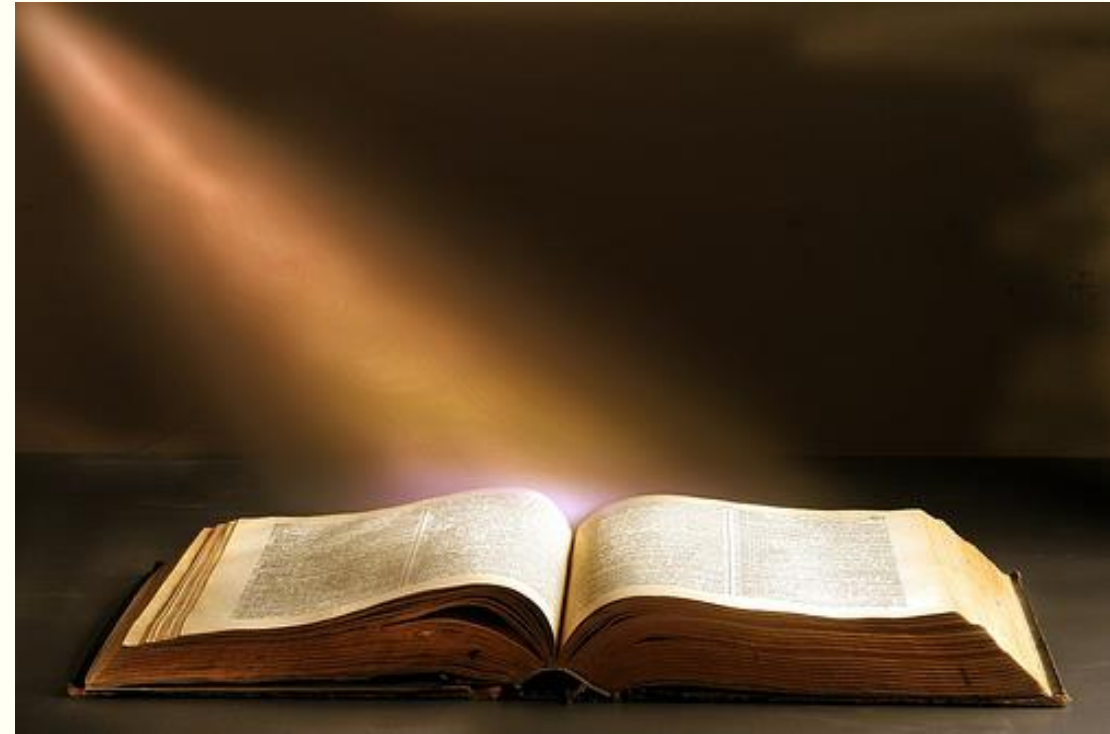




Exploring the Book of Revelation: Verse by Verse

Chapter 8





CHAPTER 8

Seventh seal and the first four trumpets

Chapter 8



Primary purpose of our Bible study is to understand each message as it applied to the church to which it was given AND its personal application for us today

Overview

Seventh seal

Introduction

The first trumpet

The second trumpet

The third trumpet

The fourth trumpet

Overview of the Seven churches and Seven seals

Ephesus (desirable)	Apostolic church	Pure and zealous	1 st seal – White horse	Warnings of lovelessness and apostasy	31-100 AD	Faithful are united
Smyrna (sweet-smelling)	Persecuted church	Faithful amidst state persecution	2 nd seal – Red horse	Severe persecution	100-313 AD	Faithful resists apostasy
Pergamos (exalted)	Compromising church	Church unite with state	3 rd seal – Black horse	Apostate church emerges (Balaam)	313-538 AD	Faithful separates from apostasy
Thyatira (sacrifice)	Dead church	Church dominating the state	4 th seal – Pale horse	Apostasy and corruption deepens (Jezebel)	538-1500 AD	Faithful flees from corrupt church to the wilderness
Sardis (renewal)	Lifeless church	Protestant Reformation	5 th seal – Cry of the martyrs	Apostate church exposed	1500-1750 AD	Faithful embraces restored lost truth
Philadelphia (brotherly love)	Faithful church	Warnings of second advent and the time of the end	6 th seal – Signs in the sky	Apostate church falls	1750-1844 AD	Faithful proclaims the true gospel
Laodicea (judgment)	Lukewarm church	The end of time and second advent	7 th seal – Silence in heaven	Wound is healed and apostate church is judged	1844 – 2 nd coming	Jesus come to take His faithful people

