

## **Revelation 8 - Seventh Seal & The Seven Trumpets**

### **The Seventh Seal - Silence in Heaven**

Revelation 8:1 “*And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.*”

Verse 1 of this chapter clearly belongs to the opening of the seven seals, namely the seventh, and thus rightly belongs to the preceding chapter, not chapter 8.

***There was silence in heaven*** - Why is there silence in heaven? The sixth seal brings us down to the climax of the second coming of Christ, but does not describe the actual personal appearing of Him. The events are listed up to that time but then stop. Chapter seven tells us who will be able to stand when He comes, but also does not give an account of His personal appearing the second time. Thus we find here, in the seventh seal, the second coming of Christ.

If you would remember in chapters 4, 5, and 6, there is continual praise in heaven and thus no silence. The reason why there is silence at this time is that there is no one there except for the Father. When Christ comes the second time **all** the holy angels are with Him. (Matthew 25:31) All the angelic host accompany Christ to this earth and thus there is silence in heaven. DS March 14, 1846.2

When looking at the passages dealing with the second coming, you will find that they are in reference to Christ not the Father. God the Father is not described as coming with Christ to the earth at the second coming. Thus we can only conclude that He awaits, in heaven, for the return of Jesus and all the redeemed.

***About the space of half an hour*** - In prophecy, symbols extend to the second coming of Christ. This would mean that the year-day principle is still in operation and thus a day still equals a year. How long would half an hour be then?

There are 24 hours in a day, so half an hour would be 1/48 of a day. There are 360 days in a Biblical year and thus 24 hours/1 day = 360 days/1 year. Thus 1 hour = 15 days (360 ÷ 24), and ½ hour = 7½ days (15 ÷ 2).

So length of time for the silence in heaven is 7½ days. Half a day is taken for Christ and all the angels to come from heaven to earth, to resurrect the righteous dead, translate the living righteous, and destroy the wicked, that are living at that time, by the brightness of His coming. Then it takes seven days for the righteous, the angelic host, and Christ to get back to heaven. What a grand climax to the seven seals, Christ comes to receive His own. No more tears, no more pain and suffering, neither hunger or thirst.

Will you be there?

## The Seven Trumpets

Revelation 8:2 “*And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.*”

**Seven angels** - We now move on from the seals to the opening of another prophecy. Here we have the seven angels that stood before the throne and to each was given a trumpet.

**Trumpets** - We find, in Jeremiah 4:5-6, 19-21, that a trumpet is associated with, and a symbol of, the following;

1. The sounding of war.
2. Preparing for war.
3. Used as a warning. (Joel 2:1)

The seven trumpets show to us the instrumentalities that were used to overthrow and subvert, and finally ruin the Roman Empire. They are not the seven last plagues.

The empire, after [Constantine](#), was divided into three parts (East, West and central section called Illyricum); and hence the frequent remark, “a third part of men,” &c., in allusion to the third part of the empire which was under the scourge. Under the first four trumpets, the two western divisions fell, and under the fifth and sixth the eastern empire was crushed; but under the seventh trumpet great Babylon entire will sink to rise no more at all.

Revelation 8:3-5 “*And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand 5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*”

**Another angel came and stood before the altar** - This angel is not one of the angels that have the seven trumpets. He stands before the altar of incense in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, as it was the altar of incense that was gold. (Exodus 30:1-3)

**Who is this angel?** To find out who this angel is we need to look at what he is doing and also look back to the other prophecies.

In the last two prophecies, dealing with the seven churches and seals, we find a description of the holy place in the heavenly sanctuary and Christ's position (7 churches - at the candlesticks and 7 seals - at the table of shewbread) in that apartment, which thus gives us our time frame/starting date of each prophecy. The seven trumpets, being a parallel prophecy with these, we would expect to see Christ in the holy place ministering before the altar of incense. We shall see this to be so as we look at what the angel is doing.

