

## Trumpet Blasts of God's Wrath

**Text:** Revelation 8:1-13

### Introduction:

1. Revelation chapter 8 records the opening of the seventh seal and the first four of the seven trumpet judgments.
2. It is of interest to note that the seven trumpet judgments closely parallel the plagues God sent on Egypt, albeit on a much larger scale.
3. Like the seal judgments, the first four trumpets are different in kind to the last three. The first four trumpets release devastation against nature whereas the final three are directed against mankind himself.
4. We will divide the chapter into three sections for our study.

### I. The Prelude to the Trumpets (Vs. 1-6)

#### A. The Silence with the Seal (Vs. 1-2)

1. "the seventh seal" = contains the seven trumpets and the seventh trumpet contains the seven vials.
2. "silence in heaven" = a sense of awe sweeps over heaven when the seventh seal is opened and a dramatic pause of half an hour follows where heaven anticipates what is about to happen.
  - a. Illustration: The silence before a judge pronounces his verdict in a trial.
  - b. Illustration: The silence that often precedes a storm.
3. "seven angels...were given seven trumpets" = these angels will participate by blowing the trumpets to announce the release of God's judgments on the earth.

#### B. The Supplications of the Saints (Vs. 3-6)

1. The Presentation of the Saints' Prayers (Vs. 3-4)
  - a. The Aroma of their Prayers (Vs. 3)
    - i. 'altar' = the altar of incense of which the altar in the tabernacle was a replica/copy. Mentioned about 7 times in Revelation.
    - ii. 'incense' = in the O.T. incense was composed of four spices (Ex. 30:34-38). It pictures the sweetness of prayer to God. It is like a fragrant aroma to Him.
    - iii. Thomas: "In the temple ritual, the priest poured the saucer of incense over the burning coals on the altar of incense. At the same time, the Israelites bowed in prayer as the fragrant cloud of smoke ascended heavenward."
    - iv. Psalm 141:2 *"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."*

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- b. The Acceptance of their Prayers (Vs. 4)
  - i. The prayers are pictured as wafting up before God, mingled with the sweet incense.
  - ii. Be encouraged! Your prayers are precious and important to Almighty God.
  - iii. Phillips: "Notice that God holds up the entire process of judgment while He receives and weighs the prayers of His own. There is silence in heaven for half an hour of heaven's time while God graciously takes into consideration the prayers of His own."
- 2. The Power of the Saints' Prayers (Vs. 5-6)
  - a. The angel takes the golden censer, fills it with live coals from the altar and hurls it to the earth. The silence is shattered with the sound of voices, the clap of thunder, the flash of lightning and the shaking of an earthquake and the seven angels ready themselves to peal forth the trumpet blasts of God's judgment.
  - b. There is a connection between the presentation of the saints' prayers in heaven and the performance of God's will on earth. God incorporates our prayers into the carrying out of His eternal purposes.
  - c. The pleadings of the tribulation martyrs for God's justice will be answered (See Rev. 6:10). The cries of the saints down through the ages "thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" will be answered.
  - d. Be encouraged! God answers prayer! God will one day shake the earth mightily in answer to the prayers of His people.

## II. The Performance of the Trumpets (Vs. 7-12)

The first four trumpets are recorded in the remainder of the chapter. Each of them has a devastating impact on man's environment.

### A. Trumpet # 1: Devastation upon Vegetation (Agricultural) (Vs. 7)

- 1. The Release of the Judgment (Vs. 7a)
  - a. "The first angel sounded" = the trumpet has a powerful, alarming, alerting sound. Trumpets were connected, amongst other things, with war in the O.T. (See Num. 10:9; Josh. 6:4-20; Judges 7:8, 16-18).
  - b. The first trumpet releases a judgment consisting of three elements – hail, fire and blood.
  - c. We get an idea of how terrifying and devastating this judgment will be by its prototype in Exodus 9:18-19, 23-25: "Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send therefore now, *and* gather thy cattle, and all

## Revelation Series

that thou hast in the field; *for upon* every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, **the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.** And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent **thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground;** and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was **hail, and fire mingled with the hail,** very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. **And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field."**

- d. The seventh vial judgment includes hail stones "about the weight of a talent" (Rev. 16:21). These stones will be around 100 pounds or 45 kilos in weight.
  - e. The hail storm of the first trumpet judgment would sit between these two hail storms in its intensity.
2. The Ruin from the Judgment (Vs. 7b)
- a. A third (approx. 33%) of trees are burned up. It has been estimated that there are around 3 trillion trees in the world. Imagine 1 trillion trees being lost to fires! This makes the recent Australian fires seem like almost nothing in comparison!
    - i. Imagine the smoke that will fill earth's atmosphere. Imagine the respiratory problems mankind will face. Imagine what will happen to the quality of the air. Imagine the destruction of animal life. Imagine the devastation of orchards.
    - ii. Note: Mankind will not bring about the destruction of the earth through climate change. The heavens and the earth, according to 2 Peter 3:7 "*are kept in store, **reserved** unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*" God Almighty will destroy the earth, not man!
  - b. All green grass is burned up. Crops will be destroyed resulting in widespread food shortages. Livestock will die for lack of feed. Many animals who rely on grass for their sustenance will perish. Imagine the impact on the meat and milk industries.

