

**Message #23****Revelation 8:1-13**

The Tribulation judgments have been pouring out of heaven and billions of people have died in the first six seal judgments seen in Revelation 6. But at this point in the Tribulation, it is far from over.

This time of God's wrath is not yet done. In fact, as we come to Revelation 8, we come to the most ferocious part of the Great Tribulation. It is the worst part of the Tribulation. It is here where Jesus Christ breaks open the seventh seal, which is the final seal, which contains the final and most ferocious judgments of God.

When people say they think they are in the Great Tribulation, ask them to show you the things described in just Revelation 6-8. There has never been any point in time when these things have happened.

**This seventh seal Tribulation judgment actually contains the seven trumpet judgments, four of which are found in this chapter. This seventh seal Tribulation judgment also contains the seven bowl judgments.**

**The first four trumpet judgments occur here in chapter 8. The fifth and sixth trumpet judgments occur in chapter 9. There is a parenthesis in chapters 10-11:14. The seventh trumpet judgment occurs in chapter 11 (11:15-19) and it will include the seven final bowl judgments.**

The first four trumpet judgments will be God's wrath against nature. The fifth and sixth trumpet judgments will be God's wrath against man and the seventh trumpet judgment, which includes the seven bowl judgments, are against Israel, nature and man.

**This seventh seal judgment is the finale of God's wrath.** It will fill up His final and fierce wrath level as He pours out these judgments on a God mocking, Christ rejecting, Israel hating world.

What we see here is this:

**JESUS CHRIST BREAKS OPEN THE SEVENTH SEAL AND UNLEASHES THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPET JUDGMENTS AT THIS MOMENT IN THE GREAT TRIBULATION.**

There are two main prophetic actions brought out in this chapter:

**PROPHETIC ACTION #1** – Jesus Christ breaks the seventh seal. **8:1-6**

There are five observations we want to make about this seventh seal judgment:

**Observation #1** - The seventh seal is broken open by Jesus Christ. **8:1a**

Jesus Christ is the One who is controlling and authorizing every one of these terrible Tribulation Judgments. Most people do not realize that Jesus Christ is not only a loving Savior, but He is also a ferocious Judge. He is God and He is worthy to pour out God's wrath and in the Tribulation He will do that in full force and this seventh seal judgment will be the full force of the wrath of God.

People need to know this now. They can accept Jesus Christ as Savior or they can face Jesus Christ as Judge. He took upon Himself God's wrath to save us; but if a person rejects Him, He will pour out God's wrath on them.

**Observation #2** - The seventh seal judgment features ½ hour of silence. **8:1b**

In all the other seal judgments, when they were broken, John saw something or heard something (6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12). **However, when this seal is broken, the thing that stands out is that John does not hear anything for a half hour.**

In the Old Testament, there are certain references to the fact that when these events occur there will be moments of unusual silence:

**Habakkuk 2:20** says, "But the LORD is in His holy temple, let all the earth be silent before Him."

**Zephaniah 1:7** says, "Be silent before the Lord GOD for the day of the LORD is near."

**Zechariah 2:13** says, "Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He is aroused from His holy habitation."

**The Greek word "silence" used here in verse 1 literally refers to an absence of all noise.** The specific location of this silence is "in heaven."

To this point in the Tribulation heaven has been a place of tremendous non-stop action and activity and sound and the earth has been a place of roaring wrath. When Jesus Christ breaks open the seventh seal there will be an eerie silence that will occur.

Now of course one question we would ask is why the silence? There are three main reasons:

**(Reason #1)** - This is one last brief moment of grace in which God grants people a brief pause in Tribulation wrath to reflect on their relationship with Him. This quiet should cause Israel to think seriously about things in view of what is about to hit her.

**(Reason #2)** - This signals to the whole world that something major is about to hit. People will be forced to wonder what will happen next.

**(Reason #3)** - This silence sets the stage for final wrath which contains the worst judgments of all.

We suspect that during this silence in heaven, the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will be communicating what is about to happen.

One other point. It is clear from this ½ hour silence that the Great Tribulation is time regulated down to ½ hour and minute time intervals. This is all very carefully timed by God.

**Observation #3** - The seventh seal judgment features seven angels who stand before God and are given seven trumpets. **8:2**

The Great Tribulation will feature many different angels doing many different things in regard to God's wrath and God's judgment. For example, in Matthew 13:41-42, Jesus Christ will use angels to gather people and cast them into burning hell.

At this point there are seven angels who are given seven trumpets. Trumpets were used in Israel to announce feast days, ceremonial processions, war and the coming day of the Lord. **These particular angels will be connected to the final judgments of the world and also national Israel.**

**Observation #4** - The seventh seal judgment features another angel who focuses on the prayers of God's people. **8:3-4**

When the seven angels are given the seven trumpets, "another (allos-allos) same kind of key angel connected to the finale comes forward to offer to God "the prayers of the saints."

