



Revelation 8

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy,
and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it,
because the time is near. 1:3

Introduction to the Third Vision

The Seventh Seal introduces the Seven Trumpets (8:1 - 11:19)

The first six seals in the vision of the seven seals used symbols that are relatively easy to interpret. **This is not the case with the vision of the seven trumpets.** This vision evidently covers the same period of time as the seven seals since both visions end with judgment day. Both visions view that day as the day of wrath for God's enemies (cp 6:17 and 11:18), but also as a day of vindication and glory for the saints (cp 7:9-17 and 11:18).

While the details of this vision are difficult to interpret, its general thrust is very clear. First of all, there is a very close connection between the seals and the trumpets. The opening of the seventh seal serves as the introduction to the seven trumpets.

The first six seals had depicted the signs of the end followed by the last judgment. When we compared the signs in Revelation 6 with the list of signs Jesus gave in His eschatological discourse in Matthew 24, we noted that Revelation 6 omits four of the signs. These four are false Christs, apostasy, false prophets and love growing cold. False Christs and false prophets are, however, so closely related in that we may view the two as one sign. The same can be said of apostasy and of the deterioration of love in the church. **We may summarize these four signs as representing false doctrine and ungodly living. This is a basic clue to help us understand the trumpets.**

It is a long standing tradition in the history of biblical interpretation that the seven trumpets symbolize various false religions or heresies that have plagued the church through its history . . . insofar as the visions depict **the damage done by false doctrine**, there is good reason to go along with the traditional interpretation. *(Commentators who view the trumpets as symbolic foreshadowing's of physical calamities will, of course, consider them a review of the vision of the seals.)*

Many, Christians included, have difficulty with the traditional interpretation because they generally fail to understand the danger that heresies pose and the destruction and misery that they bring. We know from many passages of Scripture that false doctrine leads men astray from the faith and that unbelief ends in eternal death and everlasting destruction. **If we remember this, it will not be hard to see in the calamities of Revelation 8 and 9 a graphic portrayal of the effects of heresy.**

Revelation, The Distant Triumph Song, Dr. Siegbert W. Becker, p. 132-133.



Read Revelation 8:1-4

The Opening of the Seventh Seal

8:1 Silence in Heaven

This is a transition between the preceding vision and the one to follow. The significance of the transition is indicated by the “great hush and breathless silence” which falls over heaven. The reverberation of the vast multitudes’ song of praise is replaced by a tense and expectant quiet. This

Dramatic Pause has the effect of building suspense and focusing the attention of all on the next scene.

- † The silence persists “for about a half an hour.” This approximate time measure does not indicate precise temporal duration but simply a relatively brief span of time. This brief period of silence underscores the gravity of the impending crisis. Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.220-221

8:2 Seven Angels with Seven Trumpets

The identity of these seven angels has elicited considerable discussion. The use of **the** definite article, “**the** seven angels,” implies that they are well-known or familiar figures.

Jewish Tradition (not Biblical)

This would suggest a connection to the prominent Hebrew tradition of seven archangels who stood before the throne of God in heaven. The *apocryphal* book of **1 Enoch** speaks of these seven mighty angels and defines each of their roles (1 Enoch 19:1, 20:1-7):

“Then **Uriel** said to me...So I Enoch saw the vision of the end of everything alone; and none among human beings will see as I have seen...And these are the names of the holy angels who watch: **Suru’el**, one of the holy angels - for he is of eternity and of trembling. **Raphael**, one of the holy angels, for he is of the spirits of man. **Raguel**, one of the holy angels who take vengeance for the world and for the luminaries. **Michael**, one of the holy angels,

for he is obedient in his benevolence over the people and over the nations. **Saraqa’el**, one of the holy angels, who are set over the spirits of mankind who sin in the spirit. **Gabriel**, one of the holy angels who oversee the Garden of Eden, and the serpents and the cherubim.”

