

Revelation

Chapters Eight and Nine: *The Trumpet Judgments*

Introduction

Chapters seven contained the first parenthetical vision which revealed God's amazing mercy during the plagues. Chapter six closed with the releasing of the sixth seal, and we now continue with the seventh seal being opened.

As the seventh seal is opened there is silence in heaven for half an hour.

The scroll contained seven seals. The seventh seal has seven trumpets, which are sounded by seven angels. These are known as the Trumpet Judgments.

Lesson on Prayer 8:3-5

- A. The scene recalls the accumulated prayers of all saints of all ages.
- B. The angels mix the incense and prayers of the saints with fire from off the altar and cast them into the earth.
- C. Sights and sounds (formula of catastrophe) from heaven mark the end of the age.

The Trumpets: the announcement of judgment! 8:6-19

- A. **The first trumpet**: A plague on the vegetation of the earth (v.7).
 - 1. This corresponds to the seventh plague in Egypt (Exodus 9:13-35).
 - 2. This plague has been reproduced at various times. As long as God judgements are temporal and partial, He will continue to use it.
 - 3. Hail and fire represent storms of hail and lightning. Blood indicates loss of life (Joel 2:30).
 - 4. One third of the trees, earth and all grass destroyed.
 - 5. This partial judgment shows that it is also a call to repentance.
- B. **The second trumpet**: affliction of the sea (vs.8-9).
 - 1. This plague corresponds to the first Egyptian plague (Exodus 7:14).
 - 2. The appearance is that a great mountain of flaming fire is cast into the sea. It is not a mountain but looks like one.
 - 3. It afflicts one third of the seas of the world.

4. There will be two asteroid impacts on the earth, and this is the first one.
 5. The sea will become blood. This appears to be literal.
 6. The plague also destroys one third of the ships of the sea.
- C. **The third trumpet**: affliction of the fresh inland waters (vs. 10-11).
1. This is almost an exact parallel with the first plague in Egypt (Exodus 7:19-15).
 2. It is described as a natural phenomenon.
 3. Whatever natural explanation we offer for this star, its spiritual significance is not open to question.
 4. Man has introduced the gall and bitterness of idolatries and perversions into God's world and now He turns that bitterness back on them in judgment.
- D. **The fourth trumpet**: attack on the skies (v.12).
1. This recalls the ninth plague in Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23).
 2. One third of the heavenly bodies were smitten so that they did not shine. One third of the day was deprived of the shining of the sun. One third of the night was deprived of the light of the moon and stars.
 3. This could be the most terrifying of the judgments so far.
 4. In all of these afflictions God brought into judgment all the things that man has used for security and independence from God. God has now attacked all ordinary means of subsistence such as water and food and ordinary means of comfort such as light and the regular rhythm of days.
 5. In all ages God has afflicted these things as partial judgment. **No sinful power or movement will arise that can long avoid the judgment of God.**
- E. **An Eagle in the midst of heaven** (v.13).
1. His mission is to announce the woes that are to come.
 2. His woes are threefold.
 3. These judgments are directed to "***those who dwell on the earth.***" This refers to unrepentant men.
 4. One third of the earth's population will die in this judgment.
- F. **The fifth trumpet**: release of locust from the bottomless pit (9:1-12).

1. John sees a star falling from heaven. This is not another meteor, but a person to whom a key is given for the bottomless pit.
2. This person is to release tormentors into the earth.
3. The “abyss” is an extremely awful place and has been for a very long time.
4. Description of the “abyss”.
5. The torment that is to attack men is represented in the likeness of a plague of locust.
6. These are images of demonic forces.
7. They have a king over them.

G. ***The sixth trumpet***: the Golden Altar (9:13-21).

1. The sounding of the sixth trumpet is associated with the Golden Altar and the river Euphrates.
2. The altar is a place of divine worship and the prayers of saints and where prayers turned into instruments of judgment (8:3-5).
3. The sixth angel is commanded to loosen four angels, where they were bound upon the river Euphrates.
 - Most of Satan’s angels are free – they are principalities against which we wrestle.
 - The Euphrates River is associated with the beginning of evil.
 - First sin – Genesis 2:10-14
 - First murder – Genesis 4:16
 - First dictator – Genesis 10:8-10
 - First world empire – Genesis 11:1-9
 - First world confederation – Genesis 14:1
4. These are angels of destruction and are now being held by the river. The judgments that are to follow come beyond the river.
5. With the command they are released (15).
6. They have been bound for this hour, day, and month.
7. This is the first of the judgments that is a direct attack on the lives of men.

8. John calls this a vision. The description represents the nature of the torments as being the very nature of hell.

Does this speak of a natural or a supernatural army?

- A. If this describes a natural army the picture is weird, grotesque and terrifying.
- B. The safest interpretation is not a literal 200 million army, but a demonic army invading the earth.
 1. God has two-fold purpose in this tribulation.
 - To bring judgment upon this world order.
 - To make one final dramatic appeal for men to repent.
 2. John lists the sins that men are not willing to give up.
 - Murder
 - Witchcraft associated with drugs.
 - Fornication
 - Theft
 3. This stubbornness reaches back through man's history.
 - Haughtiness of Cain
 - Generation who killed the prophets
 - Those who tried to bribe the guards who watched the grave of Jesus.

Conclusion

- A. The story doesn't end here!
- B. God is associated with three types of wrath. Redemptive, destructive and annihilative.