**Reviewing Revelation 8—The Seventh Seal and The First Four Trumpets**

**“Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.”** [**Isaiah 28:9-10**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+28%3A9-10&version=KJV)**.**

**“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” I Corinthians 2:12-13.**

**So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound: We waited for the seven seals to be opened and saw them loosed one by one. But when the seventh seal was finally loosed, the end did not immediately come. It set in motion seven trumpets that would sound upon the earth. In considering how the seals and the trumpets relate to each other, some believe they are *sequential*, and that the seventh seal contains the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet contains the seven bowls of judgment. Yet there are problems with a sequential approach. For example, are the people of** [**Revelation 6:15-17**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+6:15-17&t1=en_nas) **mistaken about Jesus' return? They don't seem to be. But if the trumpets simply follow in sequence to the seals, then it is a striking display of God's mercy in stretching out the end and allowing repentance. Since John brings a report from eternity, it is difficult to assign a chronological and sequential element to these judgments. It is most important to emphasize that they are *real*, even if their sequence is hard to pin down with certainty. The first four trumpets also reveal the *mercy* of God's judgment; these are partial judgments striking only one-third, and are meant to warn and lead a rebellious world to repentance before the final curtain. For now, God *spares* more than He *smites*. Revelation 8 is the presentation *Seventh seal, preparation for the seven trumpets, and the first four and the consequent plagues.*** silence in heaven about … half an hour **— The last seal having been broken open, the book of God‘s eternal plan of redemption is opened for the Lamb to read to the blessed ones in heaven. The *half hour‘s silence* contrasts with the previous jubilant songs of *the great multitude,* taken up by the *angels* (**[**Revelation 7:9-11**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+7:9-11&t1=en_nas)**). It is the solemn introduction to the employments and enjoyments of the eternal Sabbath-rest of the people of God, commencing with the Lamb‘s reading the book heretofore sealed up, and which we cannot know till then. The common feature of the first four trumpets is, the judgments under them affect *natural objects,* the accessories of life, the earth, trees, grass, the sea, rivers, fountains, the light of the sun, moon, and stars. The last three, the *woe-trumpets* (**[**Revelation 8:13**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+8:13&t1=en_nas)**), affect men‘s life with pain, death, and hell. The language is evidently drawn from the plagues of Egypt, five or six out of the ten exactly corresponding: the *hail,* the *fire* (**[**Exodus 9:24**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+9:24&t1=en_nas)**), the WATER *turned to blood* (**[**Exodus 7:19**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+7:19&t1=en_nas)**), the *darkness* (**[**Exodus 10:21**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+10:21&t1=en_nas)**), the *locusts* (**[**Exodus 10:12**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+10:12&t1=en_nas)**), and perhaps the *death* (**[**Revelation 9:18**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+9:18&t1=en_nas)**). Judicial retribution in kind characterizes the inflictions of the first four, those elements which had been abused punishing their abusers. As was the case with the breaking of the seven seals, the first four trumpets in the sequence are set apart from the last three. At the end of the fourth trumpet, John hears an eagle flying in midair call out in 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!" (v. 13). The first four judgments are differentiated from the more terrible ones that follow in two ways: first, they affect primarily the natural world rather than *the inhabitants of the earth;* second, each affects only *a third* of the earth, trees and grass (v. 7), the sea, sea creatures and ships (vv. 8-9), rivers and springs of fresh water (vv. 10-11), and the sun, moon and stars (v. 12), respectively. The limitation to one-third leaves room for more terrible destruction to come, whether in connection with the last three trumpets or the later visions. Still, one-third is more than one-fourth. Eugene Boring (1989:135) notes that "in the first cycle, one-fourth of the earth's inhabitants were struck (6:8); in this cycle the scale goes up to one-third," adding wisely, "to inquire whether this is a third of the original whole, or a third of what remained after one-fourth had been struck would be a wrong question; John works with the imagination, not calculators." The four areas affected--earth, sea, fresh water and sky--made up the whole of the human environment as the ancients perceived it. These four spheres were what Jews and Christians acknowledged as God's creation (compare 14:7). Some people think that the 3 sets of seven judgments run concurrently, others believe they are parallel. The book consists of seven sections, running parallel, and spanning the whole dispensation between the first and second coming of Christ. Each ends in the judgment day. Both the first trumpet and the first bowl affect the earth (**[**Revelation 8:7**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+8:7&t1=en_nas)**,** [**16**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+8:16&t1=en_nas)**:2); the second trumpet and the second bowl affect the sea; the third trumpet and the third bowl affect the rivers; the fourth in both series refers to the sun. This type of correspondence in the series is extensive, including the divisions into groups of four and three, etc. The same themes appear in all sections: the bliss of the redeemed, the destruction of Christ's enemies, the judgment.** There are a remarkable number of parallels between this series of judgments and the ten plagues in Exodus.  For example, trumpets are associated with the theophany at Sinai (Exod 19:13-19; 20:18).  The first trumpet judgment is similar to Exodus 9:13-25, hail and fire fell upon the Egyptians.  The third trumpet resembles the plague of the freshwater in Exodus 7:20, except that there the waters turned to blood. The locust in Rev 9:3 is an apocalyptic version of the eighth plague (Exod 10:12-20).





