

THE OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL INTRODUCES THE SEVEN TRUMPETS (Rev. 8-9)

Read Revelation 8:1-13 (NIV)

****What Scholars Say****

REV 8:[1] *When he (the Lamb) opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.*

THE OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL

Rev. 8:1. The opening of **the seventh seal** is a most important event, confirmed by the fact that **there was silence in heaven for about half an hour** after it was **opened**. The contents of the seven trumpets are different from the seven seals. The seventh seal is important because it actually includes all the events from Rev.8:1 through Rev. 19:10.

REV 8:[2] *And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.*

THE SEVEN ANGELS AND THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

Rev. 8:2. As John observed the heavenly scene, he wrote that **he saw the seven angels** to whom **were given seven trumpets**.

REV 8:[2] *And I (John) saw the seven angels who stand before God...* These are seven chief angels who are continually in God's presence. In Tobit 12:15 it states, *"I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand in the glorious presence of the Lord, ready to serve Him."* In Luke 1:19 it states, *"I am Gabriel... I stand in the presence of God."* This is the first time they appear in the book of Revelation.

Rev. 8:[2b] *And to them (the seven angels) were given seven trumpets.* The biblical trumpet could be a ram's horn (1 Kings 1:34) or a metal musical instrument (Num. 10:2). Trumpets were used mainly in war and for religious celebrations.

THE GOLDEN CENSER

Rev. 8:3-5. **REV 8:[3]** *Another angel, who had a golden censer* (a vessel for burning incense; incense burner), **came and stood at the altar** (in front of God's altar in heaven). **He** (the angel) **was given much incense** (sweet-smelling herbs burned to produce a fragrant odor from its smoke) **to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne** (the throne of God). **[4]** *The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand.* **[5]** *Then the angel took the censer* (incense burner), **filled it with fire** (hot coals) **from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.**

It appears to me that this angel stood before God's altar in heaven with a fragrance of burned incense (mixed with the prayer of the saints). It went up before God from the altar and the angel's hand, as a result of these prayers (incense) the angel took this incense burner (censer) and filled it with hot coals (from God's altar) and hurled it to the earth. The result was loud noises, thunder, lightning and an earthquake.

These prayers resulted in the judgment of loud noise, thunder, lightning and an earthquake. It reminds me of Acts 9:1-6... God doesn't like His people to suffer from threading, persecution and death. He takes it very personally.

REV 8:[6] Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

REV 8:[7] The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

THE FIRST TRUMPET

Rev. 8:6-7. As the first angel sounded his trumpet... hail and fire mixed with blood... was hurled down upon the earth, resulting in a third of the earth being burned up, including the trees and all the green grass. This devastating judgment, like that announced by most of the trumpets, primarily affected a third of the earth.

REV 8:[8] The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, [9] a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

THE SECOND TRUMPET

Rev. 8:8-9. As the second... trumpet sounded, something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. The result was that a third of the sea turned into blood, and this caused a third of the living creatures in the sea to die, and also a third of the ships were destroyed. Obviously the results of these judgments are literal. The sea turned to blood results in the death of a third of the sea creatures, and the blazing mountain cast into the sea results in destruction of a third of the ships. Since the results are literal, it is reasonable to take the judgments as literal also.

REV 8:[10] The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky 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 turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.

THE THIRD TRUMPET

Rev. 8:10-11. The judgment following the third... trumpet was similar to that of the second. But here the mass falling from heaven to earth was a great star, blazing like a torch. This fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water; in other words, waters other than the oceans.

The **star** was named **Wormwood**. Wormwood is a bitter desert plant mentioned only here in the New Testament. It is mentioned seven times in the Old Testament where it represents sorrow and bitter judgment (Deut 29:18; Prov. 5:4; Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam 3:15,19; Amos 5:7).

The bitter water resulted in many people dying. The third trumpet is another awesome judgment resulting in great loss of life.

REV 8:[12] The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET

Rev. 8:12. At the sound of **the fourth...trumpet** the light of the sky was reduced by one third. Without **a third of the sun** a third of the day was lacking normal light, and a third of the night was without light from **the moon** and **the stars**. Again the best interpretation is literal, just as the first three trumpets dealt with a third of the earth, the fourth trumpet dealt with a third of the heavens.

REV 8:[13] As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: (King James Version - And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice,) ***"Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!"***

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FINAL THREE TRUMPETS

Rev. 8:13. Warning was given that the next three trumpets would be more severe and devastating than those which preceded them. The triple **woe** announced by an angel warned of coming judgment.

****Questions****

1. Who is the one here described as opening the seventh seal? (8:1)
2. What happened in heaven upon the opening of the seventh seal? (8:1)
3. For how long was there silence in heaven during John's vision? (8:1)
4. What did John see after the opening of the seventh seal? (8:2)
5. What was given to the creatures seen by John? (8:2)
6. What did John see another angel come and do? (8:3)
7. What did the angel standing at the altar have in his possession? (8:3)

8. What was the angel at the altar assigned to do? (8:3)
9. What did John see going up before God? (8:4)
10. With what did the angel fill the censer? (8:5)
11. What did the angel eventually do with the censer? (8:5)
12. What happened on the earth after the angel's actions? (8:5)
13. What did the seven angels who stand before God prepare to do? (8:6)
14. What happened when the first angel sounded his trumpet? (8:7)
15. What were the trumpet blasts that John heard? (8:7-8, 10, 12; 9:1, 13-15)
16. What was the result when the second angel sounded his trumpet? (8:8-9)
17. What happened when the third angel blew his trumpet? (8:10-11)
18. What events followed the fourth angel's trumpet blast? (8:12)
19. What did John see an angel do? (8:13)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(NIV) New International Version

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New Testament

LESSON MAKER

Colo. Springs, CO 80935

Discipleship Evangelism

delessons.org

The Bible Knowledge Commentary

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UBS Handbook the Revelation to John

United Bible Societies, New York

Holman KJV Study Bible

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