
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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**MESSAGE TWENTY-THREE
THE SCENE IN HEAVEN
AFTER THE OPENING OF THE SEVENTH
SEAL AND THE JUDGMENT UPON
THE EARTH, THE SEA, THE RIVERS,
THE SUN, THE MOON, AND THE STARS—
THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS**

We come in this message to 8:1-12. In this chapter we have the opening of the seventh seal (vv. 1-2), the scene in heaven after the opening of the seventh seal (vv. 3-5), and the sounding of the first four trumpets (vv. 6-12).

I. THE SEVENTH SEAL

The seventh seal, which will begin before the great tribulation, consists of the seven trumpets, for the seven trumpets are the content of the seventh seal. If we would understand the prophecy of this book, we must realize that the secret of God's economy is sealed with seven seals. As we have pointed out, the scroll in chapter five is the new testament enacted by Christ with His precious blood. This new testament is the scroll of God's economy sealed with seven seals which are the contents of the scroll. We have seen that the first four seals are not consecutive but simultaneous and that the fifth and sixth seals are consecutive. The seventh seal includes everything from after the sixth seal to eternity future. Thus, the seventh seal, consisting of the seven trumpets, is all-inclusive. As we shall see, the seven bowls are a part of the seventh trumpet. The seventh seal consists of the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet consists, in part, of the seven bowls. Both the seventh seal and the seven trumpets run to eternity. The seventh trumpet will close this age and usher in the kingdom, the new heaven, and the new earth.

Some may have the concept that the seven trumpets follow the seven seals and that the seven bowls succeed the seven trumpets. This concept is natural. In understanding the Word, we should have no trust in our natural concepts. Rather, we must forsake them and come to the Lord, saying, "Lord, show us Your way." Since 1933, I have been helped by Brother Nee's study on the book of Revelation. Due to the natural concept which was deeply embedded in my thinking, I believed that the seven trumpets were the continuation of the seven seals and that the seven bowls followed the seven trumpets. This concept constantly troubled me. I studied and studied until one day the light came and I saw that the seventh seal contains the seven trumpets. The seven trumpets are the equivalent of the seventh seal. They actually are the seventh seal. The content

of the first four seals is the four horses, the content of the fifth seal is the cry of the martyred saints, the content of the sixth seal is God's answer to the cry of the martyred saints, and a warning to the dwellers on the earth, and the content of the seventh seal is the seven trumpets.

Like the first four seals, the first four trumpets, which are not yet the direct judgment on men, form one group. The first trumpet consists of a judgment on the earth with the trees and all the grass, as occurred in Egypt (Exo. 9:18-25); the second, a judgment on the sea with the living creatures and ships; the third, a judgment on the rivers and springs of waters, as occurred in Egypt (Exo. 7:17-21); the fourth, a judgment on the sun, the moon, and the stars, to darken them, as also occurred in Egypt (Exo. 10:21-23). By the judgments of these four trumpets, the third part of the earth, the sea, the rivers, and the hosts in the heavens are damaged, thus causing them to be no longer good for man's living. Before the seven trumpets, there will already have been a judgment on the earth and on the hosts of the heavens at the sixth seal (6:12-14). The extent of the damage of that judgment will not be as definite as the damage of the first four trumpets. At the fifth trumpet Satan and Antichrist will collaborate to torment men; at the sixth trumpet there will be a further judgment on men as the two hundred million cavalry kill the third part of men; and at the seventh trumpet there will be many things—the eternal kingdom of Christ, the third woe comprising the seven bowls, the judgment of the dead, the giving of reward to the prophets, to the saints, and to the Godfearing people, and the destruction of the destroyers of the earth. At the seventh trumpet, there will be further judgments on the earth, the sea, the rivers, and the sun through the seven bowls (16:1-21). These will be the most severe judgments of God upon the earth and heaven.

We must forsake the concept that the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls are consecutive. No, to repeat, the seven trumpets are the content of the seventh seal, and the seven bowls are a part of the seventh trumpet. This is the key to understanding the prophecy of this book. Only God could have written the book of Revelation because only He has the wisdom to compose it in such a marvelous way. Who else has the wisdom to write a book with such signs and symbols as that of the four horses which fully cover the history of the past twenty centuries? That the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls are not consecutive reveals God's wisdom in writing this book. If we do not have the light to see this arrangement, although we may read Revelation again and again, we shall still be confused. **(life study of Revelation)**

WHAT IS PRAYER

Issue No. 1 The Present Testimony (Br Nee)

Genuine prayer is a real work. Prayers that are according to God's will and which ask for God's will to be done are a work of dying to the self. We must be weaned from the self completely, that is, we must not have a bit of self-interest. We must live completely to God and only seek after His glory. Then we will like what He likes, pursue what He pursues, and pray what He wants us to pray. Indeed, it is difficult enough not to have any self-interest in working for God. It is even more difficult not to have any self-interest in praying for God's will. One who would live completely to God must be so.

