

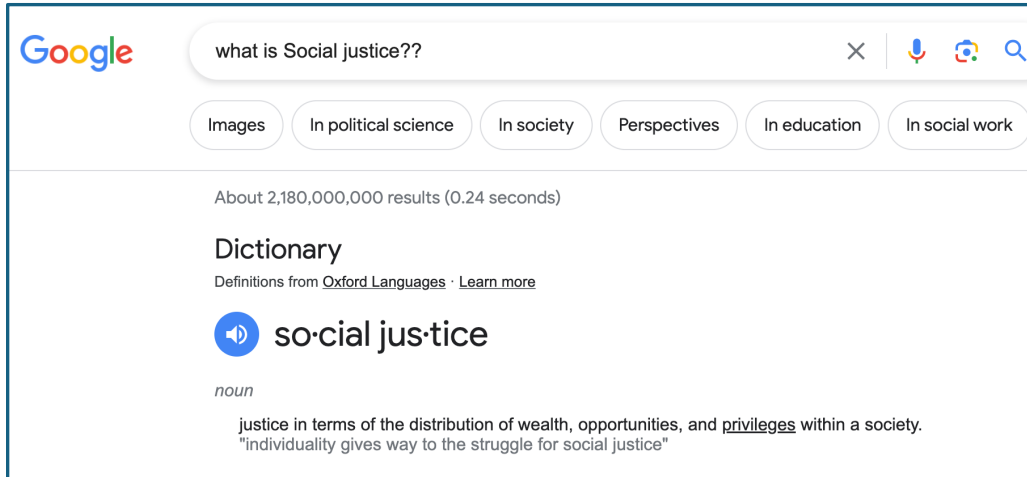
# Tribulation: Trumpet Judgements and the Two Witnesses – Revelation Chapters 8-12

Howard Liverance (3/6/2024)

## Introduction

Terms we hear a lot of today: DEI, and also Social Justice...

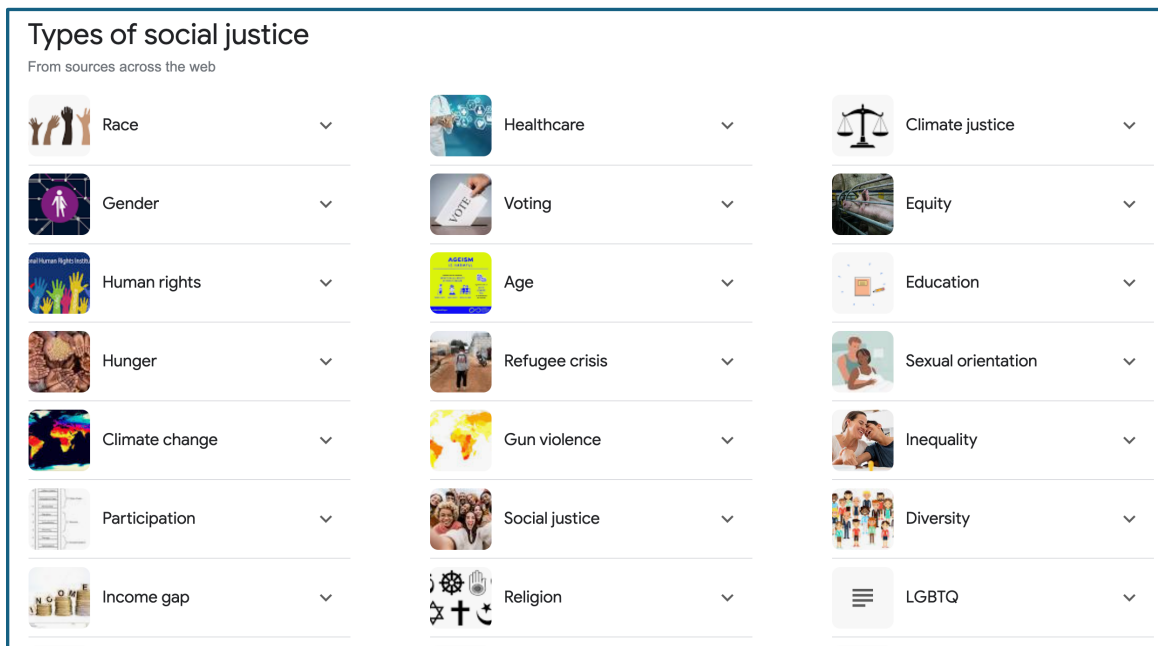
Google *Social Justice* and in 0.24 seconds it returns over 2 billion results:



