seal Opened: Silence in Heaven (8:1)

- A. The Lamb opens the seventh seal
- B. And there was silence in heaven about half an hour
 - 1. Silence
Hab. 2:20; Zech. 2:13
 - 2. Connection to the sixth seal – Zeph. 1:7, 14-18
 - 3. Half an hour
 - 4. The half hour of silence before judgment will be followed by an hour after judgment (18:19, 22-23)
- C. Summary
 - 1. The very place filled with loud praises, now falls silent.
The final judgment of God causes all of heaven to become silent.
 - 2. There is an element of praise in the silence

II. Seven Trumpets are Given to the Seven Angels (8:2)

- A. I saw seven angels standing before God
- B. And seven trumpets were given to them

III. The Prayers of the Saints (8:3-5)

- A. Another angel came stood before the altar (3)
 - 1. Having a golden censer
 - 2. In order that he will offer the prayers of the saints
Upon the golden altar before the throne
Lev. 16:12-13; Psa. 141:2
- B. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand (4)
- C. And the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth (5a)



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Derek Thomas, “Our prayers may make little impact to those who hear them in this world, but when they reach heaven, they are sent back as ‘revered thunder.’ The power of prayer is truly immense.”

- D. And there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake (5b)

Conclusion

1. Sometimes there is silence!
Sometimes God is silent.
Sometimes we should be silent (Psa. 46:10; 62:1, 5)

Silence is not non-activity (where is God?) it is the precursor to Him acting.
It is expectation, it is worship.

2. The prayers of the saints: Pleasing sacrifice
 - a) Prayer is a pleasing sacrifice. But not just any kind of prayer.
 - b) The prayers of the saints are the means by which God accomplishes His purposes.
 - c) Persevering in prayer (all the prayers!)

Whatever our own feelings may be about the matter, it is certain that every true prayer gets into the golden censer that our great High Priest swings before the eternal throne. There is not one of those birds that we send up towards heaven which does not really reach its destination. If its own wings are not strong enough to bear it up so high, Christ reaches His almighty hand down and lifts it all the rest of the way. Somehow, all the true prayers of all the saints must get into the golden censer in Christ’s hand. CHS

3. God always acts. The God who sets His people praying, will not let their prayers go unanswered. The purpose and plan of God go hand in hand with the prayers of His people.