This view occurs in a variety of forms in other apocryphal books of the period. In the Book of Tobit, for example, the angel Raphael identifies himself as one of seven holy angels who enter into the presence of God and offer up the prayers of God’s people (Tobit 12:12-15). Only two of the seven -- **Michael** (Daniel 10:13,21; 12:1; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7) and **Gabriel** (Daniel 8:6; 9:21; Luke 1:19,26) are mentioned in the Bible. *Neither the Old Testament nor the Apocrypha use the term “archangel.”* Nor does the term occur in Jewish apocalyptic writing until nearly the end of the first century. It does occur twice in the New Testament: in 1 Thessalonians 4:6 - “**the voice of the archangel**,” and Jude 9 - “the **archangel** Michael.” *Thus, the explicit witness of Scripture identifies only one archangel - Michael.* Contrary to popular opinion, the Bible does not use the term **archangel** in reference to Gabriel whom Scripture identifies --- in language very similar to that of this verse --- as “the one who stands before God.” (Luke 1:19) **John does not indulge in the speculation or elaboration characteristic of rabbinic tradition. He simply refers to “the seven angels who stand before God.”** White, [Revelation](#), p.221-222

"Apocrypha"

This is the Greek word which means "**things that are hidden, secret.**" "The Apocrypha" refers to two collections of ancient Jewish and Christian writings that have certain affinities with the various books of the Old Testament and New Testament but are not recognized by the Holy Christian Church as inspired.

8:2 Trumpets

Trumpets were used in the Old Testament to summon the people for worship and for war. They signaled both triumph and catastrophe, warning and celebration. In a positive context, the call of the trumpet gathered the people at the tabernacle and later the temple (Numbers 10:3,10) and heralded the coronation of a king (1 Kings 1:34,39; 2 Kings 9:13). But most prominently the blast of the trumpet sounded the alarm in time of war and warned of impending danger. Hence the prophet Amos declares: *“When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble?”* (Amos 3:6). Trumpets brought down the walls of **Jericho** (Joshua 6:1-20). Trumpets came to be associated with the impending judgment of God and the destruction of His enemies (Judges 7:16-22; Jeremiah 4:5-21; 42:14; 51:27; Ezekiel 7:14; Hosea 8:1; Joel 2:1; Zephaniah 1:16). **Ultimately, the sound of the trumpet will signal the coming of the final judgment (1 Thessalonians 4:16).** Accordingly, the seven trumpets given to the angels before the throne reinforce the impression of impending judgement and heighten the silent tension of the moment. Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.223

8:3 Interlude: The Censor of Grace

This interlude serves to provide an introduction to and set the tone for the trumpet vision which follows. The angel is carrying “a golden censor”, literally, “golden frankincense.” ... Incense played a significant role in the worship of Israel. In the imagery of the Old Testament, the sweet smell of the burning incense ascending toward heaven represented divine acceptance of the prayers and offerings of the people (Genesis 8:21; Leviticus 2:1,2; Philippians 4:18). Thus the plea of the psalmist which has been incorporated into the evening liturgy of Vespers: *“Let my prayers rise before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.* (Psalm 141:2)” John utilized this ancient image in his description of the twenty-four elders surrounding the throne of God: *“They were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”* (Revelation 5:8) The angel with the golden censor takes his place before the altar. Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.223-224



Many commentators identified this angel with the one great high priest of the New Testament, Jesus Christ himself. Just as a high priest of the Old Testament took a golden censor to sacrifice incense in the most Holy Place, so the prayers of the saints, a great mass of them, are here pictured as being offered up to God . . . the prayers of the saints met with God’s approval, as they are sure to do if made according to His will, for the sake of the precious merit and the powerful intercession of the Great High Priest and Mediator Jesus Christ. Kretzmann, [Popular Commentary](#)

8:3 Much Incense

The angel is given “much incense” so that it may be added to the prayers of the saints empowering those prayers and rendering them effectual before God and acceptable to Him. That point is clearly shown in the sentence which follows: **“The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel’s hands.”** The fact that the sweet smelling smoke of the incense “went up before God” indicates His acceptance of those prayers which are combined with the incense. That which renders the prayers of God’s people effectual and acceptable is the atoning merit of Jesus Christ. Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.225-226

† “There can be no doubt that **this incense is the merit of Christ...**His atoning merit makes our prayers, tainted with sin as they are, acceptable to God...When John here speaks of incense that is offered up with our prayers, he is teaching us in symbolic language the same truth which Jesus expressed when He said, **“My Father will give you whatever you ask in My Name.”** (John 16:23) *Revelation*, Becker, pp.135-136

The incense interlude offers encouragement to the people of God in the face of impending judgment. **Don’t be afraid. Do not despair. God will hear and answer your prayers in the Name of Jesus.** No matter how difficult your tribulation becomes God is with you and will enable you to persevere and overcome.