Oxford defines it as:

*Justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges in society.*

- This is, by definition, extended to environmental justice, economic justice, health justice and many, many others



- Nowhere mentioned in the *Types of Social Justice* list above is Divine Justice.
- We all recognize the world has inequities, and we should extend mercy to those in need...
- But Jesus said this:
  - *“For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me.”* Mat 26:11
  - He was obviously referring to his brief stay on earth as a man.
  - But since he usually had the spiritual in mind, he was probably also referring to our opportunity to trust Him for our very souls.
  - *Heb 9:27-28 (NLT), just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, 28 so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.*
  - Our world is concerned about social justice but has very little concern for Divine justice.
  - Our world is concerned with equity, but has not concerns for God’s equity.
- **The Lord’s Prayer** (I believe it should be called the Disciples Prayer)
  - *Mat 6:10, ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*
  - *“What heaven decrees, its effect is upon earth. What is decided in the spiritual realm will manifest in the physical realm.” – Pastor Jack Hibbs, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills*
- If the following verse from Matthew is true:
  - *Mat 10:29-31, Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And yet **not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.** 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.*
- Then how is it that so many think God is distant and unconcerned with the affairs of men?
- God is very concerned and intimately involved with the smallest of details!
- What do we learn from all this?
  - Jesus came the *first time* to deal with our sins. We are given one lifetime to receive that gift.
  - When we pray, we pray for God’s will to be done here on earth as it is in heaven.
  - Our prayers for God’s will to be accomplished on earth are effective!
    - *James 5:16b-17 (NLT), The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. 17 Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years!*
    - *Dan 10:12-14 (NLT), Then he said, “Don’t be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. 13 But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia. 14 Now I am here to explain what will happen to your people in the future, for this vision concerns a time yet to come.”*
  - God is intimately involved in what is being done here on earth.
  - *Jesus is coming again to “to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.”*
  - What will He bring to those who have rejected him?
  - Human Social Justice can *never* be “just.” It’s another, “nicer” name for *failed* communism.
  - Divine Equity is absolutely equitable
  - Divine Justice is absolutely just. It is about to poured out on “those who dwell on the earth”
    - Psalm 99:1-4,
      - *The Lord reigns, let the peoples tremble;*
      - *He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake!*
      - *2 The Lord is great in Zion,*
      - *And He is exalted above all the peoples.*

- 3 Let them praise Your great and awesome name;
  - Holy is He.
  - 4 The strength of the King loves **justice**;
  - You have established equity;
  - You have executed **justice and righteousness** in Jacob.
- Yet, we'll see that when the Trumpet Judgements are proclaimed, as bad as they are, only specific fractions of the earth are affected. QUESTION: **Why is that?**

**Rev 8:1-2, When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.**

- This is the last seal of the scroll. It doesn't have its own judgement, rather...
  - It contains the description of all the final judgements, which can now be seen.
- QUESTION: Until now, heaven has been noisy. Why the silence in heaven?
  - All heaven is in speechless awe over what is about to occur!
    - All the redeemed and all the angelic host have no words. A celestial gasp!
- Inside the seventh Seal are all the Trumpet Judgements!
- Inside the seventh Trumpet are all the Bowl judgements! We'll see this next time.
  - These all take place over an indefinite amount of time but are most likely within the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, ending after the seventh year.
- So, these are exponentially increasing judgements poured out on those who dwell on the earth.
- This is why the scripture says in Mat 24:21-22,
  - *For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. 22 Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.*
  - This begins an outpouring of wrath that has never been seen before nor ever will be!

**Rev 8:2, And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.**

- Each of seven angels is given a trumpet, which will be blown consecutively...
  - We see that angels continue to play a key role in the end times events.
- Each time a trumpet is blown the judgments become progressively more severe.
  - The first three trumpets destroy the earth's ecology.
  - The fourth trumpet affects the luminaries in the sky.
  - The next two trumpets release demonic destruction on humanity.
  - The last trumpet unleashes the bowl judgements which are far worse than the trumpets.

**Rev 8:3-5 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.**

- QUESTION: What's a censer? A firepan, used by priests to carry the coals from the altar of God
- QUESTION: What was the angel given to put into the censer? Incense. By whom? Probably God.
- QUESTION: What was already in the censer? Prayers.
  - The prayers of the earthly saints are being added to the prayers of the saints in white.
- QUESTION: What have the saints praying for?

