

Session 6. Seventh Seal: Prayer Movement Strengthened by Heavenly Incense (Rev. 8:1-6)

Tonight we are looking at our sixth session in a fourteen-part series on the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls of judgment. These are judgments that are going to be released by the praying church upon the Antichrist and the kingdom of darkness.

As I study these, they are not just interesting passages that are a challenge to see if you can work it out like a puzzle. If you work it out and feel kind of good, “Hey I got it. The puzzle worked.” This is really our life and our destiny written in advance. When I read these passages, I do not mean every time, but often, I try to picture, not just picture what is happening in these scenes, but I picture myself one day praying the release of them.

Actually saying, “Lord, release this according to your brilliant and perfect plan.” As I picture it, I learn it a lot better. Again it is more than a puzzle I am putting together. I am thinking of my future. I am thanking the Lord for it, for what He says in these different passages. Because what is written in these three judgment series — the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowls — they are a manifestation of Jesus’ brilliant mind.

ENCOUNTER JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATIONS

So I thank Him for His brilliance and for His dedicated, passionate heart. So I thank Him for His love. “Lord thank you for the seventh seal.” When you talk to Him and thank Him for it and picture praying the release of it, it becomes far more personal. It becomes real. It becomes more than just a challenge to academically learn the facts. It is our story written in advance. I want to encourage you to encounter Jesus. Talk to Him and see yourself in the drama. If you are not here at that time on the earth, well the saints in heaven are involved in this drama in a very dramatic way as well.

The saints in heaven will be involved in the whole drama. One way or another, you will be participating in this. The seventh seal is the prayer movement on the earth being strengthened by the release of the heavenly incense. There is a time, a perfect timing, when the Lord says, “Now is the time,” and the heavenly, supernatural incense is added to the prayers of the saints. It is explosive and combustive in a redemptive way. It releases the power of God on the earth. I do not understand all the ways it works. I just know that it does work. I do not know why the angel adds the heavenly incense and what is all involved in it. I just know that he does. There is a tremendous of power on the earth that is redemptive.

THE SEVENTH SEAL (REVELATION 8:1-6)

Let's read the seventh seal. Revelation 8:1, "And when He opened the seventh seal." He is the One releasing this. He is the One releasing the timing, and He is the One who designed the events described here. We are the ones who are going to be involved with Him — the saints, across the whole earth and the saints in heaven.

"When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. When I saw the seven angels who stand before God, to them were given seven trumpets" (Rev 8:1-2). There is a moment in time where the seven angels who stand before the Lord — they are a very specific group of angels — there is a time yet in the future, they are given the seven trumpets.

How would you like to be the angel who gets the seventh trumpet? When they hand those trumpets out, all these seven angels are very powerful and honored angels. How would you like to be the one where they hand the seventh trumpet and that blast is what the Lord returns to, and then the saints are raptured at the seventh trumpet, the final trumpet?

"Then another angel" — verse 3; an eighth angel in addition to the seven—"He has a golden censer" — he has a big golden container — "and he came to the altar and he stood there" (Rev. 8:3 paraphrased).

Imagine, he is coming with this empty censer and he is standing at the altar. I do not know if he is there for a minute or for hours or days. I do not know. He is standing there waiting. How dramatic. "Then he was given much incense." We do not know from who and we do not know exactly what the make-up of the incense is. We know it is under Jesus' leadership and it has to do with Jesus' redemptive activity.

Verse 3: "He is given much incense." A lot of it. Again we do not know from who, and we do not know how much. We know it is a lot. Now he takes the incense, it is in this big golden censer, this big container. "He offers it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar." There is a golden altar right before the throne. This angel takes this big golden cense that has a lot of incense in it. He goes to the altar and as the prayers are ascending, or as the prayers are being offered there before the throne, he takes his big container. He empties this heavenly incense upon the altar with the prayers of the saints.

GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE RIGHT BEFORE THE THRONE

Together they ascend before the Father, and the Father is pleased with it. It releases the fire of God. It says in verse 3, "Then another angel, having a golden censer, he came. He stood at the altar. He was given much incense that he should offer this container of incense with the prayer

of all the saints.” He offers it on the golden altar. It is called the golden altar of incense. It is right before the throne.

It is the place where the prayer ministry converges — at the golden altar of incense, right before the Father’s throne. Now that golden altar of incense was also seen in Moses tabernacle and Solomon’s temple. There was the same golden altar — an earthly picture of the heavenly reality. This is the heavenly reality in verse 4, “And the smoke of the incense.” The reason there is smoke from the incense is because they pour the incense on the altar; but what you do not know right here from reading but you know from other passages, is that there are coals of fire on the altar. When you pour the incense on the coals of fire, the fragrant smoke and the glory cloud ascends. The incense, when it hits those coals of fire, it turns into a cloud of perfumed smoke and it ascends.

