

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

The Trumpets of Wrath, Pt 1 **Revelation 8**

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PowerPoint Presentation included: None

SermonAudio Blurp: In chapters 8-9 we have an escalation of the Great Tribulation. As each trumpet is blown an ever-increasing level of misery and judgment comes upon this world. We see again the work of spiritual beings affecting our realm of existence and we are again reminded that there is much more to God's creation than meets our eye. We also see the heart of humanity in the face of this judgment; not one of repentance but of continued pursuing anything but the True God.

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week we discussed the use of numbers in Revelation and how often they are used in ways that simply are not justified.
 - 1. We saw in chapter 7 that God sealed 144,000 Israelites. 12,000 from 12 tribes of Israel.
 - 2. Lessons learned:
 - a. To try to make this number not mean what it says simply requires made up equations.
 - (1) There is nothing within this text nor within the bible as a whole that would give us a way to turn this into non-Israelites and numbered in a immeasurable way.
 - (2) I would say to any of you who may find yourself being told by a person that it can't mean what it literally says to not be intimidated. Press it back upon the other person. Make them defend to the fullest why they can make it say something else entirely. And make them defend it from the text and not through a multitude of words and reasoning.
 - b. This sealing is a work of grace. He calls them "servants of our God." They are saved out of God's wrath in the very midst of that wrath being poured out.

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- c. It is another strong indication that God is not finished in the slightest with the nation Israel. This event points us again to the faithfulness of God in His promises and covenants.
 - d. It reminds me that my hope must never rest in my efforts or state of godliness. It must always rest in the faithfulness of God to finish what He promised, salvation and eternal life.
3. We also learned that this chapter is an interlude, a pause, in these events that are in the future. In chapter 6 the scroll containing the culmination of God's plan for all of creation was opened.
- a. Six of the seven seals were broken and the beginning of God's wrath was revealed in stages.
 - b. The seventh was not yet broken, instead this pause for a chapter was given. It showed the sealing of these many Israelites.
 - c. It also gave a word of encouragement to us as it showed that those who died so far in the Tribulation were not suffering but were rejoicing and worshiping as God brought them into the fulness of His joy and comfort.
- B. But now the seventh seal shall be broken and in doing so we see again the sobering reality of God's response to rebellion and sin.
- C. Read chapter 8.

II. The Opening of The Seventh Seal (chapter 8).

- A. Our Lord now opens the final seal and it is wise to note the response—silence (1).
- 1. Up to this point, heaven has been rather noisy!
 - 2. This makes the silence all the more dramatic, for it signifies that what is to take place is awe-inspiring. Heaven is holding its breath. It is a holy moment.
 - 3. From this point forward things will begin to move rather fast.
- B. Preparation for the trumpets (2-6).
- 1. A glimpse of how heaven works.
 - a. It does not just vaguely exist and everyone does their own thing.
 - b. There are clear roles and rules. There are ceremony and process. There are preciseness and purposefulness.

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2. The seven angels (2).
 - a. They seem to be very specific angels who have a unique position in heaven.
 - b. Many hold that these are the archangels. But, there is no way to know that. What is important is that they are the seven appointed to blow the trumpets and unleash the events tied to each blast of a trumpet.
3. Note that the prayers of the saints are aided by the addition of the incense. And then they rise up to the Lord.
 - a. This is grace.
 - b. Our prayers do not go unattended. They go with heavenly aid.
4. What prayers might these be? Possibly Revelation 6:10—if so, it is saying that it is time. I think this is likely what we see because of what the angel does with the prayers mixed with incense.
 - a. Having lifted the prayers to the Lord, then the angel takes the coals and hurls them to the earth.
 - (1) There is a direct correlation between the prayers and the response.
 - (2) This alludes back to Ezekiel 10:2 where it is written, Ezekiel 10:2 “And He spoke to the man clothed in linen and said, "Enter between the whirling wheels under the cherubim, and fill your hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.”
 - (3) What followed was the judgment of God upon sinful Israel. In a similar way here is the judgment of God upon the people of the earth who have spurned His grace and persecuted His people.
 - (4) Note that first it all goes up before God (4) before being hurled to the earth. This shows that it is God, not merely some angel, who is directing all of this.
 - (5) It also shows that our prayers for justice and vengeance may be delayed but they shall be answered. It is God who determines the how and the when.
 - b. The response of creation (5).

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- (1) This is creation reacting in anticipation of what is to come. Romans 8:19-23.
- (2) When these seven trumpets are finished, creation will have been finally purged.