1. **And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour**.
2. **Review the first six seals. See Revelation 5-6. When He opened the seventh seal**: The sealed scroll was introduced in Revelation 5, and the seals were opened one by one up to the sixth seal in Revelation 6. We waited for the last seal to be opened and the contents of the scroll to be revealed - but then were given a pause with Revelation 7, the revealing of the 144,000 and the great multitude out of the great tribulation. Now the idea of a pause between the sixth and **the seventh seal** is emphasized by this **silence in heaven for about half an hour**.
3. **Describe the seventh seal.** This **silence** is striking; some have seen it as "breathing space," or, that the angels are silent so the prayers of the saints can be heard, perhaps even the cry of the martyrs of [***Revelation 6:9-11***](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+6:9-11&t1=en_nas)***, “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”*** More likely, this **silence in heaven** demonstrates a sober, awestruck silence at the judgments to come, now that the seals are off and the scroll can be opened.
	1. **List theories of what the “silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.** It is a silence of fearful apprehension.[1] The silence is transitional.[2] It introduces a new series of symbols (the trumpets).[3] It may be a breathing space in the narrative.[4] It is a dread suspense in anticipation of events to follow.[5] All heaven breathlessly awaits the final act of divine judgment.[6] It is a brilliant device for deepening the suspense.[7] It begins a new series of visions, the trumpets.[8] It represents a broken or interrupted whole.[9]
4. **So where can examples or types and shadows of this Heavenly silence be found in Scripture?** the silence of God comes before He is preparing to unleash His wrath.
	1. **In the Jewish temple**, musical instruments and singing resounded during the whole time of the offering of the sacrifices, which formed the first part of the service**. But at the offering of incense, solemn silence was kept.** **See** “My soul *waiteth* upon God**,** [**Psalm 62:1**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+62:1&t1=en_nas);” My [1] soul waits in silence for God only; From Him is [2] my salvation.” “Is silent,” *Margin;* [**Psalm 65:1**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+65:1&t1=en_nas)**,** “Praise waiteth[1] for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed,” the people praying secretly all the time. The silence which continued during the incense-accompanied prayers which usher in the first of the seven trumpets. [**Revelation 8:3-5**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+8:3-5&t1=en_nas)**,** “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer[1] it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into[1] the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.”
		1. **The *half-hour* stillness implies, too, the earnest adoring expectation with which the blessed spirits and the angels await the succeeding unfolding of God‘s judgments**. A *short* space is implied; for even an *hour* is so used. **Review** [**Revelation 17:12**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+17:12&t1=en_nas)**,** “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.” [**Revelation 18:10**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+18:10&t1=en_nas)**,** “Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come,” [**Revelation 18:19**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+18:19&t1=en_nas)**,** “And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! For in one hour is she made desolate?”
	2. **Review “The Days of Noah in *Genesis 7:1-5,”And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female… For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.”*** Not only was Noah commanded to enter the ark seven days in advance, on the same day he entered and got every person and creature on board, God shut the door Himself. Not only was Noah commanded to enter the ark seven days in advance, on the same day he entered and got every person and creature on board, God shut the door Himself. Not only was Noah commanded to enter the ark seven days in advance, on the same day he entered and got every person and creature on board, God shut the door Himself.
		1. **Reference Matthew 24:37-39. “But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”**
	3. **Note the silence in Joshua’s story. Review Joshua 6:2-15. “**And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams’ horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, **Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth**, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the reward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. **And it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.”** – [Joshua 6:2-15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+6&version=KJV)**.** Notice that God instructs His people to circle the city of Jericho, without raising a weapon, for seven days. And Joshua is emphatic that the people **remain silent**. No one is to speak or utter a sound for the seven days. And then on the seventh day, after the city was circled seven times, the nation would shout, and the walls of Jericho crumbled to dust and the Israelites slaughtered their enemies in the city and burnt it to the ground**. And this followed seven days of silence. So again, the Biblical pattern is clear: there is a period of silence before Judgement of The Lord comes.**
	4. **Reference also Psalm 50:16-22.** “But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and casteth my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother’s son. **These things hast thou done, and I kept silence**; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.”– [Psalm 50:16-22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50%3A16-22&version=KJV).  **So again we see the pattern: rebellion against God, that rebellion reaching an extreme limit, silence from God, then judgment. Here God Himself, speaking through the Psalmist warns the sinner in deep rebellion that if they continue to forget God, they will be torn in pieces with no chance of deliverance**.
	5. **Sum-up the meaning of the silence in heaven.** In this future event that takes place during the end times the seven trumpets given to the angels who stand before The Lord each bring forth devastating judgments to the people on Earth. The trumpets, along with the vial judgments that follow, are the true outpouring of God’s wrath. The Earth itself will be damaged and poisoned; millions upon millions suffer and perish. The trumpets will be discussed in much more detailed in later installments of this series, but the point to understand is that just as it was in the days of Noah, and as it was at the battle of Jericho, the silence of God comes before He is preparing to unleash His wrath. **And while the Silence in Heaven is a future event, Scripture is quite clear that when we are in rebellion God can be silent with us. And that is a scary proposition.**