REPEAT and ENLARGE

Overview of Seven seals and the Seven trumpets

Seven Seals

- 1st – 4th seals: Four horsemen
- 5th and 6th seals
- Interlude (Rev 7)
- 7th seal

Seven Trumpets

- 1st – 4th trumpets
- 5th and 6th trumpet (first and second woes)
- Interlude (Rev 10 and 11)
- 7th trumpet (third woe)

The Book of Revelation follows the structure of the sanctuary pattern:
Jesus enters the Holy Place to begin His ministration after ascension & inauguration

Seven churches: Jesus among the candlesticks (Holy Place)

Seven seals: Jesus at the table of showbread (Holy Place)

Seven trumpets: Jesus at the altar of incense (Holy Place)

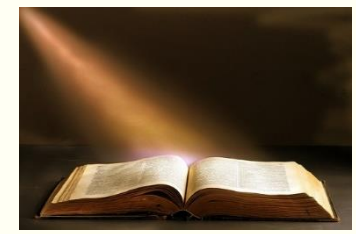
Jesus moves to the Most Holy Place to begin his ministration – Rev 11:19

Jesus closes His ministration in the Most Holy Place – Rev 15:5-8

Seven plagues: Day of Atonement, scapegoat, end of sin and Satan – Rev 16-20



Revelation 8:1-6



1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. **2** And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. **3** Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. **5** Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. **6** So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

Seventh Seal – Silence in heaven

The 6th seal ushers the Great Day of the Lord

The opening of the seventh seal begins with a period of silence in heaven indicates that the angelic hosts have come with Jesus to redeem His people

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and **all the holy angels with Him**, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.” – Matt 25:31

Half an hour using the Bible prophetic time principle is 1 week
(1 prophetic day = 1 literal year) – Eze 4:6

The vision of the seven seals is completed, and John’s view shifts back to the event that occurred in the throne room before the opening of the 7 seals

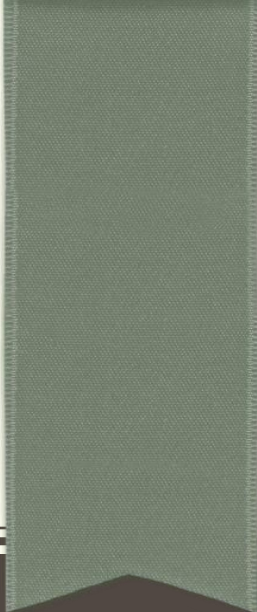
When Jesus took the scroll, John saw the 24 elders with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints (Rev 5:8)

The **introductory sanctuary scene of the vision** of the 7 trumpets takes place by the golden altar of incense in the Holy Place

Seven angels who stand before God are given seven trumpets, in response to the prayers of the saints

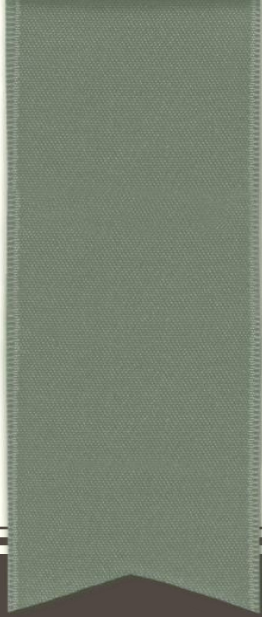
Incense represents the blood of atonement, the righteous merit of Jesus which make the prayers of the saints acceptable to God





