

The Revelation to St. John

Collect Prayer - From Morning Prayer for Thursday

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being, we humble pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit. That in all the cares and occupations of this life we may not forget you, but remember we are ever walking in your sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Are there questions or comments from the last session? For those of you following online you may email Fr. Bart at frfryanssc@frontiernet.net

Revelation 8:1-5

¹When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. ³And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; ⁴and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God. ⁵Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

I. The Seventh - the perfect number - the end?

A. Liturgical and dramatic pause - the angels appearance

B. Demonstration of the connection of the Seals, and the Trumpets

II. Prayers of the Saints - the golden censer

A. In Rev 5:11 the incense is the prayer of the saints - prayer rising like incense is to be compared with throwing down of the coals from the altar

B. These coals are to represent the prayers of the martyrs - the effective prayers which cry out for vindication

C. The basis of these visions is again both O.T. and N. T.

1. O.T. - Wisdom 19:13 - "The punishments did not come upon the sinners without the prior warning signs in the violence of thunder"

2. N.T. Luke 18:1-8 - the widow and the judge " Will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night?...I tell you he will vindicate them speedily"

II. In this passage the Good News is that God is aware of our suffering, our prayer are not unknown to God

A. The innocent and oppressed are precious in God's sight

B. Our daily prayer - Thy Kingdom Come is effective, because it is God who brings about the universal salvation to all who believe in Him.\

Revelation 8:6-13

⁶Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them.

⁷The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, which fell on the earth; and a third of the earth was burnt up, and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

⁸The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea; ⁹and a third of the sea became blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the fountains of water. ¹¹The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the water, because it was made bitter.

¹²The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.

¹³Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice, as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets which the three angels are about to blow!"

I. Connecting Heaven and Earth - Liturgy with Reality

We also note the connection between the Plagues of Egypt, Trumpets and Bowls

A. First Trumpet - 1/3 of the earth is struck vs. 1/4 in the seals

1. This is the second act of the drama the intensification is occurring

2. We are building to the final battle

3. The choices we make become ever more clearer - you can not serve God and Mammon - we are seeing the result of trying to do both

B. Second Trumpet - mountain of flame cast into the sea

1. Sea to blood

2. 1/3 of creatures destroyed

3. 1/3 of the ships destroyed

C. Third Trumpet - The Star Wormwood - Poisoning 1/3 of the water

Wormwood - The plant's characteristic odor can make it useful for making a plant spray against pests. In the practice of companion planting, because of the secretions of its roots, it exerts an inhibiting effect on the growth of surrounding plants, thus weeds. It can be useful to repel insect larvae but it need only be planted on the edge of the area of cultivation. It has also been used to repel fleas and moths indoors. It is an ingredient in the liquor absinthe, and also used for flavoring in some other spirits and wines,

including bitters, and vermouth. It is also used medically as a tonic, stomachic, antiseptic, antispasmodic.

D. The Fourth Trumpet - 1/3 of the sun, moon and stars

1. Darkness' - absence of light
2. 1/3 a warning of what the total absence of the light will be

II. Why the woes?

A. Punishment? No the result of sin -what is the result of our sins?

B. Like the Pharos those who sin reject the common of God - the result is woe

C. John expects that God will continue to find people unresponsive to His appeal. His invitation and His sacrifice

II. The triple woes vs.13 refers to the three woes to come

A. The earth sea and sky have been struck in the first woes

B. The next woes will directly affect the people of the earth who have rejected the Eternal Gospel

Remember the plagues, woes and the suffering and death is not a result of a direct action of God, but rather are the natural result of human sin, and the defiance of God's Holy Word

III. The Good News

A. God's desire is always our salvation

B. The Salvation is based on a radical refusal to dominate us - free will

C. He will do everything He can to love us into the Kingdom, even to allowing us to destroy ourselves if that is our desire

Revelation 9:1-12

¹And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key of the shaft of the bottomless pit; ²he opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. ³Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth; ⁴they were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those of mankind who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads; ⁵they were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion, when it stings a man. ⁶And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death will fly from them. ⁷In appearance the locusts were like horses arrayed for battle; on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, ⁸their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; ⁹they had scales like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. ¹⁰They have tails like scorpions, and stings, and their power of hurting men for five months lies in their tails. ¹¹They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon. ¹²The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

I. Eschatological Tribulation Continues - Intensifies

A. Fifth Trumpet - Locusts

1. From the plagues of Egypt - What do locusts eat? These locusts do not harm vegetation
2. This event has already been used and expanded by Joel now John expands further the power of this event while keeping the connection to the O.T.
3. The symbolism of the locusts
 - a. Echo of the horseman of the Apocalypse

- b. Crowns are earthly power - kingship
- c. Human face - human sin
- d. Woman's hair - lust - (yes this is sexist)
- e. Chest Plate - Strength - the protection of pride
- f. The sing of sin is death

B. The demonic dimension of evil - to look past ourselves to find another entity to blame of our sin - Was flip Wilson right? "the devil made me do it"

Isn't this the argument of the Garden of Eden - It wasn't me it was the woman - it wasn't me it was the serpent. It was Adam and it was Eve - It was free will and they chose to sin. When we accept this reality then evil is destroyed, because it is under our control it is not another kingdom, another power.

II. The Good News is that our free will allows us to choose well or poorly. If we allow God's Holy Spirit to inform us, guide us and govern us we can make good choices, worship God and live according to His Holy Word. It is God's Will for us and He has given us all we need to follow Him.

Human Hope is in the restoration of the Kingdom of God - Not only will evil be banished from the human nature but the absolute nature of evil will be destroyed

Revelation 9:13-21

¹³Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵So the four angels were released, who had been held ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶The number of the troops of cavalry was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. ¹⁷And this was how I saw the horses in my vision: the riders wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulphur, and the heads of the horses were like

lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulphur issued from their mouths. ¹⁸By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulphur issuing from their mouths. ¹⁹For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents, with heads, and by means of them they wound.

²⁰The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot either see or hear or walk; ²¹nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their immorality or their thefts.

I. The Four Angels

A. They are the reaction to sin and evil - like the four horseman

B. Topical Note: the beyond the Euphrates - the Parthians enemies of Rome
lay beyond the Euphrates

C. Historical Note: Assyria and Babylon those who had destroyed Israel
come from beyond the Euphrates

II. These angels carry out God's Desire

A. The violence is the natural result of sin

B. The purpose of God is to have people repent, and rejoice
(**Metanoia**)

Metanoia - Life changing experience - look around see what is happening - this is the fruit of sin is this what you want? Pay attention - the story of the mule and the 2x4

The parallel with pharaoh is again in the forefront of our thinking - With pharaoh the purpose of the plagues was not realized in that Egypt did not come to know God and serve Him, but the people of God are removed from the negative influence and environment - those who listened, followed the instruction and then were will to take action - move into the desert.

III. The Good News

A. God wishes us to have the Metanoia experience that will lead us to salvation

B. Even when evil is being destroyed it is not silently, but with great vigor and noise to get our attention so that we can clearly understand the fruit of sin is death