

The Seventh Seal



Revelation 8

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What events do the seven trumpet judgments represent?

The trumpet judgments are hard for some people to understand (not hard to understand, but hard to believe)

- they represent a future that some people do not want to admit could be possible to happen
- they represent a condition of man that is not easy for some to accept

HISTORICAL VIEW

(Revelation is a panorama of church history)

- The Trumpets speak of a series of invasions against the Roman Empire (Vandals, Huns, Saracens, and Turks)
- The Sixth Trumpet brings the fall of Constantinople to the Turks (1453AD)
- The "little book" represents the Bible being made available to the masses of Europe after the invention of the printing press

PRETERIST VIEW

(Revelation is about the first century; was all fulfilled in John's day)

- The first four Trumpets correspond to disasters inflicted by the Romans on the Jews in the Jewish War (AD 66-70)
- The fifth Trumpet probably depicts the demonic spirits rendering the besieged Jews irrational and self-destructive
- The sixth Trumpet refers to the Roman armies, who destroyed Jerusalem and slaughtered or deported all the Jews

SPIRITUAL VIEW

(Revelation is symbolic of timeless truth and it represents the conflicts between good and evil)

- Catastrophes reminiscent of the plagues of Egypt befall sinful humanity many times in history, demonstrating God's displeasure and worse things to come upon the unrepentant
- Sinful humanity typically absorbs these injuries with defiance, refusing to repent

FUTURIST VIEW

(Everything after Chapter 3 is future and awaits fulfillment before the Second Coming of Christ)

- Either literally or symbolically, the trumpets represent calamities that will be endured by the unrepentant inhabitants of earth during the coming seven-year Tribulation
- These may be supernatural judgments direct from the hand of God or merely the disastrous effects of man's improper stewardship on the earth and his abuse of technology (nuclear weapons)

Revelation 8:1-6;

Seventh Seal: Prelude to the Seven Trumpets

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.

Why is there silence in heaven?

- Reverence for what was about to happen
- Literal calm before the storm

Why are the seven angels given a trumpet?

It is the most used instrument of the Holy Scriptures and portrays the life of the people in the presence of God

- If there is a war declared
- If the people were to be gathered
- Festival days of the Lord announced
- If there were the crowning of a King

What prayers do you think are being offered?

The great and final judgment of this earth is in answer to the prayers of God's people

- The prayer that has been uttered by God's people for millenniums is to be answered:
"Thy kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:9; Luke 11:2)
- The time has come when iniquity, death, and the grave will be destroyed forever

Why did the angel fling the lire from the altar to earth?

This is the answer to the prayers for God's kingdom to come... before it comes; God's wrath has t. be poured out to purify it.

What did the act of throwing fire to the earth cause?

- Thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake... acts of God that speak of judgment to come
- A signal to the seven angels to sound their trumpets

Revelation 8:7; First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck

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.*

What does the first trumpet bring on the earth?

A terrible storm upon the earth - fire & hail mingled with blood

- Meteorite, asteroid,
- Nuclear Bomb

Destroys a third of the trees and all green grass

Where is the grace of God in this?

Only 1/3 of earth and trees are burned up.

This is grace and mercy from God, there is 2/3 left
Man has warning and opportunity to repent

What is the significance of the one-third?

- The number three relates to God... these are acts of God; God is in control.
- The spiritually discerning will recognize the had of God in this

Revelation 8:8-9; Second Trumpet: The Seas Struck

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.*

What does the second trumpet bring on the earth?

- This could be a large celestial object (meteor, asteroid) falling from the sky
 - Nuclear Weapons
 - Only 1/3 of the sea turned to blood
 - Only 1/3 of sea life died
 - Only 1/3 of the ships were destroyed.
- ...NOTE: Again, grace from God!

Revelation 8:10-11;

Third Trumpet: The Waters Struck

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.*

What does the third trumpet bring on the earth?

- The Greek word translated "star" can literally mean "asteroid" or "meteor". (Could be ICBM)
 - The effects seem to be chemical and biological and the results are that the waters become bitter (poisoned).
 - "Wormwood" denotes a specific entity.
 - It poisons a third of all fresh water on the earth.
 - Many people die because of the poison.
- ...NOTE: More grace from God!

Revelation 8:12-13;

Fourth Trumpet: The Heavens Struck

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!"*

What does the fourth trumpet bring on the earth?

Tremendous pollution in the air due to celestial bodies hitting the earth - 1/3 turned dark (or could be nuclear)

Joel 2:30-31 – *I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.*

...Still more Grace from God

Why does the angel say "woe, woe, woe"?

The three following trumpets are so terrible that before they are sounded, a great warning is made throughout the earth

- This warning is also grace from God ...many people still have the opportunity to repent & be saved.

Who is the "woe, woe, woe" warning directed to?

- This is addressed to all who have made this current world their home
- They do not have God in their hearts
- They have no heavenly vision (biblical worldview)
- Their hope and dreams are in the world (idolatry – trusting in the creation rather than the Creator)
- They are materialists with the faith creed that, "the cosmos is all there is, was, or ever will be" (Carl Sagan, the high priest of materialism)

What is the message in this for us today?

- Judgment is coming so repent before it is too late
- John 9:4 – *Work while it is day, the night is coming when no one can work*
- Don't put your trust in things of the world... only God can deliver us.