When we analyze this moment, it is obviously very sacred and solemn:

1) This angel is standing before "the altar." **8:3a**

2) This angel is holding a "golden censor." **8:3b**

3) This angel is given "much incense." **8:3c**

When we think about the altar and censor and incense, our mind immediately thinks of O.T. Israel. This incense altar is clearly described in Exodus 37:25-29.

4) This angel adds this to "the prayers of the saints." **8:3d**

There is an article "the" before the noun prayers and there is an article "the" before the noun saints. So these are not just any prayers; these are specific prayers of specific saints.

By virtue of the fact that “much incense” is given in regard to these prayers, there is obviously a vast amount of prayers that have been stored that are about to be answered.

We suspect that the storage of prayers here is “Thy Kingdom Come” prayers that include the wrath and vengeance of God before He sets up His kingdom.

God’s people have been praying for millenniums for God to come and set up His righteous Kingdom on this earth and destroy that which is evil. God has stored every one of those prayers and at this point, they are all released.

According to **verse 4** the prayer incense ascends to the nostrils of God.

There are some very important conclusions we may draw concerning prayer:

- 1) Prayer is very important and very sacred in connection to God working out His program.
- 2) God is a God who answers prayer in His time and not our time.
- 3) Just because our prayers are not answered immediately, does not mean they will not be answered eventually.
- 4) Prayers even concerning judgment are viewed as sacred incense by God (Ps. 141:2).

**Observation #5** - The seventh seal judgment features an angelic reaction to the saint’s prayers.  
**8:5-6**

When this moment occurs, two angelic reactions will occur:

**(Reaction #1)** - One angel is angered in heaven and powerfully demonstrates it on earth. **8:5**

The angel who has the censor is so moved by the prayers of God’s people that he emotionally responds even before the first trumpet is sounded. He hurls the fire of the altar at the earth which causes roaring thunder and various sounds, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

Keep in mind that things have been quiet for about ½ hour, but when this happens the people on earth will know serious things are about to happen.

**(Reaction #2)** - Seven angels prepare for further judgment action. **8:6**

The second reaction is the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepare to blow them. William Newell believes that these trumpet blasts will actually be heard on earth. He is probably right because the thunder and other noises are heard on earth so this trumpet blast will probably also be heard.

By this point in the Great Tribulation all on earth realize these judgments are coming directly from God. This will be a terrifying moment.

**PROPHETIC ACTION #2** – Four angels pour out four trumpet judgments. **8:7-13**

We cannot help but notice as we look at these verses that the number “one-third” shows up some thirteen times (**8:7, 7, 8, 9, 9, 10, 10, 11, 12, 12, 12, 12, 12**). **The number three is certainly a number connected to God because it specifically is the number of the Trinity.**

We know that one third of Israel will be saved when the Great Tribulation is over (Zechariah 13:9). We also know that when these first four trumpet judgments are over, there are three “woe” judgments yet to occur (**8:3**).

The Trumpet Judgments break down this way:

Trumpet Judgments 1-4 are judgments against nature found in Revelation **8:7-13**.

Trumpet Judgments 5-6 are judgments against men found in Revelation 9;

Trumpet Judgment 7, which includes 7 bowl judgments are judgments against Israel, nature and men and they start in Revelation 11:15.

**Trumpet Judgment #1** - The wrath judgment against vegetation. **8:7**

This first trumpet judgment is biological and it is a botany judgment. It is a judgment aimed at vegetation on the earth that destroys green grass and trees. In this judgment, hail and fire are sent by God to destroy 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the earth’s vegetation.

What is described here is that hail and fire are mixed with blood. God used hail and fire in the 7<sup>th</sup> plague of Egypt (Ex. 9:23-27). By adding the blood feature this is clearly connected to Joel’s eschatological prophecy (Joel 2:30), which clearly points to Israel just before He delivers her (2:31-32).

There are many prophetic references that predict that God will repeat Egyptian type plagues in the future just prior to bringing Israel into her land - Amos 2:10; 4:10; 8:8-9; 9:5-7.

By virtue of the fact that this is mixed with blood, it would certainly remind those left on earth of the martyrs who had been killed who were already in heaven.

Plant life and vegetation was originally created by God in Genesis 1:11 on Creative Day #3. This life has been in existence since then. At this point God will destroy 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of it. The effect will be devastating because it will mean that 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all the contributions that plant life makes to this world, such as shade and food and atmospheric things, will be gone.

Much of the world will be turned into a vast desert.

**Trumpet Judgment #2** - The wrath judgment against the ocean. **8:8-9**

The second trumpet judgment will be a judgment against the sea. This is an oceanographical judgment.

A huge burning substance, like a mountain, is cast from heaven into the sea and destroys 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all marine life and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all ships.

