

Revelation 8:1–6
The Glory of Prayer

Thursday, March 20, 2025 • Read Revelation 8:1–6

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the Lamb open in v1? What happened? Where? For how long? How many of whom does he see in v2? Standing before Whom? What was given to them? Then Whom does he see in v3? What does He have? Where does He come and stand? What is He given? To offer it with what? Upon what? Where? What ascended (v4)? With what else? Before Whom? From what? What does He take in v5? With what does He fill it? Where does He throw it? With what effect? What other response is there to the prayers (v6)?

If God has decreed everything why pray? Revelation 8:1–6 looks forward to the hearing of God’s Word, publicly read, in the holy assembly on the coming Lord’s Day. In these six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God has decreed to act in response to His people’s prayers, as mediated by the intercession of His Son.**

The necessity of prayer. The Lamb is still opening the seals on the scroll of the decree of all that will happen between the two comings of Christ. The opening of this seal, however, is unique. What has God decreed this time? Prayer. The last seal will include the sounding of the seven trumpets, from 8:7–11:15. But the point of the seal is the prayer that precedes the trumpets. Heaven, which has been full of noise and activity, goes silent for an extended period of time (v1). Heaven is waiting for the prayers of the saints! Since God has completely decreed all that will happen (the scroll is written front and back), prayer is not only effective but required; for, He has decreed to act in response to prayer.

The efficacy of prayer. In v3, we are introduced to another Christophany. This one Angel is different than the other seven. He is a Priest, Who mediates the prayers of the saints. This is the true and great ministry of which the tabernacle’s incense altar was an earthly shadow-copy (cf. Ex 30:1–10; Heb 8:5). All saints pray, and all their prayers are attended by the Lord Jesus, Who offers His own incense along with them. How this ought to encourage you in prayer! Our prayers are not effective because of how strong they are, but because of the strength of Him to Whom we pray, and of Him through Whom we pray. Every time we pray, the Lord Jesus is commending our prayers to God, unto Whom they smell of the sweet aroma of His Son’s ministry, offered straight from His hand (v4).

The effects of prayer. The outcome of this praying is seen in two different ways in this passage. First, there is the action of the Priest in v5. His response to the prayers of His saints literally shakes up the earth. The world is full of those who compete for power and influence, but the real power is wielded by Christ, in response to the prayers of His saints. The other outcome is seen in v6. The sounding of the trumpets, that anticipate the end of the age, is a direct response to the prayers of all the saints. Whether the shaking up of kingdoms during the age, or the shaking of all kingdoms at the end of the age, we see here an answer especially to the petition, “Thy kingdom come.” Indeed, this will be the ultimate result of the final trumpet (cf. 11:15)!

When do you pray? What is happening when you pray? What difference does this make to you for your praying? How will you change your frequency and manner of prayer in response to this passage?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for how little we have valued prayer, when John’s vision showed its importance by heaven’s waiting in silence for half an hour for the prayers of the saints. Thank You for the Lord Jesus’s priestly intercession. Forgive us for how we have missed out on enjoying the fellowship that we have with Him when we pray, and grant that we would be more mindful of Christ, as we come to You through Him, which we also ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP5 “Listen to My Words, O LORD” or TPH518 “Come, My Soul, with Every Care”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Revelation 8 verses 1 through 6 these are God’s words. When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven. For about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God. And to them. We’re given seven trumpets. Then, another Angel having a golden sensor came and stood at the altar.

He was given much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the Saints. Ascended before God from the Angel’s hand. Then the angel took the sensor, filled it with fire from the Altar, and threw it to the Earth.

And there were noises, thunderings, Lightnings, and an earthquake. So the seven angels? Who had the seven trumpets? Prepared themselves. To. So far, the reading of gods inspired and. And Aaron torqued. We’re at the end now. Of the Seven Seals, you remember? Seven Seals were on this scroll. That was written front and back.

Which means it was. Complete, know where to add anything. That was correct, know where to fix anything. In order to make notes. represents the decree of God. How all that will happen, especially the decree of God, pertaining to the time between Christ’s two comings? To the time of the Gospel going out as the one on the White Horse and the gospel of the Kingdom conquering.

And conquering to conquer and conquering and to conquer. And a time of. many upheavals that frighten men, but are under the decree of God seals two through four and. and which Jesus calls the beginnings of the birth banks. when he is differentiating between the destruction of Jerusalem and.

The end of the age? And it is in this time period that Saints are being martyred and the number both of the Servants of the Lord in Christ. And the martyrs are being completed, and it is during this time that the Lord is sealing, who are his? By giving them his holy spirit.

gives us life, and light brings us to Faith in Christ. Consecrates us sets us apart. From the world, every last one of whom every specific one of whom. Will be sealed. and who, upon departing from this world, will enter that innumerable multitude that Praises God. In glory that has their rest and their white robes and are resting, not by relaxing on a couch in a picture window somewhere.