- Rev 6:10, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"
- QUESTION: What does the angel do with the contents of the censer?
  - This is symbolic of divine wrath, but it is directly associated with the prayers of the saints.
  - Plus, it's not just symbolic, because what happens when the coals hit the earth?

### **The First Trumpet – Judgement on the Land**

***Rev 8:6-7, And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. 7 The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.***

- Hail and fire, mixed with blood. Reminiscent of...
  - Joel 2:30, "I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke.
  - Hail is always a sign of judgement and can come from severe thunderstorms
  - Fire can come from volcanic activity (such as described in verse 5)
  - Blood rain is not all that uncommon (Google it). It's caused by red dust, spores, or red ash from volcanism.
    - Wikipedia: *Blood rain or red rain is a phenomenon in which blood is perceived to fall from the sky in the form of rain. Cases have been recorded since Homer's Iliad, composed approximately 8th century BC, and are widespread. Occurrences of blood rain throughout history are distributed from the ancient, to the modern day. The earliest literary instance is in Homer's Iliad, in which Zeus twice caused a rain of blood, on one occasion to warn of slaughter in a battle.*
  - **These are all symbolic of judgement, but will be literal, real events.**
    - 1/3 of earth, 1/3 of trees, and all the green grass were destroyed.

### **The Second Trumpet – Judgement on the Seas**

***Rev 8:8-9, The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, 9 and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.***

- QUESTION: What does the term "something like" mean? What was this thing?
- It landed in the ocean without burning up in the atmosphere.
- 1/3 of the sea became blood (or blood red).
- 1/3 of the creatures in the sea were killed.
- 1/3 of the ships were destroyed.

### **The Third Trumpet – Judgement on the Fresh Water**

***Rev 8:10-11, The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. 11 The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.***

- A star can be any heavenly object except for the sun or the moon.
- Seems like this meteor or comet burned up upon entry but brought contamination with it.
- 1/3 of the earth's rivers are poisoned (affecting the fresh water supply), many die
- Wormwood is associated with poisoned water in Jer 9:15, Jer 23:15,
- Wormwood is Gr, *apsinthos*, from where we get the word Absinthe
  - This is a bitter herb called *Artemisia Absinthium*, extremely bitter, poisonous in quantity.
    - Invite people to taste if they want.

- I used it as an antimalarial/antiparasitic when I travelled to Africa. Explain.
- Another fun fact: “Wormwood” in Ukrainian is Chernobyl
- “Monument of the Third Angel” is installed just outside the radioactive exclusion zone.
- *“A LONELY ANGEL STANDS AT the entrance to Chernobyl’s ‘Wormwood Star Memorial Complex,’ a trumpet pressed to his lips in a silent song. The sculpture, created by Ukrainian artist Anatoly Haidamaka, is a poignant tribute to those who perished in one of the world’s worst nuclear disasters ... The Monument of the Third Angel was installed as part of the new memorial park in Chernobyl on April 26, 2011 – the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster ... The name of Haidamaka’s monument refers to a local folk belief, which became popular in the region after the disaster, and was rooted in a passage from the Biblical New Testament (Revelation 8:10-11).” From atlasobscura.com*



### **The Fourth Trumpet – Judgement on the Luminaries**

*Rev 8:12-13, The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. 13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”*

- 1/3 of the sun. This seems to be temporary, since in Rev 16:8-9 the sun scorches people,
  - Yet, this will drastically affect the climate. This is real climate change.
- 1/3 of the stars.
- 1/3 of the moon.

### **The Fifth Trumpet – The Demon Locust Swarm Sent to Torment Unbelievers**

*Rev 9:1-2, Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit...*

- Now we have spiritual attacks!
- The “star” that falls from heaven is most likely representative of Satan who, until now, has retained access to heaven.
- The key to the abyss is given to him. QUESTION: By whom? Jesus
  - *Rev 1:17-18, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.*
- QUESTION: So, wait! Jesus gives the keys to the abyss to Satan? Yes!
- QUESTION: Are there demons currently in the abyss who will be freed by this action? Yes!
  - *Jude 6, And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,*
  - Most believe this refers to Gen 6, where angels cohabitated with women, producing the Nephilim. In other words, they exceeded the bounds that God had established for their interaction with humans and were locked away in the abyss for their actions.
- QUESTION: Why does Jesus give Satan the key? Remember, this is judgement on “those who live on the earth”.
- This demon horde is not permitted to kill, just to torment unbelievers (those without God’s seal on their foreheads) for five months (the only time given)
- People will seek death but “will not find it”.
- Interestingly, 5 months is the average lifespan of a typical swarm of locusts.
- God does not allow death but gives unbelievers this amount of time to repent and turn to Him.
- In the interest of OUR time, I’m not going into a lot of detail on the remainder of the fifth trumpet.
- Suffice it to say John spends time describing their appearance, and each detail has interpretive challenges.

