

# Revelation – There Was Silence in Heaven

Revelation 8:1-13

Before I read verse one of chapter eight, I need to remind you of a basic truth that forms the heart of Bible prophecy. Prophetically, God has clearly stated there is a coming seven-year period of world history determined upon Israel (Daniel 9:24-27).

As we study the book of Revelation you must not lose sight of this foundational truth. The focus of the coming tribulation period is not on the church (which has at that time already experienced the rapture), nor is it on the gentile nations (although they have a role to play as this end time drama unfolds). Rather, the focus is upon Israel.

God has clearly indicated through the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Zephaniah and others his plan to regather Israel and to save her following the time of her great trouble. Sadly, Israel's darkest days lie in wait. The time of Jacob's trouble is coming but he shall be saved out of it (Jeremiah 30:7).

The time of Jacob's trouble occurs as the day of the Lord unfolds. Revelation chapters six through 19 give us many details about this coming period of world history. Zephaniah the prophet says of the day of the Lord quote:

*“The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.*

*That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,*

*A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.*

*And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: (an example of rebellion against the Lord*

occurred yesterday at our highest level of government as our President presided over a pride month celebration at the White House hanging a LGBTQI+ flag between two American flags . . . it is this kind of willful rebellion against God demonstrated by the nations which results in the Lord bringing distress upon men . . . ) *and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.*

*Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land."*

I hear a lot about gold and silver these days as the global economy continues to waver under the duress of global public debt of some 60 trillion dollars. Gold and silver are considered safe havens that protect wealth from inflation and the collapse of fiat currencies.

Regardless, one thing gold and silver cannot do is deliver a man from the just and holy wrath of Almighty God. Be careful my friend. Do not make gold and silver your place of security. Rather, fear the Lord and depart from evil. Fear the Lord and repent of sin. Fear the Lord and bow at the foot of the cross where the sure mercies of our gracious Redeemer can be found. Amen and amen!

And so, Jeremiah the prophet says, "*Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it;* (Jesus says the same in Matthew 24 when he warns that nothing can be compared to the great tribulation to come) Jeremiah continues, "*it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."*

Please take careful note of God's promise to deliver Israel from extermination. Israel is the most hated nation on planet earth. Her enemies have dedicated themselves to her complete destruction. Yet, despite the overwhelming flood of opposition which God will allow to come upon Jacob he shall be saved out of it. Hear now this powerful word from the Lord through Jeremiah,

*“Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.*

*For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.*

*For thus saith the LORD, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous.*

*There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines.*

*All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased.*

*Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.*

*Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.*

*For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.*

*Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be built upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.*

*And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.*

*Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.*

*And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD.*

*And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.*

*Behold, the whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind: it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked.*

*The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he has done it, and until he has performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it.”*

Don't doubt this: Israel is the focus of Bible prophecy. God will never make an end of Israel. Rather, when the Lord shall build up Zion, then shall he appear in glory! Indeed, cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee! For the Lord hath chosen Zion . . . the Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord. Can somebody say Amen!

You are looking with me now at Revelation chapter eight verse one:

*“And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.”*

This is quite the picture. Silence in heaven. No fellowship among the saints. No praise round about the throne. No angelic movement. Upon opening the seventh seal all falls quiet for the space of half an hour. The opening of the seventh seal allows

the scroll, the book, in the hand of the Lamb who took it from his Father in chapter five, to be opened revealing the magnitude of what must now unfold during what Jesus calls the great tribulation.

This silence signals a transition from what the Lord has allowed mankind to do on earth during the opening of the first six seals to what the Lord himself is about to do in Divine judgment upon the earth. This is a brief pause before the winds of God's direct judgments are unleashed upon the earth during the second half of the tribulation.

Dr. J Vernon McGee tells a story from his childhood in Oklahoma I think illustrates this point. He writes:

*“Judgment is getting ready to come upon the earth. This is the lull before the storm of judgment which is coming on the earth during this particular period. When I was a boy, my dad built a storm cellar wherever we moved . . . late one evening my dad and I were standing in the storm cellar doorway. He was watching a storm come up, and he saw that it was not going to hit our little town in southern Oklahoma.*

*It hit one just about ten miles away. We could see the funnel as it let down near that little town. But before that storm hit, there was a certain stillness. The wind had been blowing, the rain had been coming down, there had been a great deal of thunder and lightning, but suddenly all of that stopped, and for a few moments there was a deathlike silence.*

*Then the wind began to blow. It was not a funnel-shaped hurricane or a tornado, but just a straight wind. It was all my dad could do to get that storm cellar door down, and I helped him hold onto the chain. The storm broke in all its fury.*

*This is the way the Great Tribulation will break upon the earth, and it is presented to us in this way in the blowing of the trumpets, which is the subject of chapter 8 thru chapter 11.”*

## Conclusion

I believe we will be in heaven, and we will witness this silence in heaven as that seventh seal is opened. With that action the book that no man could open except the Lamb who was slain, will then be opened for its contents to be fully revealed. The silence speaks of the fact that all with bated breath will anticipate what is to be revealed.

My friend, as we study this amazing book surely your heart can be moved at what is soon to take place on planet Earth. God's judgment is coming on a world of rebellion. It is time to make preparation to escape these things.

In closing, I remind you of the words of the Lord Jesus in Luke 21 where he says, *"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."*