**2And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.**

1. **Who are the seven angels? The seven angels who stand before God: According to Jewish tradition, there are seven angels who stand in God's presence. Apparently, based on this verse, that traditional idea was accurate.** Seven angels that stand before God ... **It is natural that many should understand these as the seven archangels, and Barclay named them (not from the Bible, of course, but from Tobit): "Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sariel, Gabriel and Remiel.**
	1. **Compare the apocryphal** [**Tobit 12:15**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Tobit+12:15&t1=en_nas)**, “I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” Compare** [**Luke 1:19**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+1:19&t1=en_nas)**, “I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God.”**
2. **Discuss trumpets**. **And to them were given seven trumpets**: In the Old Testament, **trumpets** sounded the alarm for war and threw the enemy into a panic, or they called an assembly of God's people. These **seven trumpets** will sound as God's battle-alarm during the great tribulation.
	1. **Trumpet is often mentioned in Scripture in connection with the last things. See I Corinthians 1:52, “**In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,” **and** [**1 Thessalonians 4:16**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Thessalonians+4:16&t1=en_nas)**, “**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

**3And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. 5And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.6And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.**

1. **Elaborate on this fact:** [**Revelation 8:3-6**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+8:3-6&t1=en_nas) **seems to connect the prayers of the saints with the trumpet judgments; and, in a sense, "it is these prayers that set the judgments in motion."**
2. **Who is this other angel? Then another angel: Some see this angel as Jesus, functioning as a mediator and because of Old Testament references to Jesus as "the Angel of the Lord." Others say it could only be a mere angelic being because the specific ancient Greek word for another means "another of the same kind."**
3. **Describe the golden censer . . . the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God: Prayer and incense are often associated in the Bible. The idea is that just as incense is precious, pleasant, and drifts to heaven, so do our prayers. So here, before anything *happens* at the opening of the seventh seal, the prayers of God's people come before the Lord God.**
	1. **See** [**2 Peter 3:10-12**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Peter+3:10-12&t1=en_nas)**, “**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, 12Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” **and Revelation 22:20, “**He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” **Indicates that there is a sense in which we can *hasten* the Lord's coming by our holy conduct and godly lives. But here we see that we can also hasten the Lord's coming through prayer, even as Daniel asked for a speedy fulfillment of prophecy regarding captive Israel (Daniel 9), we can and should also pray *Even so, come, Lord Jesus!* (**[**Revelation 22:20**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+22:20&t1=en_nas)**, “**He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”**)**
	2. **Elaborate on Verse 5…** cast it into the earth — that is, *unto* the earth: the hot coals off the altar cast on the earth, symbolize God‘s fiery judgments about to descend on the Church‘s foes in answer to the saints‘ incense-perfumed prayers which have just ascended before God, and those of the martyrs. How marvelous the power of the saints‘prayers!

