

Silence Before the Trumpets (Message #20)

Revelation 8: 1-13

In Chp.7 we discovered a pause in God's judgment. The 144,000 Jews were sealed and a great multitude which no man could number is seen before the throne robed in the righteousness of Christ. These are they which have come out of great tribulation.

Now, if you remember, Jesus took the book from the hand of God that was sealed with 7 seals. In chp.6 we found great horror and devastation as 6 of the 7 seals were opened. Moving into chp.8 we find that the pause in judgment has ended as Jesus opens the 7th seal which involves 7 trumpets. Tonight we will deal with the first four of these trumpets as we consider: [Silence Before the Trumpets](#).

I. The Time of Preparation (1-6) – The pause in judgment has ended as heaven makes final preparations for God's judgment to resume. Notice:

A. The Silence Involved (1) – [And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.](#) Here we find that [there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.](#) Up until this point we've witnessed the praise of the redeemed being offered to the Lamb of God. The four beasts are crying, [Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.](#) Heaven is overwhelmed with the sounds of praise and honor to the King.

- But here an unusual scene unfolds, heaven falls silent. There is no praise offered, no words uttered, just complete silence. We are witnessing the final moments of the eye of the storm. Those upon the earth may feel as if the storm has passed, but heaven stands in silence of the power and presence of God. Their silence is in recognition of the fact that God's judgment is about to resume.

B. The Servants Involved (2) – [And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.](#) There are 7 angels standing before God to whom each is given a trumpet. These created, angelic beings are preparing to carry out the sovereign will of God in judgment.

- John well understood the significance of trumpets among Jews. Trumpets were blown in various ways to send specific messages: **1)** Calling the people to an assembly **2)** A call to break camp **3)** A call to alert to battle **4)** A call to proclaim victory or announce a warning. These angels are about to sound their trumpets, announcing a warning to the earth of the impending judgment.

- What a dreadful time awaits those who will hear these trumpets sound. I'm glad that I'll hear a trump sound prior to these as Jesus calls for the church, taking us out before this awful tribulation judgment begins!

C. The Supplications Involved (3-4) – [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 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.](#) Another angel stands before the altar of God holding a golden censer filled with incense to make an offering along with the prayers of God's people.

- Let me remind you that prayer offered from a pure heart in faith is never in vain. God hears and is mindful of the prayers of His people. These include the prayers of those found under the altar, [6:9 – 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:](#)

- I also believe that this includes the prayers of the saints down through the ages. Those who have prayed for God's kingdom to come and that His will be done. Consider the prayers that have been offered throughout time because of sin and persecution.

- The Almighty is about to answer each of those prayers in power and judgment upon this evil world. The prayers of the martyrs who were burned at the stake, crucified, beheaded, eaten of wild beasts, or whatever means will now be answered as God vindicates His name and the injustice of His people.

- Our precious Lord is hated and rejected in our day, as well as those who follow Him. We serve a God of mercy, but during this time He will judge the injustice of men and the world system.

D. The Sign Involved (5) – [And 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.](#) The angel removed the censer, filled it with fire from the altar and cast it upon the earth. With that there are voices, thunder, lighting, and earthquakes signaling that divine wrath is about to commence again.

- Mankind has stood in open defiance of God, rejecting the saving grace that was offered through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. Their rejection will bring about the final end of their sin. God will stand for the rejection of His Son no more! His mercy and grace wasn't accepted, so there's nothing left but absolute judgment.

- This will be a horrible scene, but man has brought this upon himself. They treaded upon the glorious offer of redemption and God's mercy is turned to wrath. God desires that all men be saved, but He will judge the wicked. Let's look at the coming judgment.

I. The Time of Preparation (1-6)

II. The Trumpets of Desolation (7-12) – As we discovered 7 angels stand prepared to blow their trumpets. As each trumpet is blown another phase of judgment begins. The 1st trumpet is:

A. The Trumpet of Devastation (7) – *The 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.* This trumpet brings what appears to be a great hailstorm mingled with blood, fire, and brimstone as much of the vegetation is consumed. The blood quite possibly could be that of men and animals that die during the storm. It may simply be contaminated water droplets that have the appearance of blood. Whatever the case, this judgment will be severe.

- Ezekiel prophesied of this in [Ez.38:22](#) – *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.*
- That alone is devastating enough, but 1/3 of the trees and all green grass are burnt up. Consider the effects as oxygen levels plummet due to the vegetation being destroyed. Consider the fruit trees that will no longer bring a harvest and all of the green pastures and hay crops for livestock, gone! The world's food supply will suffer great loss. The famine and hunger of [Chp.6](#) only worsens here.

B. The Trumpet of Destruction (8-9) – *And 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; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.* As the 2nd trumpet sounds a great mountain burning with fire falls into the sea. This is quite possibly a large meteor or asteroid falling upon the earth. With it 1/3 of marine life will die and the ocean will be filled with blood and rotting flesh causing widespread contamination. One third of the ocean vessels are destroyed, likely from a massive tsunami caused by this enormous impact.

- On land much of the trees and all grass have been devastated and now much of the ocean is destroyed. Shipping lanes and fishing boats will be greatly hindered. The life that the ocean sustains through its many resources will be greatly reduced. The hunger and economic effects of these two trumpets will be overwhelming. (Consider that both of these trumpets involve blood. Man has rejected the redemptive blood of Christ and now God brings blood of condemnation.)

C. The Trumpet of Desperation (10-11) – And 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; And 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. The 1st two are horrifying, but the trumpets continue. The 3rd trumpet brings a great star from heaven falling upon the rivers and fountains of fresh water causing them to become poisoned. Wormwood literally means “*bitter*.” One third of the world’s drinking water is contaminated causing mass death.

- Right now there are over 50 countries that don’t have access to safe drinking water. That translates into over 1 billion people. If we are facing a crisis for many in the world today, consider the effects of this trumpet added to that.

D. The Trumpet of Darkness (12) – And 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. When the 4th angel sounds the heavens will be dimmed. One third of the light given from the sun, moon, and stars will no longer shine upon the earth. Consider daylight being reduced by 1/3, creating the longest night we’ve ever known.

- It will also be the darkest night with the moon and stars affected. This will no doubt affect the climate, growing seasons, temperatures, and weather patterns.
- Consider the emotional effect this will have of those who are here as the earth is plunged into darkness. **Mat.24:29 – Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.** Man has never felt the wrath of God as he will during the tribulation. We’ve seen what the 1st four trumpets will bring, but there is more to come.

I. The Time of Preparation (1-6)

II. The Trumpets of Desolation (7-12)

III. The Testimony of Continuation (13) – And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! After the 4 trumpets have sounded, John hears an angel proclaim that judgment isn’t over.

A. The Presentation of the Testimony – The angel flies through the midst of heaven declaring a warning, **Woe, woe, woe!** There are three woes yet to come, three trumpets yet remaining. These that have already sounded were bad, but things are only going to get worse as the tribulation continues.

B. The Prediction of the Testimony – These woes were sounded for the **inhabitants of the earth**, the earth dwellers. We studied these before and found they were those who had built their lives upon this earth, sinking their roots in the system of men. These are those who've rejected the call and mercy of God and are left to face His divine judgment. There will be no escape for those who must face the judgment of the Lord.

This is no Hollywood script or science fiction novel. The events that we've looked at tonight are soon coming to pass. Do you know for sure you have been saved? If not and the church is raptured out today, you'll be left to endure the torments of the tribulation. Be sure that you're sure you're saved!