What is Prayer? JOHN GERHARD (Lutheran Theologian 1582 – 1637)

If someone wants to describe adequately the usefulness of pious, earnest prayer, he will in my opinion, surely find a beginning more easily than a conclusion. Pious prayer offered in faith is familiar conversation with God. It is a salutary remedy to all the difficulties of life. It is the key to heaven and the door to paradise. It shows us how much we depend on God, and it is a ladder of ascension to God. It is a shield for our defense and a faithful messenger of the ambassador. It is refreshment in the heat of misfortune; it is the medicine during illness. It is a winch, drawing us to heaven, and a vessel that draws water from the font of divine kindness. It is a sword against the devil and a defense against misfortune. It is a wind that blows away evil and brings earthly benefits. It is a nurse the nurtures virtue and conquers faults. It is a great fortification for the souls and gives free access to God. It is a spiritual feast and a heavenly delicacy. It is a consolation for the dejected and a delight for the holy. It grants knowledge of the secret things of God and acquires his gifts. It upholds the world and rescues people. It is a joy for the heart and a jubilation for the mind. It follows God’s gift of grace, and it leads ahead into glory. It is a garden of happiness and a tree full of delights. It calms the conscience and increases our thankfulness. It sends demons running and draws angels close. It is a soothing remedy for the misfortunes of this life and the sweet smell of the sacrifice of thanksgiving. It is a foretaste of the life to come and sweetens the bitterness of death. Whoever is truly a child of God through faith will, with childlike trust, address his or her heavenly Father everyday in prayer. The one in whose heart the Holy Spirit has made His home will, as a spiritual priest, daily offer to God this incense of prayer. Johann Gerhard, as translated into English in the book *Mediations of Divine Mer*

Prayer is Trinitarian!

The Holy Spirit is at work in you to talk to the **God the Father** through faith in **Jesus the Son**

EXCURSUS: “IN JESUS NAME, AMEN!”

[John 14:13](#), [15:16](#), [16:23-24,26](#)

God the Father hears our prayers as if they came from the mouth of Jesus; He is just as pleased with us and our prayers as He is with Jesus and His prayers. . . we can now approach

our heavenly Father as if we were Jesus Himself and claim all His blessings for ourselves. It also means that our heavenly Father regards and treats us just like His beloved Son. . . . God the Father does not consider us as we are in ourselves, but only as we are in Jesus. [Grace Upon](#)

Grace: Spirituality for Today, John W. Kleinig, 170-171

- Jesus gives us access to God the Father **It is the claim of the Gospel that everything in our relationship with God happens in and through Jesus the Son!** He is the Mediator! He is the Great High Priest!
 - Prayer is not simply “pouring out your heart” (unbelievers do that!): it is “pouring out your heart to the one true God through the Mediator Jesus Christ.” Unbelievers do the former; believers do the latter through Christ.
- Jesus gives us His Name and His Word to use in prayer
- [John 14:6](#) reinforces “access” through Jesus
- [Matthew 27:51](#) illustrates “access” through Jesus

By praying in the Name of Jesus . . .

- We recognize that access is only by grace **through Christ**
- We believe that God invites us to pray **through Christ**, “[He] tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.” Intro, LP from [Small Catechism](#)
- We don’t have to worry about “what” or “how” we pray – “Jesus covers us with His righteousness and perfects our prayers. Our performance does not matter; what matters is Jesus and our faith in Him as our intercessor.” P.172

Why pray?

For one thing, Jesus tells us to ask. He urges us to bring our own needs and the needs of others to Him in prayer. Christ commands us to pray. Second, God knows our burdens are too big for us. He invites us to bring the worries and troubles of this life to Him so He can, in turn, give us His peace.

“Today’s Light”, July-Sept, 2013, p.16

PRAYER REVIEW

After a lifetime in the faith, prayer happens so fast and naturally that you might not break it down; you are so used to praying that you may have forgotten the steps that get you to your knees and why you are there. Here is what happens in your heart, mind and soul before you even utter your first word in prayer:

God the Father

invites you to pray and promises that He cares, He will listen, and He will answer. You believe that He has the power to change things.

God the Son Jesus Christ

is your Great High Priest who has given you *access* to the Father through His work as your Mediator. You believe that your sins are forgiven, and that you can boldly approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find help in times of trouble.

God the Holy Spirit

dwells within you and moves you to pray when a situation comes along.

You understand that your hidden, godly **vocation** is to pray for others. You use your access to the Father for the benefit of others; prayer is a good work.

God’s Word invites, encourages, & teaches you to pray. In the humility of a **prayer beggar**, you speak to God with confidence.