### **The Sixth Trumpet – The Four Demons Released to Kill Unbelievers**

***Rev 9:13-15, Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” 15 And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind...***

- These unbound demons command an army of 200 million and kill 1/3 of mankind.
  - We believe these are fallen angels because of their fire and brimstone description
- The fourth seal deaths added to this slaughter has already killed more than half earth’s population.
- Those who remain “*did not repent of the works of their hands*” of the following six things:
  - Worshipping other gods and demons
  - Worshipping idols (probably a reference to the abomination of desolation)
  - Murders
  - Sorceries (actually Gr: pharmakeia – drugs)
  - Immorality
  - Thefts

### **An Interlude in Heaven**

***Rev 10***

- John is shown some things, and heard some things which he is not allowed to write down.
- A “strong” angel appears with a small book, and John is commanded to eat it.
- It tastes as sweet as honey, but is bitter in his stomach.
  - God’s word is sweet to the taste, but is bitter in its consequences rendered to unbelievers.
- All of us should love God’s word, but also be concerned for the consequences coming to rejectors.

## The Temple Measured

***Rev 11:1-2, Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. 2 Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.***

- This cannot be 2<sup>nd</sup> "Herod's" temple, since *that* temple was destroyed completely in 70 AD by the Romans, and John is writing in 96 AD. Besides, he is writing as a prisoner on Patmos!
- This must be the future rebuilt temple that John is being shown.
- Israel currently has no temple, and there is a Mosque now located on the temple mount.
- This has led to no small consternation over how the 3<sup>rd</sup> Jewish Temple is to be rebuilt.
  - Yet, the Jewish nation IS preparing to reinstate not only the temple, but also the sacrifices.
    - *While the Temple Movement continues to prepare for the rebuilding of the Temple, most understand that some political action must take place to reverse the present situation of control of the Mount by Muslims, in order to allow for Jewish access...In other words, this must be a political, not legal, action. Those who understand Daniel's prophecy of the seventieth week (Daniel 9:27) know that it is a future political leader, the Antichrist of Revelation 13, who will one day make a deceptive covenant with the Jewish leaders, leading to the rebuilding of the Third Temple. - <https://www.jewishvoice.org/read/article/update-building-third-temple>*
  - The temple WILL be rebuilt during the tribulation as part of the treaty with Israel.
- So, John is told to measure everything in the temple but the court of the Gentiles.
  - The idea here is not to know the dimensions, but to make a claim of ownership.
    - When we bought our house, we asked a surveyor to find the property line.
    - This determines what we own and what we don't own.
    - God owns the Holy place and the Holy of Holies but leaves the Gentile court.
    - The outer court will be "trampled" by the nations for 42 months (3 ½ years).

## The Two Witnesses

***Rev 11:3-14, And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. 6 These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.***

- This section flows from the previous section about the temple.
- *the two olive trees and the two lampstands*, Ref Zech 4:1-14, trees and oil, symbolic of revival
- 1260 days is exactly 3 ½ years, during the same time the outer court will be trampled.
- Prophecy here means to declare God's Word, judgement, and repentance.
- These witnesses are speaking to Jews who remain in Jerusalem during this difficult time.
- QUESTION: Who are these men? Best guess is that they are Moses and Elijah.
  - The miracles they perform are the same as Moses and Elijah performed.
  - *Num 11:1-2 (NLT), Soon the people began to complain about their hardship, and the Lord heard everything they said. Then the Lord's anger blazed against them, and he sent a fire to rage among them, and he destroyed some of the people in the outskirts of the camp. 2 Then the people screamed to Moses for help, and when he prayed to the Lord, the fire stopped. 3 So*

*the name of that place was called [b]Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them.*

- *2 Kings 1:10, Elijah replied to the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.*
  - Both appeared at the Mount of Transfiguration
  - Elijah was raptured (2 Kings 2:11-12), and Moses was buried by God (Deu 34:5-6).
    - Plus in Jude 9, Michael disputes with the devil over the body of Moses
- No reason to doubt that actual fire kills those who try to stop them.
  - Their preaching and sending plagues on the earth goes on for 3 ½ years!