HEAVENLY INCENSE

Again you will see it in the notes and some of you know the verses where the coals, there are burning coals on that prayer altar around the throne. Those coals are on the altar and they never go out. The fire on that altar never goes out. It is a very fascinating reality. It is not just a symbol. It is actually a reality. There is really a golden altar where the prayer ministry of the church and of all the saints in heaven and on the earth all converge together.

There is a time when the Lord is going to add heavenly incense to it. Then when that heavenly incense hits the fire on the altar together with the prayers of the saints, it is combustive. It is gloriously combustive. It is redemptively combustive. It breaks out and ascends. The smoke of glory goes before the Father. Verse 5, “The angel took that now empty censer” that golden censer because he emptied it. Now it is empty. He takes it and puts it to good use. He takes fire from the altar where those prayers have been, coals of fire. He puts it into the censer. He goes over somewhere, to the balcony of heaven. I do not know how it works. He pours it on the earth. This is all in direct relationship to the prayers of the saints that are on the earth in the end times.

It is the prayers of all the saints. I have no doubt that the prayers throughout history are involved in this and the prayers of all the saints in heaven are involved in this.

What we are focused on is the prayer of the saints on the earth. It is connected to this. He takes, verse 5, the censer. Again, the angel goes there and it is empty to start with. Somebody fills it with heavenly incense. I do not know who. I know it is under Jesus’ leadership. Maybe Jesus Himself does. We do not know.

GOLDEN CENSER FULL OF INCENSE AND GLORY CLOUDS

He takes that golden censer full of incense, puts it on the fire, the puff of smoke goes up, the glory, the fragrant cloud. The censer is now empty. He fills that empty censer with the coals from the fire that is on that heavenly altar. He goes somewhere. I do not know how he throws it to the earth, but he dumps it on the earth.

The earth is troubled by this. At least the unrighteous are. Verse 5 continues, it does not end with fire being thrown to the earth, “There are noises.” I have always wondered, what noises? That shows up several times in the book of Revelation. Some of those noises are beautiful melodies and sounds. Some of those noises, undoubtedly, are very terrifying and troubling. I believe the noises have both extremes. What an interesting thing to put into the end time drama — noises from the throne. There is thundering and lightening. It is breaking out from the throne and it is also appearing in the sky over the earth.

Thunder and lightening is breaking out across the whole earth. Fire is falling. Thunder and lightening. Then there is a big earthquake. I have read some that said all these are signs and things happening in heaven. You cannot have an earthquake in heaven. It has to be on the earth to be an earthquake. I have read that before and I have thought, “That is interesting.” They said, “These are all the things happening around the throne.” I go, “By definition it has to be on the earth.” The noises will be heard by the folks on the earth. The lightening and thunder will be seen by believers and unbelievers alike on the earth.

What a dramatic time. Verse 6, “Then those seven angels that just received the trumpets a few moments ago, they get ready to sound them.” They have not sounded them.

The seventh seal is not the sounding of the seven trumpets. Some commentators will say the seventh seal is to release the seven trumpets. I can accept that, but the seventh seal is more than these angels preparing to sound. There is more to the seventh seal. It is the angel receiving the heavenly incense, the fire falling, the noises, the thunder and the lightening, and the earthquake. The whole deal.

Paragraph A. Again I am going to be repetitious through this. I want you to get the picture. There is a lot of details of all the twenty-one judgments, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls. This one has been, for me, the most challenging to get all the details clear, trying to picture it. Again, the way I picture it is not just answer the puzzle. It is seeing myself in the drama, whether here or there.

SPIRIT OF GRATITUDE

Then it becomes personal. Then thanking Jesus for it in a specific way. Not just, “Thank you for the seventh seal.” “Thank you, that in Your wisdom and in Your passion, you designed and devised such an excellent intervention to the earth.”

When I begin to thank Him in a detailed way, it becomes clearer what I am thanking Him for. I am being a little repetitious because this is the one out of the twenty-one I have had the hardest time getting my mind around. Because there are many details to it.

SEVENTH SEAL JUDGMENT IS ON THE ANTICHRIST'S EMPIRE

Paragraph A, the seventh seal judgment is on the Antichrist's empire and is the strengthening of the prayer movement. It is the prayer movement going to a whole different level.

