

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 8

Introductory Notes

- We return to the chronological narrative in this chapter with the opening of the Seventh Seal
- The Seventh Seal contains the Seven Trumpet judgments that will follow.
- The distinguishing characteristic of the first four Trumpets is that God is judging man through nature.

Outline

- The Seventh Seal opened - vs. 1
- The Angels and the Incense - vs. 2-6
- The First Trumpet (Fiery Hail) - vs. 7
- The Second Trumpet (Sea Turns to Blood) - vs. 8-9
- The Third Trumpet (Fresh Water Poisoned) - vs. 10-11
- The Fourth Trumpet (Heavens Darkened) - vs. 12
- The Message of the Angel - vs. 13

Notes

- vs. 1 – The Seventh Seal is opened.
 - Walvoord - “Contained in the seventh seal are all the subsequent developments leading to the second coming of Christ, including the seven trumpets and the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”
- vs. 1 - Why the silence? Probably in awe of what is to come.
- vs. 2 – Trumpets were used in Bible times to signal, as at the Feast of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24) or in the military. The word here describes an instrument of a straight tube with mouthpiece and bell on opposite ends.
- vs. 3 – another angel – because this angel’s priestly actions, some believe it is Christ Himself.
 - altar - I think it is an altar of incense, such as in Exodus 30:1-10. This brief scene has parallels to offering incense in the Tabernacle/Temple.
 - prayers of saints – are the prayers of martyrs in 6:9-10, and likely the prayers of all saints of all ages for Christ’s return.
- vs. 5 – There is a parallel here to Ezekiel 10, where coals are spread over Jerusalem as a sign of coming judgment.
- vs. 5 - “voices”, etc. - these are anticipating the judgment to come.

- vs. 7 - The First Trumpet is very similar to the Seventh Plague (fiery hail) in Exodus 9:23-25. See also Ezekiel 38:22 and Joel 2:30.
- vs. 7 - 1/3 of trees – A report from 2010 states there were 15,571,500 square miles of forests on earth. The combined forests of Asia and Africa are almost 1/3.
- vs. 8 - The Second Trumpet has similarities to the First Plague (water turned to blood) in Exodus 7:14-25
 - “great mountain” - I think quite possibly a super-volcano or perhaps a meteor.
 - 1/3 of sea - I couldn't get a very clear breakdown on this size but is it roughly 70% of the Pacific Ocean.
 - “sea became blood” - I'm taking this as literally blood, just as literally 1/3 of the sea is affected and 1/3 of sea life is killed and 1/3 of sea vessels are destroyed.
- vs. 10 – The Third Trumpet - I think this is a meteor or comet.
- vs. 10 - 1/3 of rivers - This is directed at fresh water in contrast to the sea before.
- vs. 11 – Wormwood – Literally the word refers to the plant *artemisia absinthium*, a very bitter plant used in medicines and fermentation.
- vs. 11 - “waters became wormwood” - basically bitter or poisoned. Comets are known to contain such things as hydrogen cyanide and formaldehyde. Possibly could be radioactivity also.
- vs. 12 – The Fourth Trumpet - 1/3 of light is taken away, by both intensity and duration.
- vs. 13 - Think this is bad? Just wait for the rest of the Trumpets...