

Revelation 8

Chapter 8 begins where chapter 6 left off. Chapter 7 served as a pause to introduce us to the 144,000 Jews who will be sealed and protected by God and the incredible multitude from every tribe, tongue, and nation all worshipping.

A popular understanding of the chronology of Revelation presents the events of chapters 4-11 as happening in sequence, then from chapters 12-20 we have the same events recorded, but with Israel as its main focus. It's like reading the back side of this 2-sided scroll that Jesus is unveiling.

It's like Genesis 1 focuses in on the broad scope of creation, while 2 restates the creation narrative with its focus on Adam and Eve.

8:1

The ultimate calm before the storm.

Or the moment right before the foreman of a jury announces his verdict.

This is the silence of dread for God's enemies, and of high anticipation for the people of God.

This is because contained in this 7th seal are the 7 trumpets of judgment.

8:2

These are sometimes called the Presence angels. They stand in a prominent position before God.

Trumpets play an important role throughout Scripture

- Announced times of public gatherings
- Directed soldiers in war
- Signaled holy events during the year
- Used at the giving of the Mosaic law
- Announced the coming of God in splendor and victory

These 7 trumpets are foreshadowed by the 7 trumpets of the Israelites at Jericho.

As the priests who blew the trumpets marched before the Ark of the Covenant, so does the 7th trumpet of Revelation reveal to us the Ark of the Covenant (**Rev. 11:19**).

Also, pre-figured in **Joel 2:1**. **Joel 2:12** may indicate chance for repentance during this time.

8:3

There is some debate as to the identity of this angel. Because of the priestly role being executed here, some believe this angel to be the Angel of the Lord (Christ; or a Christophony) as seen in **Genesis 16:7; Exodus 3:2; Numbers 22:22; Judges 2:1; I Kings 19:7; Psalm 34:7; Isaiah 37:36.**

Others say that because *he was given* much incense, it would not be the Angel of the Lord (Christ) but another angel, but with a significant standing.

The Old Testament priests would burn incense at the altar of incense and it would fill the Tabernacle or Temple and the upward rising of the smoke symbolized the prayers of the people.

The presence of this same incense in heaven is pointing to the effectiveness of our prayers on earth, that they indeed reach heaven.

8:4,5

The picture here is that of the Old Testament priest when he would take the censer made of gold and take fire in it to bring into the Holy of Holies.

Here, after the incense of prayer, the angel hurls the censer down to the earth creating noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

This seems to be a sign of judgment that results from answering the prayers of the Tribulation saints for vengeance as seen in **6:10** during the opening of the 5th seal.

8:6

This sets the scene for the blowing of the 7 trumpets

8:7

The 1st Trumpet:

This parallels the 7th plague that came upon the Egyptians in Exodus.

Exodus 9:18-26

The fire with the hail may represent the fact that hail is judgment, as fire will be in many of these judgments. It may also be descriptive of massive amounts of lightning that accompanies the hail and causes fire. The blood may be in the hail as it comes

down, or like the plague in Egypt, may be the result of the hail hitting some humans or livestock.

Just as the plague of hail in Exodus was only allowed limited damage, so here the damage is permitted by the Lamb to only go so far.

8:8,9

The 2nd Trumpet:

Parallel here to the 1st plague in Egypt. Bloody waters and dead fish.

The blood of the waters is not due to the dead sea creatures, but more seems to indicate the Egyptian plague.

Yet God limits His judgment here as well. Repentance is still an option (see **9:20**)

8:10,11

The 3rd Trumpet:

A heavenly object named 'wormwood' is cast into a third of the waters. Wormwood is a bitter plant that grows in wastelands. It turns the waters bitter (foreshadowed in **Exodus 15:22-25**).

But in Exodus, a tree was given to sweeten the waters. Here, no such tree is offered. The tree that turns bitterness into sweetness is none other than the cross of Christ.

To those who reject Christ, the waters of this trumpet remain bitter.

