

# God's Revelation of the Future

Community Baptist Church  
Lesson 4

Adult Bible Fellowship  
Spring, 2024

## The Trumpet Judgments

These trumpet judgments flow out of the breaking of the seventh seal (8:1).

The account of these judgments is recorded in 8:2-9:21 and 11:14-19.

These judgments appear to be more severe than the previous seal judgments.

The first four trumpets form a group, each involving thirds. So too, the last three trumpets form a group, three woes.

Timewise, it appears we are now well into the 70<sup>th</sup> week, perhaps the last fourth.

### Background – 8:2-6

- Seven angels who “stand before God” are given seven trumpets.
- Verses 3-5 describe the actions of “another angel” which take place before the trumpets are blown.
  - This angel stands at “the golden altar” (cf. 6:9) with “a golden censer” offers incense with the prayers of the saints.
  - The angel fills the censer with fire and throws it on the earth causing thunder and lightning.
- Now the seven angels prepare to blow their trumpets.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet – 8:7

- When this trumpet sounds a powerful hail storm, apparently with lightning, is unleashed. (Cf. 16:21)
  - The “mixed with blood” is difficult. It may indicate great shedding of blood caused by the hail.
  - Compare the 7<sup>th</sup> plague on Egypt (Exodus 9:18-26).
- The primary target for this judgment is the land with the destruction of vegetation.
  - One-third of the land (including smaller vegetation), one-third of the trees, and “all green grass” (perhaps in the third impacted).

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet – 8:8-9

- When this trumpet sounds “something like a great mountain, burning with fire, [is] thrown into the sea.”
  - It is not known what this is. Even John struggles, saying “something like.”
  - Even though John does not say “from heaven” as with the next trumpet (8:10), it could be an object from space of great size.
- The primary target of this judgment is the sea (salt water).
  - One-third of the sea “became blood,” one-third of the sea creatures die, and one-third of the ships on the sea are destroyed.
  - Compare with this the 1<sup>st</sup> plague on Egypt (Exodus 7:17-21).

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet – 8:10-11

- When this trumpet sounds “a great star [falls] from heaven, blazing like a torch.”
  - Not a literal star. But clearly something coming from space, like an asteroid or comet.
  - Interestingly, this “star” has a name, “Wormwood.”
- The primary targets of this judgment are “the rivers” and “the springs of water.”
  - One-third of the rivers and springs (fresh water supplies) are poisoned resulting in the deaths of “many people.”
  - This is just the opposite of what happened for Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 15:23-25).

### 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet – 8:12

- When this trumpet sounds a third of the sunlight, moonlight, starlight, daytime, and nighttime is impacted.
  - Initially, it appears that it is the sun, moon, and stars which are changed. However, it is the earth that is changed by this judgment.
  - It is suggested by some that the rotational speed of the earth on its axis is being increased so that the earth rotates in 16 hours rather than 24 hours.
    - This would result in one-third less sunlight, moonlight, starlight, daytime, and nighttime.
    - This is not the only time earth’s rotation has been changed. Recall the long day of Joshua (Joshua

12:12-13) and the change of the sundial for Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:7-8).

- In this regard recall Jesus's statement in the Olivet Discourse that during the "great tribulation ... those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:21-22 [KJV]).

### **The Three Woes – 8:13**

- Between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> trumpets an eagle is heard. This eagle speaks of three woes. These woes are associated with the sounding of the final three trumpets.
- This warning may indicate that the intensity of these judgments will be greater.
  - Note that the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet is effectively all seven of the bowl judgments.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet (1<sup>st</sup> Woe) – 9:1-12**

- When this trumpet sounds John sees "a star from heaven which had fallen to earth" [NASB]. This "star," a person, is given a key.
  - It appears that this person is Satan.
  - When John sees Satan, he had already fallen to earth.
    - Satan was cast to the earth earlier in the 70<sup>th</sup> week (12:7-9).
  - Satan is given "the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit [the abyss]" which then, having such authority, he uses to open the shaft. (Cf. Luke 8:31; Revelation 20:1-3)
- John describes smoke and "locusts" coming from the shaft.
  - Who/What are these "locusts?" Having been bound in the abyss, most likely they are demons. (Cf. Luke 8:31)
  - These "locusts" are given a special power.
- John describes what they are permitted to do.
  - They can only torment those who do not have "the seal of God on their foreheads."
  - Their tormenting extends five months and does not kill. Those stung will wish for death but "death will flee from them."
  - Interestingly, these demons, working for Satan, are carrying out God's judgment on Satan's own children. (Cf. Matthew 12:25; Mark 3:25)
- John describes their appearance, first as a group and then as individuals.

- These "locusts" have a king, "the angel of the bottomless pit."
  - It is suggested that this is a "high-ranking" demon.
  - His names mean "Destroyer."

### **6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet (2<sup>nd</sup> Woe) – 9:13-21; 11:14a**

- When this trumpet sounds John hears a command, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."
  - These angels, prepared just for this purpose, were bound, indicating they are evil.
  - They are released "to kill a third of mankind." (Given today's population and the 4<sup>th</sup> seal, this is another 2 billion people.)
- It seems with the release of these four angels, an army of 200 million is also released.
  - From the description, it appears that these are not human.
  - The plagues spread by this army and its horses are responsible for the deaths.
- As we noticed before (6:12-17), God's judgment does not produce repentance.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet (3<sup>rd</sup> Woe) – 11:14b-19 (Cf. 10:5-7)**

- When this trumpet sounds there is celebration and worship in heaven after which "God's temple in heaven [is] opened."
  - Presently, Satan is this world's ruler. (Cf. Luke 4:5-8; Matthew 4:8-10; John 18:33-37)
  - The Father's offer to the Son is fulfilled. (Psalm 2:7-9)
  - We might say that at this point the Son "takes back" what is rightful his. (Cf. Isaiah 2:2-3; Zechariah 14:9)
  - His reign is unending. (Cf. Exodus 15:18; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:13-14; Luke 1:31-33)
- The elders offer more worship. Note the allusions to the raging nations and God's wrath as seen in Psalm 2.
- The heavenly temple is opened with "the ark of his covenant" then being seen.
  - This appears to be the Holy of Holies in heaven.
  - Recall that the earthly temple was modeled after the heavenly one. (Cf. Hebrews 8:1-2, 5)

Note: All references are to the book of Revelation unless otherwise specified.