

The Trumpet Judgment

Revelation 8:1-9:21

The book of Revelation is a unique and somewhat painful revelation to read. **First**, on the unique side, it reminds us who our Lord and Savior is – He is the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega, our Creator and our Savior. He is in the midst of the church and sovereignly in control of all things.

Second, on the painful side, we are reminded of man’s tendency to wander from the Lord. For in chapters 2 and 3 we are given a snapshot of the churches in Asia Minor. These assemblies should be living for the Lord, and yet, they are reminders that there is no perfect church while on earth. Each are filled with redeemed men and women who have been snatched out of this broken world. Many still needing to wash the remaining stench of their former lives through the daily sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

In fact, we discover the **believers in Ephesus** lost their first love for the Lord. The **believers in Smyrna** were persecuted for their faith and struggled with their faithfulness. The **believers in Pergamos** were compromising their faith, mixing it with the things of this world. The **believers in Thyatira** were tolerating a false prophetess in their midst. She was seducing them into idolatry and immorality.

Many in Sardis were unregenerated. They had a great past, but this generation attended out of habit. The believers who came before them failed to pass on their faith in Christ. Jesus said, “they have a name that they live, but are dead.” Soon there would be no assembly meeting in Sardis.

The **believers gathering in Philadelphia** were a small assembly with little strength but were on fire for the Lord. **Finally, those gathering in Laodicea drifted so far from the mark that all remnants of true Christianity were stripped away.** Jesus was left outside the assembly. He was knocking at the door waiting to be invited in, for there was nothing taught about Him within the assembly.

This is a reminder that if you are looking for a perfect gathering of believers, think again. In reality, it’s up to you to maintain your faith. Stop looking at others. I guaranteed that sooner or later they will disappoint you. We need to start holding ourselves up to the standard Jesus has called us. Don’t wait for someone else to do this first. Look to Christ only. Learn about Him in His Word. Meditate on the things He has said. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God

and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” – Matthew 6:33.

When we get to Revelation 4 and 5, we found the saints in heaven with the Lord. There, He is readying Himself to reclaim all that was lost, bringing forth His kingdom.

Revelation 6 is not a pretty scene on earth. Since Adam and Eve’s sin the world has continually been in rebellion against God. This chapter began with Jesus opening the seven-sealed scroll. When each seal opened, we found awful judgments being poured out on the earth upon all those who rejected the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Chapter 6 describes six of the seal judgments. The seventh seal is found in chapters 9 where seven more judgments are revealed. These judgements are known as the trumpet judgments since each are announced with an angel blowing a trumpet.

When the last of the trumpet judgments unfolds in Revelation 16, we will find seven final judgments. They are known as the vial or bowl judgments. They will be poured out in rapid succession ending with the Lord’s return to the earth.

THE TIME SEQUENCE OF THESE JUDGMENTS IS DEBATED.

There are two typical premillennial, pretribulation views on when the seal and trumpet judgments will take place during the tribulation period.

The first view:

The seal judgments listed in chapter 6 will unfold over a 3½ year period. They will begin with the signing of the covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27) and end around the midpoint of the tribulation. The trumpet judgments begin shortly after that and will continue for at least 1½ years. It will be followed by the bowl judgments and end with the Lord’s return to the earth.

The second view (and the more popular view).

Many see the seal judgments occurring within the first 1½ years of the tribulation. They placed the false peace plan, war, famine, pestilence, death (Rev. 6:1-8), the appointing of the 144,000 (Rev. 7:1-8), and the global

persecution of the saints (Rev. 6:9-11 & 7:9-19) all occurring within the first one-and-a-half-years. They assign the trumpet judgments to the next one-and-a-half-years. This view is based on the chronological order presented in the biblical text. For we find chapters 10 through 15 detailing a number of events that occur during the middle of the tribulation.

The differences between the Seal and the Trumpet judgments.

The seal judgments have a human element to it. The Antichrist and humanity are part of the false peace, war, famine, pestilence, death, persecution and the witnessing of the 144,000. Chapter 6 ends with God's reaction against man's cruelty towards others and His children (*the sixth seal*).

The trumpet judgments begin with 30 minutes of silence in heaven and is followed by four cosmic events involving hail, fire, and meteorites. This is immediately followed by demonically empowered entities who inflict pain and kill men and women.

LET'S BEING:

Revelation 8:1 - Why is there silence in heaven for 30 minutes?