We rejoice in that for sure, but the reason this is being revealed to the saints on the earth as a prophecy is so we are strengthened by it. I have no doubt that whenever the prayer movement is strengthened and goes to a new level in heaven, there is an earthly correspondence of the grace of God and the prayer movement on the earth.

This happened in the fifth seal if you remember. It is the prayer of the martyrs created a strengthening of the prayer movement. This is the prayer of the heavenly incense, which is different than the martyrs. There is undoubtedly an overlap, but they are not the same thing. These are two different judgments against the Antichrist kingdom. It results in fire being cast on the earth.

Like when Elijah called fire down from heaven, Elijah called fire from heaven on the prophets of Baal. The end-time church will call fire from heaven on the altar of worship of the Antichrist system. It will be the Elijah showdown happening again. I like the fire, I mean I focus on that. The thing that excites me more is to see the prayer movement increasing. I see the prayer movement increasing as predominant in my thinking, even more than the fire falling. I see the fire falling as a consequence of it.

THE FIVE SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE SEVENTH SEAL

Paragraph B. I give the five specific aspects of the seventh seal. Number one, the seven angels are given the trumpets. They do not have them right now. That is a big event when they are given these trumpets. It means the calendar of heaven is at a minute to twelve so to speak. It is that time.

Then, number two, an angel is given heavenly incense to add to the prayers of all the saints.

I believe it is the saints in heaven and the saints on the earth. Some would say the prayers of the saints present and the prayers of the saints through history all coming to a glorious crescendo together.

Number three, fire cast to the earth. Number four, the cosmic disturbances of the thunder and the lightening. The cosmic disturbances, we have just seen them in the sixth seal. This is the seventh seal. It is a continuation of some of the cosmic disturbances, meaning the sky where in the sixth seal it was the sun, the moon, the stars, and heaven splitting open.

Here it is thunder, lightening, fire falling from the sky, and noise, terrifying noises to the wicked for sure. I am assuming there is a corresponding dimension of the beautiful sounds coming from the throne to the righteous. Not sure how all that works, but it is all part of the judgment. Then an earthquake is the fifth aspect.

OUR PRAYERS ARE STRENGTHENED

Paragraph C. Here is my premise, that our prayers are ultimately strengthened. The reason our prayers have power, it is not the magical incense. We are not like some people might go to some bizarre extreme and try to pray for a vision of an angel who has incense. People have strange imaginations. Anything might happen there. It is not the incense I am concerned with. It ultimately is Jesus. It is the activity of the Holy Spirit, the activity of Jesus. The reason our prayers have power, ultimately, is because of the generosity of God's heart, number one.

If God did not have a desire to listen to our prayers, there is no equation that could make our prayers effective. His heart is so generous. He wants our involvement. Therefore He ordained prayer the way to release His power. "Thank you Father for the generosity of your heart that you have involved us in a dynamic way, in an ongoing way forever in this way that touches the very deep parts of our spirit."

When we pray, not all our prayers, it eventually connects our heart to His heart in a very deep and dynamic way. It comes from the generosity of God's heart to even want prayer. Then our prayers are effective and powerful because of the work of Jesus on the cross. If God had the desire, but Jesus did not remove the offense, our prayers would not be effective.

Thirdly, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is moving on the saints in heaven. The Holy Spirit is moving on the saints on the earth. The reason I am saying this, whatever the heavenly incense is, it is the composite of these realities.

HEAVENLY INCENSE

Paragraph D. The heavenly incense. Because this is the essence of what we are asking, “Lord release that heavenly incense upon the prayers of the saints on the altar.” We do not pray that now. Because we do not pray it until the first seal is released. Then we begin to pray these things. We do not pray them until after the first seal is released and the Antichrist is on the world stage.

Then our prayers begin to shift to praying the specific canonized prayer manual that is right here in the book of Revelation. We do not want to have people going on the microphone and have people praying for the release of the sixth seal, the seventh seal, and the fourth trumpet.

Do not do that right now. Right now we do not pray for judgment in a direct way unless the Holy Spirit spoke it in a very direct and powerful way. Like some of the prophets in the days of old were told judgment was coming. They were supposed to pray the release of it. They were actually forbidden to pray the stopping of it. He told Jeremiah, “Do not pray to stop it. Stop praying Jeremiah against this judgment.”

I do not know many prophetic people who have that prophetic track record and credibility where we need to make it a big point in one of our teachings. If you and the Lord are operating that close prophetically and you have that kind of track record, you will know what to do if the Lord speaks to you. Apart from that exception, right now in this hour of history, we pray for the breaking in of light, of the power of God, the goodness, the redemptive part.