**The altar** - Compare Exodus 30:1-10.

**Censer** - Compare Leviticus 10:1.

**Much incense** - This angel was given much incense to offer upon the altar of incense with the prayers of the saints. It was the high priest alone that was to offer the incense upon the golden altar. (Exodus 30:7-8, 34-38) We have one high priest in heaven, and that is Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 4:14)

Notice the angel was to offer the incense with the prayers of the saints before God, verse 4. This is known as the intercessory work of the high priest, for it was the altar of incense that dealt with the mediatory work of the high priest. He was to intercede for the people. Christ is our mediator, (1 Timothy 2:5) and the incense is His own righteousness that He mingles with our prayers before presenting them to the Father.

Also this angel has the power to close probation, which is explained more in the following comment.

Quite clearly then, this angel is Jesus Christ.

**With the prayers** - The picture is that of the angel adding incense to the prayers of the saints as these prayers ascend to the throne of God. The scene portrayed may be understood as symbolic of the ministration of Christ for His people. (see Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1;) Christ, as intercessor, mingles His merits with the prayers of the saints, which are thereby made acceptable with God.

**5. Filled it with fire of the altar** - If fire is being added to the censer, it shows that there is no more incense being offered and thus that intercession has ceased, for the censer was cast to the earth. If intercession has ceased probation has closed. But closed on what?

**Cast to the earth (EW 279.2)** - This can not be the close of probation on the earth for Christ is still ministering in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. Also, when you look at the sixth trumpet Christ is still in the holy place (Revelation 9:13) thus placing the first six trumpet before 1844 (Christ did not move into the most holy until 1844. Another reason why it is not the whole world is, the angels that received the trumpets could not sound them until probation had been closed, verse 6. Thus you would be placing the trumpets during the time of the plagues, and then, what is Christ doing in the holy place of the sanctuary after 1844 when He is to be in the most holy.

There are different forms of close of probation as listed below;

1. On cities (Sodom and Gomorrah).
2. A nation (The Jews).
3. Kingdoms (Babylon, Daniel 5:25-28).
4. Individual (Saul, 1 Samuel 28:15-16).
5. The world (Noah and the flood).

Seeing it is not the close of probation on the whole world, why is the censer cast to the earth? At the time that John was writing Revelation Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece had passed off the scene. Rome was ruling the world. (Luke 2:1) And if you

look at how the words earth and world are used in the book of Acts, you will see that they are clear references to Rome.

Thus we conclude that it is the close of probation on the Roman Empire.

**Voices, thunderings** - Activity around the throne of God. (Revelation 4:5, Ezekiel 1:14, 24; 10:5)

Revelation 8:6 *“And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.”*

Now that intercession has ceased and probation had closed on the Roman Empire, the angels could begin to sound the trumpets, and thus the commencement of the downfall of the empire.

### **First Trumpet**

Revelation 8:7 *“The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.”*

**Hail** - In Isaiah 28:2 we have a prophecy of the coming invasion of Assyria (who were from the north) into Israel. Notice how the enemy is described as being a “tempest of hail.” It is interesting to note that all hailstorms that fell upon the Roman territory came from the north. Thus we have a military invasion from an enemy in the north.

This was clearly fulfilled by the Gothic invasions, under the rulership of Alaric (born between 360-370 A.D.), largely upon Western Rome 395-428 A.D. Alaric eventually died in 412 A.D. after he had successfully taken the city of Rome in the same year. The path that was travelled is as follows; Thermopylae, Corinth, Sparta, up the coast to Aquiteia, Rome (on 3 separate occasions), Consentia, Rhegium, Massilia, Narbo, Tolosa (Toulouse), and down through Spain. Some of these conquests were after the death of Alaric. Notice the following quote.