“Let the families, the individual Christians, and the churches bear in mind that they are closely allied to heaven. The Lord has a special interest in His church militant here below. The angels who offer the smoke of the fragrant incense are for the praying saints. Then let the evening prayers in every family rise steadily to heaven in the cool sunset hour, speaking before God in our behalf of the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Savior. That blood alone is efficacious. It alone can make propitiation for our sins. It is the blood of the only-begotten Son of God that is of value for us that we may draw nigh unto God, His blood alone that taketh “away the sin of the world.” Morning and evening the heavenly universe behold every household that prays, and the angel with the incense, representing the blood of the atonement, finds access to God ”

Volume Seven, Bible Commentary, page 971



“These prayers that were thus accepted in heaven produced great changes upon earth in return to them; the same angel that in his censer offered up the prayers of the saints in the same censer *took of the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth*, and this presently caused strange commotions, *voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake*; these were the answers God gave to the prayers of the saints, and tokens of his anger against the world and that he would do great things to avenge himself and his people of their enemies; and now, all things being thus prepared, the angels discharge their duty.”

Matthew Henry's Bible Complete Commentary, 1.26809

Trumpets and God's judgments

Trumpets were sacred instruments used to communicate to God's people

Chatsothserah were used by the priests and made of hammered metal.
Shopfar was from ram's horn and used as a signaling instrument

In the Scriptures, trumpets were used in different ways:

- to proclaim religious festivals and celebrations (Psalms 81:3, Num 10:10)
- to summon to battle (Judges 6:34, Num 10:9)
- to worship and temple services (2 Chron 5:11-13)
- to announce the coronation of a king (2 Kings 9:13)
- to gather the people or proclaim time to advance (Neh 4:20, Num 10:1-8)
- to warn the people of approaching danger (Eze 33: 3-6)
- God's final intervention on earth (Matt 24:31)

“Blowing of trumpets” symbolizes the intervention of God which gives the saints the assurance that **God would remember His people**

The vision of the blowing of the seven trumpets is a series of interventions by God in response to the prayers of His saints

God's wrath kindles judgments specifically on those who have been hostile to the gospel and oppressed His people (those who dwell on the earth)

These are just a foretaste. Rev 16 indicates that the day is coming when full judgment will be poured out on the wicked, beginning with the 7 plagues



Trumpets and God's judgments

Jesus offering and sacrifice to God is as a sweet-smelling aroma (Eph 5:2)

Throwing of coals of fire upon the earth symbolize judgment on the nations (Eze 10:1-2) and the Holy Spirit outpouring on God's people

Fire which purifies the prayers of the saints are used to judge the wicked

God's wrath kindles judgments on those who have viciously persecuted and oppressed God's people in response to their cry of "How long?"

In answer to the prayers of the saint, the response comes clearly: **Not too much longer...** God is already judging the enemies of His people

"For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." – Isa 26:9

Judgment is poured on those who have failed to receive the seal of God

Intercession is still taking place. These judgments are divine warning that time for repentance is running out. Mercy's door is not yet closed

Like the seven seals, the vision of the seven trumpet commences from the cross through to the Second coming (Rev 8 -11) and the end of history



Trumpets and God's judgments

In the sanctuary service, the end of the daily sacrifice “tamid”, was announced by the blowing of the trumpets



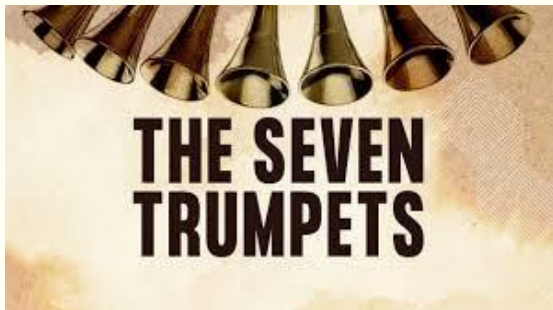
The sacrificial lamb was placed on the altar of burnt offering, the blood of the sacrifice was poured at the base of the altar. The priest takes the golden incense censer into the temple and offers incense upon the golden altar in the Holy Place, while the people wait quietly in prayer. When the priest comes out to bless the people, seven priests blew their trumpets marking an end of the daily sacrifice ceremony.