You believe that even **Jesus intercedes for you;** and the **Holy Spirit also prays for you.**

SILENCE IN HEAVEN (Revelation 8:1-5) Petersen, [Reverse Thunder](#) p.89

Silence . . . everything is silent in heaven – what an image! The silence is so God can listen to your prayer!

- God listens. He not only speaks to us, he listens to us. His listening to us is an even greater marvel than his speaking to us. It is rare to find anyone who listens carefully and thoroughly. It is rare to find our stammering understood, our clumsy speech deciphered, our garbled syntax unraveled, sorted out and heard – every syllable attended to, every nuance comprehended. Our minds are taken seriously. Our feelings are taken seriously. When it happens we know that what we say and feel are immensely important. p.93
- Everything we say, every groan, every murmur, every stammering attempt at prayer: all this is listened to. All heaven quiets down.

[See the Prayer Catena handout](#)

Read Revelation 8:5-12

The Seven Trumpets

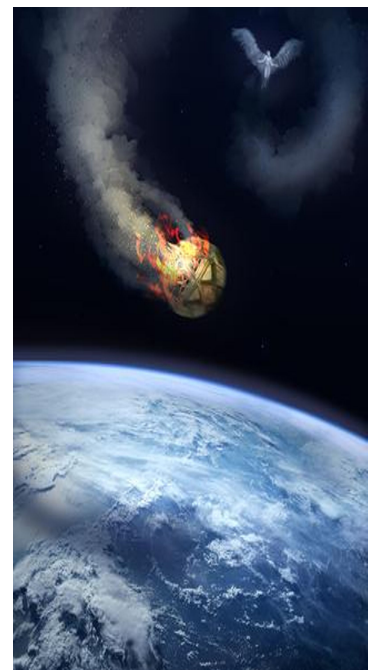
We must rather say this prophecy does belong to the darker parts of the book of Revelation. Stoeckhardt, [Lectures on Revelation](#), p.31-32

With the conclusion of the golden censer interlude, the text returns to the angels with the seven trumpets. The stage has been carefully set - now the trumpets will finally sound.

8:5 Resumption: The Censor of Wrath

The golden censer is refilled with fire from the altar and that fire is cast down upon the earth. While saints may take comfort from the knowledge that God hears their prayers, the unbelieving world remains subject to the terror of His wrath.

- † The fire on the altar is now **the consuming flame of God's judgement** (cf. Ezekiel 10:2).
- † The verb “**hurled**” indicates the violent intensity and the sudden swiftness of t his judgement. This judgement fire does not gently waft its way to earth - it is flung down upon unsuspecting and impenitent mankind with lightning speed.
- † **Ominous silence is replaced with the cacophony* of cosmic chaos** - “*and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.*” *cacophony = discord, disharmony noise
- † These are the signs which accompanied the coming of God upon Sinai (Exodus 19:16-19). Throughout Revelation they signal the awe and majesty of God and warn of the arrival of His judgement (cf. Revelation 4:5; 11:19; 16:18). Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.226-227



Revelation 8 begins with ½ hour of silence and incense and prayers rising to God. The same censor is then used to hurl wrath on the earth. Keep in mind, the time frame for these trumpets is the entire New Testament era, from the Ascension to the Parousia. Some see the seven trumpets as symbols of **various false teachings or heresies** that have plagued the church [Becker, Stoeckhardt, Kretzmann]; others view them as **foreshadowing's of physical calamities** [Brighton, Griffen]. Here are two summary statements of each position:

We may summarize these four signs as representing false doctrine and ungodly living. This is a basic clue to help us understand the trumpets. Becker, p. 132-133.

All through the time period covered by the message of Revelation, nature and its components are being physically struck, and as a result, humanity is being made to suffer. Brighton, p. 228

The seven trumpets announce a series of plagues **more severe** than the seals, but **not as devastating** as the bowls. (Note that 1/4 was designated in the 4th seal, here it is intensified to 1/3.)

Jericho revisited! *Joshua 6:1-7*

The 7 Trumpets describe the “End Times” in terms similar to that of Jericho and its walls falling down.

