

Rev. 8:1-5

v2. And I saw. Thus John introduces the vision of each seal. The vision is not the silence in heaven, but what John saw. On this point some commentators make a mistake here. What he saw was the **seven angels which stand before God**; that is, the angels who act as his immediate ministering servants, to whom were given seven trumpets. The seventh seal, therefore, embraces these angels and their trumpets, and all they do in the following verses belongs to this seal. The seventh and last seal will not be exhausted until the seven trumpet angels have discharged their mission. **Therefore, the 7 angels, what John saw, are in the seventh seal. In other words, the 7 trumpets are inside the 7th seal. This is very important to understand because now all the chapter 8, including v.5 casting down the censor (of which we look at soon) are WITHIN the 7th seal. Therefore, to understand the context of ALL the trumpets it really relates to understanding the silence of the half-hour in verse one which IS the seventh seal. That is precisely why when they divided the chapters that the 7th seal incases the trumpets and is included in Ch. 8**

The book of Revelation is both structured on the Sanctuary and the Jewish festivals. This is noticed throughout the book, churches, seals, and trumpets. For example we can see the 7 churches is related to the 7 branch candlestick because of the fact that Jesus is in the middle (Rev. 1:13) representing the Head of the Church and working through His people and the oil (Holy Spirit) being lit, brings Jesus the light to the world, through His people (church) to the world. Jesus is represented as the middle stem of the candlestick bringing the oil (light) to the church (other 6 branches) then to the world. The seals are related to the Table of Shewbread because it is the Bread of Life that seals His people (Isa. 29:11; Eph. 1:13). Jesus the living Word, or bread of Life, was born at Beth-lehem, the house of Bread and lived and died to seal His people through His word (Song 8:6). The Trumpets are related to the Golden altar of incense as spoken of in Rev. 8:1-5. And the Plagues or Bowls of Judgments are related to the Most Holy Place where the Ark of the Covenant is opened (Rev. 11:18,19).

So let us look at Rev.8:1 to correctly understand the CONTEXT of the 7 trumpets. First for us to understand the trumpets we MUST allow the bible to interpret itself. Any speculation of what we assume, have heard, or feel has no place in defining the text. The bible must interpret itself. However other tools such as: exegesis, hermeneutics, Hebrew parallism, repition and enlargement and most importantly 1st usage in scripture and sometimes first usage of sanctuary scripture defines and sets the pace by how that word is used, defined and interpreted. Almost all of the New Testament is based in the Old. Most all of Christ's words as he spoke on earth are from the Old Testament. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert in Luke 4, all of Jesus' responses were from Deut. 6 and 8. Therefore, to have a correct understanding of Luke 4:1-13, by definition, one would go back to the sources.

Therefore, to understand the Trumpets in Revelation let's first look at the original sources for it. Looking at the Trumpets in Rev. 8 we MUST understand how Rosh Hashanah (the Feast of Trumpets) worked. The Feast of Trumpets was the second fall festival and the 6th in the year. During the agricultural calendar (lunar year) that Israel used from the first month Nissan to the 7th month Tishri, a shofar (trumpet) was blown on each new moon of the month. Therefore, by the time when the first new moon of the seventh month (Tishri) came that first day of the seventh month culminated as the 7th trumpet blast, the beginning of the judgment process, that is why the trumpets are referred to as "judgments" in Rev. 9:20. The Greek root word for Trumpets is (tupto) = "wounds" or "blows." From that day forward for the next 10 days until Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) the trumpet was blown 3 times per day. Therefore, the new moon is the monthly

celebration of the first day of the month on which the trumpets were blown in ancient Israel to remind the people of the forthcoming Feast of Trumpets (Num. 10:10; Ps. 81:3). It was a special day of worship (1 Sam. 20:5) on which work was suspended and additional sacrifices were offered (Num. 29:11-14).

“The blowing of the trumpets was understood to be a call to repent and prepare oneself to stand trial before God who would execute His judgment ten days later on the Day of Atonement. The importance of the feast is indicated by the fact that the Jews anticipated its arrival on the first day of each month (new moon) through short blasts of the shofar (Num 10:10; Ps 81:3). These short blasts were an anticipation of the long alarm blasts to be sounded on the new moon of the seventh month.” God’s Festivals. Bacchiocchi p.83.

