

Revelation 8

I. The 7th Seal (8:1-5) – Silence

- A. After all the noise, 7th seal brings an eerie silence
 - 1. That doesn't mean it is all over
 - 2. It is like the eye of a hurricane, the worst is yet to come
 - 3. The difference – God's people are sealed!
- B. Why the silence? God is listening to the prayers of his people
 - 1. 1 John 5:14 – This is our confidence
 - 2. 1 Pet 3:12 – God attends to the prayers of the righteous
- C. Mixed with incense
 - 1. Old Testament background
 - a. Exod 30:1-9 – Incense offered twice a day on the altar of incense in the tabernacle
 - b. Lev 16:12 – When going into the Holy of Holies, on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) the Priest had to burn incense on the altar
 - 2. Ps 141:2 - Incense became associated with prayer
 - a. Psa 141:2 – Prayer counted as incense
 - b. Luk 1:9-10 – Praying while incense being burned
 - c. Rev 5:8 – Bowls of incense are prayers of the saints
 - 3. Tells us that we are not alone even in our prayers
 - a. Rom 8:26-27 – Holy Spirit assists our prayers
 - b. Heb 7:25; 1 John 2:1; Rom 8:24 – Jesus intercedes for us
 - 4. Incense is sweet smelling aroma
 - a. When Christians pray, God is pleased
 - b. Psalms 141:2
 - c. Proverbs 15:8
- D. God's answer to their prayers – The silence is broken, a storm is coming!
 - 1. Thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning
 - 2. Followed by seven trumpets, signifying God's judgement
 - 3. So God's answer – You harm my people, you answer to me!
- E. This shows what to do in the face of danger – Pray!
 - 1 John 5:14-15 – God hears our prayers



II. The Seven Trumpets

- A. Purpose (Num 10:1-10)
- B. To get attention (Ezek 33:1-6)
- C. In this case, they are an answer to prayer
 - 1. Like the plagues of Egypt, they are to warn
 - 2. Only a third are affected, not everyone, as in Egypt
 - 3. (9:20-21) – Shows that God was trying to get repentance
 - 4. Purpose was not to destroy, but to discipline
 - a. (2:21) – God gave Jezebel time to repent
 - b. (Jas 1:19) – God is slow to wrath
- D. A trumpet would be like a tornado warning
- E. Areas affected



- 1. Begins with natural disasters
 - a. Things necessary for life
 - b. Demonstrates the effect of sin on the universe
 - 1) Gen 3:17-19 - Curse on the ground which would resist man after sin came into the world
 - 2) Rom 8 - Indicates that the whole world "groans" for redemption, indicating that it has been affected by sin as well as man
- 2. Moves to human suffering
 - a. Demonstrates the effect of sin on man
 - b. Sin causes all kinds of human suffering

II. First four trumpets (8:6-12)

- A. 1st trumpet – Land Disaster (8:7)
 - 1. Similar to the 7th plague in Egypt (Ex 9:13f)
 - a. v.31 - The hail destroyed most of the crops in Egypt
 - b. v.25 - The hail also killed livestock left in



the field

- c. v.26 - Israel was spared this plague
- 2. Hail & Brimstone mixed with blood
 - a. Hail and fire are usually instruments of God's judgment
 - 1) (Is 30:30-31) - Judgment against Assyria
 - 2) (Job 38:22-23) - God keeps it for times of trouble
 - b. It is mixed with blood, denoting the severity of it
- 3. 1/3 of trees were destroyed
 - a. Not the final judgment, but a warning
 - b. Would mean a shortage of fruit, such as olives, figs, grapes, etc.
 - c. Destruction of all the grass means death of grazing livestock, which means no milk, cheese, etc.

B. 2nd trumpet – Sea Disaster (8:8-9)

- 1. Mountains signify kingdoms (Jer 51:24-25)
 - a. Mountain was on fire, signifying a kingdom
 - b. It was thrown into the sea
- 2. A third of the sea turned to blood
 - a. Recalls plague on Egypt of the Nile turning to blood
 - b. Effect on the Sea – Death
 - c. 1/3 creatures of the sea and ships were destroyed
- 3. Sea was the source of livelihood (shipping and fishing)



C. 3rd Trumpet – Fresh Water Disaster (8:10-11)

- 1. Star falls from Heaven on a third of the rivers and springs
 - a. Unlike the previous disaster, this affects drinking water
 - b. The destruction of fresh water is devastating
- 2. Water made bitter and poisonous. Same language used for God's judgment in other passages
 - a. Jer 9:15; 23:15 – God gives bitter plants to eat
 - b. Deut 29:18 – Bitterness from sin & disobedience
 - c. Wormwood is a type of bitter plant
- 3. Similar to Isaiah 14:12
 - a. In this case, it is talking about Babylon (Isa 14:4, 22-23)



- 1) Rome is figuratively called Babylon in Revelation
- 2) Is fitting, since Domitian, the emperor was full of pride and went so far as to require emperor worship

b. Dan 5:17-33

c. Signifies the overthrowing of a king or kingdom

D. 4th Trumpet – Disaster in the sky (8:12)

1. Similar to 9th plague in Egypt (Ex 10:21)
2. Fading of the lights in the sky signify judgment
 - a. (Is 13:10)
 - b. (Joel 3:15)
 - c. (Amos 8:9)
3. This should get everyone's attention



E. Reflections on the Nature of History:

1. The question of 6:10, "how long?" is being answered
2. Historians have written that the Roman Empire fell primarily because of the following:
 - a. A Series of Natural Calamities
 - b. Internal Decay
 - c. External Enemies
3. Revelation demonstrates that these things are the result of God's judgment
 - a. The first four trumpets represent the natural calamities
 - b. The fifth trumpet represents internal decay
 - c. The sixth trumpet represents external enemies
4. Lk 1:46-56 & 1 Sam 2:1-10 - Gives a true view of history
 - a. Characteristics of God
 - 1) He is Holy
 - 2) He exalts the needy and brings down the arrogant
 - 3) He brings down rulers and lifts up the humble
 - b. God is the Lord of History
 - 1) Example is the History of Israel
 - a) (Gen 12:1-3) Promise to Abraham
 - b) (Dt 18:15) The promise of the prophet
 - c) Through Israel would come a blessing for the world, and it did as God planned
 - 2) The crucifixion is a historical fact that happened according to God's plan
 - a) (1:5) Chosen "in Him" From the foundation of the world
 - b) (Isa 53) - Suffering Servant
 - 3) The birth of Christianity is a historical fact that happened according to God's plan

- a) (Gal 4:4) - At the right time
- b) (Eph 1:4-5, 11) - It was predestined by God
- c. Things do not happen by chance, but God is involved in history to bring about his plan

F. Angel in Midheaven (8:13)

1. Three "woes"
2. Indicates that the next three trumpets are going to signify a much greater intensity of disasters
3. This highlights in consequence of unrepentance