- ✓ The Trumpets are like “tornado sirens”: **danger is imminent!**

Trumpets similar to Plagues

The commentators note the similarity between the first five trumpet judgements and the plagues which God sent upon the land of Egypt:

- the first trumpet Exodus 9:22-25
- the second and third trumpets Exodus 7:20-25
- the fourth trumpet Exodus 10:21-23
- the fifth trumpet Exodus 10:12-15

As the plagues of Egypt were not designed to destroy the land, but to lead Pharaoh to repentance and change of heart so also **the trumpets are “warning judgements” designed to lead sinful mankind to repentance**. The plagues of Egypt did not harm the Israelites and resulted in their deliverance. So also the trumpet judgements will not harm the people of God but are a sign of the imminence of their salvation. These judgements, so painful and devastating for the sinful world should serve to constantly remind Christians that Jesus is coming again soon and spur us on to constant readiness. Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.229-230

The first four trumpets, like the first four seals in the previous vision, are linked together thematically and structurally. They focus on the judgements of God as they are manifested by the upheavals and disasters in *the world of nature*. **Man's fall into sin cursed the entire universe**. The physical world had been designed by a loving Creator as the perfect environment for man, the crown of His creation. The disruption of mankind's relationship with the Creator had dire consequences for the *natural world*. Remember **Romans 8:20-22**. Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.230

- † The physical world is unraveling under the impact of sin.
- † Fallen man's selfishness and sin only serves to hasten the destruction of the natural world. Jesus also urged his disciples to discern the hand of God's judgement in the devastation and death of natural disasters.
- † Natural disasters are prominent among the signs promised by our Lord. The chaos and upheaval of the world of nature throughout the New Testament era should serve as a constant reminder that this world is passing away and that Jesus is coming again. Remember **Luke 21:11,25-28**.



- † Dr. Brighton (LCMS professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in his theological commentary Revelation) agrees with the natural disaster point of view: “while the first four plagues (plagues of seemingly natural forces) strike the earth directly, humanity is also affected as a result (8:11).” The 5th and 6th plagues are demonic in character. Dr. Brighton uses words like **volcanoes, economic impacts, marine life killed, people dying at sea, smog, and pollution** to illustrate the results of the first four trumpets. He says, “**All through the time period covered by the message of Revelation, nature and its components are being physically struck, and as a result, humanity is made to suffer.**”
- † The judgements sounded by the first four trumpets each impact different components of the created order -- the **land** and its **vegetation**; the **sea** and its **creatures**; the **rivers** and **springs of waters**; and the light of the **heavenly bodies**. The result is a pattern that one commentator calls “**de-creation,**” -- the deliberate undoing of that which God did in the beginning.^{White, Revelation, p.232}

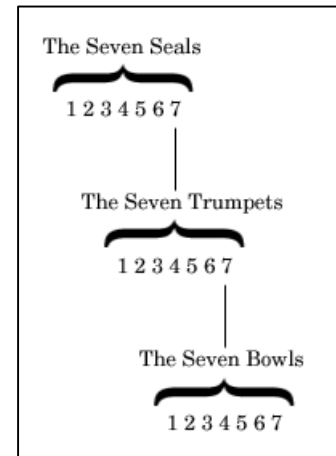
If the Trumpets are “Heresies”, and not natural disasters The sounding of the trumpets effect signs which proceed from above. Hail mingled with blood falls from Heaven. A burning mountain falls down into the sea. A great star falls from heaven upon earth. All these phenomena are the effects of heaven in this prophecy. Heaven is the invisible world. Hence the effects here described proceed from the invisible world and are spiritual in nature. So the older interpreters were right, when they explained the effect of the [four trumpets] as foretelling the coming of **great heresies**, which corrupt Christians and threaten to destroy the church. Indeed, the lies which false prophets spread are brought on by the invisible, the spiritual world. Evil spirits speak and work through false prophets. The plagues described in verses 6-12 are all of the nature that harm or destroy human life. But they must be taken here as **spiritual afflictions**, as perils which bring about spiritual dangers and disasters. When our Lord foretells the last evil times, he speaks not only of war and bloodshed, but also a false prophets, and he emphasizes that they shall seduce many and lead them into destruction.



Stoeckhardt, Lectures on Revelation, p.31-32

8:7 The First Trumpet

The call of the first trumpet summons a devastating deluge of “**hail and fire mixed with blood.**” The clear allusion is to the seventh plague of Egypt, that of fiery hail, with the blood as an added horror (Exodus 9:23-27). The addition of the blood heightens the impression of destructiveness and death. It also serves as a link to the final judgement and the destruction of the present universe. The prophet Joel had warned: “*I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.*” (Joel 2:30-31; cf. Acts 2:17-21).