### B. Trumpet # 2: Devastation upon Oceans (Oceanological) (Vs. 8-9)

1. The Release of the Judgment (Vs. 8a)
  - a. "a great mountain" = note the word 'as'. This is how the object appeared to John. It was like a great mountain in size and appearance. Possibly a meteoroid.
  - b. "burning with fire" = fire a symbol of God's judgment

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- c. Note: This this is farfetched? Don't you think the God who knows all the trillions of stars by name and holds the universe together has the ability to drop of his stars on earth?
2. The Ruin from the Judgment (Vs. 8b-9)

There is a triple judgment in this trumpet, all related to the oceans.

  - a. A third part of the sea became blood. Oceans occupy about three fourths (71 percent) of the earth's surface. Blood was also mixed with the hail and fire in the previous judgment. Rev. 16:6 gives us a clue as to why blood features in these judgments.
  - b. A third part of marine life dies. Scientists estimate there are between 700,000 and 1 million different species of creatures that live in the sea. Imagine the impact on world food supplies with the dramatic reduction of available seafood! Imagine the awful stench from all the dead and rotting creatures.
  - c. A third of ships are destroyed. There are approx. 55,000 registered merchant ships in the world today. Imagine if you lost 17,500 of them! Imagine the loss of life with the death of the ships' crews. Imagine the loss of materials. Imagine the disruption to fuel and food supplies.

### C. Trumpet # 3: Devastation upon Rivers (Hydrological) (Vs. 10-11)

1. The Release of the Judgment (Vs. 10)
  - a. "a great star from heaven" = an asteroid or meteorite that evidently breaks up as it enters earth's atmosphere and falls with contaminating influence on a third of fresh water.
  - b. There are around 165 major rivers in the world along with their contributing tributaries.
  - c. "fountains of waters" = reference to fresh water springs
2. The Ruin from the Judgment (Vs. 11)
  - a. "the name of the star" = God has names for all the stars (Psalm 147:4) and this particular star is called 'Wormwood'. Wormwood was a bitter plant and pictures the poisoning of the waters.
  - b. "many men died" = the WHO says that about 900,000 people die of contaminated water each year. Imagine how many will die when a third of the world's fresh water is poisoned. Imagine the fish and animal life that will also perish. Imagine the impact on irrigation of crops.

### D. Trumpet # 4: Devastation in the Heavens (Astronomical) (Vs. 12)

1. A third of the sun darkened (Vs. 12a)
2. A third of the moon darkened (Vs. 12b)
3. A third of the stars darkened (Vs. 12c)
4. This means daylight will be reduced by a third and star and moonlight by a third. This is 8 hours of **total** darkness out of a 24-hour period.

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5. Thomas: “Almost every area of life – agriculture, navigation, human health, productivity, and the like – are bound to feel the consequences of this plague.”

**E. Walvoord:** “The first four trumpets deal with aspects of the physical world that are taken more or less for granted. The beauty and benefit of the trees, and the luxury and growth of green grass are seldom occasions for thanksgiving to the living God. In a similar way, human beings are prone to take for granted the blessings of water. These are all gifts from a loving God to an undeserving world, and they come under the blight and judgment described in the second and third trumpets.”

### III. The Proclamation of the remaining Trumpets (Vs. 13)

This verse forms a transition from the first four trumpets to the last three.

#### A. The Sight of the Angel (Vs. 13a)

1. “through the midst of heaven” = means “mid-heaven, mid-sky”. This means the angel will be visible to earth’s inhabitants.
2. What an incredible sight this would be and a significant warning to those on earth.
3. Challenge: Will you heed God’s warning and repent now?

#### B. The Sound of the Angel (Vs. 13b)

1. “a loud voice” = there was significant volume in the angel’s proclamation
2. “Woe, woe, woe” = a triple pronouncement of woe. Woe always speaks of judgment in the Bible.
3. The warning peals forth that the remaining 3 trumpet judgments will be especially grievous.
4. Cloud: “Whereas only seven verses are devoted to describe the first four trumpet judgments, more than 50 are devoted to the last three. The final trumpet opens up the seven vial judgments, which are worse than anything that has occurred.”

### Conclusion:

1. Have you trusted Christ as your Saviour?  
If you are willing to repent and ask Jesus Christ to be your Saviour, this prayer might help you put this into words:  
“Dear God, I admit that I am a sinner and I deserve Hell. I believe You love me and died for my sins, was buried and rose again. Right now, I repent from my sin and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour from sin. Help me to grow and live as a Christian from now on. Amen!”
2. Are you living for now or eternity? How important is prayer in your life?