Whenever the light breaks in, it will displace the darkness. We do not need to know the details right now. We pray against the destruction. We pray for the impartation of light and against the destruction. We know that when the light comes, there will be destruction, but we leave that to the Lord’s mysterious workings. We do not know the details. Afterwards we are surprised at how little or how much the destruction happened. The prayers stop it, but sometimes the prayer for the breaking in for light increases the trouble.

PRAYING FOR MERCY

When light increases, it displaces the darkness. We do not know the mechanics of it exactly. We pray for light to break in and judgment to stop. That is our default button, minus a prophet who gets a direct word from the Lord in a way that is very, very rare, but it is biblical. After the first seal, then our prayer approach is now different. Then we have a very clear canonized prayer manual. We have a prayer guide globally that unifies us and we pray the first seal. After that the second seal. After that, we know the third seal. After that is the fourth seal.

We have the order and we have the sequence and we have the clarity. From that time on, there are a growing number of people who have taken the mark of the beast. They are reprobate. Meaning they cannot repent. Right now there are people like that, but we do not know who they are. When they have a mark on their hands, they have declared themselves publically as standing with darkness.

From that time on, we pray for the judgments according to the wisdom of Jesus written in the Book ahead of time. These are called the written judgments. Psalm 149, “All the saints will pray.” It is their glory to release the written judgment because there is a large category of people on the earth who have taken the mark. They are reprobate.

They cannot repent and they are troubling the earth. The conflict mounts up. As the prayers of the saints increase, the power of God dismantles darkness even as they rage in an intensified way.

HEAVENLY INCENSE

Paragraph D, the heavenly incense. Nobody knows exactly what the heavenly incense is. Just from the testimony of Scripture. We see the broad prominent themes of Scripture, the main and plain things of Scripture, the heavenly incense would consist of the intercession of Jesus. He is praying right now before the Father. The intercession of the Holy Spirit mixed with the much incense offered by the angel. We do not know all the mechanics of that.

We are not sure what role angels have in prayer. We do not have to know. That is not our focus. Our focus is not to pull the focus back and know all the dynamics. Our focus is to be encouraged that there is a time when the prayer movement goes to a whole different level. There are catalytic moments where there is a great global increase of the grace of God in prayer.

It says in Romans 8:26, “The Spirit helps us in our weakness.” We do not know what we should pray. The Spirit says, “Well I do.” He intercedes for us with groanings. He intercedes for us. He says, “Tell you what. I will be the intercessor on the inside of you, with groanings too deep for words.” This is not tongues, though I greatly value praying in tongues, praying in the Spirit because tongues can be uttered. These are groanings. These are unutterable groanings. My real point is that the Holy Spirit is committed to helping us in intercession. That is what is happening at the seventh seal at a global, eschatological level.

The Spirit is helping the church at a level unprecedented in history. Jesus’ intercession for us is being released at another level.

PRAYERS OF SAINTS ARE IMPERFECT BASED ON HUMAN WEAKNESS

Paragraph F. The church on the earth, we get a picture of what is happening on the earth. The Spirit is praying through the church, “Come Jesus, come.” The Spirit says, “Hey, I am going to help you pray.” He is not just helping the saints in heaven. That heavenly incense dimension is touching us as well. The Spirit is, through us, praying to Jesus, “Come Lord Jesus. Come Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:17). We are saying, “Come” as well, but the Spirit is energizing us.

We need help because of our weakness. It talks about the remnant of Israel here at the very final moments at the Lord’s return, right before the Lord’s return with the anointing of the spirit of grace and the spirit of supplication. “I will pour on the house of David...the Spirit of grace and supplication” (Zech. 12:10). Supplication means prayer. The spirit of prayer comes on the house of David, the remnant of Israel. They are saying, “Come Lord Jesus, Come Lord Jesus.” The Spirit, there is a time in history where there is a catalytic increase, an unprecedented increase of the spirit of prayer. Now there are two responses you can have to that. One guy may say, “This is encouraging because help is coming,” because we look at our prayers and they look so weak. There is a master plan Jesus has set in order.

There is a time when the prayer movement in heaven is given the heavenly incense which I think is the angel’s role, Jesus’ role, the Holy Spirit’s role, we do not know all the breakdown of it. We know it is a dynamic catalytic increase so we say, “Let’s keep pressing in.” There is a tremendous wave of glory of prayer coming to the planet. The other guy may have a wrong approach to that, “Tell you what. I will get into the prayer thing when that happens. Since it is coming anyway, I will just do what I do. When that wave breaks in, I will ride that wave and be a house of prayer guy.”