The violent destructiveness of this outpouring of judgement is emphasized by the verb “it was **hurled down**” . The fiery hail of this storm does not merely fall. It is cast down, as it were, by the hand of the Almighty, to crush and destroy all in its path. This is not a natural phenomenon, to be categorized and explained through the ordinary patterns of nature. One need not look for historical instances of literal “**hail and fire mixed with blood**” as the fulfillment of these grim words. **This terrifying image encompasses all of God’s acts of judgement throughout history - wherever, whenever, and by whatever means the Lord has brought about the destruction of the earth and that which grows upon it.**

1/3

The devastation is not complete but preliminary and partial. Even so, it is massive in its scope. The construct of **one third destruction** is drawn from Ezekiel 5:1-4, 12, where God’s judgement upon His apostate people is illustrated and apportioned in the same way. (The significance of the destruction of “all the green grass” in contrast to the third of the earth and the trees is unclear and may simply reflect the relative fragility of this particular object of destruction.) Dr. L. L. White, *Revelation*, p.233

† “The significance of these thirds is difficult to discover. All that we can say for certain is that these heresies will not cause total destruction.” Becker, p. 139.

8:8 The Second Trumpet

“*The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea.*” The sounding of the second judgement trumpet follows in rapid succession. In the first plague of Egypt, the Nile and all the waters of the land were turned to blood. A similar fate befalls the world’s oceans and seas. The awesome sight which John beholds is so far beyond his experience and comprehension that he is unable to offer a precise description. He resorts to simile and tells us of “*a huge mountain, all ablaze.*” Some understand this to be a reference to volcanic eruption like that of Mount Vesuvius which destroyed Pompeii in 79 A.D. However, John’s language seems more comprehensive.

† “This is not a volcano hurling lava into the sea but a mountain that is all ablaze with fire, that is hurled into the ocean by an invisible hand, a mountain that is so great as to cause the effect described.” Revelation, Lenski, p. 279

† The image of a massive meteor, hurtling down from the heavens, blazing with fire is perhaps more adequate. But again, in any case, this is no ordinary phenomenon, whose cause or

counter-part can be found in the world of nature. **This awful image depicts the righteous judgement of an angry God exercising His wrath upon the earth's oceans and seas.** Once more, the language of one third destruction indicates that the scope of this devastation is preliminary and partial.

- † This vision of maritime destruction impacts not only the sea itself, but the marine creatures that dwell within it and the ships that travel upon it. Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.233-235

8:10 The Third Trumpet

The scene produced by the third trumpet is very similar to its predecessor. In this instance, instead of a fiery mountain it is **“a great star, blazing like a torch”** which is cast down from the heavens. The difference between them may simply be one of size, the falling mountain, aimed at the great mass of the world's oceans and seas, appearing larger than the blazing star whose target is the rivers and springs of water. Again, the image of a fiery meteor or comet blazing through the earth's atmosphere comes to mind. The target now is **the earth's fresh water**. Under the onslaught of this divine judgement one third of the planet's drinking water turns bitter and deadly.

- † The blazing star is given a name descriptive of its effect - **“the name of the star is Wormwood.”** **Wormwood is an herb renown for its bitterness.** Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#), p.
- † John's use of the term here seems to be drawn from the prophecy of Jeremiah where **Wormwood** is specifically linked to the poisoning of drinking water. **Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15** The blazing, bitter star causes the contamination of **“a third of the waters”** and **“many people died from drinking the waters that had become bitter.”**

8:12 The Fourth Trumpet

The ninth plague of Egypt was the coming of thick darkness upon the land for three days (Exodus 10:21- 23). As God struck down His enemies in the days of Moses, so He will act again and again to inflict His judgement upon those who dare to stand against Him. Now the **sun, moon, and stars** are under attack. The fractional one third again indicates that this judgement is not final or complete. The interruption of the normal reliable course of the heavenly bodies and the light which they provide is often presented in Scripture as a precursor of divine judgement. **“On that day, says the Lord God, I will make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth at broad daylight.”** (Amos 8:9) Dr. L. L. White, [Revelation](#),

p.237

- † The imagery of the fourth trumpet is reminiscent of the darkness that fell upon the land for three hours during Christ's final agony and death.
- † It is difficult to relate this partial darkness to human experience... Partial or total eclipses of the sun or moon are, of course, common. However, eclipses of the sun or moon do not seem to correspond completely to this inability of the heavenly bodies to produce their full light for the benefit of life on earth. Could it be that, throughout the time period that Revelation covers, clouds and smog and pollution will so cover the earth that it will be increasingly difficult for the light of the heavenly bodies to penetrate?...Whatever this plague of the heavenly bodies implies and entails, it is a part of the total picture which the first four trumpet angels introduce. All through the time period covered by the message of Revelation, nature and its components are being physically struck, and as a result, humanity is being made to suffer. [Revelation](#), Brighton, p. 22

The Plagues on Egypt preceded the great salvation story of the OT: the Exodus.