***Rev 11:7 When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. 8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 9 Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. 10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.***

- Notice they are killed only after finishing their testimony. God controls everything!
- The beast is not Satan (who is depicted as a dragon), but rather Antichrist empowered by Satan.
- The "Great City" (Jerusalem) is referred to as Sodom and Egypt for the wickedness found there.
- That their ministry is centered in Jerusalem is confirmed by "where also their Lord was crucified".
- The whole world will rejoice and "look at their dead bodies". Do you think they will be on CNN?

***Rev 11:11-14, But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them. 13 And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. 14 The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.***

- Then, the celebration is quickly over!
- QUESTION: Don't you love it when God shows himself strong? Both raised and raptured live on TV.
- *Luke 16:29-31, But Abraham \*said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' 30 But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'*
  - Moses and perhaps the greatest prophet came to them "from the dead"
  - And then were killed!
  - And then came to life again!
  - And then rose bodily!
  - QUESTION: Did anyone repent? Some 7,000 were killed, and some gave glory to God!
    - The phrase "gave glory to God" always means saving faith, Luke 17:19, Rom 4:20

### **The Seventh Trumpet**

***Rev 11:15-17, Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their***



*faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.*

- *has become*, in the past tense because of its certainty to happen.

*Rev 11:18-19, And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." 19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.*

- *the nations were enraged*, the whole earth is mad at what God is doing! Who does he think he is?
  - *Psa 2:1-2, Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed*
  - QUESTION: What's a vain thing?
  - We will see later in Rev 16 how they assemble armies to fight against the living God
  - Rather than get the message of the judgements and preaching and repent, they harden!
  - Somehow, they think they can prevail against God? Maybe God is too weak to stop them?

*Num 11:3-23, Then the foreign rabble who were traveling with the Israelites began to crave the good things of Egypt. And the people of Israel also began to complain. "Oh, for some meat!" they exclaimed. 5 "We remember the fish we used to eat for free in Egypt. And we had all the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic we wanted. 6 But now our appetites are gone. All we ever see is this manna!"*

*7 The manna looked like small coriander seeds, and it was pale yellow like gum resin. 8 The people would go out and gather it from the ground. They made flour by grinding it with hand mills or pounding it in mortars. Then they boiled it in a pot and made it into flat cakes. These cakes tasted like pastries baked with olive oil. 9 The manna came down on the camp with the dew during the night.*

*10 Moses heard all the families standing in the doorways of their tents whining, and the Lord became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated. 11 And Moses said to the Lord, "Why are you treating me, your servant, so harshly? Have mercy on me! What did I do to deserve the burden of all these people? 12 Did I give birth to them? Did I bring them into the world? Why did you tell me to carry them in my arms like a mother carries a nursing baby? How can I carry them to the land you swore to give their ancestors? 13 Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people? They keep whining to me, saying, 'Give us meat to eat!' 14 I can't carry all these people by myself! The load is far too heavy! 15 If this is how you intend to treat me, just go ahead and kill me. Do me a favor and spare me this misery!"*

*16 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Gather before me seventy men who are recognized as elders and leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle[a] to stand there with you. 17 I will come down and talk to you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone.*

*18 "And say to the people, 'Purify yourselves, for tomorrow you will have meat to eat. You were whining, and the Lord heard you when you cried, "Oh, for some meat! We were better off in Egypt!" Now the Lord will give you meat, and you will have to eat it. 19 And it won't be for just a day or two, or for five or ten or even twenty. 20 You will eat it for a whole month until you gag and are sick of it. For you have rejected the Lord, who is here among you, and you have whined to him, saying, "Why did we ever leave Egypt?"'"*

*21 But Moses responded to the Lord, "There are 600,000 foot soldiers here with me, and yet you say, 'I will give them meat for a whole month!' 22 Even if we butchered all our flocks and herds, would that satisfy them? Even if we caught all the fish in the sea, would that be enough?"*

*23 Then the Lord said to Moses, "**Has my arm lost its power?** Now you will see whether or not my word comes true!*