

The Seventh Vial Chapter XIX. The Seventh Trumpet



The continuation of [Chapter XVIII. The Harpers On Mount Zion](#).

THE dark scene of Babylon's overthrow now opens to our view, in the symbols of the Apocalypse, as, not improbably, it is about to do in the astounding events of our times—a consideration fitted, surely, to produce that solemn and devout spirit which eminently becomes an inquiry like the present.

The commencement of the dreadful catastrophe is notified to the world by the trumpet of the seventh angel. The first question here is, When did this angel sound? We derive material aid in determining this point from an intimation immediately preceding that of the angel's sounding.

"The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." - Revelation 11:14

The second woe was the Turkish invasion. The capture of Constantinople, in 1453, formed the acme of that power. We cannot surely make that date the end of the Turkish woe; for we find the Turks afterwards becoming a woe to the western world.

The first check given to their arms was in 1673, by John Sobieski, before the walls of Vienna. This is the earliest date we can assign to the passing away of the second woe; but even this appears to be too early; for the form of speech here employed intimates not merely that the woe had begun to decline, but that it was past; and we think, with Mr. Elliot, that 1774, in which year the Turks, after sustaining repeated defeats by the allied forces of Russia and Austria, signed a peace, the terms of which were dictated by the conquerors, is the true period when the woe had passed. Before 1774, then, the seventh trumpet, which forms the third woe, could not be sounded. But it must have been sounded soon after, for the third woe was to follow quickly on the passing away of the second. The next great epoch of calamities that opened on the world followed the exhaustion of the Turkish woe at the distance of only fifteen years—the French Revolution. Beyond that event—1789—we are not disposed to defer the sounding of the seventh angel; and we cannot fix it earlier. This makes the sounding of that angel synchronize with what Daniel designates "the time of the end," and also with the termination of the twelve hundred and sixty years; and the appearance of the angel with the cry of Babylon's falling.

The sounding of the seventh trumpet was instantly followed by great voices in heaven, announcing the conversion of the kingdoms, the wrath of the nations, the time of the dead that they should be judged, and the opening of the temple of God in heaven, accompanied by lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. What an awful picture! Darkness and light, terror and joy, are strangely blended in it. The earth shakes beneath our feet, and the heavens begin to thunder fearfully above us; while tempests of lightning and hail are poured from the sky. Mysterious voices are heard announcing the coming of a new age, and, brightest omen of all, the temple of God in heaven opens, but the darkness of the tempest which is raging on the earth does not as yet permit us a sight of His glory. This symbolic scene sketches, as it were, the character of the era to be introduced by the seventh trumpet; and it specifies the leading events that were now to fall out, and the heads of those great judgments, the particulars of which were to be given under the vials.

These symbols we can only indicate, not illustrate. They depict the era which the seventh trumpet was to introduce as eminently an era of "earthquakes," that is, of revolutions; as an era of "hail-storms," that is, of fierce wars, originating in a quarter of Europe lying to the north of Italy; as an era of "lightnings," that is, of sudden explosions of popular wrath; as an era of the "dead," that is, of the vindication of the good, and the condemnation of the bad, of past ages. But with these would mingle other agencies. The era would wear a singularly mixed character; the agencies of destruction would be unusually powerful, but the agencies of good would also be unusually active in the promotion of the cause of human amelioration, and the spiritual enlightenment of the nations. In short, if this symbolization reveals the terrible spectacle of the destruction of the old world; it portrays the blessed and gladdening vision of the rising of a new and better in its room.

But, more particularly, the voices which spoke in heaven announced, as the first consequence of the sounding of the trumpet, the conversion of the kingdoms, i.e., of the Roman earth. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." This foretells a radical change awaiting the kingdoms of Europe—a change as great as that which passed on Nebuchadnezzar, when, at the end of the days, his understanding returned, and he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and blessed the Most High. Like their prototype, these kingdoms have long been smitten with the mad rage and ferocious cruelty of the wild beast; they have labored under a moral and political madness: but at the end of the days their reason shall return, and they shall praise and honour Him that liveth for ever. The Roman element which Justinian breathed into them shall become extinct; new principles shall guide their policy, even those of the Word of God; their wealth and power shall be devoted to higher objects—the true happiness of their subjects; and whereas they have been the bulwarks and fences of superstition, they shall come to account it their glory to subserve the interests of God. But first they must pass through that period of convulsion foretold by Daniel under the symbol of the breaking in pieces of the image.

"And the nations were angry." (Revelation 11:18) This implies, that at the period of the seventh angel, the nations of the Roman world will become

exceedingly exasperated. The words forbode an era of turbulence and fierce contention. The object of their rage is not stated: but it is instructive to observe that it is the nations that are angry, not the beast. This period will be marked by some terrible outburst of popular fury; perhaps against God, by denying His existence and government; perhaps against rulers, by whom they have been so long oppressed; or, which is more probable, their madness will be directed against both.