Over a picturesque scene that they have their rest and the greatest thing that there is the worship of him who sits on the throne and the lamb. And so. The scroll that is sealed by these Seven Seals is the scroll of the. Decree of God for all that occurs between the two comings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now that we’re really far into the scroll or into the? Last part of the scroll and what is written, not necess, not meaning the last part chronologically. But the last part of God’s Own description of his degree? The seventh seal is broken and interestingly, instead of action. We have silence.

The seventh seal is going to result in the blowing of the seven trumpets. We see that in our passage. when he opens the seven Co, there's silence in heaven for about half an hour. And then there are the seven angels with the seven trumpets in verse two, and the Seven Angels prepare to sound the seven trumpets in verse six, and so the seventh seal is a silence that precedes the sounding of the trumpets.

And there are a couple of things happening here, one of which is that the silence is. having the same effect as. How we would now today, use a drroll. to indicate that something. immense is about to occur. Heaven has been very noisy in all of the visions and glimpses that.

John has had it that we have had of it by John's pen in his vision so far. And so. Because of the how much sound there has been? so far. In heaven in the Book of Revelation. The sound of this silence is deafening as it were. it's all the more significant on account of that.

It's indicating. some great thing. Is about to happen. And. So there is that effect of the silence? But the silence turns out to be for something else, which is actually the opposite of the original reason for a drroll. do you know that drrolls originally existed to stop martyrs from evangelizing?

drrolls. Began to be used when the last words of those who were being executed for their faith in Christ were full of confidence in the Lord Jesus and hope in him and praying for the conversion of those who are killing them and pleading with those who were killing them to be saved, for they were the ones who were in the great Peril of perishing and the saint that was about to be executed was not in Peril at all, but was being helped to Heaven by this execution and.

Plain words. They weren't always the the most eloquent saint who was being. Executed, but they died so well and their faith was so real. And the Lord used the preaching of the Gospel. That those who are killing them began to use drrolls to drown out. The last praying and evangelizing.

Of those Martyrs who are being executed. Well, the silence here is exactly the opposite. The silence is making you making room for the prayers. Their silence in heaven for about half an hour. You see, the seven angels with the seven trumpets, and yet they are not, to sound them yet.

What are they waiting for? Verses 3 and 4, especially tell us. They're waiting for the prayers. Of the Saints. That's what the silence is for all of. That goes quiet. As it. So that the prayers of the Saints may be heard on high. Another Angel having a golden sensor came and stood at the altar.

Now, just as we said before in the sixth seal, you have the four Angels who are the ones. Whom it is going to be given to destroy everything on the earth, and then you have the one Angel. Whose task is to place God's seal upon those whom he is saving.

You say, aha, I know who that is. Because I know who the seal is, it's not what the seal is. It's who the seal is. The seal is the Holy. As Ephesians 1 and Ephesians 4. Remind us and the one who seals his Saints to the spirit is Jesus himself.

And then we come here, and you've got seven angels with seven trumpets. And then there's a one Angel. Turns out to be a priest. Because he has the? The Priestly fire pan or shovel the sensor. of the priest, and he's serving the incense Altar, and he is the one who mediates and offers the prayers of the Saints.

We know who this one is, don't we? This is our Lord Jesus Christ, our great high priest. Who, as Hebrews tells us. Always lives to intercede. What is he always doing with his resurrection life? Always interceding for us, always mediating our prayers unto God. He is given much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the Saints.

And so. I think we just found out something that's true of every Saint. Because all of the Saints will be praying people. It is impossible that you should have such a praying savior as the Lord Jesus. And that you should be United to him. By the work of the Holy Spirit, giving you.

To unite you to Christ, it is impossible. That you would be genuinely being conformed to the Lord Jesus and not be a praying person. Now, you may be very weak and you're praying and very infrequent in your prayer. And that's true of us in every part of Christ. And his character being worked out in US of our being conformed to him.

We are very weak and inconsistent and part of the work that he does is growing Us in himself to make us to be more like himself. But certainly, that must be true in the area of prayer. And here, the Lord Jesus has his Priestly fire pan, and he has as much incense, and he's offering with the prayers of all the Saints.

All Saints pray. All Saints pray and Jesus. Adds his incense. To every one of those prayers. Maybe there's times. I get the sense sometimes. what? I hear one of you praying, and it sounds like you might be struggling a little bit, or when I don't hear you praying.

And I wonder? What's going on that, you know, we're having our? prayer time. At the end of the day, and one or another is not praying. I get the sense that perhaps? You're concerned with how feeble and? Uninstructed, how poor it might sound, how you might be, feel find yourself unable to give the words.

That you need? And yet we see here. That the strength of the praying is in two places. we're about to get to the strength of the praying is the one to whom we pray. But the strength of the praying is also the one through whom we pray. Jesus adds his incense.

To every prayer. Of every saint offered through him. However difficult, and struggling and halting your prayer may feel. By the time it reaches the ears of God. It smells like the sweet offering of the Lord Jesus Christ, for he has offered his incense with it. And so he is given much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar.