Zephaniah predicts that God will destroy the fish when He cuts off man from the earth (Zeph. 1:3). So this judgment against ocean water is predicted to occur prior to when God destroys man.

Now the substance that God uses is a very massive and visible burning mountain. It appears to be a “mountain like mass of meteoric chunk, ablaze with fire.” The destruction will be against all the seas and not just one. So 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all ocean water in the world will receive this judgment.

One writer observed, when one considers this judgment and thinks about all of the advancements that man has made in science, nothing even begins to compare with what God will do here (Robert Thomas, *Revelation*, Vol. 2, p. 19).

This judgment will not only affect the water, but all ships, including cruise ships, cargo ships, oil ships. When this judgment hits, calamity will hit ships on the high seas. One third of all marine life will die by this one judgment.

This kind of thing was done on a much smaller scale in Egypt in Exodus 7:21 and the result was terrible stench and death.

### **Trumpet Judgment #3 - The wrath judgment against fresh water. 8:10-11**

The third trumpet will be a judgment against fresh water. The third angel releases a great star, which also has a burning fiery look to it. It hits key areas where people get drinking water. The rivers and springs of water are turned into a very bitter water and in this one judgment, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the world's drinking water is destroyed. People will be able to see this is coming straight out of heaven and they will not be able to do one thing about it. The God they mocked and denied is pouring out His wrath and they know it.

Now the flaming star has a name and the name is “the wormwood” (ο α=yinqoc). This is the only place in the Greek New Testament where this word is used. It is used in the Old Testament in Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15 and Lamentations 3:15, 19. This “wormwood” was the bitterest shrub known in the Middle East. It was found in Palestine and in Syria and it has a very putrid smell.

In Exodus 15:22-25, God turned bitter water into sweet water for His people, but here He turns sweet water into bitter water as a judgment on the whole world. The noun “wormwood” refers to a very bitter substance that apparently is malignant or poisonous because it had the ability to kill people who drank it.

At this point in the Great Tribulation, in just the first three trumpet judgments, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all vegetation is gone; 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all ocean water is destroyed and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the world's fresh drinking water is destroyed.

More than likely the “Great Lakes” will become “Grave Lakes.” With the billions of people already dead, this will make the world even more of a desperate place.

**Trumpet Judgment #4** - The wrath judgment against heavenly planets. **8:12-13**

The heavenly planets were created by God in Genesis 1:14 on Day #4 of God’s creation. Those great planets display the glory of God. There is a story in history about Napoleon, who was sailing to a location and some men were debating the subject of the existence of God.

Napoleon is reported to have pointed up to the stars and said something like if you are going to say there is no God, you are going to have to do something about those. Those planets display God’s glory so men are without excuse.

This trumpet judgment will be against 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sun, moon and stars. This judgment will affect every place in the world because part of it is in the daytime and they will see the judgment against the sun and part of it is in the nighttime and they will see the judgment against the moon and stars. No matter where one is on this earth, as they look to the sky they will see the Glory of God begin to dwindle. God is going to begin the process of shutting down His light system.

It is hard to know what this will actually do when 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all light is gone. The world will obviously be an eerie and scary place.

Now before we look at **verse 13**, let’s recap what has happened:

- 1) All Christians disappeared at the Rapture.
- 2) Several Antichrists, and the Antichrist has surfaced. **6:1-2**
- 3) There have been major outbreaks of war, both civil and national. **6:3-4**
- 4) There has been a terrible worldwide famine. **6:5-6**
- 5) There has been terrible death with ¼ of the world’s population dead. **6:7-8**
- 6) There have been scary and horrible cosmological disasters. **6:12-17**
- 7) There was a strange moment of ½ hour of silence.
- 8) There has been a destruction of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the earth’s vegetation.
- 9) There has been a destruction of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the oceans.
- 10) There has been a destruction of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of fresh drinking water.
- 11) There has been a destruction of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the sun, moon and stars.

So after all of these things have hit the world, we come to **Revelation 8:13** in which God sends an eagle to fly through the air in “midheaven.” Now midheaven would be where the planets normally would be.

So this will be a massive eagle flying through the air and people will see it and hear it. The eagle will say with a very “loud voice” - “Woe, Woe, Woe to those who live on the earth because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.”

The noun “eagle” means just that, an eagle. If God can make a parrot talk or a crow talk, He is certainly able to authorize a giant eagle to fly through the sky and announce this.

The people on this earth are going to see and experience things like they have never seen or ever experienced.

Now “woe” judgments in the Bible are the most ferocious of all. So what this angel is saying is you haven’t seen anything yet. You are about to experience the worst judgments of all.

The people are going to see an eagle rocketing through the sky shouting at humanity. When the eagle is gone, the world will be in for a judgment finale like it has never seen.