

The Trumpets Unveiled: Part 1

Revelation 8:1-13

ANNOUNCE

Mozingo baptism

2nd Sunday and Israel meeting

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 8:1-13 NKJV] 1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for

11:32



opening the golden altar which was before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, that is, 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. 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. 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. 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. 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!"

INTRO

Go over a brief overview up to this point:

- As we get to chapter 8 we jump right back into the swing of things. Six of the seven seals have now been broken, now with the breaking of this seventh seal we see events unraveled in even greater detail.

As we go through chapter 8, I want to dive into three divisions within the chapter:

- **The silence**
- **The supplications**
- **The soundings**

1 THE SILENCE

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 8:1 NKJV] 1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

APPLICATION

Whenever I think of silence in the Bible, I am reminded of a vivid picture of Christ.

[Isa 53:7 NKJV] 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

There is something powerful about silence. Even a brief instance of it can impact what you observe.

Here again, there is a profound silence. God's judgment is about to be unleashed. I like to look at it like this:

QUOTE

“ Before God's greatest act of mercy, there was silence; before His greatest act of judgment, there will be silence.

Pastor Josh

APPLICATION

THINK ABOUT IT: Up to this point in heaven, we have heard a lot.

(Start Music Here!) 38 seconds:

We have heard loud, passionate worship constantly being offered in the presence of God. The elders, the angels, the tribulation saints, and every created thing singing and shouting. Sounds of roaring waterfalls, thunderings, and loud voices permeate the heavenly scene. Every sound is overwhelming John's human senses as the glory of God and the lamb is shouted from every corner of the universe. He is holy and worthy... then all of a sudden... silence.

CONTEXT

IMAGE: In the Tabernacle (which, the Bible tells us, is an earthly picture of what is in heaven) and then in the temple, there would have been constant praising with trumpets, harps, percussion, and singing. Loud voices would be lifted in Psalms and prayers to the Lord. Then, right before the sacrifices would be made, all of this worship would be halted by a somber silence.

Habakkuk 2:20 - "But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him."

SILENCE

I believe this silence represents the awe of heaven at what has been and what is about to take place. The unrestrained wrath of God is about to be poured out on the earth, and it's a sobering moment. The presence of God is about to cause the earth to tremble in fear and awe.

Zephaniah prophesies of this silence and what comes after.

Zephaniah 1:7 - Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD; For the day of the LORD is at hand, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests.

Here we see an important contrast between what Jesus did at the cross and what he will do in the Day of Vengeance.

- Leading up to the cross, Jesus was silent. His silence proceeded the ultimate sacrifice that would make a way possible for all to be forgiven.
- Leading up to God's wrath, there is silence. The sacrifice is prepared, but this time the enemies of the Lord will be sacrificed. Zephaniah continues:

[Zep 1:15-18 NKJV] 15 That day is a day of wrath, A day of trouble and distress, A day of devastation and desolation, A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 A day of trumpet and alarm Against the fortified cities And against the high towers. 17 "I will bring distress upon men, And they shall walk like blind men, Because they have sinned against the LORD; Their blood shall be poured out like dust, And their flesh like refuse." 18 Neither their silver nor their gold Shall be able to deliver them In the

day of the LORD's wrath; But the whole land shall be devoured By the fire of His jealousy, For He will make speedy riddance Of all those who dwell in the land.

APPLICATION

We should not minimize this language, for to fully appreciate the grace of God in Christ, we must fully observe His righteousness and justice.

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 8:2 NKJV] 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

THE SEVEN ANGELS

We aren't sure who these angels are. The number seven does represent perfection and completion in the Bible, so this probably symbolizes God's perfect judgment.

[Psa 119:137 NKJV] Righteous are You, O LORD, and upright are Your judgments.

It's interesting to note that the apocryphal book of Enoch (which does not exist in the canon of inspired scripture but provides interesting insight into some ancient Jewish beliefs) states that there are seven arch angels of God's creation:

- Uriel
- Raphael
- Raquel
- Michael
- Zerachiel
- Gabriel
- Remiel

This is, of course, speculation, and we have no way of knowing for sure.

They are each given a trumpet: **The trumpet is an instrument of declaration**, of war, and of victory. The angels are giving the signal, the go-ahead, for the next series of judgments to be released.

2 The Supplications

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 8:3-5 NKJV] **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.**

CONTEXT

I mentioned earlier that the tabernacle offers us a picture of what is in heaven.

- One of the elements of the tabernacle that was before the ark of the Lord was the **altar of incense [image]**.
- There was a sweet incense created specifically for this type of offering and was to be used for nothing else. Aaron would mix this incense with coals from the altar to take in him and Leviticus tells us that it served as a protection for him in the presence of God's holiness.

Here, the incense is mixed with prayers. More than likely, these are the prayers of the saints we saw in chapter 5, as well as the prayers of the martyrs we saw in chapter 6 who are crying out for God's vengeance.

It's interesting that in the Old Testament every time a sacrifice was offered on the altar, it was to be offered as a "a sweet aroma" to the Lord.

- This fascinates me. When you think of how God receives our prayer, which one of the senses do you automatically attribute? Hearing! God hears our prayers. While this is true, the Bible indicates that God actually smells our prayers.

EXAMPLE: When you walk into your favorite BBQ joint, and you smell the roasted pork! What happens when you smell something bad? It repulses you. You want to get away as fast as you can.

- When we offer our prayer, worship, and obedience to God from a pure and sincere heart, he smells something sweet. Sacrifices from the heart smell sweet to God.