*“If the subjects of Rome could be ignorant of their obligations to the great Theodosius, they were too soon convinced how painfully the spirit and abilities of their deceased emperor had supported the frail and mouldering edifice of the republic. He died in the month of January (395 A.D.); and before the end of the winter of the same year the Gothic nation was in arms. The Barbarian auxiliaries erected their independent standard; and boldly avowed the hostile designs which they had long cherished in their ferocious minds. Their countrymen, who had been condemned by the conditions of the last treaty to a life of tranquillity and labour, deserted their farms at the first sound of the trumpet, and eagerly resumed the weapons which they had reluctantly laid down. The barriers of the Danube (**this places them to the northern regions**) were thrown open; the savage warriors of Scythia issued from their forests; and the uncommon severity of the winter allowed the poet to remark '**that they rolled their ponderous wagons over the broad and icy back of the indignant river**.'”* **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Edward Gibbon, Vol 3 chap. 30, pg 253, 1909.**

“The union of the Roman empire was dissolved; its genius was humbled in the dust; and armies of unknown Barbarians, issuing from the **frozen regions of the North**, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe and Africa.” **Ibid. pg 439.**

**Fire mingled with blood** - “The troops which had been posted to defend the straits Thermopylaeæ retired, as they were directed, without attempting to disturb the secure and rapid passage of Alaric; and the fertile fields of Phocis and Boeotia were instantly covered by a deluge of barbarians, who **massacred the males of an age to bear arms**, and driving away the beautiful females, with the spoil and cattle, of the **flaming villages**. The travellers who visited Greece several years afterwards could easily discover the deep and **bloody** traces of the march of the Goths.” **Ibid. pg 255.**

“The old man, who had passed his simple and innocent life in the neighbourhood of Verona, was a stranger to the quarrels both of kings and of bishops...Yet even this humble and rustic felicity (which Claudian describes with so much truth and feeling) was still exposed to the undistinguishing rage of war. His trees, his old **contemporary trees, must blaze in the conflagration of the whole country**; a detachment of Gothic cavalry might sweep away his cottage and family; and the power of Alaric could destroy this happiness which he was not able either to taste or to bestow.” **Ibid. pg 263.**

“The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed; and **many thousand Christians were inhumanly massacred** in the church. Worms perished after a long and obstinate siege; Strasburg, Spires, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke; and **the consuming flames** of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul.” **Ibid. pg 285.**

“...many thousand warriors, more especially of the Huns, who served under the standard of Alaric, were strangers to the name, or at least to the faith, of Christ; and we may suspect, without any breach of charity or candour, that in the hour of savage licence, when every passion was inflamed and every restraint was removed, the precepts of the gospel seldom influenced the behaviour of the Gothic Christians. The writers, the best disposed to exaggerate their clemency, have freely confessed that a **cruel slaughter** was made of the Romans; and that the streets of the city were **filled with dead bodies**, which remained without burial during the general consternation. The despair of the citizens was sometimes converted into fury; and, whenever the Barbarians were provoked by opposition, they extended the promiscuous **massacre** to the feeble, the innocent, and the helpless.” **Ibid. pgs 341, 342.**

**Third part of trees...green grass was burnt up** - This points to the partial destruction, namely Western Rome. Alaric's main conquests were against the Western part of the empire. Fire consumed villages and the countryside alike, not to mention the massacre of the citizens.

## The Second Trumpet

Revelation 8:8-9 *“And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood 9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”*

**A great mountain** - A mountain in Bible prophecy is symbolic of a kingdom/nation. (Jeremiah 51:24-26) (The kingdom of Babylon likened unto a destroying mountain).

**Burning with fire** - Fire devours or destroys/consumes that which it is burning, thus fire deals with destruction. (Psalms 50:3) (like a devouring fire)

**Cast into the sea** - The fact that this destroying kingdom is being cast into the sea would show that the power that we are to be looking for would make its conquests by sea.