The backdrop of the opening scene of the seven trumpets shows that the 7 trumpets blast begins **after** Jesus sacrificial death on the cross

“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” – Rev 11:15

The “voices,” “thundering,” “lightning,” and “earthquakes” are symbols of judgement. They appear at the beginning (Rev 8:5) and end of the seven trumpets (Rev 11:19), and at the end of the seventh plague (Rev 16:17-18)

Just like the seven seals, **both visions cover the same period of Christian history.** They are both similar in their arrangement in two groups with the first four, the last three trumpet woes, and an interlude (Rev 10 & 11) between the 6th and the 7th trumpet



Trumpets and God's judgments

The seven trumpets parallel the preceding visions of the seven churches and seven seals.

Most difficult part of Revelation. Interpretation should not be taken out of context or thrown in the future



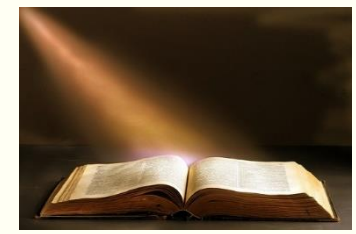
Trumpets represent preliminary warning and partial judgment upon those who have persecuted and oppressed God's people from the time of the cross to the second coming of Jesus.

Partiality of the judgment is denoted as affecting only a third that have apostatized

It points forward to a greater judgment in the future. However, the door of mercy is still open, and repentance is possible.

In contrast, the plagues are retributive. This is God's final and total judgment on the wicked and end-time Babylon. Repentance is not possible once it begins.

Revelation 8:7



7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.



The 1st Trumpet

Judgment = Hail and fire mixed with blood

“And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the Lord rained hail on the land of Egypt. So, there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.” Exodus 9:23-24



Great hailstones, fire and brimstone rained on Gog, an enemy of Judah, as judgment from God (Eze 38:22-23) and Assyria (Isa 30:30)

One-third of the earth, and trees are impacted

Lucifer swept one-third of the angels (Rev 12:4), Babylon is split into three parts as God brings judgment on it (Rev 16:19)

One-third part denotes substantial loss, but not total annihilation

Trees and green grass refer to Israel, God's covenant people and leaders (Jer 11:15-17)

Judgment begins with God's own people who rejected Jesus and became the oppressors and persecutors of the followers of Christ (Eze 9:6)

Peter warns of coming judgment (“Blow the trumpet in Zion”) quoting Joel 2 (Acts 2)

Jesus laments as He prophesied her doom. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem” (Matt 23:37-24:2)

The 1st Trumpet

“...your enemies will build an embankment around you...” – Luke 19:41-44



“The long-suffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the Jews in their stubborn impenitence. In their hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus they rejected the last offer of mercy. Then God withdrew His protection from them and removed His restraining power from Satan and his angels, and the nation was left to the control of the leader she had chosen.” - Great Controversy, page 36

Hail and fire mingled with blood symbolize destruction and bloodshed

The first trumpet blast portrays the consequences visited on God's covenant people who rejected and crucified Jesus, opposed the gospel and the apostolic church



It symbolizes the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Roman armies as God's judgment against the apostate Jewish nation.

Foretold by Christ Himself, the city was destroyed in AD 70

Hundreds of thousands of Jews were starved, crucified, burned and pierced through with the sword and their blood was mingled with fire

