

## THE SOUNDING OF THE TRUMPETS

### Introduction

1. In chapter 8, the last seal was opened resulting in a period of silence in Heaven.
2. As God listened to the prayer of the saints, seven angels prepared to sound seven trumpets – announcing the judgment of God.

### I. The Sounding of Four Trumpets (8:7-13)

- A. As one reads the descriptions of destruction unleashed with the sounding of each trumpet, the plagues brought upon the nation of Egypt come to mind (Exodus 7 – 12).
- B. Likewise, the soundings of the trumpets are warnings to repent before it is too late (cf. Numbers 10:1-10; Hosea 5:8; Joel 2:1, 15; Amos 3:6; Ezekiel 33:3-4).
- C. The Sounding of the First Trumpet
  1. When the first trumpet was blown, the earth was smitten with hail and fire, mingled with blood. {*Think of Sodom and Gomorrah.*}
  2. This symbolizes that the calamity is a judgment of God, for hail and fire have been His weapons (Joshua 10:11; Job 38:22-23; Psalm 11:6; 18:12-13; 78:47-48; 105:32; Isaiah 30:30).
  3. This affects 1/3 of the trees and all the grass is burned.
  4. The symbol is of suffering due to the judgment of God.
  5. Though many are affected, it is not a complete and final judgment.
- D. The Sounding of the Second Trumpet
  1. When the second trumpet was blown, a great, burning mountain was cast into the sea.
  2. This represents the fall of great world power (Jeremiah 51:25, 42).
  3. The results of this fall would affect many – 1/3 of the sea, sea creatures, and ships (economy).
  4. Again, this is not a final judgment, but a warning from God.
- E. The Sounding of the Third Trumpet
  1. When the third trumpet was blown, a star called Wormwood fell to earth and struck 1/3 of the rivers and fresh water sources.
  2. This is often compared to a meteor or asteroid striking the earth, but it is not a literal event.
  3. The symbol is of a great power or leader being cast down (cf. Isaiah 14:12-17).
  4. The result is “wormwood” – bitterness, suffering and sorrow (Deuteronomy 29:18; Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15; Amos 5:7).
- F. The Sounding of the Fourth Trumpet
  1. When the fourth trumpet was blown, 1/3 of the sun, moon, and stars were darkened.
  2. The heavenly bodies that declare the existence and power of God are dimmed (cf. Psalm 8:3-4; 19:1).
  3. This symbolizes a lessening of the light of truth and, therefore, the wisdom and guidance of the leaders of the world powers.
- G. Summary:
  1. The first four trumpets affect the land, sea, inland waters, and heavenly bodies.

## The Book of Revelation

### Lesson Seventeen

Revelation 8:7 – 9:12

2. In other words, God's judgment will affect all.
3. Yet, the destruction is neither complete nor final.
4. God is warning men to repent and return to Him.
- H. After these four trumpets were blown, John saw an eagle (angel, KJV) flying through the sky crying out, "Woe, woe, woe!"
- I. The Fifth Trumpet – *Locusts from the Pit* (9:1-6)
  - A. The sounding of the fifth trumpet also brings about the first woe.
  - B. When the fifth trumpet sounded, John saw a star fall from heaven to the earth – yet this star was a being for it was given a key (cf. Luke 10:18).
    1. The key is a symbol of power or authority.
    2. The "bottomless pit" is the abyss – the temporary home of the lost, the devil, and the demons (cf. Luke 8:31; Romans 10:7).
  - C. As this being opened the abyss, smoke rose out in sufficient amount to fill the air and darken the sun.
    1. This symbolizes the spiritual cloud caused by the lies and deceptions of the devil.
    2. He works to obscure the light of the Truth of God's Word.
  - D. Out of this smoke came a plague of locusts that were a grave threat to mankind.
    1. This is not a literal plague of locusts.
    2. The illustration being made is that sin is destructive to the souls of men just as locusts are damaging to the plants of the earth.
  - E. The locusts have no power to hurt the children of God, for they have overcome sin by the blood of the Lamb (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:55-57; Luke 10:19; 2 Peter 2:9).
  - F. Yet, they do harm those who are not sealed in their foreheads by God.
  - G. However, even then, Satan's power is limited – he can only torment, not kill.
  - H. Their torment will be so severe that they will seek death; yet it holds no help or hope for them.
- II. Description of the Locusts (9:7-12)
  - A. They are described as war horses, symbolizing the battle and conflict that one endures when overcome by sin.
  - B. They are pictured as wearing crowns, symbolizing the short-lived victory of Satan.
  - C. They are pictured with the face of a man, symbolizing intelligence and will.
  - D. Their long, flowing hair and teeth like that of lions symbolized their strength in attacking (cf. Joel 1:6; 2:4; 1 Peter 5:8).
  - E. They are pictured as wearing breastplates, symbolizing a perceived invincibility.
  - F. The great sound produced by them symbolized the fact that a spiritual battle was taking place – though many failed to realize it.
  - G. Finally, it is revealed that they have a leader – a king – who is the angel of the abyss.
  - H. Thus, God allowed His enemies to suffer the consequences of their sins as a means of warning them of judgment to come.
  - I. "One woe is past;" two more are to follow.