The only Gothic power that was involved in the destruction of the Roman empire by sea, was the naval power of the Vandals under the leadership of Genseric. The Vandals were just one of the Gothic tribes that migrated from North western Europe at the same time as the Visigoths. Radagaisus invaded Italy in 404 A.D. with his combined army of Vandals, Burgundians and Suevi, besieged the city of Florence but was killed. When Radagaisus was killed, the Vandals, Burgundians and Suevi withdrew and entered into the Southern parts of France. It was the Burgundians that broke off and settled here forming the kingdom of Burgundy. The rest of the Goths continued South into Spain (approx. 409 A.D.) where the Suevi separated from the Vandals and settled in the North western regions of Spain forming the kingdom of the Suevi, now known as Portugal. The Vandals continued on to Gibraltar under the leadership of Genseric (428-468 A.D. he later died in 477 A.D.), and after repelling an attack by the Suevi, crossed the straits into Northern Africa in 429 A.D. (which was a province of Western Rome) They continued East along the coastline until they reached Carthage, taking possession of it in 439 A.D.

*“The king of the Vandals severely reformed the vices of a voluptuous people; and the ancient, noble, ingenuous freedom of Carthage (these expressions of Victor are not without energy) was reduced by Genseric into a state of ignominious servitude...The lands of the proconsular province, which formed the immediate district of Carthage, were accurately measured and divided among the Barbarians.”* **Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 3, chap. 33, pg 435. by Gibbon.**

Genseric's presence was felt greatly upon the empire, so much so that Gibbon was led to say the following, *“...the terrible Genseric : a name which, in the destruction of the Roman empire, has deserved an equal rank with the names of Alaric and Attila...The ambition of Genseric was without bounds, and without scruples; and the warrior could dexterously employ the dark engines of policy to solicit the allies who might be useful to his success, or to scatter among his enemies the seeds of hatred and contention.”* **Ibid. pg 424.**

**Third of the sea became blood** - The verse here gives a good description of the bloodshed from the naval battles of Genseric. The continual reference to the “third part,” is a reference to the third part that was being ravaged by the Vandals under Genseric. Africa was very fertile in the region of which Genseric had taken. It was a

major part of where Roman gained its food supply, thus this hurt the empire greatly. Notice the following quotes by Gibbon;

*“The loss or desolation of the provinces, from the ocean to the Alps, impaired the glory and greatness of Rome; her internal prosperity was irretrievably destroyed by the separation of Africa...The distress of the Romans was soon aggravated by an unexpected attack; and the province, so long cultivated for their use by industrious and obedient subjects, was armed against them by an ambitious Barbarian. The Vandals and Alani, who followed the successful standard of Genseric, had acquired a rich and fertile territory, which stretched along the coast above ninety days' journey from Tangier to Tripoli...”* **Vol. 4, chap. 36, pg 1.**

### **The Conquests of Genseric.**

*“...but he cast his eyes towards the sea; he resolved to create a naval power; and his bold resolution was executed with steady and active perseverance. The woods of Mount Atlas afforded an inexhaustible nursery of timber; his subjects were skilled in the arts of navigation and shipbuilding; he animated his daring Vandals to embrace a mode of warfare which would render **every maritime country accessible to their arms...**the **fleets** that issued from the port of Carthage again claimed the empire of the Mediterranean...The kingdom of Italy, a name to which the Western empire was gradually reduced, was afflicted, under the reign of Ricimer, by the incessant depredations of the Vandal pirates. In the spring of each year they equipped a formidable **navy** in the port of Carthage; and Genseric himself, though in a very advanced age, still commanded in person the most important of the expeditions...When he was asked by his pilot, what course he should steer; “Leave the determination to the winds (replied the Barbarian with pious arrogance); they will transport us to the guilty coast, whose inhabitants have provoked the divine justice”...The Vandals repeatedly visited the coasts of Spain, Liguria, Tuscany, Campania, Lucania, Bruttium, Apulia, Calabria, Venetia, Dalmatia, Epirus, Greece, and Sicily...and their arms spread desolation, or terror, from the columns of Hercules to the mouth of the Nile.”* **Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 4, chap. 36, pgs 1, 2, 28, 29.**

Rome itself was ravaged by Genseric in 455 A.D.; *“But Rome and its inhabitants were delivered to the licentiousness of the Vandals and Moors, whose blind passions revenged the injuries of Carthage. The pillage lasted fourteen days and nights; and all that yet remained of public or private wealth, of sacred or profane treasure, was diligently transported to the vessels of Genseric.”* **Ibid. Vol 4. chap. 36, pg 6.**

