

THE REVELATION

LESSON 16: THE SEVEN TRUMPETS (8:6- 9:21)- SAY IT AGAIN!

Intro:

Big Idea: God's judgment distinguishes between the _____ and _____.

"The seals are concerned with history from the vantage point of earth ... The trumpets view the same history, but this time from the vantage point of heaven, looking down on earth." **Derek Thomas**⁴⁹

"God typically fought Israel's holy wars from heaven by causing the elements of nature (inclement weather, etc.) to thwart the enemy." **G.K. Beale**⁵⁰

The 1st 4 Trumpets

⁶Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

⁷The 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.

⁸The 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. ⁹A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰The 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. ¹¹The 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.

¹²The 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.

¹³Then 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!"

- Like the seals, the first 4 are set apart from the last 3. This time the " _____ " are coming.
- Generally speaking, trumpets announce _____ - the calling or _____ of soldiers. Sometimes they are for the call to _____, but not here.
- All _____ of creation are _____ by these judgments.

⁴⁹ Thomas, pp. 82.

⁵⁰ Beale, pp. 470.

THE REVELATION

- Everything comes from _____. Judgment comes from _____.
- The first 3 all include _____, a symbol of _____.
- The first 2 include _____, symbolizing _____.
- The 1st trumpet parallels the plague of _____ and _____ in Exodus 9:22-25. Affecting vegetation, it parallels 6:6 among the seals (famine). See Ezekiel 5 as well.
- In the 2nd trumpet, mountains are often used to represent _____. An evil kingdom is judged! (Jer. 51:25; Rev. 18:21)
- The 3rd affects the _____, paralleling the plague in Exodus 7:16-18.
- The star is thought to represent “Babylon’s” _____ (see Is. 14:12-15).
- The water is polluted to represent the moral and spiritual _____ of the people (see Jer. 9:15 & 23:15 which also use the term wormwood).
- Wormwood is a bitter _____. The idea is of great _____.
- The 4th trumpet is similar to the plague of darkness in Exodus 10:21 (also see 12:12) in which God defeats _____, their _____ god. This also parallels 6:12-13.
- The eagle, a bird of _____, proclaims a three-fold _____ for emphasis. The coming judgments are on _____, not nature.

Read Revelation 6:12-13 again. What can we learn about the time sequence from these 2 passages?

“The fraction is symbolic of the mercy of God. The calamity is not universal but leaves those who can learn from the tragic events.” **Bruce Metzger**⁵¹

“The burning up of one-third of the trees of ‘the land’ reminds us of the Romans’ setting villages on fire in conjunction with their denuding the land of its trees.” **Kenneth Gentry**⁵²

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
The hail & fire (lightening?) recall the plagues of Egypt. Most identify this	This concerns the Jewish War (66-70), taking place in the land, not globally. Jay	These are taken to be literal, global and in the future. Hal Lindsey points to this	Since ‘only’ 1/3 of the earth is affected, this is not viewed as the final judgment but a

⁵¹ Metzger, pp. 66.

⁵² Pate, pp. 58.

THE REVELATION

<p>with military conflicts against the Goths and Vandals. Historian Gibbon uses similar language, including a “Gothic trumpet”. The Goths burned everything in their path. Unclear if it refers to the Roman Empire (oft said to be 1/3 of the known world) or 1/3 of the Empire.</p>	<p>Adams notes this describes the devastation to the land of Israel prior to the siege of Jerusalem. Roman soldiers destroyed much of the vegetation and trees in Israel (described by Josephus). Josephus also notes that there were battles in the bodies of water in and around Israel. The Jews built ships and became pirates near Syria, Phoenicia and Egypt. In a battle upon the Dead Sea, dead bodies filled the water.</p>	<p>as evidence of nuclear warfare.</p>	<p>warning of the final judgment. All of them indicate repeatable (not consecutive) calamities. Most see the resemblance to the Egyptian plagues. They often say the church will be uninjured by these calamities.</p>
<p>Mountains are symbols of strength and can represent kingdoms. In this case, seen as the Vandals under Genseric, “Tyrant of the Sea”. They destroyed the ships and commerce of Rome, leaving the water blood red.</p>	<p>Mount Zion was a symbol for Israel (note: like a mountain) meaning that Jerusalem was burned by the Romans. It was totally destroyed. Josephus records a battle in which Galileans were pursued into the sea of Tiberius where they were slaughtered.</p>	<p>Again, mountains represent kingdoms. The sea is a symbol of the gentile nations. Ironside ties this in with Jeremiah 51:25 and ends up with a spiritual Babylon or counterfeit church. Henry Morris takes a more literal approach of a huge meteor crashing into the sea. Lindsey also argues for a meteor or H-bomb.</p>	<p>The imagery is drawn from Babylon’s fall in the OT. It may be taken to refer to the fall of a spiritual Babylon. Others think this refers to a volcano which in many instances flowed into the sea destroying ships and sea creatures. Wilcox notes the shift from our environment to commerce.</p>
<p>The star is Attila the Hun, the “scourge of God”, who suddenly sprang upon the Roman scene. Attila was the master of the rivers. The waters ran red with the blood of as many as 300,000</p>	<p>Wormwood, or Bitter, refers to the curse mentioned in Deuteronomy 28 including making the waters bitter like at Marah. Wormwood is also used in the OT to warn Israel of the</p>	<p>Some see the star as leaders who lead God’s people astray or possibly the anti-Christ. Ironsides thinks it is the Pope. Ryrie and Morris argue for a more literal interpretation- a</p>	<p>Natural resources are now subject to God’s judgment. Hendriksen expands it to include floods and other ways water can devastate civilization.</p>