The Trumpets in Revelation precede the ultimate salvation story of history: the Parousia.

The Trumpets as False Doctrines

False doctrine is a significant sign of the end, especially in view of the conclusions which the people of this world, and also some Christians in their weakness, draw from its presence. There are many who say that if the Bible were a clear book, false doctrine would not exist. Others simply try to write false doctrines off as a legitimate “variety of interpretations.” They assert that men have a right to such interpretations because no one can be sure of what the Word really means.

However, the presence of false doctrines in the world is by no means an indication of lack of clarity in Scripture. Rather, it is evidence of the Bible’s clearness as well as its truth. For the Bible clearly foretold that there would be false doctrines and apostasy from the faith.

Moreover, the fact that false doctrine follows the angels flinging of the incense burner [in Rev 8], teaches in a symbolic way that false doctrine is a punishment from God. When men turn a deaf ear to the truth and refused to take the words of Scripture at face value, error and deception are natural punishments that come as a direct consequence of the rejection of God’s Word. Because men turn away their ears from the truth, all that is left for them is to believe in fables (2 Tim 4:4). And because men have refused to love the truth, god will send them strong delusions so that they firmly believe lies instead (2 Thess 2:10ff).

In Revelation 8, the significance of the “thirds” is difficult to discover. All that we can say for certain is that these heresies will not cause total destruction. Even though they bring great danger and damage to the world by obscuring the light of God’s word (one third of the sun), by poisoning the waters of life (by turning them into blood and wormwood), and by robbing men of spiritual sustenance (the destruction of the earth the trees and the green grass), yet they are never able to blot out the truth of God’s Word completely. Also in the sense, the gates of hell are not able to destroy the church. Revelation, The Distant Triumph Song, Dr. Siegbert W. Becker, p. 138-139

Read Revelation 8:13

8:13 Angel Flying in Midair

This brief interlude signals **a shift in the significance of the trumpet and a severe intensification of the judgements which they summon.** The first four dealt with natural disasters, and horrendous though they may have been, they are not nearly as terrifying as *the demonic judgements* which are now revealed in the sounding of the final three trumpets.

† This is the only instance in Revelation where an animal is used as God’s messenger (cf. Numbers 22:28). The image appears to have been chosen because of the bird’s association with warfare, death, and judgement in the OT (Hosea 8:1; cf. also Dt 28:49; Jer 4:13; 48:40; 49:22; Lam 4:19; Ez 17:3; Hab 1:8).

† The message of doom which the raptor proclaims immediately confirms our sense of impending disaster. **“Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!”** The core of the message is the triple repetition of “Woe!”. The term may be used as an interjection meaning “How horrible, how terrible!” It has the idea of “disaster,” “catastrophe,” or “horror.”

- Indicates hopelessness and despair, also that a situation is “beyond remedy.” Used 46 times in NT, 30 times by Jesus.
- The woes fall on the **“inhabitants of the earth”**: the unbelievers, not the believers.
- **If you interpret the first four trumpets as events in nature, then man is only indirectly affected. Now, he is directly affected in the last 3 trumpets, thus the triple “woe!”**
- **If you interpret the first four trumpets as heresies, then man is directly affected, and the remaining three trumpets are worse yet, thus the triple “woe!”**

† **Greater evils are in store; the first four are “bad enough, but now the cry of the eagle signals that the remaining three plagues are going to be far worse.**

The First 4 Trumpets of Revelation 8

Lutheran Commentators Vary Between These Two Interpretations

Natural Disasters

That Kill People Physically

Earthquakes
Hurricanes
Typhoons
Tsunamis
Avalanches
Blizzards
Wildfires
Volcanoes
Floods
Landslides
Meteorites
Heat Waves
Hailstorm
Sandstorm
Epidemics
Lightning
Sinkholes
Drought
Famine
Animal attacks
Pestilence
Disease

False Teachings

That Kill People Spiritually

Arianism
Docetism
Adoptionism
Monarchianism
Eutychianism
Nestorianism
Patripassianism
Sabellianism
Gnosticism
Antinomianism
Donatism
Ebionites
Iconoclasm
Marcionism
Montanism
Semi-Pelagianism
Waldensians
Prosperity Gospel
Pentecostalism
Deism
Liberal Theology
Et al.