Which was before the Throne? And then verse 4, the smoke of the incense. With the prayers of the Saints, the sins before God from the Angel's hand. And he receives your praying and are praying and all genuinely Christian praying. He receives it. As sweet, smelly incense from the hand of his beloved son.

With whom he is well pleased. And so there's one sense in which? We almost never do anything in which we feel weaker than when we pray. You'll remember Romans 8 when it says the spirit helps us in our weakness. And what is the particular weakness that it's talking about when it says the spirit helps us in our weakness?

For we do not know how to pray as we ought. Or we do not know how to pray what we ought a little bit more literally there. In Romans 8, we always pray in weakness. That's of the essence of prayer. One of the whole reasons you're praying is because you are weak and the one to whom you pray is strong, and so you pray to him.

And so it shouldn't be surprising if that's of the essence of prayer that you find that you're praying itself is weak. You're a weak person, praying. What did you expect strong prayers to come from a weak person? But they come through a strong Christ. With his strong and sweet and acceptable and pleasing incense.

Commending our praying to God. And they come to a strong God. You see that in verse 5? Then the angel took the sensor, filled it with fire from the altar. So, we're praying. And he offers the sweet incense of the smoke unto God. But then he takes the fire and the fire doesn't go up.

You have to remember, we have a high priest who is not just man, he's God, and man. He fills it with fire from the Altar and threw it to the Earth, and there were noises and thunderings and lightnings. And an earthquake. So that the the? shakings. Of what happens here in the?

Those things that are the smallest hints, the beginnings of the birth pangs of that, which is to come in the last day. They come in large measure. As response to the prayers of the Saints. The Lord has decreed all that he will do. But he has also. Decreed that he would do them in response to his son.

And in response to his sons mediating his people's prayers. So that prayer is not just a submitting of our Wills unto God and all the things that we pray. It's true. It is. But prayer is an embracing of God's will. Who? Response to our praying by doing what he Wills and has so willed that we pray, and so loves to respond to our prayers.

So insists. Upon our praying and upon his responding responding to. That he actually does not do things until we pray. The seven trumpets cannot sound. Except in response to the prayers of the Saints. In Revelation 8, 1-6. This principle that he there are, he does not do things until we pray because he has ordained to work through.

Our praying also appears, of course. In the Book of James, when he says you have, not because you ask not. How could you expect to have that which God has ordained to give through praying in response to praying if you haven't prayed? And so there is this consequent necessity?

Of prayer. Not that prayer determines what will happen, but that God is determined that it will happen through prayer. And even things these noises and thunderings and earthquake. Remember, they're connected to things like the sun being darkened and the moon to blood and stars falling from the sky, the topling of authority in every sphere and over every domain you remember.

Sun, Moon and stars were the first created authorities in Genesis chapter 1. This world is full of those who. Want to be the ones who are in Authority and who take down other authorities? But there is something that is more immediately responsible. For the pulling down of Kingdoms and authorities, tyrants and persecutors, oppressors, strongholds, Empires.

There's something that is more immediately responsible for that than great wealth or great militaries or great scheming. And it is the prayers of the Saints. Because it is Jesus from Heaven. Who throws the fire? From his altar on the earth. As thunderings and Lightnings and earthquake. To take down the authorities and indeed.

That's what we'll see is the ultimate result, because what happens in response to the prayers of the Saints or the seven trumpets? We get to the last trumpet. You'll have it. In chapter 11, verse 15, then the seventh angel sounded. And there were loud voices in heaven, saying. The kingdoms of this world.

Have become. The kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. And he shall reign. Forever! And ever. Now we know one of the things. That we pray. The Lord taught us to pray. And one of the great things that we pray is thy kingdom come. And one of the great responses of God.

To our praying thy kingdom come? Will. And that ultimate answer to that request. There are many smaller answers to that request. Throughout the age. But the ultimate answer to that request is the sounding of the seventh trumpet. We have prayed thy kingdom come. And you hear the great announcement in heaven.

The kingdoms of this world. Have become the kingdoms of our Lord. And of his Christ. And his kingdom, thy kingdom. Will have fully come. How great a thing. Is the praying? Of all the Saints. The weakest Saints. That come through a strong Christ. And to a strong God. And.

Result in his strong and mighty works. Hey man, let's pray. Our Father in Heaven. We pray that your spirit would help us remember and take to heart. This portion of your word? That we might be encouraged to pray. And. be prayerless that we might be encouraged in prayer and know our fellowship with the Lord Jesus and his offering his incense along with our praying.

And that we might be encouraged by prayer. And be confident of what you are doing and will do. In response to our prayer. So, please help us by your spirit, you know, Lord, how weak we are in the area of prayer. And yet, you have given us this portion of your word to strengthen us.

So, Grant the ministry of your spirit that, indeed, this portion of your word would strengthen us in praying. It through Christ.