**7The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.**

1. **What is the first trumpet judgment? Hail and fire followed, mingled with blood**: **Blood** may indicate the *color* or the *result* of the phenomenon described here. We don't know if the **hail and fire** was red in color or if it brought forth red blood, but one way or another this should be understood straightforwardly, without escaping into a creative symbolism **in verse 6-7.**
	1. **Compare this to the 7th plague in Egypt, Exodus 9:18, “**Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.”  **Hail and fire mingled with blood. Vegetation is devastated.** Three of the four judgments echo the plagues of the Exodus, preceding the giving of the law at Mount Sinai: *hail* in connection with the first trumpet. Yet Mount Sinai, not the Exodus, dominates the imagery, at least up to this point. *Fire,* not hail or blood, is what damages earth, trees and grass (v. 7; contrast Exodus 9:25).
		1. **Also compare Exodus 9:23-25,** “And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. 24So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.”
		2. Yet these reminders of the Exodus alert us to watch for more as the visions continue. The controlling theme is closer to the theme of Sinai--fire from heaven.
	2. **What percentage of the trees and grass were burnt up**? **A third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up**: Because of this **hail and fire**, **trees** and **grass** are destroyed - one-third of the vegetation of the planet is **burned up** during the great tribulation.
		1. God may use whatever *method* He desires to bring judgment, but people on earth *know* these events are from God, and do not think them to be merely natural disasters. **See** [**Revelation 16:9**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+16:9&t1=en_nas)**, “**And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory,” **and 16:11,”** And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds,” and [**Revelation 19:19**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+19:19&t1=en_nas)**, “**And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” *Greek,* “*unto* the earth.” A, B, *Vulgate,* and *Syriac* add, “And the third of the earth was burnt up.” So under the third trumpet, the *third* of the rivers is affected: also, under the sixth trumpet, the *third* part of men are killed. In [**Zechariah 13:8**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Zechariah+13:8&t1=en_nas)**, “And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein,”** [**Zechariah 13:9**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Zechariah+13:9&t1=en_nas)**, “And I will bring the thirde part through the fire, and wil refine them as siluer is refined, & will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my Name, and I will heare them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God,”** this tripartite division appears, but the proportions reversed, two parts killed, only a third preserved. Here, vice versa, two-thirds escape, one-third is smitten. The fire was the predominant element.

