

The Seventh Seal: Silence in Heaven For About Half an Hour

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DIG: Amidst all the seals and trumpets, why this heavenly silence? What did YHVH accomplish in this short amount of time?

REFLECT: When was the last time you were given a second chance for something that was really important? What have you done with Christ's supreme sacrifice?

All eyes at the heavenly throne will be drawn irresistibly to **the Lamb** once more. As **Jesus** breaks open **the seventh seal**, the scroll will be completely open. Nothing will remain to restrain the carrying out of **His** remaining **judgments**. Before **they** can begin, though, **there** will be **silence in heaven for about half an hour**. **Silence!** Not a grand entrance or great calamity . . . just a thoughtful, sober quietness in **heaven**.

How appropriate! When **Ha'Shem** prepares to intensify **His** wrath, every creature is reduced to open-mouthed silence. In fact, silence is the only proper response to looming judgment. This theme runs throughout the TaNaKh. **Psalm 76:8** declares: **From heaven you pronounced judgment, and the land feared and was quiet. God proclaimed through Isaiah His prophet: Be silent before Me, You islands! Let the nations renew their strength! Let them come forward and speak; let us meet together at the place of judgment (Isaiah 41:1).** And **Zephaniah 1:7** warns: **Keep silent before Adonai ELOHIM, for the Day of ADONAI is near. The LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has set apart those He invited.**

Once opened, there will be a great hush that settles over **heaven**. Though thirty minutes are not ordinarily considered a long time, it really depends on the circumstances. Thirty minutes under water is a long, long time. So when **about** thirty minutes precedes such an ominous development as the opening of **Messiah's judgment** on the earth, it is an indication that something of great importance is about to happen. **The seventh seal** will contain the seven trumpet **judgments**. This moment may be compared to the **silence** before the foreman of a murder trial reports the verdict.²³⁴

Before this time **heaven** and earth had been filled with sound. But now the flashes of lightening, rumblings, and peals of thunder coming from the throne will cease. The four living creatures will temporarily end their praise of the holiness of **God**. The twenty-four elders will suspend their rejoicing about the worthiness of **the Lamb**. The angels will stop their singing and the Tribulation martyrs will cease their praise.²³⁵ As **the scroll** is unrolled, an eerie **silence** will move across **heaven** as everyone sees the grim reality of the destruction written on it. It will be a pause in the action, the calm before the storm and all of creation will be overwhelmed by what they see.

The intense **silence** will not last long, however. **John** timed it out as best as he could, **about a half hour**. But I am sure it will feel like an eternity. Those in **heaven** will pray. Those on the earth will somehow sense the **silence in heaven**, and consider, or reconsider, their rejection of **Jesus Christ**. Will they soften their hearts and turn to **Him** as their **Lord and Savior**, or will they harden their hearts like Pharaoh and become reprobate, **without excuse (Romans 1:19-20)**? They will be given a reprieve, standing on the edge of the cliff between heaven and Sh'ol. They were not lost because they were merely sinners. They were lost because they had rejected **Yeshua** who died for them. What will they do with **His** sacrifice?

The hour of **God's** final **judgment** will finally come. It will be a time when all believers will be vindicated, sin punished, Satan defeated and **Messiah** exalted. The greatest event since the Fall in the Garden will take place at that time and all those in **heaven** will be holding their breath, standing on tip-toes waiting to see what will happen.²³⁶

This brief interlude of quietness and prayer in **heaven** is an invitation to reflect on our own attitude of prayer. There are times when we need to quiet our souls before **the Lord**, and to listen for **His** word. **John's** vision of heaven recalls the words of the psalmist: **Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10a)**. As believers, we need not to fear or be anxious, but to rest in **the Lord** and place our trust in **Him**.

*Lord Jesus, like the great multitude in **heaven** before **Your** throne, I want to quiet my soul before **You**. Teach me to put aside all cares and concerns as I come into **Your** presence. As I learn to be still before **You**, let **Your** love fill me with the certainty that when times are tough, **You** are there with me, sustaining me, filling me with **Your Holy Spirit**. In the stillness of my spirit, help me to remember that **You** love me unconditionally.²³⁷*