The Trumpets actually begin the inauguration of a judgment process culminating in the Day of Atonement. Therefore, the Trumpets are warnings that on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) the final Judgment is coming. Also as in Ex 19 the trumpets (shofar) that were blown became louder and louder until the people could not bear it any longer. As a matter of fact in Ex. 19 we will see that the trumpet blasts were actually the voice of God Himself. Therefore, as the Day of Judgment (Yom Kippur) was fast approaching the trumpets became louder and louder thus God’s warnings, which are redemptive in nature, become increasingly intense. Remember, the trumpets are as the voice of God for as the “last trump” or trumpet sounds – “eschate salpiggii” then the resurrection of believers takes place and the history of redemption is completed. Jesus said, “Do not marvel at this; (that Jesus has the authority to execute judgment) for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come forth.” (John 5:28,29). John also hears this voice as a trumpet in Rev. 1:10, “a loud voice as a trumpet” which is identified as Christ (Rev. 1:12,13) Furthermore, in Mt. 24:31 and Thess. 4:16,17 states, “For the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout (*keleuma* = a loud command) with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first...” These three sounds are virtually one sound, 1) shout of command, 2) voice of the archangel, and 3) trump of God that bring back the dead in Christ and transform the living righteous. As Samuel Bacchiocchi states, “The outcome of the trumpet sound which accompanies Christ coming reminds us of the “remembrance” function of the Feast of Trumpets.” God’s Festivals, Vol. 2 p. 99 Therefore, the Feast of trumpets not only reminded the people to repent of their sin but reminded God to be merciful to them (Num. 10:9,10). “The last trump which accompanies Christ at His return proves that God has not forgotten His people in the graves and those in distress on the earth.” Ibid, p.99 Therefore, this is the antitypical fulfillment of the judgment that started on the first day of the Feast and ended on Yom Kippur. Furthermore, the last trump or trumpet blown on the Day of Atonement signaled the Jubilee Year, the year of liberation and complete restoration (Lev. 25:9, see also, Isa. 27:13; Zech. 9:9-14)

The new moon of the seventh month started the seventh trumpet and also started the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah). Therefore, we can see that each of the previous new moon of each prior month were mini-Feast of Trumpets or mini judgments. In other words, when the trumpets were blown for each new moon for each of the 6 months, they acted as warnings prior to the ten day period that started on the first new moon of the seventh month when the 7th trumpet blew ushering in the feast of trumpets but in reality

judgment itself. Each of these new moon 7th months were blown by the silver trumpets. They called the 10 days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom kippur as the “days of awe” and were really considered one feast, though they were broken into two. “Awe” is in retrospect that the Jews felt that they corresponded not only to repentance but in “awe” that God could restore and heal them totally individually. Therefore, we can see that the Trumpets in Revelation are redemptive judgments and the “bowls” in Rev. 15 and 16 are punitive judgments that fall upon the living lost at the end time. Again these both correspond to the trumpet blowing, based for Israel’s individual redemption, on a 7 month agricultural, lunar calendar.

The feast of Trumpets was observed on the first day of the seventh month. Now the first day of every month was begun with the blowing of trumpets. So why make special mention of the blowing of trumpets on the first day of the seventh month?

The unique difference of the seventh month was in the realization that this was the month containing the Day of Atonement when the High Priest is before the ark of the covenant. All were to search their hearts and consecrate themselves to the Lord in preparation for this solemn day which represented the final judgment.

It is interesting that seven months pass, each month beginning with a trumpet blast. On the seventh month, we have the seventh trumpet announcing the Day of Atonement. Therefore, we can now see parallels with these feasts and the sounding of trumpets in Revelation.

The true Anti-type of the Trumpets in Rev. (Connected with Investigative Judgment) is related to the authentic and true completeness of the bride (church) SEE BELOW

In Revelation we have seven trumpets blown consecutively, not all together. And when the seventh trumpet blows, in chapter 11, we see the inner door into the Most Holy of Heaven opened and we see the ark, while the 24 elders declare that the time of judgment has come. ????(Therefore, the 7 Trumpets can have a historical impact, i.e. the trumpets blown throughout Christian history as warnings of coming judgment (death probation) i.e. the 6 months are blown each on the first new moon of each month, and they will have a spiritual impact after the 7th trumpet is blown on the first day of the 7th month they begin Rosh Hashanah (after 1844, Day of Atonement). However, the 2nd set of Trumpets are blown, i.e. Rosh Hashanah antitype has not occurred yet because of the fact that God’s people have not prepared themselves. (Rev. 17:7-9).

It seems very likely that the blowing of the seven trumpets in Revelation correspond to the blowing of trumpets at the seven New Moon (or New Month) festivals in the Old Testament. Each new moon trumpet blowing was understood as a day of judgment in miniature, which warned people to prepare for the final judgment ushered in by the Feast of Trumpets. When the seventh trumpet blew, it was to announce the Day of Atonement was at hand. Why 10 trumpet blast on the 7th month and not 7 trumpet blasts. According to the Jewish Midrash the ten represent one day for each 10 commandments. The whole

concept was to draw close to God and by doing so he would restore and infuse His Law (character) within each penitent believer so that a pure bride is formed. (See the Jewish marriage paper)

In like manner, the trumpets in Revelation each have a warning function. When the seventh trumpet is sounded (Rev. 11:18,19) the judgment is announced and the ark of the covenant is seen.