C. The trumpets.

1. Used in the Old Testament in various ways, but one key one was in warfare. Thus they came to represent the announcement and warning of judgment.
 - a. My soul, my soul! I am in anguish! Oh, my heart! My heart is pounding in me; I cannot be silent, Because you have heard, O my soul, The sound of the trumpet, The alarm of war. (Jeremiah 4:19)
 - b. So the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him. (Judges 6:34)
 - c. Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the LORD is coming; Surely it is near. (Joel 2:1)
2. Just like with the seals, so the trumpets break into two distinct groupings. There are the first four and then the final three. The last three are the worst, which is frightening when you consider the horror of these first four.
3. Four trumpets.
 - a. These first four are different in quality from the final three. These set into motion nature, in a sense, pushing back against mankind.
 - b. First trumpet:
 - (1) Note what Old Testament images might be brought to mind here? Egypt, Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - (a) Now the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that hail may fall on all the land of Egypt, on man and on beast and on every plant of the field, throughout the land of Egypt." Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of

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Egypt. So there was hail, and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very severe, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. The hail struck all that was in the field through all the land of Egypt, both man and beast; the hail also struck every plant of the field and shattered every tree of the field. (Exod. 9:22-25)

- (b) In a similar way the heavens rained down fire and brimstone upon the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, utterly destroying them.
 - (2) However people are not the object of the judgment here; rather it is the vegetation.
 - (3) However there were many Old Testament allusions to the repeating, at a higher degree, of the plagues of Egypt.
 - (4) “Like the bowls to follow (16:1 ff.) the trumpet series has reminiscences of the OT plagues against Egypt—the first trumpet paralleling the seventh Egyptian plague (Ex. 9:24), the second trumpet resembling the first plague (Ex. 7:19–20), the fourth trumpet recalling the ninth plague (Ex. 10:21), and the fifth trumpet paralleling the eighth plague (Ex. 10:12).” (Thomas, 13)
 - (5) Consider also the words of Joel, “I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke.” (Joel 2:30)
 - (6) 1/3 is destroyed. The sheer terror of this is only understood if you have seen/experienced a major fire.
- c. Second trumpet (8-9):
- (1) Now the affected portion is the sea and what the sea contains.
 - (2) What is the object that creates the destruction?
 - (a) Some see it as reference to some great kingdom.
 - (b) Another sees it as a great volcano.

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- (c) A third is it is something like a meteor. This is the simplest understanding and takes into account the nature of the simile.
- (3) What is the result?
 - (a) A third of the sea became blood.
 - (b) Again an allusion to Egypt.
 - (c) Literal blood?
 - i) This is hard to decide. When we look at Exodus we see that God has no problem doing that. However, then it would appear that the flaming mountain was not a meteor.
 - ii) A second option that I lean toward is that it is referencing the great death that was occurring. But I can go either way.
 - (d) A third of water to blood, a third of creatures killed and a third of the ship destroyed.
- d. Third trumpet (10-11):
 - (1) Now the object of the trumpet is fresh water.
 - (2) What was this star?
 - (a) Some see it as some great leader.
 - (b) Others see it as an angel.
 - (c) Or it is another meteor-like object.
 - (d) The last two make the most sense, or then you will be forced to try to understand symbolically what the fresh water is, what the bitterness is, etc.
 - (3) The results here are many people dying because of the bad water. Try as best you can to grasp the level of misery here.
- e. Fourth trumpet (12):
 - (1) Now the heavenly bodies are affected.
 - (2) Everything is now darkened measurably.

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4. Everything that we take for granted as being relatively permanent is being destroyed. With it great sufferings is going to take place.
5. I think of Romans 1 once again.
 - a. Read vss 18ff.
 - b. Mankind works hard at ignoring what is known to each of them.
 - c. Mankind work hard at worshipping the gifts of God rather than God.
 - d. And the very creation that is the source of their hope, pleasure and joy now becomes a living nightmare.
 - e. “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.” (Galatians 6:7)

III. Conclusion.

- A. The eagle (13).
 1. KJV has angel, but based off of poor manuscripts but is probably due to 14:6.
 2. The phrase itself refers to events of great calamity. E.g Isaiah 5:8-25.
 3. Usually it is used singularly or doubly, when doubled it is used for emphasis.
 4. So why the triple use? Likely it is referring to the three remaining trumpets. This is seen in 9:12; 11:14.
 5. Essentially what is happening is that if you thought the first four were bad, wait till you see the next three.
- B. What is sad and even shocking is how one would think that this would drive you to your knees in repentance.
 1. But the harsh reality is that repentance in this time of the tribulation will be the rare exception.
 2. It reminds me of how truly hard the heart of each of us is without the saving grace of God.
 3. Ephesians 2:1-9.
 - a. Consider the description in vss 1-3.

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- b. Consider the glory of the words, “But God . . .”
- c. Consider the grace of “being made alive together with Christ.”

IV. Benediction/Doxology.

May the LORD bless you, and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace.'

Small Group Questions

- **Summer Break**