"And thy wrath is come." (Revelation 11:18) This is a terrible announcement. The era of the seventh trumpet will be the day of God's wrath. Before the world can enter on a new and better dispensation, it must pass through a judgment-day. If, on the one hand, there will at this period be a fearful exhibition of human passion and wickedness, there will, on the other, be a solemn display of the essential holiness of the Divine character, and the eternal rectitude of the Divine government. Till the seventh angel sounded, God's wrath was suspended. Though His saints were put to death, and though His own name was blasphemed by idolatries and wickedness on the most gigantic scale, He sat silent in the heavens, as if He saw not the crimes done upon the earth, nor heard the cry from under the altar, "How long!" but now His wrath, no longer restrained, will burst upon the world. Crimes of long standing, particularly the slaughter of the saints, will come up for judgment, and will draw down the hoarded vengeance of ages.

The heathen will rage; but He that sits in heaven shall speak unto them in wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. (Psalm 2) This great judgment-day, or period of wrath, will begin, we apprehend, at the termination of the twelve hundred and sixty days, and continue during the seventy-five supplementary years. And it is confirmatory of our opinion that the twelve hundred and sixty years ended at the close of last century, that we find the world making then a sharp and sudden transition, in fact, traversing the gulf which divides modern from medieval times.

Up till this very hour the Papal world had been at rest. Rome sat tranquilly upon her seven hills, and as she cast her eyes abroad upon the subject nations, promised herself an eternity of dominion. She was saying in her heart, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow," (Revelation 18:7) when, suddenly, a great shock was felt, a terrible crash was heard, thrones and altars came tumbling down, and from the very depth of the earth there came up a terrible power, rending the framework of society in its passage to the surface, and establishing itself on the earth, amid the wailings of dynasties and hierarchies, and the cry of agonized nations—the Revolution of 1789.

"And the time of the dead, that they should be judged." (Revelation 11:18) The idea of a judgment-day is carried out in this symbolic resurrection, or "time of the dead." Who these dead are, and the design for which they are now judged, we gather from the next clause :—"And that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great." (Revelation 11:18) It is some grand and public vindication of the martyrs slain in former ages that is here foretold. They had this day in their eye when they were slain; and from the tribunals where they were condemned—from the fires, and scaffolds, and dungeons, where they

perished—they appealed to the judgment of this day; and when it comes, the events of Providence shall make it as clear to the world as if the great Judge Himself were to erect His tribunal on the earth, that their cause was just, and that they perished witnessing for religion and liberty. In the triumph of their cause on that day, and the honour to which their memories shall then be raised, God shall give reward unto His servants the prophets, and to His saints, and to those of them especially who lived during the twelve hundred and sixty days of the domination of Antichrist, and were called to prophesy clothed in sackcloth.

“And shouldst destroy them who destroy the earth.” (Revelation 11:18) Still the figure of a judgment-day is carried out. After the raising of the dead comes the separation between the two companies—the public acquittal of the one, who now receive their reward, and the public condemnation of the other, who now pass to their punishment. “Them who destroy the earth.” This is a description of Popery as striking as it is compendious (marked by brief expression of a comprehensive matter). Popery has destroyed man morally, by the idolatry and crime in which it has sunk him. It has destroyed him socially, by the demoralizing and disorganizing principles it has imbued him with—loosing him from the most solemn obligations of morality, and from obedience to lawful authority. It has destroyed him intellectually, inasmuch as it has enfeebled his mind by superstition, and crushed his liberty, together with all those arts and sciences which can flourish only where liberty is enjoyed. And it has destroyed man physically, by plunging him into ignorance, improvidence, sloth, and poverty. It has covered those countries in Europe where it prevails with comparative barrenness, hovels, and rags; thus making them monuments of the fact, that Popery, as a system, destroys the earth. But now itself shall be destroyed.

An eminently judicial character will belong to the era of the seventh trumpet. “The judgment shall sit,” says Daniel, at the end of the twelve hundred and sixty days, to take away the dominion of the Papacy, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. So clearly retributive a character will then belong to the events of Providence, that God’s tribunal will be, as it were, visibly set up before the nations. The moral sense, if not the bodily eye, will see an august Judge erecting His throne amid the clouds and tempests of that era, and summoning before Him one great criminal. The past murders, tyrannies, crimes of Rome will be brought up to confront her; and so signal a disclosure of her true character shall be made before the nations whom she has seduced and destroyed, that the whole world will acquiesce in the justice of her DOOM.