When we understand the purpose of the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah) in the old testament the blowing of the shofar (trumpet) served the purpose of reminding the people to repent of their sins but also reminded God to be merciful toward His people (Num. 10:8-10). This is found in Rev. 8:2-5 when the offering of incense is made representing intercessory prayers in behalf of those who the trumpets are sounded against. Therefore, the trumpets, which parallel the three angels' messages, are to be proclaimed with mercy in order to motivate repentance. The response to their prayers is the casting down of the censor. The trumpets are released in response to the saint's prayers which means that the casting down the censor with fire on the earth (Rev. 8:5) is bringing the Holy Spirit that brings the everlasting gospel but ends in judgment just as the 3 angel's message. In the book the Great Controversy Ellen White named the chapter "The Final Warning," as it relates to the warning of the trumpets couched in the 3 angel's message. Speaking of the trumpets in Rev. 8 Jon Paulien states, "This is a remarkable parallel to Numbers 10:8-10. There the sounding of a trumpet was understood as an act of prayer reminding God of His covenant with His people. In Revelation the trumpets are unleashed by the prayers of the saints and signal God's response to those prayers. This strong thematic parallel with Numbers 10 argues that the trumpets in Rev. 8-11 are to be understood in relation to worship and prayer as in the case of much of the Old Testament." Decoding Revelation's Trumpets, p.223. The point is that the trumpets begin with mercy and end with judgment. Parallel to the 3 angel's message where we have the first angel's message of mercy as related to the everlasting Gospel and then the warning of whoever rejects the everlasting gospel will receive judgments (2nd and 3rd angel's messages). But until the close of probation all of God's judgments are redemptive in nature. The feast of trumpets in the O.T. was dual in nature, one to bring about repentance during the 10 days of judgment and it reassured them that they would be remembered with favor and mercy by God. A recognition of God's mercy also motivated faith/hope within the believer indicative that God was restoring each person (His bride). See Proverbs 21:15; Ps. 25:9; Ps. 37:28, 76:9, 94:15, 119:39,43, Isa. 1:17; 4:4; 41:1

I believe some confusion has also been brought about by the word judgment. As humans we have this idea of God's judgments as always been punitive, eternal, and everlasting, even though it is true that they have been and will be after the close of probation, however, during the feast of trumpets they were totally different. There are approximately 17 words for "judgment" in the Old Testament everything from "shahphat" meaning to "vindicate" to the root word "spt" meaning to execute punitive judgment. But God's judgments are always restorative and from David's perspective and God Himself they are good news.

Rosh Hashanah is described as a "holy convocation" or in other words, a "holy reading of scripture" from the word "convocation" = miqra (Lev. 23:24; Num 29:1-6). The word in

later O.T. periods just came to be known as “scripture” from “scripture reading.” Therefore, the feast was to be known as a scripture reading based on Ex. 19 and Deut. 28. The blessings and cursings of entering the Promised Land. We must remember all of the feasts were a history in miniature from Egypt (sin) unto entering the promised land (Feast of Tabernacles). But the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashannah) was actually viewed by the Jews as one feast including Yom Kippur. They called it the “days of awe,” the idea is prophetic in nature and through the fact that the first day of the seventh month began an experience that the people gathered together to receive the word/scripture, repent from their idolatry of self, and realize that they will be standing before the King of the universe within 10 days, formed anew as God’s bride. In addition, no work was to be done for 10 days starting on the first day of the feast. Why? Because God wanted and required full attention to show the seriousness of these days of awe. This was to be an “awe” experience. The feast also required one to afflict their soul daily leading up to Yom Kippur (Lev. 23:27). The word “afflict” is “anah” in Hebrew and means “to abase and look down upon oneself,” or “humble” oneself. It is the first requirement for repentance.