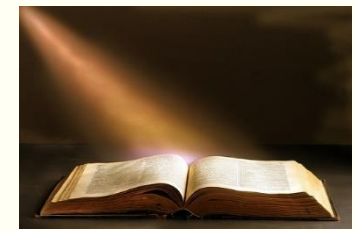
“Not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christ had given His disciples warning, and all who believed His words watched for the promised sign...At the time of the siege, the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and thus the Christians throughout the land were able to make their escape unmolested. Without delay they fled to a place of safety—the city of Pella, in the land of Perea, beyond Jordan...**The Jews had rejected the entreaties of the Son of God,** and now expostulation and entreaty only made them more determined to resist to the last. In vain were the efforts of Titus to save the temple; One greater than he had declared that not one stone was to be left upon another. It was an appalling spectacle to the Roman—what was it to the Jew? The whole summit of the hill which commanded the city, blazed like a volcano. One after another the buildings fell in, with a tremendous crash, and were swallowed up in the fiery abyss. The slaughter within was even more dreadful than the spectacle from without. Men and women, old and young, insurgents and priests, those who fought and those who entreated mercy, were hewn down in indiscriminate carnage. The number of the slain exceeded that of the slayers. **The legionaries had to clamber over heaps of dead to carry on the work of extermination.** After the destruction of the temple, the whole city soon fell into the hands of the Romans. The leaders of the Jews forsook their impregnable towers, and Titus found them solitary. He gazed upon them with amazement and declared that God had given them into his hands; for no engines, however powerful, could have prevailed against those stupendous battlements. **Both the city and the temple were razed to their foundations,** and the ground upon which the holy house had stood was “plowed like a field.” Jeremiah 26:18. In the siege and the slaughter that followed, **more than a million of the people perished;** the survivors were carried away as captives, sold as slaves, dragged to Rome to grace the conqueror's triumph, thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheaters, or scattered as homeless wanderers throughout the earth.”

GREAT CONTROVERSY, PAGES 30 - 35

“We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. **But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed.** God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown which yields its unfailing harvest. The destruction of Jerusalem is a fearful and solemn warning to all who are trifling with the offers of divine grace and resisting the pleadings of divine mercy. Never was there given a more decisive testimony to God's hatred of sin and to the certain punishment that will fall upon the guilty.”

“Christ saw in **Jerusalem a symbol of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion** and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God...Jesus, looking down to the last generation, saw the world involved in a deception similar to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at nought. Millions in bondage to sin, slaves of Satan, doomed to suffer the second death, would refuse to listen to the words of truth in their day of visitation. Terrible blindness! Strange infatuation!

Revelation 8:8-9



8 Then 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 living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.



The 2nd Trumpet

Judgment = Burning mountain thrown into the sea

One-third of the sea, marine life and ships are impacted

“And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all the evil they have done in Zion in your sight,” says the Lord. “Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, who destroys all the earth,” says the Lord. “And I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the rocks, and make you a burnt mountain.” (Jeremiah 51:24-25)

God’s kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is described as a great mountain filling the whole earth (Dan 2:35,44)

Mountain represent a kingdom or empire. Sea represent people.

The scene of the second trumpet predicts the fall of Babylon

Ancient Babylon and the fall of “Babylon the great” are symbolized as thrown into the sea for destruction (Jeremiah 51:42,63,64)

“Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.” (Rev 18:21)

Ship represent a nation’s economic and commercial prosperity of trading (Prov 31:14)

The second trumpet describes the downfall of the Roman Empire and the devastation of its economic, social order and imperialism beginning in the 3rd century



The 2nd Trumpet

The apostles used **Babylon** as the cryptic name for **Rome** (1 Pet 5: 13)

Babylon referred to the great pagan Roman Empire – an enemy of God’s people. For 300 years, she bitterly persecuted and killed God’s people

After the fall of Jerusalem came the fall of Pagan Rome

Both the Jewish nation and Roman Empire united together in their opposition to God and death of Jesus. They were the first to experience God’s judgments.

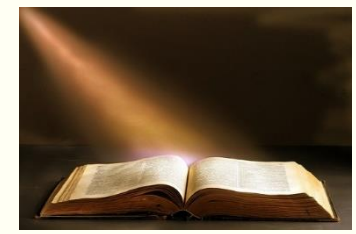
Invasions by barbarian tribes (**Visigoths, Vandals, Huns**) between 378-476 AD resulted in vicious ravages, ruin, desolation, carnage, fire and mass bloodshed in Rome. They destroyed the routes of commerce and decimated the prosperity of Rome. The Gothic barbarians under the leadership of Alaric captured and sacked the city of Rome in 410 AD. He did not destroy any Christian church in his war against Rome. The Vandals’ naval power twice destroyed the gigantic Roman fleet. In one night, under the leadership of Genseric, the Vandals destroyed 1,113 ships and killed more than 100,000 men in the Battle of Carthage! They sacked the Rome in 455 AD in an unrestrained burning and dreadful pillage. Finally, Attila, the ruler of the Huns called “The Scourge of God”, raped, murdered and turned the cities of Rome into smoldering ruins without mercy.



