

Revelation 8-9

Read opening “Central Focus”

Sing Hymn, “I Am Trusting You Lord Jesus”

Pray the Prayer out loud as a group

Introduction:

- It’s easy to be lulled to sleep by the things of the world.
- So, Revelation is designed to show the panoramic effects of sin upon the world. For what purpose?

2 Peter 2:9: “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

The Seventh Seal and the Golden Censer

8 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.

1. Verse 1: The Seven Seals come to an end.
2. This inaugurates the next vision.
3. The silence is preparation of what is to come.
4. Verse 2: Heaven prepares for what will happen on earth.
5. Seven trumpets. Trumpets call attention to momentous announcements and events.
6. Think of Jericho in the OT. How many trumpets in that scene?
7. 1 Thess 4:16 has the “trumpet of God”
8. 1 Cor 15:52 mentions the “last trumpet”
9. But the end is not yet. First the 7 trumpets will present 7 aspects of God’s judgement upon the world.

10. Verses 3-4: But before the trumpets start, another angel comes, bring a censer in order to offer incense to God, which ascends to God with the prayers of the saints.
11. In Rev 5:8 the servants of God in heaven also bore the prayers of the saints in the form of incense.
12. When the saints under the altar cried out, “How long?” (6:9-10), they were told to wait.
13. Here, however, this scene leads to God saying, “Now!” The judgements upon the earth begin.
14. Verse 5: These signs foreshadow God’s actions against an evil world. Then, one by one, the trumpets are sounded.

The Seven Trumpets

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!

15. Verse 6: Judgement begins and this is pan-history.
16. Verse 7: Corresponds to the 7th plague of Exodus 9:13-26). The parallel says that God is preparing to free His people from their bondage in this world and lead them to the home He has promised them.
17. No mention about effects on people, just the world. Devastating, but not complete destruction. These events occur to serve as a

warning to the world about the strength of God's anger and the coming severity of His judgment, but are not yet God's complete judgement.

18. Verses 8-9: Mountain is an image used by Jeremiah to describe the destructive power of Babylon at 51:25. Water turning into blood reminds us of the 1st plague against Egypt. (Exodus 7:20-21) In describing the end times, Jesus includes "Nations [will be] in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves." (Luke 21:25) Still, this judgment is not final.

19. Verses 10-11: Third trumpet. "In the wilderness, God sweetened the bitter waters at Marah (Exodus 15:25) as a sign for His people. Here, he turns sweet water bitter as a sign against those who reject Him."

"Wormwood": name of a plant and of the bitter-tasting extract derived from it. Associated with judgment (Lm 3:15, 19)

20. From land to water and now with the fourth trumpet at verse 12 God touches the sky. God put the lights in the sky as a sign to mark the days and season (Genesis 1:14), but now they serve as signs that God has power to bring seasons to an end. Unsetting all human security. 9th plague in Egypt: darkness.

21. Verse 13: With the first four, the judgments have struck nature. But another change is coming so, "Woe, woe, woe." (oracle of judgment)...the eagle crying to emphasize the horror of what is being unleashed. Woe is a lament, but also a warning! What is to come will strike PEOPLE.

9 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. ²He 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. ³Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. ⁴They 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. ⁵They 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. ⁶And in

those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

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

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

¹³Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵So 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. ¹⁶The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. ¹⁷And 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 and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. ¹⁸By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. ¹⁹For 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.

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

22. God is unleashing the forces of evil upon the world.
23. False teaching is unleashed.
24. Verse 1: The home of the demons is opened.
25. 1 Peter 3:19 there home.
26. Luke 8:31: these demons begged Jesus not to send them back to the abyss.
27. God controls the evil powers.
28. Verse 2: The 5th trumpet is the 1st WOE.
29. Plague of locusts...sign of God's judgment. The eighth plague in Egypt.
30. Also sign of judgment in Amos 7:1-3 and Joel 1:2-2:11.
31. Verse 11, they have a "king" who is the Destroyer. Both names mean "Destroyer." This is Satan.
32. Supernatural locusts with human faces we get the imagery of an army.

33. They can only strike those without God's SEAL. 5 months = life cycle of the locust. Limited time.
34. Nature of the plague: guilty conscience (don't water this down). The deepest and most unbearable pain.
35. It can drive a person to long for death.
36. Demons capitalize on this.
37. Verse 13: 6th Trumpet: The second WOE. Sulfer = Sodom and Gomorrah. Snake aspect = demonic symbol. God uses drastic measures for the sake of repentance. He confronts people with the seriousness of their sin.