There were a number of attempts to dispossess Genseric of his dominion of the seas; *“Under circumstances much less favourable, Majorian equalled the spirit and perseverance of the ancient Romans. The woods of Apennine were felled; the arsenals and manufactures of Ravenna and Misenum were restored; Italy and Gaul vied with each other in liberal contributions to the public service; and the Imperial navy, of three hundred large galleys, with an adequate proportion of transports and smaller vessels, was collected in the secure and capacious harbour of Carthage in Spain...Guided by secret intelligence, he (Genseric) surprised the unguarded fleet in the bay of Carthage; many of the ships were sunk, or taken, or burnt; and the preparations of three years were destroyed in a single day (460 A.D.)”* **Ibid. Vol 4. chap. 36, pgs 24, 25.**

“...the African campaign amounted to the sum of one hundred and thirty thousand pounds of gold, about five millions two hundred thousand pounds of sterling...the fleet that sailed from Constantinople to Carthage, consisted of eleven hundred and thirteen ships, and the number of soldiers and mariners exceeded one hundred thousand men...The army of Heraclius and the fleet of Marcellinus either joined or seconded the Imperial lieutenant; and the Vandals, who opposed his progress by sea or land, were successfully vanquished. If Basiliscus had seized the moment of consternation and boldly advanced to the capital, Carthage must have surrendered, and the kingdom of the Vandals was extinguished...but he (Genseric) requested a truce of five days to regulate the terms of his submission...During this short interval, the wind became favourable to the designs of Genseric. He manned his largest ships of war with the bravest of the Moors and Vandals, and they towed after them many large barques filled with combustible materials. In the obscurity of the night these destructive vessels were impelled against the unguarded and unsuspecting fleet of the Romans, who were awakened by the sense of their instant danger. Their close and crowded order assisted the progress of the fire, which was communicated with rapid and irresistible violence...Whilst they laboured to extricate themselves from the fire-ships, and to save at least a part of the navy, the galleys of Genseric assaulted them with temperate and disciplined valour; and many of the Romans, who escaped the fury of the flames, were destroyed or taken by the victorious Vandals...After the failure of this expedition, Genseric again became the tyrant of the sea : the coasts of Italy, Greece and Asia were again exposed to his revenge and avarice : Tripoli and Sardinia returned to his obedience; he added Sicily to the number of his provinces; and, before he died, in the fullness of years and of glory, he beheld the final extinction of the empire of the West.” **Ibid. Vol 4. chap 36, pgs 38-40.**

### **The Third Trumpet Sounds**

Revelation 8:10-11 “And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”

**A great star...burning as it were a lamp** - We have already found that a star is a symbol of a leader (Revelation 1:20) and a falling star is a reference to an apostate leader. (Jude 13) In the prophecy of the 7 churches, dealing with the different happenings of God's church, a star represented a spiritual leader, here we are looking at the political fall of the Roman Empire and thus this star would be a political leader.

A shooting star (or meteorite) is very bright and intense, but it is also very quick to go out or disappear. Thus this leader's conquests are to be very intense but very short.

**Third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters** - The fountains of waters refers to where the rivers begin, that is, the source of the river. This is the alpine regions of the empire. This shows where the heart of his region would be.

**11. Called Wormwood** - The word in the original Greek, *apsinthos*, means bitterness. Thus everywhere this leader went he caused bitterness, or bitter consequences.

**Many men died** - Many died due to his taking over of their territory.

This is a very good description of the reign of Attila the Hun, as it was very short, 451 - 453 A.D., but very intense. Many men were slaughtered during his reign, even by his own hand he put to death many of his own countrymen.