All through the time period covered by the message of Revelation, nature and its components are being physically struck, and as a result, humanity is being made to suffer. Brighton, p. 228

We may summarize these four signs as representing false doctrine and ungodly living. This is a basic clue to help us understand the trumpets. Becker, p. 132-133.

The Trumpets are similar to the 10 Plagues on Egypt, and the images are from nature: earth, trees, grass, sea, rivers, water, sun, moon, stars

Using Jesus' words in Matthew 24, heresy and apostasy are emphasized; as well as *many warnings* in both the Old and the New Testaments.

We must rather say this prophecy does belong to the darker parts of the book of Revelation.

Stoekhardt, Lectures on Revelation, p.31-32

Either way you interpret them, when you see and hear of these things, they are meant to remind you that Jesus is coming soon; repent of your sins, trust in Christ for forgiveness, and remain faithful!

PRAYER CATENA

A "chain" of verses about Prayer

The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him Nahum 1:7

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all Psalm 34: 17-19

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. Psalm 145:18

Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. Jeremiah 29:12

Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. Isaiah 65:24

And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. Luke 11:9

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Psalm 51:10-12

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Romans 8:26

In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears. Psalm 18:6

I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray Thee to keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please Thee. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Martin Luther's Morning Prayer

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer is more than a prayer – it is a confession of faith! It is a focus on God!

- † We pray to **Our Father in Heaven**, because we have unlimited access to Him through His Son Jesus Christ; He is the source of our life.
- † We **Hallow His Name** because God's Name is His Presence and Power in our lives. We hold God and His Name sacred.
- † We pray for God's **Kingdom to Come** in word, water, bread and wine as we look forward to an eternity in His Eternal Kingdom; we acknowledge that He is our sovereign King.
- † We pray **Thy Will Be Done** because we trust our Heavenly Father's care for us as He leads us through life; we know His Will is better than our will.
- † As we pray for **Daily Bread**, we acknowledge that everything we are and everything we have is a gift from His good hand. God is the supplier of our needs.
- † As we pray for **Forgiveness**, we confess that Jesus is the Savior Who has done 100% of the work for 100% of the people.
- † As we pray for help in **Temptation** we thank God that He strengthens us to face all trials, tests, and temptations.
- † As we pray for **Deliverance from Evil**, we confess that God has delivered us in the past, is now, and will continue to deliver us from evil.

And at the end of the Lord's Prayer, after a **burst of praise**, we boldly say **AMEN!**, "Yea, Yea it shall be so!", because we know that **no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him, the "Amen" is spoken by us, to the glory of God (2 Corinthians 1:20).** To our Heavenly Father be the Kingdom, the Glory and the Power, forever and ever, Amen!

DJB lord's prayer 9. amen 11/3/13, TLC,LP,AZ adapte

"Today Thy Mercy Calls Us"

by Oswald Allen, 1816-1878

1. Today Thy mercy calls us
To wash away our sin.
However great our trespass,
Whatever we have been,
However long from mercy
Our hearts have turned away,
Thy precious blood can cleanse us
And make us white today.

2. Today Thy gate is open,
And all who enter in
Shall find a Father's welcome
And pardon for their sin.
The past shall be forgotten,
A present joy be given,
A future grace be promised,
A glorious crown in heaven.

3. Today our Father calls us,
His Holy Spirit waits;
His blessed angels gather
Around the heavenly gates.
No question will be asked us
How often we have come;
Although we oft have wandered,
It is our Father's home.

4. O all-embracing Mercy,
O ever-open Door,
What should we do without Thee
When heart and eye run o'er?
When all things seem against us,
To drive us to despair,
We know one gate is open,
One ear will hear our prayer.

The Lutheran Hymnal #279
Text: Rev. 3:8
Author: Oswald Allen, 1861
Composer: Friedrich K. Anthes, 1847
Tune: "Anthes"

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

By: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886

1. What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

2. Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a Friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness--
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

3. Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our Refuge--
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

The Lutheran Hymnal #457

Text: Matthew 21:22

Author: Joseph Scriven, 1865

Composer: Charles C. Converse, 1868

Tune: "Friend"