I do not mean an IHOP–KC staff person. I am talking about the house of prayer; the whole church in the earth will be functioning as the house of prayer at that time. The Holy Spirit wants to use us now. The way we are praying now actually has a connectedness.

Our history in God today is connected to the measure we operate even in that day. Some of us will be up there praying. Some of the saints that I believe right here in this room will still be on the earth. We do not know who. I know this, there is continuity between our prayer history today, the oil that we get in prayer today and the oil that we have in prayer in that day.

They are connected. We do not want to just wait and catch the wave when it comes. We want to be faithful in these early days. We know this. The number one agenda of the Holy Spirit is to pour out a spirit of grace and to have the whole church connected with His heart in supernatural power and connected with the prayer movement in heaven.

UNITY OF HEAVEN AND EARTH PRAYING TOGETHER

In a unity that is global, eschatological unity of heaven and earth praying together. The full purposes of God break out. This is trouble for the kingdom of darkness.

This is a nightmare for the wicked, when the prayers of the saints increase to the next level. Again, it happened at the fifth seal related to the martyrs in heaven.

This is the seventh seal related to the heavenly incense. I do not know all the distinctions of how they are different. I know they are different enough to make them two separate seals and for Him to release them personally, each one of them. Again, this is your history in advance whether you are here or there. You are going to be involved in this. Begin to thank the Lord, not in a general way.

Not just, “Lord thank you for Revelations 8,” but break it down. Talk to Him in detail like a true friend. “Lord, it really fascinates me when you came up with that idea in verse 2 and verse 3. Where did you come up with that idea? I love that idea. You are awesome in your wisdom.” He smiles, “You do not have even the hint of the hint how big that idea is. It will excite you as you learn more and more about it.”

THE SEVEN ANGELS COMMISSIONED WITH TRUMPET JUDGMENTS

We are going to break down some of the verses. In Revelation 8:1, Jesus opened the seventh seal. There was silence in heaven for about half an hour. It is interesting. Some people say, “When I go away to heaven, where time is no more.” Time does not cease in the age to come. The fact that you live forever does not mean time is obsolete.

There is time in heaven. There will be time in the age to come. It will never run out, but it will exist. We will not kind of live in a floating in the air, stuck in a vacuum reality. It will be real, physical events happening on the earth with real time and real impact and real relationships. This idea that time will be no more. Throw that idea away.

Time will exist forever. It will just never run out. There will be sequential order to the universe forever under Jesus’ leadership. Verse 2, “And I saw the seven angels who stand before God. They were given trumpets.”

SILENCE IN HEAVEN

Verse 6, “They were prepared now to sound.” Silence in heaven. This is a very dramatic time in heaven. The kairos moment, meaning that prophetic moment on God’s time clock, on God’s calendar. There is a lot going on around the throne, but there is a moment when the seven angels and everybody around the throne know who these seven angels are.

They stand in order before the throne in a certain way. Everybody gets what happens when those seven angels stand in a position to receive the trumpets. How dramatic. They know the seventh trumpet. The Lord Himself is coming back to the earth never, ever to leave the earth again. Ever. He is on the earth forever and ever.

He will bring the New Jerusalem, down to the earth. When these seven angels are given the trumpets, there is this dreadful, but glorious, awful, wonderful, terrible, silence of glory and awestruck. They understand the implications of the seven trumpets. It is not just how terrifying the judgments will be on the wicked. It means human history is about to shift and the age to come is a moment away. It is not just how terrifying the judgments are. It is how significant the shift in history is going to be.

HUMAN HISTORY NEVER COMES TO AN END

Human history never comes to an end. Natural history comes to an end, but not human history. It will go on and on and on. We will live forever. Natural history is about to have its most radical shift from Genesis 1. Well this is radical, right at that level — a complete shift that is so cataclysmic in its implications. All of heaven is completely silent, billions of angels and all the saints. Everyone is silent. Try to picture that. Try to picture the feeling, the sobriety, and the weightiness.

Whatever weight is on our heart, beloved it is going to happen on the earth. I have asked the Lord here and there, not enough, but, “Lord, let me touch now a little bit of it so I can carry my heart in a way appropriate to the generation that we live. Let me touch this even ahead of time.”

SILENCE FILLS HEAVEN AS JESUS RELEASES HIS FINAL JUDGMENT

Paragraph B. The silence in heaven will come to the earth when these trumpets are released. When the seven trumpets and the seven bowls, those two series of judgment come to the earth, the whole earth will be still with dreadful silence, even the silence of the awe of the saints. There will be no adequate answer. The earth will be speechless, both the righteous and the wicked. The earth will be speechless because the events will be so big and so dynamic.