THE REVELATION

<p>dead. Some, like Matthew Henry, think this points to various heretics like Arius or Pelagius.</p>	<p>penalty for apostasy. So this refers to the destruction of apostate Israel.</p>	<p>meteor falling to earth contaminating fresh water. Ray Stedman says it is no coincidence that Chernobyl means “wormwood”, and Hal Lindsey sees this as another salvo in the thermonuclear exchange.</p>	
<p>The sun, moon and stars represent the foundation of Rome. Its conquest is in view, accomplished in 476 by the Heruli led by Odoacer. 1/3 of the Empire was vanquished when the Western Empire fell.</p>	<p>The symbolism used has a long history of use to describe the fall of nations (Isaiah 13:9-11; 24:19-23; Ezekiel 32:7-8). Leading figures in Rome and Israel were assassinated or committed suicide.</p>	<p>Ironsides- the diminishing spiritual perception in the Tribulation. Gaebelein- the authority of the revived Roman Empire is struck. Walvoord & Ryrie- natural order is struck.</p>	<p>The darkness prefigures the gloom of the ungodly as a prelude to the new Exodus of God’s people.</p>
<p>The 3 woes turn our attention to the Eastern Roman Empire. First the Saracen conquest of the southern & eastern 3rd, then the Turkish conquest of the remaining east and then the bowls are poured upon the Papacy.</p>	<p>The eagle was on the banner of Rome. The woes refer to the destruction of Jerusalem: the seditions of the Jews; the besieging of the city; the taking and sacking of the city & temple. Nearly a million men lost their lives.</p>	<p>They simply signify “you ain’t seen nothing yet!”</p>	<p>They indicate that the calamities to follow will be even more intense.</p>

“The last three trumpets are grouped together as three woes. These plagues explicitly discriminate between the righteous and the wicked, as did the later Egyptian plagues.” **Vern Poythress**⁵³

The 5th Trumpet: The 1st Woe

¹And 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

⁵³ Poythress, pp. 123.

THE REVELATION

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.

⁷ In 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.

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

- Another star falls, but the star is a _____.
- The creature has the _____ to the bottomless (*abyss* in Greek) _____ (see 20:1).
- He opens the abyss to _____ the first woe upon the earth.
- Locusts, as in the Exodus, arose as _____ of God's judgment.
- They only _____ those who do not bear God's _____ of ownership.
- This happens for 5 months, the _____ of locusts.
- It is so bad people will _____ to die, but _____.
- The locusts are symbols of an _____.

“Neither Satan nor his evil servants can any longer unleash the forces of hell on earth unless they are given power to do so by the resurrected Christ.” **G.K. Beale**⁵⁴

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
Nearly 100% say the locusts refer to the Saracens (Muslim Arabs). They waged war against the Eastern Roman Empire from 612-763. The fallen star is a symbol for someone who lost his rank, possibly Mohammed whose family lost their rank & title in the previous	This is seen as a flood of moral and spiritual errors connected with the delusions of anti-Christian Jews. Josephus notes their many atrocities in <i>The Jewish War</i> . The siege drove people mad. The 5 months is not a symbol but refers to the period from May to September during the siege. People	Ironside sees the key as false teaching, what we now call New Age religions. Ryrie, Walvoord and Morris shift gears from literal to symbolic on this falling star. They and Hal Lindsey see the star as representing Satan. The locusts are often seen as demonic	The locusts are often viewed as demonic forces that have been unleashed. People's minds are further darkened. The ravages correspond to the average lifecycle of locusts. They are powerful, seductive and invulnerable while exercising illegitimate authority.

⁵⁴ Beale, pp. 493.