Imagine all the sounds in heaven. We saw them in chapters 4 and 5: the living creatures, the sounds of the heavenly hosts, and the songs of the redeemed saints. This was followed in chapter 6 with the entreaties of the martyred saints before the throne. But when we get to the seventh seal there is dead silence in heaven for 30 minutes. The sobering astonishment of the judgments to come caused the heavens to fall into complete silence.

Then John sees **seven angels** standing before the throne (Rev. 8:2). They have been there all along. Gabriel (though not mentioned in this passage) is recorded in Luke 1:19 as an angel who stands in the presence of God. He might be one of the ones in this scene. To each were given seven trumpets.

Another angel shows up (Rev. 8:3-5).

He has a golden censer in his hands and is given incense to offer up the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar. These are the stored prayers of the saints that are now being offered up. The censer is then filled with fire from the altar and cast on the earth. This gives us the sense that these are the

unanswered prayers regarding the injustices inflicted upon humanity. They are now going to be answered.

The sights, sounds and shakings follow this angelic act (Revelation 8:5). That is, voices, thunderings, lightening and an earthquake are felt on earth as a precursor of things to come.

TRUMPET JUDGMENT #1 – Revelation 8:8.

Here we find climate change on steroids: Hail, Fire mixed with blood.

The result of this judgment is one-third of the trees are burned up and all the green grass. No doubt affecting the earth's atmosphere.

TRUMPET JUDGMENT #2 – Revelation 8:8-9.

A great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea. We are not sure what this is – a meteorite? Something else? **The sea.** When scriptures usually speak of a literal sea, it is a reference to the Mediterranean Sea. This object kills one-third of the sea creatures and one-third of the surface vessels.

TRUMPET JUDGMENT #3 – Revelation 8:10-11

A Great Star called Wormwood, fell from heaven, burning as it were a lamp. It fell upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of the deep. The pollution that follows this event will kill many men.

The **Hebrew** word for “**wormwood**” means “to poison.” Its root word means “to curse.” Other passages use phrases like “bitter as **wormwood**. Cf. Prov. 5:4 – “But her end is bitter as **wormwood**, sharp as a two-edged sword.”

Again, we are not sure what this object is. Another meteorite? To affect both the rivers and the fountains (the subterranean waterways) it had to hit at the right spot and burrow very deeply into the earth to poison our aquifers and rivers. I can't imagine the ecological impact this will have on the people of the earth.

TRUMPET JUDGMENT #4 – Revelation 8:12-13

“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.”

Literally the length of the day and night hours were flipped. Eight hours of daylight and sixteen hours of darkness. Perhaps the result of the ecological impact brought by the fires, meteorites, and drought. This is the second time the sun was darkened. (The first darkening occurs before the tribulation. Joel 2:31 – “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before** the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.”)

THREE WOES

As if things can't get any worse (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!”

The first four trumpets were cosmic in nature. Phenomenon brought on by hail, fire, and perhaps meteorites. Now the next three trumpets will be brought about by the unleashing of the demonic forces on humanity. They have been held back by God's grace but now He removes His restraining hand. As if to say, “this is what you wanted, this is whom you made your allegiance, . . . so here they are, the host with whom you made your bed.”

With this trumpet we will see demonic activity unleashed with physical consequences upon mankind.

TRUMPET #5 (WOE #1) – Revelation 9:1-12

A star falls from heaven. This time it is an angelic being who opens up the bottomless pit (or the Abyss).

“and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: **and to him** was given the key of the bottomless pit.”

This act brings spiritual darkness across the globe. Demonic creatures emerge like locust. They swarm the earth. They are given power to torment men for five months with pain like a scorpion sting. This pain will be so severe that men wish to die but they cannot. Their king's name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon. Both terms mean destroyer.

TRUMPET #6 - (WOE #2) - Revelation 9:13-21

Four angels:

“Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. ¹⁵ And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. ¹⁶ And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand . . .” – Revelation 9:14-16.

Four fallen angels bound by the Euphrates River are unleashed. They are given the power to kill one third of all men. This torment will take place over a period of thirteen months and one hour. Their tools to kill are by fire, smoke, and brimstone which are issued from their mouths. This is a large demonic army numbering two hundred thousand, thousand (which is 200 million).

YET, MEN REFUSE TO REPENT – Rev. 9:20-21

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: ²¹ Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

THE 7TH TRUMPET AND 3RD WOE appear in Revelation 11:14-19.

“The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. ¹⁵ And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. ¹⁶ And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, ¹⁷ Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. ¹⁸ And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. ¹⁹ And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”