8:12,13

The 4th Trumpet:

This is the hardest of the first 4 to take in a literal sense. It seems to be a preview of the what the 6th seal revealed (**6:12,13**).

It is a completing of judgment upon all that we are given as blessing yet can take for granted. The green grass and trees for beauty and for clean air, the waters of the earth, and now our sources of light.

This is pre-figured by the 9th plague (**Exodus 10:21-24**).

Some see this as a literal reduction of light by day and by night, others as a darkness coming from the smoke of burning resulting from the previous trumpets.

Either way, it is a great judgment.

See **Psalm 19:1,2; Romans 1:20; Isaiah 40:25,26; Jeremiah 31:35,36**

The 1st 4 trumpets affected the earth and sky, the last 3 give are given tremendous warning due to the fact that they will directly affect, not the things of the world, but the people of the world.

The 1st woe consists of the 1st 5 trumpets (**9:12**); the 2nd woe, the 6th (**11:14**), and the 3rd announces the completion of God's wrath (**11:19**).

Revelation 9

After the 4 previous trumpets, the 3 woes are given. Here, we have the fulfillment of the 1st woe.

9:1

This appears to not be a star, but a being. The fallen is in the perfect tense in Greek, meaning it is a completed action. So, it wouldn't refer to the action of falling, but to the state of being fallen.

Likely reference to **Luke 10:18**. This is likely the scene described in **Revelation 12:7-12**

9:2

This pictures the spiritual corruption that will happen during the Tribulation.

9:3-6

These are demons according to their description in **verse 11**. See **Joel 1:4** for a comparison

Refers back to **Exodus 10:12-20**

They do not eat grass like locusts (they are demons) and they cause excruciating pain.

Life expectancy of a locust is 5 months (May-September)

Demonic oppression often involves a loss of ability to do what you want (here, includes suicide)

9:7-11

The description of the locusts here may be a false imitation of the 4 living creatures in **Revelation 4:7**

Like the Antichrist is a false imitation of Jesus

Breastplates of iron imply they are guarded against destruction
Wings and chariots imply they are inescapable

The 5 months is repeated to highlight the severity of the suffering

The fact that the locusts have a king is indicative of their demonic nature more than being actual bugs.

Abaddon is Hebrew for Destroyer
Apollyon is Greek for the same

9:12

And this is just the first woe.

Prophets of old would give pronouncements of either 'woe' or of 'weal'.

Curses or blessings

Isaiah 6 is a self-pronounced woe by Isaiah.

Matthew 11 Jesus pronounces woes upon cities who rejected His visitation
(Chorazin and Bethsaida)

This woe demonstrates the visible spiritual enemy we have in an invisible way today (**Ephesians 6:12**)

9:13-15

The mention of the altar here points us to this being an answer to the prayers of the martyred saints in **8:3**.

These 4 angels may be referred to in **Jude 6**

Not likely the 4 angels of **7:1** since holy angels are never bound

These angels are under direct, divine authority and do not have the authority in themselves to be released.

Reminiscent of the fish that swallowed Jonah was 'appointed' to do so. He had no choice either (**Jonah 1:17**)

The Great River Euphrates is taken literal by some and as a reference to the east by others.

The precision of the timing is a strong reference to God's sovereignty. This is going to happen at this time, and no other.

A fourth of the earth its inhabitants killed in the 4th seal. Here another third is killed. This is over half the earth's population.

This is the greatest loss of life in judgment percentage-wise since Noah.

9:16-19

2,000,000 in the text reads two hundred thousand thousands.

This was greater than the world population in John's day, so why would he believe is an army this size?
Because he said he heard it.

John is big on testimony of this kind (**I John 1:1-4**)

Now there is about 7-8 billion people in the world. China and India together have about 2 billion of them.

China recently claims almost 320,000,000 people 16-49 fit for military service and another nearly 300,000,000 women of this age as well.

Most understand the description of the warfare to be depictive of modern warfare. The animals listed would represent the deadly character of all involved.

9:20,21

Seems crazy that after all of this they would not repent.
This is not a new phenomenon.

Isaiah 40:18-20