



“The Utter Ridiculousness of Stubborn Unrepentance.”

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David Hinkle

Revelation 8 & 9

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

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 offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, ⁴ and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. 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, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

⁶ Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

⁷ The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

⁸ The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. ⁹ 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 springs of water. ¹¹ The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been made bitter.

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 might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.

¹³ Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead, “Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!”

¹ And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. ² He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. ³ Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. ⁴ They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵ They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. ⁶ And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

⁷ In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, ⁸ their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; ⁹ they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. ¹⁰ They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. ¹¹ They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

¹² The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

¹³ Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” ¹⁵ So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶ The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. ¹⁷ And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire[e] and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. ¹⁸ By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.

²⁰ 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 see or hear or walk, ²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

SUMMARY

The first six trumpet judgments contain catastrophic consequences for humanity's rebellion

against God. These judgments will result in the wide destruction of earth's resources and the deaths of many people through diseases and plagues that ravage the earth. Those who survive these judgments would rather die than to continue suffering. Yet, they will not yield before God. They will only double-down in stubborn unrepentance. We will explore this danger that lurks in every human heart and consider the way out that God has provided through His Son.

WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?

- Christ is Revealing God's Wrath. (Seals, Trumpets, Bowls)
- Believers Witness, Suffer, and Die from Persecution, (Revelation 7)
- Judgment Intensifies on the Unrepentant. (Revelation 8-9)

PASSAGE OUTLINE

- The Seventh Seal Opened - 8:1-5
- The First Four Trumpet Judgments (Natural Forces) - 8:6-12
- The Last Three Trumpet Judgments (Spiritual Forces) - 8:13-9:21

THE WRATH OF GOD SHOULD LEAD TO REPENTANCE

- God sets limits to His wrath.
- God spares His witnesses from wrath.

BUT THE HEART OF MAN RESISTS IN STUBBORN UNREPENTANCE

- People would rather die than yield to God.
- Idolatry blinds people from yielding to God.

SWINDOLL I REVELATION, LIVING INSIGHTS COMMENTARY

"Idolatry of various forms stands at the heart of humanity's rebellion against God. It leads to greater sin and stronger defiance, even in the midst of God's obvious judgments and His merciful calls to repentance and salvation. Idolatry blinds fallen humanity to the Word of God. And we must keep in mind that modern forms of idolatry can negatively affect the lives of believers as well. Dead idols can distract us from the living God."

WHAT IDOLS ARE ENSHRINED IN YOUR MIND?

- Possessions - What "thing" preoccupies you?
- People - Who do you want to see you?
- Position - What status do you seek?
- Passion - What needs restraint?
- Pursuits - What is at the expense of God and others?

Ask, Answer, and Repent.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What events follow the sounding of each of the first four trumpets? What do the trumpets signify? Triumph or doom? Life or death? Or what?
2. How do these events compare with the plagues in Exodus 7-10 and Joel 2:1-11?
3. What happens when the fifth trump sounds? Who can the fallen star be (see Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12)?
4. What events are inaugurated by the sixth trumpet? What response should this woe elicit from the unbelieving world? Why? Why do you suppose this woe failed to bring the majority to repentance, as intended?
5. How has bitterness affected your life? How has it affected others around you?
6. What do you have in common with the people mentioned in 9:20-21? What will you do about this today?
7. What was your takeaway from this week's passage?

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*Discussion Questions adapted from The Serendipity Bible.