“After the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish state, the next scene of judgment is one on a much broader and vaster scale...The second trumpet calls for some terrible, fiery, destructive force to fall into the troubled seas of the ancient world and to turn their turbid waters into blood. After the fall of Jerusalem came the fall of Rome...The empire of the Caesars was doomed. The ax of divine retribution must fall. Like flames of fire from heaven came Genseric the Vandal, Alaric the Goth, and Attila the Hun, leaving in their wake scenes of ruin, desolation, carnage and blood. Irresistible and destructive as a flaming mountain, the hordes of barbarians fell upon the peoples of Rome, till all the empire was involved in a grand and irretrievable catastrophe. Rome was gone and justice again had had its way.”

DECODING REVELATION'S TRUMPETS, PAGE 386

Revelation 8:10-11



10 Then 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 water. **11** The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.



The 3rd Trumpet

Judgment = A great burning star called “Wormwood” fell from heaven

One-third of the rivers and waters are impacted

Shift from earthly warfare against God’s truth to the more serious and significant spiritual warfare in the Great Controversy



“The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.” (Rev 1:20)

“And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” (Luke 10:18)

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning.”(Isa 14:12)

The great star recalls Lucifer, morning star who fell from heaven (Rev 12: 9-10)

Lamp (Greek “lampas” meaning burning torch or flame fed with oil)

River and springs of water symbolizes spiritual nourishment (Jer 2:13)

“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” – John 7:38

“I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.” – Rev 21:6

The 3rd Trumpet

Wormwood (Apsinthos – Greek): group of herbs in the East notorious for its bitterness, poisonous in large or concentrated doses (Lam 3:15)

“So that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a **root bearing bitterness or wormwood.**” – Deut 29:18

Wormwood is a symbol of divine punishment for apostasy

“And the Lord said, “Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, but they have walked according to the dictates of their own hearts and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them,” therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will feed them, this people, **with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.**” – Jer 9:13-15

Lucifer, the fallen star, defiled Adam and Eve with his poisonous teachings and then through them, poisoned the entire human race

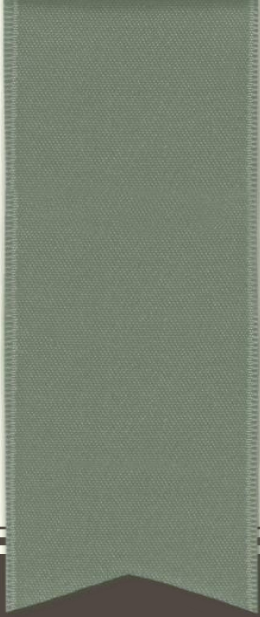
Again, Satan introduced great apostasy to defile the Christian church from within when Papal Rome rose to power after the fall of the Roman Empire

Papal Rome, is the dragon’s representative, who persecuted God’s people (Rev 12:13-14)

The third trumpet shows Satan’s involvement in polluting the streams of truth and salvation through perverted doctrines and false gospel preached by the fallen teachers of the Papal church, resulting in spiritual death of the masses



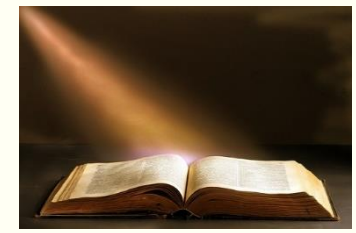
Parallels the 3rd seal:
black horse



“Here a remarkable, revolutionary transformation is depicted. The once pure, life-giving fountains become contaminated and corrupt as the death-star Wormwood falls upon them, and henceforth men die rather than live as they partake of the polluted waters. The pure church is a clear stream and a life-giving fountain. When the enemy enters the church, it becomes corrupt. Henceforth it is a scourge rather than a blessing to men. Satan rather than Christ is in control, and the church is to take complete control, a savor of death unto death instead of life unto life.”