One guy told me some years ago, he goes, “When I hear you talk, you have this idea like it is going to be really dramatic.”

He says, “I do not get it.”

I respond, “No, no. You are getting it. That is what I think. It is going to be really dramatic.”

He says, “Oh come on.”

It will be so dramatic that all of heaven and all of earth will be awestruck of the weightiness of the significance of the events. The terrible nature and the glorious nature of them will silence heaven and earth together. Beloved, that is dramatic. We need a touch of that on our spirit now. We can never have the fullness of that. We need to have a touch of that sobriety, even in these early days, to focus our spirit on the task that is before us and what is going to happen to history.

It is exciting and very weighty. It says in Habakkuk 2:20, this is about the final hours of human history. The Lord is in His holy temple, but the earth is silent. The whole earth is silent. It says in Zechariah 2:13, “Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord for He is aroused from His holy habitation.” The Lord is aroused from His holy habitation.

You know the verse Psalm. 46:10, “Be still and know that I am God.” This is talking about the silence of the seventh seal. It does not mean our prayer life, although that is a good verse to use. It is on posters and stuff. This is talking about the great tribulation, the earth being silent. I still appreciate it on those posters. It is talking about a awesome silence that fills the entire earth when Jesus is exalted in the nations in judgment.

THE FULLNESS OF THE POWER OF INTERCESSION

Let’s go to Roman numeral III. Again, we are trying to picture this, the fullness of the intercession, its power manifest, and Jesus fully releasing the anointing of intercession: The Holy Spirit releasing the fullness of His grace upon the intercessory ministry and on the earth. In our weakness, we are helped to the uttermost. We are helped to the full measure.

Verse 3, “Another angel having a golden incense. He came and he stood at the altar.” Again, the incense is empty. He is waiting, he is waiting, and he is waiting. I wonder where he came from and how long he is waiting. I try to picture it, and I do not know where he is coming from. I do not have to know or else it would be in the Bible. I say, “Lord I want to see this.” Suddenly he is given much incense.

We do not know from where or from whom. Suddenly the container is full. He offers with the prayers of the saints on the golden altar before the throne, which is the prayer altar in heaven. It has fire, coals on it. Verse 4, then the puff of smoke. It is more than a puff of smoke. This glory cloud of fragrant smoke ascends before the throne, this cloud of glory.

Undoubtedly, it is massive. It is not a puff. That was really bad. It ascends with the prayers of the saints and the angel is offering them with his hand. This means that there is a moment in

time where the heavenly incense is added, where the angel officially is presenting the collection of the prayers of all the saints before the Father in an official, dramatic presentation.

ANOTHER ANGEL

I do not know why an angel would need to do that. It just says he does. We do not break down the why of that. We just say it is going to happen and we leave it there. It is the cross of Jesus, the anointing of the Spirit that gives us the authority before the throne. There is, in the Scripture, an angelic ministry involved in the ministry of the Spirit.

Angels execute some of the mandates of the Holy Spirit. They involve helping the saints as well as releasing judgments. Like when Jesus was in the garden, angels came to strengthen Him.

I do not get how that happens. Angels are the agencies of the grace of God to strengthen and to execute God's will. They are involved somehow in the prayer ministry. We do not have to grasp all the details.

Paragraph C. The heavenly incense is connected. The heavenly incense is connected to the prayers of the saints. This is a verse we talk about because we use the phrase harp and bowl. Revelation 5:8, the four living creatures, those are seraphim, the twenty-four elders. I believe they are humans. They are saints. So it is twenty-four plus four, twenty-eight of them.

Each of these twenty-eight, each of them have one of these golden censers, these golden bowls. We know the one angel here in Revelation 8 has one. He is in a very significant, strategic position. We know there are twenty-eight other bowls that are full of incense. My conclusion, the implication is that, that is not just one angel and one bowl, but he is representative of a whole category of activity happening at this time.

Where the heavenly incense and the saints prayers come together in what I call a holy synergism. There is a holy synergism of the heavenly incense and the prayers coming to where they merge and become one and ascend before the Father.

GIVEN MUCH INCENSE

Paragraph E. I realize, because I have made the hand out and I have thought on this for years. "Okay, I am already last. How many censers? How does that work?" Do not be intimidated if you cannot grasp it right away. Determine in your heart, "I am going to go after it. This is a high point in history about the prayer movement."

We are so connected in our own personal lives. So many of us are saying, "We want to be involved in this to the full degree possible in our weakness, but Lord we want to be a part."