In addition during the feast, one was to offer a ‘burnt offering’ (ishshah) or (holocaust) meaning entirely burnt up. These voluntary (Lev. 1:3) offerings were where there was a burnt offering there was always a sin offering. Therefore what was God asking for or requiring? The free will burnt offering recognized the fact that the sinner personally made a covenant with God, as a matter of fact before Sinai there were only burnt offerings and sin offerings, as in Noah (Gen. 8:20,21), and Abraham (Gen. 15:17,18). It was used in the Nazarene vow (Num. 6:14) and stood for complete consecration of the individual to God. The idea was the offerer placed himself symbolically on the altar, his life wholly devoted to God. This is where Paul says, “I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service’ (Rom. 12:1). Only when all filth was removed from the burnt offering can one stand on Yom Kippur. As a matter of fact, on the daily sacrifices, which still occurred even to the day of Yom Kippur, the penitent offerer cut the throat of the lamb (burnt offering) the priest then placed the blood on the 4 corner horns of the altar of sacrifice, cut the fat out and placed the meat on the altar to be eaten by the priest before he entered the holy place. If the priest did not eat ALL of the sacrifice then the priest was not allowed in the holy place to mediate on behalf of the sinner. This teaches us that not only does God desire a pure sinner and recognize him as pure by faith but He also needs to have the total burnt offering (sin) taken into to the holy place by priest to be atoned for. If the total meat of the burnt offering was not assimilated (eaten) by the priest the priest was not allowed to present in the holy place.

Interesting is the fact that the first trumpet uses the words “burnt up” (katakaio) as related to those who offer up themselves and those who do not and are ultimately removed from the camp. In addition, three elements of purification were used in the “burnt up” sacrifice, water, fire and blood. As we have seen earlier fire is symbolic of the holy spirit that is a purifying agent, Isa. 4:4 says “He will purge His people by the spirit of burning” and Malachi says that when He comes to His temple He is like a refiner’s fire and will purify the sons of Levi (the priesthood) and purge them as gold that he may offer an offering to

the Lord an offering in righteousness.” (Mal. 3:2,3). The fire on the altar was lit by God. Water is symbolic of cleansing, as in baptism Eph. 5:25,26; Titus 3:5,6 and Acts 22:16. The burnt sacrifice “the offering made by fire,” was a “sweet savour unto the Lord” (Lev. 1:17). When self dies, God lives, it’s the same as this sacrifice demonstrates. Therefore, on the feast the burnt offering was pleasing to God because it revealed a desire in the heart of the offerer to dedicate himself to God, such an attitude is a sweet savour unto the Lord. The blood was the vital part of the burnt offering, it represented atonement for the soul. Lev. 17:11 The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that makes atonement by reason of the life.” Again these burnt offerings were a volunteer offering of love, dedication and consecration. This is what was pleasing to God, and rightfully are Paul’s words, “God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Cor. 9:7, not necessarily money but personal sacrifice. During the feast as the trumpets became louder, God warned that His love had limits. The message was don’t spurn or throw away His love.

As on the feast of trumpets we can apply it to our day, “too many Christians wait to be urged admonished, encouraged, and even bribed before doing what they should do without any urging. Isaiah complains, “There is none...that stirreth up himself.” (Isa. 64:7). Such attitudes must weary God. Nothing is so wearisome than to have to admonish again and again and have but little response. It was from Paul’s personal experience that he can say that God loves a cheerful giver.” The Sanctuary Service, M.L. Andreason. P.97

Therefore, the key points and requirements of the Feast of Trumpets were, 1) it was designed as a Memorial from the Mt. Sinai experience when the trumpets were blown in Ex.19 calling the people to repentance, consecration and priesthood. 2) it was a time of holy reading of the Word, 3) no work was performed during these 10 days, God wanted full attention, 4) there was to be personal burnt offerings made to God, 5) a time of afflicting ones soul, or humbling ones self.

Why would God just send death judgments upon a world when the message had not been sent yet? Literalizing the trumpets in Revelation goes completely contrary to the feast of trumpets, Ex. 19 and Lev. 23. If in fact Daniel said that the book was sealed until the end of time then if we literalize, would they really be sealed? Anyone could have realized by themselves in just literalizing the interpretation of it. It’s true if one does not respond to the trumpets then punitive judgments will come. Even the plagues in Egypt were redemptive in nature.

God only operates receptively, therefore a merciful message that brings about repentance is what God desires. And as God stepped up the blowing of the trumpets during Rosh Hashanah proving the fact that the trumpets got louder and louder leading up to Yom Kippur, so does the voice of God’s people (voice as a trumpet) a message of mercy and repentance swelling up to a Loud Cry. Rev. 10:11 states, that the two witnesses will prophecy again for 1260 days (Rev. 11:3) The two witnesses represent a message that startles the world, with signs and wonders, in order to bring about repentance. Will something catapult this, absolutely, most likely an economic collapse, a major man made disaster or natural disaster. This understanding of a message of mercy to promote repentance which swells into judgment is a response to the prayers of the saints before the golden altar of incense and from Rev. 6:9.