In the past generations, God could have done many things and, in fact, would have liked to have done many things, but because His children did not work together with Him, He did not perform them. It was not God who failed, but His people. If we review our entire personal life, we will see the same story. Had we only had greater faith and more prayer, our life would not have been so. Today God is seeking that His children would be willing to be one with His will and through prayer proclaim this kind of union. No believer has ever fully experienced the greatness of being completely one with God's will.

Once a servant of the Lord said well that "prayer is the railroad track of God's work." What tracks are to a train, prayer is to God's will. A locomotive does have great power and ability; it is able to run thousands of miles in one day. But if there are no tracks, the locomotive will not be able to move one inch. If it tries to move one inch, it will sink into the mud. It can go everywhere except where no tracks have been laid by man. This is the relationship between prayer and God's work. We do not need to explain in detail. The meaning of the illustration should be obvious to all. Indeed, God is almighty. No one can oppose His work. However, if you and I do not work together with Him in prayer or prepare the way for His will through prayer or by means of all prayer allow Him the possibility to move in many directions, He will not work and cannot work. Today locomotives cannot pass through many places in interior China. It is not because their engines have no power, but because there are no tracks on which to run. God wills and wants and even delights to do many things. But because His children do not express their sympathy with Him or pray to open the way for Him, He is limited. All of us who are fully consecrated to God should consider if we are daily limiting Him. Thus, our most important work is to open the way for God. There is no other work more important than this. With God there are many possibilities. But if we do not open the way for Him, all will become impossibilities. Therefore our prayers in one accord with God should increase more than ever. Let us pray thoroughly—let us pray on all sides—so that God's will will reach all directions. No doubt our activities among men are important. But before God, working together with Him by prayer is even more important.

To pray does not mean to change the mind of heaven. It is the greatest mistake to think that God is hard and stubborn and that we must use prayer to battle with Him until He yields to us and changes what He has predetermined. Actually, any prayer that is not according to God's will is useless. Because God's will has suffered a hindrance from either men or demons, we come before God (as if we are wrestling with Him), asking that He execute His will and that His (predetermined) will not suffer through hindrances to His "permitted will." If we really desire God's predetermined will and if we have such prayer, such wrestling

with God, and such resisting of any hindrance to His will, it will cause Him to carry out His predetermined will, not allowing anything of men or demons to (temporarily) come in the way. It is true that it appears that we are wrestling with God. Actually, this is for the accomplishment of His will. It is not that we have a certain idea and are trying to change His will. For this reason, unless we really know what God's will is, we shall not be able to work together with God in prayer.

Dear brothers, once we know the true meaning of prayer, we have to be careful not to allow the flesh to speak anything. O dear ones, if God will send laborers by Himself, the Lord would not have told us to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers! If His name will automatically be hallowed, if His kingdom will come without our cooperation, and if He will cause His will to be carried out on earth by Himself, He would not have taught us to pray this way. If He will come again without the need for the sympathy of the church, His Spirit would not have inspired the apostle to ask Him to come quickly again. If God the Father will automatically cause His believers to be one, there would not have been the need for the Lord to pray such a prayer. If the cooperation of God and man is not important, what is the point of Christ interceding in heaven continuously today? O dear ones, praying in sympathy with God is more important than doing anything else. He can only work on matters in which His children sympathize with Him. He is not willing to work where there has been no prayer, where He does not have His people's will in union with Him. This union of the wills is real prayer. Obtaining an answer to prayer is not the highest goal of prayer. The purpose of prayer is that we be one with God's will so that God can work. When our will is one with God, even though we may at times ask amiss and our prayer is not answered, God still receives the benefit because He is able to work as a result of our sympathy with Him.

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Strengthening of prayer in the church life on all levels: personal, husband and wife, vital group, church prayer
- Pray for the English-speaking testimony and gospel preaching on West Valley College campus.
- Pray for the burden of raising up next generation for building up of the body of Christ.
- For GOW training: Vital groups be raised up, attending prayer meeting, prophesying on Lord's day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth.

Announcement

- Bible Reading Schedule of Revelations:

LD	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
7:9~17	8:1~6	8:7~12	8:13~9:11	9:12~21	10:1~4	10:5~11

- 1/1/2013 prayer meeting at Tien's place 19070 Dagmar Dr., Saratoga, CA.
- 12/31, 1/1 to receive saints from MTT Taiwan.
- Jan, 2-4, to receive saints from New Zealand.
- Winter Video training, at Campbell meeting hall 12/30 Lord's day 4~6pm open, Monday 12/31 8:30am ~ 12pm.
- Financial needs for Boston Training center and Church in Hayward.