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament,” (Revelation 11:19) the symbol of the partial enlargement of the Protestant Church, and the readier access now afforded to the men of the Roman earth to the Bible. Contemporaneously with the French Revolution, or immediately subsequent, there was a signal revival of the evangelic and missionary spirit in Britain. Numerous societies were formed for the spread of the gospel and the circulation of the Scriptures. Missions were set on foot to almost all parts of the world—the West Indies, the South Sea Islands, Africa, Australia, Greenland. The evangelization of India was a

work not too mighty to be undertaken. The Jews were visited; and even the benighted and idolatrous Churches of Eastern and Western Christendom were not neglected. The French Revolution opened great part of Europe to the preaching of the gospel. Thus the temple was opened: and the ark of the testament—the Bible and gospel—which Popery had veiled, was anew discovered to the Roman nations. But this statement must be taken in connection with another most important intimation, in the end of chapter 15, respecting the temple now open:

“And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power: and no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” -Revelation 15:8

God was present on the scene as an avenging God, punishing the Popish nations for the blood they had shed and the idolatries they had committed, the smoke from the glory of God, and from His power, that filled the temple; and, till He had vindicated His holiness by the infliction of these awful plagues, no man was able to enter into the temple. Nevertheless, all the while the storm was raging, it stood open, revealing, as it were, to the nations, the sanctuary of safety, and the temple of worship, where they should ultimately be gathered. Since evangelic agencies began to be employed on the Continent of Europe, there have been individual conversions not a few; but there has been no general or national evangelisation; nor are we to expect that there will be, till the judgment of the seventh vial is ended. France, Austria, and the other Popish countries continue nominally Popish to this hour. This has often occasioned great discouragement to the friends of truth; but when they think that is precisely what was foretold, the result ought to confirm their faith in the Divine Word, and stimulate to greater exertions in spreading it.

The labours of the missionary are not in vain, though not followed by immediate fruit. After the “lightnings, and thunderings, and great hail ” of the vials, will come the “tender rain” of the Spirit; and then the seed He is now sowing shall spring up. He who has gone forth to sow in tears, shall carry back the sheaves of that glorious harvest amid songs of joy.

The Arc de Triomphe at Paris, which forms the approach to the city on the west, is inscribed all over with the great battle-fields of Napoleon. No nation but the French could show so long a list of victories gained in so short a space. These are the lightnings, thunderings, earthquake, and hail of the seventh trumpet. Paris may become a field of ruins or an heap of ashes, heaven thus marking its abhorrence of a city in which so much iniquity has been committed, by making its site like that of Nineveh or of Babylon. But though this fate should befall this splendid but guilty capital, the Arc de Triomphe, from its isolated position and amazing strength, will most probably survive, with its awful scroll, and, like the Arch of Titus amid the ruins of Rome, will become a witness to the truth of prophecy, by proclaiming to after ages how terrific the storm that burst on Europe—overturning its thrones and desecrating its temples: enwrapping in flames its proudest capitals and fairest cities: blackening its plains with battle, and dyeing its rivers with blood; and of all that industry had accumulated and art had created, and victory achieved in past ages, leaving only a melancholy wreck—the instant the trumpet of the seventh angel was heard to sound.

Continued in [Chapter XX. The First Three Vials](#)

All chapters of The Seventh Vial – By J.A. Wylie

- [Chapter I. Introduction](#)
- [Chapter II. Apocalyptic symbols](#)
- [Chapter III. Structure of the Apocalypse](#)
- [Chapter IV. The Rider on the White Horse](#)
- [Chapter V. Vision Of The Mighty Angel](#)
- [Chapter VI. The Little Book](#)
- [Chapter VII. The Oath Of The Angel](#)
- [Chapter VIII. The Measuring Of The Temple](#)
- [Chapter IX. The Two Witnesses](#)
- [Chapter X. The Western Witnesses, or The Waldenses](#)
- [Chapter XI. Avenging Power of the Witnesses](#)
- [Chapter XII. War With The Witnesses](#)
- [Chapter XIII. Death Of The Witnesses](#)
- [Chapter XIV. Resurrection Of The Witnesses](#)
- [Chapter XV. The Ten-Horned And Seven-Headed Beast Of The Sea](#)
- [Chapter XVI. The Two-Horned Beast Of The Earth](#)
- [Chapter XVII. The Commencement And Termination Of The 1260 Days](#)
- [Chapter XVIII. The Harpers On Mount Zion](#)
- [Chapter XIX. The Seventh Trumpet](#)
- [Chapter XX. The First Three Vials](#)
- [Chapter XXI. The Fourth Vial–The Sun Of Fire](#)
- [Chapter XXII. The Fifth Vial–Darkness In The Kingdom Of The Beast](#)
- [Chapter XXIII. The Sixth Vial–Drying Up Of the Euphrates](#)
- [Chapter XXIV. The Kings Of The East–The Three Frogs](#)
- [Chapter XXV. The Harvest Of The Earth](#)
- [Chapter XXVI. The Seventh Vial – Part 1. Poured Into The Air](#)

- [Chapter XXVI. The Seventh Vial – Part 2. Voices, Thunders, and Lightnings](#)
- [Chapter XXVII. The Tripartition And Burning Of The Great City](#)
- [Chapter XXVIII. The Expedition of Gog; Or Irruption Of Nations From The North And East](#)
- [Chapter XXIX. Harpers By The Sea Of Glass](#)