"May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice." (Psalm 141:2)

The first time we see the phrase aroma in the Bible is in Genesis 8:21. God smells the aroma of Noah's sacrifice, and He says, **"I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done."**

- In other words, incense is a picture of God being reminded of His promises and the prayers of His people. These prayers rose up before the Lord and reminded God about His promise to avenge the world for their blood. Many commentators agree that this is a picture of God answering the prayers of the saints by mixing them with His judgment and casting it to the earth.
- This is highly likely the case, but I'd like to present you with another idea. Admittedly, this is an original idea... at least in the sense that I haven't seen anyone else write about it in this way.

APPLICATION

Read verse 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.**

In the OT, incense offering was given for intercession and protection. This offering was used every morning and every evening so that there was constant intercession transpiring on behalf of the people of Israel.

- So what could this angel be doing by tossing the fire from the altar mixed with the prayers down to the earth? Many commentators agree that he is answering the prayers of the tribulation saints and unleashing His judgment. But let me present you with another thought. Turn to Numbers 16:46. Here, God is pouring out his wrath upon the children of Israel in the wilderness for their disobedience.

Numbers 16:44-48 - [Num 16:45-48 NKJV] 45 "Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces. 46 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense on it, and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun." 47 Then Aaron took it as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people. 48 And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped.

Could this image of incense cast upon the earth, with the fire and the prayers, represent God's divine protection for those believers (tribulation saints) and 144,000 Jews still on the earth???

- Maybe the angel pours this out on the earth to separate the spiritually living from the spiritually dead before God's plagues are unleashed. Those who are sealed and those who are saved will be divinely protected from the coming wrath of God.
- Maybe this could be the intercession of Jesus and the gospel going out to those who believe they might be saved.
- Maybe, as a result of this intercession, the tribulation is cut short.

Matthew 24:22 - And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

3 The Soundings

BIBLE PASSAGE

[Rev 8:6 NKJV] 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

INTRO

After the censor is poured out, the first four angels sound their trumpets individually, each unleashing a judgment of God on the earth.

- It's interesting that these are all judgments that have to do with nature. First, the earth and then the cosmos.

NOTE: We see a common number. The proportion of the ecological disasters stays the same; 1/3 of everything is affected.

A. THE FIRST TRUMPET

[Rev 8:7 NKJV] 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.

Hail and fire mingled with blood: Where does the blood come from? Many agree that this hail will be so ferocious that it will kill people on the earth, sending their blood all over the place. The hail will be so massive that it will crush human bodies.

The largest hailstone ever recorded had a **circumference of 17.4”** [image]. It was almost the size of a volleyball. You could only imagine those falling from the sky like rain. Many people would be killed and many things destroyed.

What about the fire? Hail and fire have been found together throughout history, namely in volcanic explosions.

- **Mount St. Helen formed its weather system that affected the northwest United States and Canada.**

- It was reported that hailstorms and lightning followed. The volcanic gasses in the atmosphere combusted from the lightning and created streaks of fire in the sky.
- As a result of this particular biblical event, 1/3 of all the green vegetation on the earth is completely destroyed. Notice as well that all the grass is destroyed.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Joel 1:19-20 - ...fire has devoured the open pastures, and a flame has burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field also cry out to You, For the water brooks are dried up, And fire has devoured the open pastures.

B. THE SECOND & THIRD TRUMPETS

The judgments of God move from man's food source (land) to man's water source (sea and rivers).

[Rev 8:8-11 NKJV] 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.

Great Mountain of Fire destroys the sea and its life:

- John uses the word "like." When we see that, we know that John is simply trying to describe what he sees with understandable language.
- When you look at scientific renderings of large asteroids, you can see something similar to what John described.
- Of course, an asteroid burning through the earth's atmosphere would add fire.

Whatever it is, it hits the ocean.

- The impact causes 1/3 of all ocean life to perish, causing the seas to turn into bloody messes.
- Over 50% of our earth's oxygen content is produced by plankton in the ocean.

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 Greek Word Wormwood means bitter. We have a plant named after this that creates a hallucinogenic effect.

- Again, speculation here, but could this be an asteroid or meteor? A biological or nuclear weapon?
- Its name seems to indicate its effect on the world's freshwater supply. It's localized to about 1/3 of the world's rivers, but what a catastrophic effect. It will make our modern-era droughts seem like a walk in the park.

[Jer 9:15 NKJV] 15 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.

C. THE FOURTH TRUMPET

[Rev 8:12-13 NKJV] 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.

God's judgments move now from earth to sea to the heavens.

These judgments correlate with Christ's words from Matthew 24:

[Mat 24:29 KJV] 29 ...the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken

Jesus is quoting the prophet Isaiah from chapter 13.

Before the Lord returns, the fabric of the universe will begin falling apart. Celestial entities are affected.

- The third part of the day and night - Not shining 1/3 less, but total darkness for 1/3 of the day.

I have no scientific explanation for how all these things will occur, but I believe this is intentional. There must be a sense that these are beyond natural disasters, but the supernatural move of God's mighty hand.

We cannot remove the divine from these judgments. God can use any means He sees fit to judge, whether it's nature or war, but it is still God. God tried revealing Himself to mankind through His grace and now reveals Himself through His judgment. And what's so tragic, as we'll see next week, is that humanity still does not repent after physically witnessing God's wrath.

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!"

Paraphrased: OK, now it's going to get really bad!

CONCLUSION:

God's wrath is coming. Are you prepared? A better question: if you were guaranteed to be rescued from what is coming, would you take it?

The whole world laughed at Noah as he built a giant boat. After all, it had never rained or flooded. Yet as the rain started pouring down, how many of them wished that they would have taken the side of the crazy old man, but it was too late.