### **Attila's Conquests**

*“The armies of the eastern empire were vanquished in three successive engagements; and the progress of Attila may be traced by the fields of battle. From the Hellespont to Thermopylae, and the suburbs of Constantinople, he ravaged, without resistance and without mercy, the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia. Heraclea and Hadrianople might perhaps escape this dreadful irruption of the Huns; but the words, the most expressive of total extirpation and erasure, are applied to the calamities which they inflicted on seventy cities of the eastern empire.”* **Ibid. pg s 17, 18.**

*“He threatened to chastise the rash successor of Theodosius; but he hesitated whether he should first direct his invincible arms against the Eastern or Western empire. While mankind awaited his decision with awful suspense, he sent an equal defiance to the courts of Ravenna and Constantinople, and his ministers saluted the two emperors with the same haughty declaration. “Attila, my Lord, and thy lord, commands thee to provide a palace for his immediate reception.” But, as the Barbarian despised, or affected to despise, the Romans of the East, whom he had so often vanquished, he soon declared his resolution of suspending the easy conquest, till he had achieved a more glorious and important enterprise. In the memorable invasion of Gaul and Italy, the Huns were naturally attracted by the wealth and fertility of those provinces.”* **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire by Edward Gibbon, Vol. 3, chap. 35, pgs 471, 472, 1909.**

*“The kings and nations of Germany and Scythia, from the Volga perhaps to the Danube, obeyed the warlike summons of Attila. From the royal village, in the plains of Hungary, his standard moved toward the West; and, after a march of seven or eight hundred miles, he reached the conflux of the Rhine and the Necker...and the hostile myriads were poured, with resistless violence, into the Belgic provinces. The consternation of Gaul was universal...But, as the greatest part of the Gallic cities were alike destitute of saints and soldiers, they were besieged and stormed by the Huns...From the Rhine and the Moselle, Attila advanced into the heart of Gaul; crossed the Seine at Auxerre; and, after a long and laborious march, fixed his camp under the walls of Orleans...After an obstinate siege, the walls were shaken by the battering rams; the Huns had already occupied the suburbs...The Roman and Gothic banners were gradually perceived; and a favourable wind, blowing aside the dust, discovered, in deep array, the impatient squadrons of Aetius and Theodoric, who pressed forwards to the relief of Orleans...the king of the Huns immediately raised the siege, and sounded a retreat...he repassed the Seine and expected the enemy in the plains of Chalons...”* I myself, continued Attila, “will throw the first javelin, and the wretch who refuses to imitate the example of his sovereign is devoted to inevitable death.” The spirit of the Barbarians was rekindled by the presence, the voice, and the example, of their intrepid leader; and Attila, yielding to their impatience, immediately formed his order of battle...The nations from the Volga to the Atlantic were assembled on the plain of Chalons...Cassiodorius, however, had

familiarly conversed with many Gothic warriors, who served in that memorable engagement; “a conflict,” as they informed him, “fierce, various, obstinate and bloody; such as could not be paralleled either in the present or in past ages.” The number of the slain amounted to one hundred and sixty-two thousand, or, according to another account, three hundred thousand persons.” **Ibid. Vol. 3, chap 35, pgs 483 - 485, 487, 489, 490.**

“Neither the spirit, nor the forces, nor the reputation of Attila, were impaired by the failure of the Gallic expedition. He passed the Alps, invaded Italy, and besieged Aquileia with an innumerable host of barbarians. The succeeding generation could scarcely discover the ruins of Aquileia. After this dreadful chastisement, Attila pursued his march; and, as he passed, the cities of Altinum, Concordia, and Padua were reduced into heaps of stones and ashes. The inland towns, Vicenza, Verona, and Bergamo, were exposed to the rapacious cruelty of the Huns. Milan and Pavia submitted, without resistance, to the loss of their wealth...Attila spread his ravages over the rich plains of modern Lombardy; which are divided by the Po, and bounded by the Alps and Apennines. He took possession of the royal palace of Milan.” **Ibid. Vol. 3, chap. 35, pgs 493 - 495.**

