

Revelation 8:1-13 - *Takes us back to the gospel age*

Revelation 8-11 contains the third cycle. In the previous cycle (Rev 4-7) God's people learn why they have been going through difficulties and persecution.

This cycle (Rev 8-11) takes us back to the gospel age, the age that began with the first coming of Christ.

[1] When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

The seven seals ended in heaven. Now the trumpets take us back to earth. Notice the phrase "the earth" found in 8:5; 7, 13; 9:1,3

Why silence? Possibly all of these:

- 1) For prayers to be heard*
- 2) This is what we find in Old Testament prophecy of Judgment. Habakkuk 2:20; Zephaniah 1:7; Zechariah 2:13*
- 3) The silence prepares us for the terrible judgment to come. The inhabitants of heaven stand spellbound.*

[2] Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

[3] And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne;

[4] and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God.

[5] Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

Verses 2-5: These verses tell us about prayer. The trumpets are sounded in response to prayer.

The seals were opened to reveal the suffering of God's people. They suffer because of their connection to Christ.

Because they suffer, they pray. In response to their prayer, God sends His angels to blow their trumpets.

God values our prayers! Prayer would mean far more to us if we knew what it means to God!

What makes our prayers acceptable? NOT because we are good prayers but because of Christ's intercession for the saints.

Christ's intercession may be represented by the incense which is mingled with the prayers.

Our prayers accomplish amazing things. The trumpets are God's answers to the prayers of the saints.

REMEMBER that the "saints" are the redeemed people of God, not super Christians.

The seven angels are a high order of angels.

[6] Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them.

The seven trumpets are divided into four and three. The four are judgment on the earth. But these four trumpets announce that God is directly bringing judgment. The first four seals came from activities of selfish mankind, thus the cycles are increasing in intensity.

[7] The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, which fell on the earth; and a third of the earth was burnt up, and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

The first four trumpets announce devastation in nature. They are strongly reminiscent of the Egyptian plagues:

- hail - fire - darkness - locusts

The first trumpet brings forth storms of hail and fire which devastate vegetation so much that one-third of the trees and grass are destroyed.

As with the woes of the four horsemen, the judgments are only partial in nature.

[8] The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea;

The second trumpet affects the sea. This represents the various sea disasters throughout human history

[9] and a third of the sea became blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

[10] The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the fountains of water.

[11] The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the water, because it was made bitter.

The third trumpet affects the inland waterways (rivers, springs, canals, and reservoirs)

Wormwood means "bitter sorrow." Wormwood is a bitter plant. It can also mean "poison."

The star shows that the judgment comes directly from God.

[12] The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.

The fourth trumpet refers to the sun, moon, and stars and may represent calamities from the skies, such as meteors and lightning.

[13] Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice, as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets which the three angels are about to blow!"

Note the three woes or curses.

Note also the use of the number seven. The seven trumpets are divided into four (Rev 8:7-13) and three (9:1-22; 19)

Why do these things happen? Revelation 9:20-21 makes this plain: so that men may turn from their evil ways. A warning for humans!

Trumpets warn! Bowls are poured out. Ezekiel 33:3

Revelation 9:20-21: The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot either see or hear or walk; ²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their immorality or their thefts.