**8And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.**

1. **What is the second trumpet? Is the second trumpet judgment similar to the first plague on Egypt in the days of Moses? Read Exodus 7:20-25.** The sea's turning to *blood* in the second trumpet verses 8-9; compare Ex 7:20-21. **Compare.**
2. **Something like a great mountain**: John carefully said that this is not an actual mountain (note the use of **like**), but it was a blazing mass as large as a **mountain**. When the angel blows the second trumpet, the scene echoes Jesus' promise to his disciples that "if anyone says to this mountain, `**Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart . . . it will be done for him" (Mark 11:23).** In Revelation the mountain is no ordinary mountain, but a vehicle for fire sent down from God. It is as if Mount Sinai itself, *all ablaze* (v. 8; compare Heb 12:18) has been taken up and thrown into the sea. "Later Christian piety, prompted by Paul (Gal 4:25) and Hebrews (12:18-21), saw in Mount Sinai the terrors of the old law which condemns the sinner
	1. **What is the great mountain**? **Use Jeremiah 51:25,** “Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain**,” 27,** “Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers,” and **30,** “The mighty men of Babylon have forborn to fight, they have remained in their holds: their might hath failed; they became as women: they have burned her dwellingplaces; her bars are broken.” **Like a great mountain**: It is common to take this **great mountain** as a symbol for a nation that will be judged. It is true that mountains are sometimes used as figures of governments or nations But in this context, the symbol doesn't make sense. What does it mean that the **great mountain** is burning with fire? What does it mean that it **was thrown into the sea**? What does the **sea** symbolize? Who are the **living creatures in the sea**? What are the **ships** on the sea? What is their destruction a symbol of? All these questions make us say that the best solution is to see this as some literal mass of land with probably something like a meteor or asteroid falling into the sea and bringing ecological disaster. There is a plain allusion to [Amos 7:4](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Amos+7:4&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank), “Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and, behold, the Lord GOD called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.” **We cannot leave this prophecy of the "burning mountain" cast into the sea without citing the only literal historical fulfillment of it that is known; and, even in this, the sea did not become blood. On August 27,1883, the 2,623-foot mountain Krakatoa in the Sunda strait of Indonesia literally exploded, burned up completely, and was cast into the sea, the waters where the mountain stood having been 1,000 feet deep ever since.[51] Following this event, atmospheric waves girdled the earth seven times; tidal waves are thought to have destroyed a million lives; some tidal waves reached England, more than 11,000 miles away; and the explosion was actually heard at Bangkok at a distance of 3,000 miles! Thus, within the memory of a few people who have just died, we still have the evidence that the trumpet of God still sounds above the waters of the sea.**
	2. **Talk about the sea**. **A third of the sea became blood**: This disaster is a cataclysm, perhaps a meteor that crashes into the sea and results in great oceanic upheaval with residual pollution. Researchers today say that this sort of phenomenon has happened before in the history of the earth, sometimes resulting in great ecological upheaval and disaster. Here, the result is that **a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed**. The **blood** may be either the *cause* or the *effect* of the widespread death in the oceans of the world. **The sea** may be a specific reference to the Mediterranean and not a reference to all oceans. In the world of the Apostle John, the Mediterranean Sea *was* the sea and they really had little knowledge of other oceans.

**10And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.**

1. **What is the third trumpet?** **A great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch**: We may easily associate this with a comet or meteor crashing into the earth and bringing ecological disaster. But God may have something else in mind also. When a third of the fresh waters turn *bitter* (v. 11), not bloody, it is more like the waters of Marah after the departure from Egypt (Ex 15:23) than the plagues themselves.
	1. **Talk about Wormwood.** **The name of the star is Wormwood**: **Wormwood** is a very bitter substance, and proverbial for bitterness and sadness. it is the personification of something *God* threatens to do to God's people when they allow themselves to be deceived by false prophets (**see Jeremiah 23:15, "I will make them eat bitter food [KJV wormwood] and drink poisoned water, because from the prophets of Jerusalem ungodliness has spread throughout the land";** compare Jeremiah 9:15). Given the mischief of the Nicolaitans and "Jezebel," the situation in Asia Minor in John's day was similar to the one lamented by Jeremiah.
	2. **Elaborate on “one-third.”** **A third of the rivers . . . a third of the waters**: The *proportion* of ecological disaster stays the same. In each one of the trumpets, **a third** of an ecological system is destroyed in judgment.
	3. **Is this star an angel? Refer to Revelation 1:20, “**The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” The symbolizers interpret the *star fallen from heaven* as a chief minister (Arius, according to Bullinger, Bengel, and others; or some future false teacher, if, as is more likely, the event be still future) falling from his high place in the Church, and instead of shining with heavenly light as a *star,* becoming a torch lit with earthly fire and smoldering with smoke. And “wormwood,” though medicinal in some cases, if used as ordinary water would not only be disagreeable to the taste, but also fatal to life: so “heretical wormwood changes the sweet Siloas of Scripture into deadly Marahs” [Wordsworth]. Contrast the converse change of bitter Marah water into sweet, [Exodus 15:23](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+15:23&t1=en_nas). Alford gives as an illustration in a physical point of view, the conversion of water into *firewater* or *ardent* spirits, which may yet go on to destroy even as many as a third of the ungodly in the latter days.