“The Western emperor, with the senate and people of Rome, embraced the more salutary resolution of deprecating, by a solemn and suppliant embassy, the wrath of Attila. This important commission was accepted by Avienus, who, from his birth and riches, his consular dignity, the numerous train of his clients, and his personal abilities, held the first rank in the Roman senate...The Roman ambassadors were introduced to the tent of Attila, as he lay encamped at the place where the slow-winding Mincius is lost in the foaming waves of the lake Benacus, and trampled, with his Scythian cavalry, the farms of Catullus and Virgil. The Barbarian monarch listened with favourable, and even respectful, attention; and the deliverance of Italy was purchased by the immense ransom, or dowry, of the princess Honoria (Ildico by name)...Before the king of the Huns evacuated Italy, he threatened to return more dreadfully and more implacable, if his bride, the princess Honoria, were not delivered to his ambassadors within the term stipulated by the treaty...Their marriage was celebrated with barbaric pomp and festivity at his wooden palace beyond the Danube; and the monarch, oppressed with wine and sleep, retired, at a late hour, from the banquet to the nuptial bed...after attempting to awaken Attila by loud and repeated cries, they at length broke into the royal apartment. They found the trembling bride sitting by the bedside, hiding her face with her veil, and lamenting her own danger as well as the death of the king, who had expired during the night. An artery had suddenly burst; and, as Attila lay in a supine posture, he was suffocated by a torrent of blood, which, instead of finding a passage through the nostrils, regurgitated into the lungs and stomach...The remains of Attila were enclosed into three coffins, of gold, of silver, and of iron, and privately buried in the night : the spoils of nations were thrown into his grave; the captives who had opened the ground were inhumanly massacred; and the same Huns, who had indulged such excessive grief, feasted, with dissolute and intemperate mirth, about the recent sepulchre of their king (453 A.D.)” **Ibid. Vol 3, chap. 35, pgs 498 - 501.**

Thus the third trumpet was faithfully fulfilled under Attila and his Huns. A very intense but short rulership, 451 - 453 A.D.

## The Fourth Trumpet Sounds

Revelation 8:12 “*And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*”

At this stage the Western Roman Empire has been reduced to the kingdom of Italy alone. The rest of the kingdom has been broken up under the first three trumpets.

**Third part of the sun...moon...stars** - Each of these are heavenly bodies and are undoubtedly used symbolically. Notice that it is only a third part that is darkened, thus indicating a third part of the kingdom that is under attack, namely the western part. But what would they represent?

We know from previous study that leaders are symbolized by stars. Here we seem to have three different levels of leadership/government with the sun, highest, moon, next dominant, and the stars as the lower of the three. Was this the case with Western Rome?

The answer is yes. They had three levels of government as follows;

The emperor (represented by the sun).

Consuls (represented by the moon).

Senate (represented by the stars).

So under this trumpet we should see these extinguished.

### The Sun

In 476 A.D. Augustulus was made emperor of the west after his father, Orestes, declined the position. Odoacer, the leader of the Heruli, resolved to take Italy at this time, when his 'demand that a third part of the lands of Italy should be immediately divided among them', was rejected.

*“From all the camps and garrisons of Italy, the confederates, actuated by the same resentment and the same hopes, impatiently flocked to the standard of this popular leader (Odoacer); and the unfortunate patrician, overwhelmed by the torrent, hastily retreated to the strong city of Pavia, the Episcopal seat of the holy Epiphanius. Pavia was immediately besieged, the fortifications were stormed, the town was pillaged; and, although the bishop might labour, with much zeal and some success, to save the property of the church and the chastity of female captives, the tumult could only be appeased by the execution of Orestes. His brother Paul was slain in an action near Ravenna; and the helpless Augustulus, who could no longer command the respect, was reduced to implore the clemency, of Odoacer.”* **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, chap. 36, vol 4, pgs 52, 53. 1909.**

*“(Odoacer) was admitted into the service of the Western empire, and soon obtained an honourable rank in the guards...the confederates of Italy would not have elected him for their general, unless the exploits of Odoacer had established a high opinion of his courage and capacity. Their military acclamations saluted him with **the title of king**; but he abstained, during his whole reign, from the use of the purple and*