As you are reading this, do not get discouraged if you do not get it right away. Stay with it and speak it to the Lord. Thank the Lord for it. Ask Him for insight on it.

GIVEN MUCH INCENSE

Let's go to paragraph E. This is what the Lord told Moses back in Leviticus 16. This is a fantastic insight into what is happening on the seventh seal. The Lord pulls Moses aside and says, "Let me tell you some things here about how this works." He says, "I want you to do it on earth as a picture of what is happening around the throne and the altar of incense in heaven." Again the altar of incense is the prayer altar right before the throne.

He says, "You do an earthly rendition of it." When we study Leviticus 16, we can gain insight into the seventh seal. He says, "Here is what I want you to do, have the high priest take a censer full of burning coals. Tell him to go to the altar. The coals on the altar of incense, talking about the earth, can never go out. Those coals must be there all the time. The fire must never go out on the altar. Tell him to take this container, put the coals of fire into it, then take handfuls of sweet incense and put it inside as well."

Inside this container, you have live coals and you put the incense, then that puff of smoke. That would be a puff. That would be a smaller version of it, the earthly side. This is what the high priest in Israel was supposed to do in the Old Testament days.

This priest is to bring this fragrant burst of smoke, this cloud of glory that is coming from the coals and the incense inside that container that have joined together, this holy synergism, this combustion that takes place.

He says, "Take this container with this cloud of glory, this fragrant smoke, go into the holy of holies behind the veil and offer it to the Lord. Offer it on the mercy seat." What we find out is that Leviticus 16 gives us significant insight into the seventh seal. One thing we do understand that the sweet incense and the coals come together with the prayers of the saints in order to release the mercy of God on the earth. When you read the seventh seal, fire coming down, you say, "That does not sound like mercy." The destruction of the Antichrist kingdom, of people who have chosen in an irreversible way to side with Satan and the Antichrist, it is the mercy of God that they are diminished.

God's judgment is coming on them to liberate those whom they are oppressing. It is a mercy judgment. That is what we find out from Leviticus 16. This terrifying judgment that is released by prayer is established on the basis of mercy.

THE ANGEL'S HAND

Paragraph F. Isaiah 6. This gives us another insight. Each one of these gives us a little insight to what is going on here. Isaiah 6, one of the seraphim. There are cherubim and seraphim — those are the two highest categories of angels around the throne. They are a bit different. I do not want to go into it. I do not know very much about it, but there is a little Scripture about it. They are just different.

The seraphim took a live coal from the heavenly altar, the same one in the seventh seal. The interesting thing is the seraphim touched Isaiah's lips with it. Here is the point I am making: number one, there are hot coals on that altar in heaven right now that the angels have access to, the high ranking angels at least.

The point I am making here is that somewhere the angels use these heavenly coals, the heavenly incense to affect the grace of God, and to release the grace of God in the human experience in some ways that are mysterious. We do not want to break it down. We do not even want to peer into those things. Those kinds of details fascinate some people.

I just wanted us aware. There is an involvement of the angelic in these fiery coals in terms of God releasing the grace of God to His prophet Isaiah. The heavenly incense in the seventh seal is involved and it is affecting us on the earth in a way only God fully understands.

This seal with the heavenly incense and the coals on the altar, it does affect humans on the earth. It will enhance the prayer movement on the earth in a very dynamic way. When that cloud of glory is released before the throne and the cloud of glory undoubtedly will be released upon the church.

FIRE CAST TO THE EARTH

Let's go to Roman numeral IV. Now what happens is there is the casting of fire to the earth. Revelation 8:5, the angel took the censer, filled it with fire and threw it to the earth. The end time conflict is going to be like the Elijah, Mount Carmel collision and conflict again, but it is going to be against the false worship, not the prophets of Baal. It will be against the Antichrist system. Elijah said, "The God that answers by fire, He is God" (1 Kings 18:24).

The false worship is going to be exposed and the false worship is going to be judged by fire. It is not going to be as immediately obvious to everybody as it was in the days of Elijah. Because Revelation 13:13 is about the false prophet in the kingdom of darkness, he (the False Prophet) will call fire from heaven too like Elijah. I do not have this verse written down, but you can add it to the notes, Revelation 11:5. The two witnesses, they call fire down from heaven too. We have the two witnesses calling fire down from heaven. Undoubtedly their prayers are

linked to the seventh seal. They are on the earth in Jerusalem, or wherever they are at. They are in Jerusalem a lot. We do not know they are only in Jerusalem. They are calling fire from heaven in Revelation 11:5.