**12And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.13And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!**

1. **What is the fourth trumpet? A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night**: This does not describe a one-third lessening of light, but one-third of the day and night are plunged into absolute darkness. When the fourth trumpet sounded (v. 12), nothing fell from the sky. But the dimming light of sun, moon and stars, and consequently of both day and night, sent a signal that the worst was yet to come. This impression is confirmed by the voice of an eagle or vulture directly overhead, announcing three even more terrible "woes" or judgments against the earth's inhabitants.
	1. **Compare this, the darkness in the fourth trumpet, verse 12, to the plague in Exodus 10:21-23.** Finally, the dimming of the light of sun, moon and stars by one-third (v. 12) is far from equivalent to the "darkness that can be felt" or "total darkness" that covered Egypt (Ex 10:21-22).
	2. **See also the similarity in Matthew 24:29, “As Jesus said: *the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light*.”**
	3. **Why the** “**Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth?” Because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet**: The angel's woes are well founded, because one-third of the earth's population will die in the next three trumpets.
	4. **Angel or eagle? The ancient Greek words for *angel* and *eagle* are very close in spelling. Some ancient versions say that it is an *eagle* flying through the midst of heaven, making this cry.**
		1. **Parallel this section with I Timothy 3:12. pointed out that the prophecy here of woes that shall be worse and worse "is in harmony with Paul's teachings (**[**1 Timothy 3:12**](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=1%20Timothy+3:12&t1=en_nas)**)."**
	5. **Talk about his…. These first four trumpets reveal the severity of God's judgment. He attacks all the ordinary means of subsistence, such as food and water; and He attacks all the ordinary means of comfort, and knowledge, such as light and the regular rhythm of days.**
2. **What is the central theme of Revelation 8? Can its message apply to modern-day America?**