THE REVELATION

<p>generation. The instructions are similar to Mohammed's in the Koran: "Destroy no palm trees, nor any fields of corn, cut down no fruit trees." The Saracens were not able to completely destroy the church or possess the Empire. Using a day means a year, they fought for 150 years. In 732, Charles Martel stopped their progress into Europe. In 763 they ceased their aggressive policies. They often wore turbans, but had beards and long hair. They had iron coats of mail and were skilled at fighting backwards, over the tails of their horses. Some Roman Catholics view the locusts as Luther and the Reformation.</p>	<p>wanted to die. There were riots, cannibalism and more. Rome waited while Jerusalem devoured itself. Josephus refers to transvestitism in Jerusalem- looking and acting like women (& engaging in immorality) they would suddenly produce weapons and kill people. The Romans developed terrible methods of torture to learn where food was stored (<i>Wars</i> 5.10.3).</p>	<p>hoards released against unrepentant sinners. Hal Lindsey thinks they are Cobra attack helicopters. Ryrie thinks people won't be able to die, though they try to commit suicide. Moorehead sees the locusts as an invading army (Ezekiel 38). He thinks Russia will have a key role in this.</p>	<p>Poythress sees Apollyon as perhaps in ironic reference allusion to Nero or Domitian who saw themselves as imitating Apollos.</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Read Revelation 20:7-9. Does it sound like these passages are talking about the same thing, or something different?

Talk it Out: Which views make the most sense and why? Which seem the most inconsistent?

"God uses even the work of the devil as a punishment and as a warning for the wicked, a warning in order that they may repent." **William Hendriksen**⁵⁵

"We must always remember that when evil is unleashed, God is using it and overruling it according to his hidden will." **Doug Kelly**⁵⁶

The Sixth Trumpet: The Second Woe

⁵⁵ Hendriksen, pp. 120.

⁵⁶ Kelly, pp. 167.

THE REVELATION

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.

- A voice comes from _____ the altar issuing a _____.
- The timing has been _____ ahead of time, and the 4 angels are _____.
- This woe kills 1/3 of _____. This woe is an enormous _____.
- His description of the horses is quite _____.

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
<p>This woe falls upon the eastern third of the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire. Just before 1000 the Tartars, or Turkomans, established an empire and converted to Islam. The conquered many lands east of the Euphrates. In 1453 they finally moved west of the Euphrates. They would conquer Constantinople. There were 4 sultanies bordering the river, confined there until after the Crusades. The size of the army is symbolic- 2 myriads. The breastplates are the same color as the those of the Turks. The armies under</p>	<p>Many of the Roman forces, including the 10th Legion, had been stationed beyond the Euphrates. The destruction of Jerusalem, as foretold by Daniel (chapter 9) is pictured as a flood, at a specific time set beforehand. Jesus noted that it would happen within a generation of his earthly ministry. The size of the army is enormous, but shouldn't be pressed literally. David Chilton notes that the promised curses in Deuteronomy 28 correspond to many of those in Revelation- including a great army from the east.</p>	<p>These 4 angels are seen as "evil angels". The invading army comes from the east, the Orient. Earlier (since view chronologically) ¼ of humanity was killed, they view this as killing 1/3 of those remaining. So half of the population of the world has been killed. There is a split: some see this as a demonic hoard, and others as a literal army. Ray Stedman notes that the largest armies in the world are only 2-3 million troops. Lindsey returns to thermonuclear war. For Gaebelein, the revived Roman Empire is the objective of the</p>	<p>The Euphrates was the eastern boundary of the Roman Empire, a barrier to invaders. While the locusts represent internal decay, this represents a foreign invasion.</p>

THE REVELATION

Sultan Mahomet had 67 cannons. Decorations on the horses tails indicated ranking officials.		hoards. Moorehead rejects this since the revived Roman Empire is led by the Anti-Christ.	
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

The Result

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.

- Those who were not killed did not _____.
- The focus is on _____, and sins against the _____ of God.
- Humanity is _____ in its sin.

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
The unrepentant are the apostate churches, east & west. Matthew Henry points to the use of images, the murder of the Albigenses & Waldensians by the Pope and the immorality of the Popes.	The unrepentant are the rebellious Jews in Jerusalem. Per David Chilton: “As Josephus reports, even up to the very end- after the famine, the mass murders, the cannibalism, the crucifixion of their fellow Jews at the rate of 500 per day- the Jews went on heeding the insane ravings of false prophets who assured them of victory.”	The unrepentant are the unbelievers in the Tribulation. They continue to follow New Age religions, commit violent crimes, use mind altering drugs, sexual immorality etc.	The unrepentant represent no particular class of people except those outside of Christ.

“The prayers of the saints have a way of bringing down evil persons and structures, if one persists in those prayers.” **Doug Kelly**⁵⁷

Conclusion:

⁵⁷ Kelly, pp. 181.