Outline Studies in Revelation, page 293-294

Revelation 8:12-13



12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. **13** And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”



The 4th Trumpet

Judgment = Darkening of the heavenly bodies

One-third of the sun, moon, stars and day are impacted

Light is a symbol of the true gospel or spiritual truth (John 1:9)

Jesus is the True Light. Only through Him we are rescued from darkness (Col 1:13-14)

Rev 12 woman (pure church) is clothed with the sun, moon and stars

“When I put out your light, I will cover the heavens, and make its **stars dark**; I will **cover the sun** with a cloud, and the **moon shall not give her light**. All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you and bring darkness upon your land,” says the Lord God.” – Eze 32:7-8

Darkness, the absence of light, is the lack of spiritual understanding that results from the absence of the truth. It is a symbol of sin and the consequence of ignoring or rejecting the light - John 8:12, 3:19

The invasions of the barbarians marked the end of the Roman Empire and ushered the long period of demoralization in Europe, “The Dark Ages”

Dark Ages refer to the period between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance (5th through the 14th century) in the Middle Ages. There was economic and cultural deterioration in Western Europe and great spiritual darkness and apostasy. The gospel truth was replaced with church tradition and dogma.



“The accension of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator and that none could approach God except through him; and, further, that he stood in the place of God to them and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. Thus, the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men, nay, more, to **the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them**. Sin was disguised in a garb of sanctity. When the Scriptures are suppressed, and man comes to regard himself as supreme, we need look only for fraud, deception, and debasing iniquity. The darkness seemed to grow more dense. Image worship became more general. Candles were burned before images, and prayers were offered to them. The most absurd and superstitious customs prevailed. The minds of men were so completely controlled by superstition that reason itself seemed to have lost its sway. While priests and bishops were themselves pleasure-loving, sensual, and corrupt, it could only be expected that the people who looked to them for guidance would be sunken in ignorance and vice. But **“the noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world**. The Holy Scriptures were almost unknown, not only to the people, but to the priests. Like the Pharisees of old, the papal leaders hated the light which would reveal their sins. ”

GREAT CONTROVERSY, PAGE 55,57,60

The 4th Trumpet

Apostasy of the 3rd trumpet reached its deepest depth in the 4th trumpet

While the 3rd trumpet is a divine warning of the consequences of the spiritual decay of apostate Christianity, the 4th trumpet scene warns of the deepening of the prevailing darkness in the world in the period following the Dark Ages



“The poisoning of the streams of truth under the 3rd trumpet brought about the darkening of the streams of light under the 4th trumpet. By 500 AD, there were over 500 translations of the Bible into different languages. But from that time, the availability of the Bible was curtailed to the point that only one translation was available – the Latin version – which most people could not read or understand. The people were in darkness for a thousand years.”

Revelation Pure and Simple, page 121

Parallels the 4th seal:
pale horse

Christ-less gospel - Traditions of men which replaced the Word of God: Purgatory, limbo, celibacy, confession, eternally-burning hell, lent, processions, the mass, relics, canonization of saints, the rosary, bowing before images, the immaculate conception of Mary, baptism of infants, the observance of Sunday, etc.

The temporary darkness under the prevailing influence of secularism does not completely obliterate the gospel truth. However, three woes are coming!

“During this period, the Christian life became less of a personal relationship with Jesus and more of a matter of membership in the official church. Next, the intellectual revolution of the Age of Enlightenment, or the Age of Reason, that characterized Europe from the 16th through the 18th centuries, ended the rule of Christian faith over the Western mind. This new phenomenon rejected traditional religion and led to the outgrowth of **rationalism, skepticism, humanism, and liberalism**. Its final product was the birth and **rise of secularism**. Despite many positive elements of secularization in the Western world (on science, politics, religious liberty, arts, and education), its negative effects on Christianity overshadowed its positive effects. With its materialistic orientation, denial of any supernaturality, and skepticism toward faith of any kind, secularism replaced the authority of the Bible and Christian faith with human reason. This negative aspect of secularism gradually degenerated Christian faith and life into lifeless formality and spiritual lethargy and robbed millions of the hope of salvation.”

Sources

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