

THE BOOK OF REVELATION
“Trumpets of God’s Judgments”
Revelation 8:6-13

Update

1. The key to the Book of Revelation is at the front door (1:19). It notes what John has seen (1:9-18), what was (seven churches, chaps. 2, 3), and what was thereafter (chaps. 4-22).
2. God’s throne was seen by John (chap. 4). He saw the Lamb, the Lord Jesus, and His title-deed book (title as Kinsman-Redeemer and claimant to world-dominion) -- he saw it all (chap. 5).
3. The view of heaven is moved to earth (chaps. 6-19:16). God introduced a series of judgments, but they are interspersed with mercy. Hence:

- a. Six seal judgments (6:1-17) have an interval of mercy (7:1-17). The seventh seal comes (8:1).
- b. Six trumpet judgments (8:2=9:21) have an interval of mercy (10:1-11:14). The seventh trumpet comes (11:15-19).
- c. Six vial judgments (15:1-16:12) have an interval of mercy (16:15). The seventh vial comes (16:17-21).

4. Following the abated breath of heaven (8:1-5) the trumpets are about to sound. The seven angels are ready to blow their trumpets. The verb “prepare” () means to make ready. Primarily it was “themselves,” but latently the thought is there were some predetermined arrangements in heaven. So the sound of the trumpets is about to blast. What do they occasion?

1. THE FIRST TRUMPET v. 7

a. It’s Sound

The verb () is used in every instance indicates a presence angel and has a trumpet sound (cf. vv. 8, 10, 12, 9:1, 13; 11:15). Like “voices” (v. 5). This is a distinguishable sound. No mistake about it -- John heard the message.

b. It’s Content

“Followed” is the verb meaning “came to be” or “happened” (). Three destructive elements are recorded: 1) hail 2) fire 3) blood (mixed is), a perfect passive participle indicating there is something superhuman and divine here. There is no reason to deny literality to these fearful judgments.

c. It’s Effect

The force of the aorist passive verb “cast” () points to God being the One Who intervenes to bring the elements down to the earth (). There is no chance in this event. Mark that 1/3 of the trees are “burnt up” (, aorist passive) and all () the green grass. Therefore necessary vegetation is immediately catastrophically affected. The Majority Text adds that a third of the earth is “burned up.” With 1/3 land, 1/3 trees, and all green grass, the land mass upon which man lives, is dealt an unbelievable destruction.

2. THE SECOND TRUMPET vv. 8, 9

a. It’s Sound

This is the same as found above (v. 7).

b. It’s Contents

While the elements included in the first trumpet were listed directly, the event involved here is seen “as” () a great mountain. What John saw was not a mountain, but something that

appeared as a “great mountain.” This mass may denote a meteoric one cast down (aorist passive) into the sea. Whatever, it was constantly burning with fire (present tense,).

c. It’s Effect

Three times “the third part” is mentioned with this trumpet: 1) Third part of sea becomes () blood (cf. Ex. 7:19-21). 2) Third part of creatures () died. The statement “had life” is present tense () is essential to the drama taking place. This single thought is incomprehensibly staggering indicating world-wide stench. 3) Third part of ships are destroyed (), hence sunk, dashed ashore, or burned. That will be a navigational nightmare. Note: Consider other passages (Hosea. 4:1-3; Zeph. 1:3; Isa. 2:16; 26:9).

3. THE THIRD TRUMPET vv. 10, 12

a. It’s Sound

Same as above (v. 7)

b. It’s Content

Here is a “great star” which may connote a meteor. It surely is some celestial creation of God. The verb “fell” suggest a spontaneous act, but it was “out of the heaven” (). The verb “burning” () is present tense (cf. v. 8), hence constant light “as a lamp.”

c. It’s Effect

The record is clear: 1) Third part of rivers and fountains of waters affected. Whereas the sea (probably salt water as opposed to land mass) was involved, here the fresh water resources are touched by God. 2) The waters become wormwood a variety of plant found in Israel which is very bitter, poisonous, and can be fatal. The fallen star has this plant’s name -- wormwood. 3) Many will die due to the embittered water (aorist passive). Wholesome drink water is scarce, bringing death to many.

4. THE FOURTH TRUMPET vv. 12, 13

a. It’s Sound

Same as above (v. 7)

b. It’s Content

One verb, “smitten” (, aorist passive) concludes that the third part of the sun, the moon, and the stars get the impact of God’s purpose. Nothing can be more true than this to show that the luminaries are not “gods,” but creations of God Himself. Men use these to determine seasons, days, years, but God uses them as signs and instruments of His judgment.

c. Its Effect

The stated purpose (purpose clause:) for the “smiting” of celestial creations is to bring awesome darkness upon the earth. This was one of the Egyptian plagues (Ex. 10:21) and is considered for the end times of Israel (Isa. 13:9; Amos 5:20; Mt. 14:19; Lk 21:25, 26). Light obeyed increases light, but light resisted brings night.

Conclusion It is true that the steps of God from mercy to judgment are often slow, reluctant, and measured. John confesses that he “saw” and “heard” one angel (some MSS have “eagle”). This superhuman being is seen “flying in the mid-heavens (cf. 14:6; 19:17 for only other references to this word). This is a solemn intermission before the next trumpet blast. God proposes three woes to the “earth dwellers” (cf. 3:10; 6:10). Oh, dear friend, receive Christ. Believe the message of salvation through His death for you at Calvary. Do it now while there is time. Amen.