***And, here are the promises:***

**Romans 8: 37-39,** “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

**Luke 21:36,** “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

**The Seal & Trumpet Chart**

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| **THE SEVEN SEALS OF THE REVELATION**  |
| **Seal**  | **Text**  | **WHAT THE PROPHET JOHN SAW**  | **THE MEANING**  | **Related Texts**  |
| [**1**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/seals1-4.html)  | Rev. 6:2  | A WHITE HORSE  | Its rider carried a bow and went forth conquering and to conquer.  | This seal portrays the going forth of Yahweh's Warning Truth concerning **COUNTERFEIT**: Baptisms, Sabbath Days, Messiahs and Bibles. Beware!  | Jer. 29:17-18Matt. 24:4-5Luke 21:8  |
| [**2**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/seals1-4.html#secondSeal)  | Rev. 6:3-4  | A RED HORSE  | Its rider was given a great sword and proceeded to take peace from the earth.  | This seal tells of **wars, revolutions** and **bloodshed** on an unparalleled scale. The great sword symbolises world wars involving many nations.  | Matt. 24:6Luke 21:9-10Jer. 25:27-38  |
| [**3**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/seals1-4.html#thirdSeal)  | Rev. 6:5-6  | A BLACK HORSE  | Its rider held a pair of scales and weighed out food at extremely high prices. (e.g. a whole day's wages for two measures of wheat).  | This seal brings to view world-wide **famines** when prices for even the barest of life's necessities will spiral out of control. (A whole day's wages for two measures of wheat).  | Matt. 24:7Luke 21:11  |
| [**4**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/seals1-4.html#fourthSeal)  | Rev. 6:7-8  | A PALE, SICKLY HORSE  | Its rider's name was Death and Hell followed him.  | This seal symbolises **pestilence** and **disease epidemics** of various kinds which will lay low millions of people.  | Matt. 24:7Luke 21:11  |
| [**5**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/seals5-6.html)  | Rev. 6:9-11  | SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR  | Souls were heard crying for justice. They were told to wait for a while till a further martyrdom took place.  | This seal reveals a further persecution of God's people, a persecution as intense as any which occurred in the past.  | Matt. 24:9-10Luke 21:12-19  |
| [**6**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/seals5-6.html#sixthSeal)  | Rev. 6:12-17  | CELESTIAL SIGNS  | 1. A great earthquake.
2. The sun turned black.
3. The moon turned blood-red.
4. The stars (meteorites) fell.
5. The sky was rolled back as a scroll.
6. Earth's population was terrified.
 | These are literal signs in the physical universe. When they occur blind panic will overtake the inhabitants of the world. Note: The Messiah does **not** return to earth during this seal.  | Matt. 24:29Luke 21:25-26Jer. 4:23-28  |
| Revelation chapter 7 is inserted between Seals 6 & 7  | [THE SEALING OF YAHWEH'S SERVANTS](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/sealing.html)  | By divine authority the devastation of the **earth**, the **sea** and the **trees** was delayed till the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads and right hands. 144,000 Israelites were sealed.  | The Signature of Yahweh the God of Israel is the Sabbath days in the sacred calendar. These are the seventh day of the week (Saturday) and the seven annual Sabbaths as specified in Lev. chapter 23. Each one is a sacred memorial of a divine achievement in the plan of Salvation. In short, Yahweh seals his people with **obedience**.  | Eze. 20:12&20Exodus 13:9Exodus 31:13- 17Ezekiel 9  |
| [**7**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump1-5.html)  | Rev. 8:7  | Trumpet[1](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump1-5.html#firstTrumpet)  | A third of the earth, a third of the trees and all the green grass were burned.  | This damaging of the earth, the sea and the trees will only take place after the sealing work is completed (Rev. 7:3). The Trumpets, in other words, cannot even commence their destruction till all 144,000 Israelites are sealed. When the Trumpets eventually do sound, a time of great devastation will begin on earth. The terms earth, sea, trees, grass, fish, ships etc. may have symbolic as well as literal meanings. But it must be remembered that ONE THIRD OF MANKIND are slain at Trumpet No. 6, so it is most unlikely that these terms also represent mankind.  |    |
| Rev. 8:8-9  | Trumpet[2](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump1-5.html#secondTrumpet)  | A third of the sea became like the blood of a dead man. A third of the fish perished and a third of the ships sank.  |
| Rev. 8:10-11  | Trumpet[3](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump1-5.html#thirdTrumpet)  | A third of the rivers of water were made bitter and many people died.  |
| Rev. 8:12  | Trumpet[4](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump1-5.html#fourthTrumpet)  | The sun, moon and the stars were then darkened by a third.  |
| Rev. 9:1-12  | Trumpet[**5**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump1-5.html#fifthTrumpet) **FIRST WOE!**  | The Bottomless Pit (Abyss) was then opened and an evil host led by Abaddon the King of the Abyss came forth. They proceeded to torture all mankind for five months - all except those who had received Yahweh's Seal at the time of the sealing. These believers were supernaturally protected from Abaddon's power.  | The Abyss is a place - or condition - in which God has imprisoned a host of evil angels. Abaddon, the King of the Abyss, is a demon of great depravity. At this Trumpet, he is given leave to torture and brutalise mankind for 5 months: that is, all except the servants of the Most High who accepted the Seal of God in their foreheads and right hands (minds and actions) at the time of the sealing.  | Luke 8:30-332 Peter 2:4Jude 6  |
| Rev. 9:13toRev. 11:14  | Trumpet[**6**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump6.html) **SECOND WOE!**  | Four mighty angels were then loosed from the Great River Euphrates. Aided by a force of 200,000,000 they killed ONE THIRD OF MANKIND. At this time the holy city is trampled under foot for a period of 42 months (3½ years). Yahweh's Two Witnesses also preach to the world during this 42 month period. At the end of this woe the Beast who ascends from out of the Abyss will kill the Two Witnesses; but after 3½ days they are resurrected and carried to heaven in great glory.  | During this seal, ONE THIRD OF MANKIND will be slain. The Beast, who we are told also rises from the Abyss, could well be Abaddon the Destroyer, the Lawless One, the Son of Hell, the Exterminator from the Bottomless Pit. His Mark is the age-old counterfeit of Yahweh's Signature and will again manifest itself when the bogus sabbaths of Christendom (Sunday, Christmas, Easter etc.) are enforced by law throughout the world.  | Daniel 7:25Daniel 12Rev. 12:6-14Rev. 13Zech. 14:1-22 Thess. 2:1-17 |
| Rev. 11:15  | Trumpet[**7**](http://www.avoiceinthewilderness.org/prophecy/revbook/trump7.html) **THIRD WOE!**  | This is a time for God's anger, his judgment of the nations and the rewarding of his saints. At this Trumpet the kingdoms of this world will pass to their rightful ruler, the Messiah of Israel.  | Yahshua, the Son of God, will return to earth at this Last Trumpet. The Beast will vainly attempt to make war with the returning Christ, but he will perish in the attempt. The Messiah's millennial reign of peace will then begin.  | Matt. 24:30Rev. 19:11-211 Thess. 4:14-17  |