On the seventh seal, fire does come from heaven. Then the false prophet is calling fire from heaven. Elijah called fire down from heaven. This thing is going to go to a very dramatic showdown. The true God answers with the fire in a dominant way. Fire is going to come to the earth.

THE END-OF-THE-AGE CONFLICT WILL BE ANSWERED BY FIRE

Paragraph B. Ezekiel actually saw the events of the seventh seal in his own generation back in 586 BC. Ezekiel, he has a vision and he sees an angel taking the coals from the altar of heaven, and then throwing them to the earth. That actually happened. That fire was released through the Babylonian invasion that destroyed Jerusalem. This was Ezekiel 10:2, it is a snapshot of a small example of what is going to be a global reality at the seventh seal.

Look at this. It says in Ezekiel 10:2, “Then He, the Lord, spoke to the man (angel) clothed in linen” — that was an angel in context when you read it. The Lord said, “Fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.” The events of the seventh seal, we have a little bit of insight through the ministry of Ezekiel, through the prophetic ministry. Interesting, we have this in the notes.

What happened in Ezekiel 10, when he through the fire on the earth. What is the even that happened right before Ezekiel 10, it is Ezekiel 9, of course. What happens in Ezekiel 9?

The Lord told the angel, “Go mark or seal the righteous, the intercessors so when the fire comes it does not hurt them” (paraphrased). The even before this fire is released, the intercessors, the ones who groan and sigh against the abominations in the land in Ezekiel 9 are sealed before the fire is released back in Ezekiel’s day. It was very dramatic in Ezekiel’s day, but it is just a snapshot of what is going to happen in the seventh seal.

What happens in the seventh seal in Revelation 8? Right before, God has sealed His bondservants in Revelation 7 (the chapter before Revelation 8), just in the same sequence of Ezekiel. God seals His own servants before His fire is thrown to the earth. This is not symbolic.

FIRE WILL LITERALLY FALL DOWN TO EARTH

Fire will really come to the cities of the earth. We will bring this to an end. Fire will be released by the prayers of the saints. Let’s go to paragraph C. This is interesting because sixty years earlier, plus or minus a few years. We do not know exactly — about 30 AD.

Now it is 90 AD when John is having the vision in Revelation. He is in his nineties. Back when he was just a young man, his twenties, he wanted to call fire down from heaven like Elijah. It says in Luke. 9:52-53, “They entered the village of the Samaritans... but they did not receive the Lord.” Verse 54, so James and John saw it and said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just like Elijah did.” Verse 55, the Lord said, “No.” He rebuked them.

“You have a wrong spirit.” Here it is, sixty or seventy years later and he sees the prayers of the saints releasing fire on the earth. It is of a completely different spirit. That is why the prominence of the Bridal paradigm or the revelation of Jesus a Bridegroom and us a cherished bride is important. The Spirit and the bride will cry, “Come” (Revelation 22:17).

THE NECESSSITY OF THE BRIDAL PERSPECTIVE

The praying church will have a bridal paradigm, a bridal perspective of what is happening. Meaning, they will not call fire down from heaven because they have their pride wounded or because they are frustrated or because people are not responding how they want.

They will only call fire down from heaven in loyal love and submission to the Holy Spirit and for His purposes. We will pray for revival and the saints will pray for judgment in an entirely different spirit when their hearts are touched with loyal love.

Here in John, they would not show up at his meetings, so John wanted to burn the city. He just came from this Mount of Transfiguration. He was feeling pretty bold, pretty excited and pretty important. He just says, “Hey, I just saw Elijah, let’s get on with this.” Jesus said, “We are not going to release fire on a city because they do not come to your meetings John. We are not doing it that way.”

Incidentally, I love to mention this. It was some years later in Acts 8, it says that when the Samaritans received the word of God, they sent John up from Jerusalem and he called down the Holy Spirit on them. John did call fire down on those cities, but it was of a whole different spirit. In Acts 8, John and Peter went up and they called the fire down.

I can imagine John and Peter saying, “Are you not glad we did not burn this city up a few years back?”

“Yeah, I do not know. I was just all fiery. I was just really overcome by that Mount of Transfiguration scene. Elijah, I got so touched by that, I just wanted to see if it would work.”

“Are you not glad the Lord said no because they are all receiving the fire of the Holy Spirit,” (in Acts 8)?

There will be a day when the church will be transformed by love. They will pray motivated by love and for love to increase. They will not be praying in just the warrior mentality. I like the warrior paradigm; but the warrior paradigm of this bold aggression against darkness which is not rooted in the bridal paradigm where people will call for revival and fire for their own purposes, for the bravado of their own ministry. The Lord says, “No, I do not want that spirit involved.” We will end with that.