*diadem...Royalty was familiar to the Barbarians, and **the submissive people of Italy was prepared to obey**, without a murmur, **the authority which he should condescend to exercise as the vicegerent of the emperor of the West. But Odoacer had resolved to abolish that useless and expensive office...The unfortunate Augustulus was made the instrument of his own disgrace; he signified his own resignation to the senate...They solemnly 'disclaim the necessity, or even the wish, of continuing any longer the Imperial succession in Italy;** since, in their opinion, the majesty of a sole monarch is sufficient to pervade and protect, at the same time, both the East and the West. In their own name, and the name of the people, they **consent that the seat of universal empire shall be transferred from Rome to Constantinople...The republic (they repeat that name without a blush) might safely confide in the civil and military virtues of Odoacer; and they humbly request that the emperor would invest him with the title of Patrician and the administration of the diocese of Italy.**"*

Gibbon, speaking of Augustulus, "A youth recommended only by his beauty, would be the least entitled to the notice of posterity, if his reign, **which was marked by the extinction of the Roman empire in the West**, did not leave a memorable era in the history of mankind." **Ibid. chap. 36, vol 4, pgs 54, 55, 56.**

Odoacer overran Italy and assumed the rulership and abolished the position of emperor, thus Augustulus resigned from that position and had the seat of the empire transferred to the East, Constantinople. This ultimately was the death nail to the final remnants of the Western empire, bringing about the final extinction in 476 A.D. by Odoacer.

Other names that Augustulus went by are as follows; Romulus Augustus, and diminutive Augustulus.

### **The Moon**

Under the heading of, 'The Roman consulship extinguished by Justinian A.D. 541', we have the following comment;

*"Notwithstanding these precautions and his own example, the succession of consuls finally ceased in the thirteenth year of Justinian, whose despotic temper might be gratified by the silent extinction of a title which admonished the Romans of their ancient freedom."* **Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, Vol 4, chap. 40, pg 286.**

Justinian had the consulship extinguished in 541 A.D.

### **The Stars**

The senate had been banished from their country by Totila, who was a Goth, and basically meet their fate from lack of power in 553 A.D.

*"The fate of the senate suggests an awful lesson of the vicissitude of human affairs. Of the senators whom Totila had banished from their country, some were rescued by an officer of Belissarius and transported from Campania to Sicily; while others were too guilty to confide in the clemency of Justinian, or too poor to provide horses for their escape to the sea-shore. Their brethren languished five years in a state of indigence*

*and exile; the victory of Narses revived their hopes; but their premature return to the metropolis was prevented by the furious Goths, and all the fortresses of Campania were stained with patrician blood. After a period of thirteen centuries, the institution of Romulus expired; and, if the nobles of Rome still assumed the title of senators, few subsequent traces can be discovered of a public counsel or constitutional order.”*  
**Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, Vol 4, chap. 43, pgs 445, 446.**

Revelation 8:13 “*And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*”

Here we find that the last three trumpets are called woes, but notice that they are yet to sound. This places the timing of the next three trumpets after the date of the fourth, which is after 476 A.D.

Under the first four trumpets we have seen the total extinction of the Western Roman Empire, now we turn our eyes to the Eastern portion of the empire as we continue to look at the disintegration of the Roman empire.

***I beheld*** - This temporary break in the sequence of the trumpets calls special attention to the last three, which are specially designated as “woes.”

***An angel*** - Textual evidence favors the reading “an eagle.” The eagle may be thought of as an omen of doom (see Matthew 24:28; cf. Deuteronomy 28:49; Hosea 8:1; Habakkuk 1:8).

***Midst of heaven*** - That is, at the zenith, so that all may hear his message.

***Woe, woe, woe*** - The woe is repeated three times because of the three judgments yet to come at the blowing of the three remaining trumpets. Each of these is designated a “woe.” (see Revelation 9:12; 11:14)

***Inhabitants of the earth*** - That is, the unrighteous (see notes on Revelation 3:10).