

Revelation 8 – 9 The Seven Seals

Revelation 8 & 9 Introduction

- When Jesus came the first time, He was not the Messiah His nation and His followers expected.
- They were expecting a conquering king. They got a suffering servant.
- After His resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven and promised that He would one day return.

- The book of Revelation gives us much in the way of prophetic detail leading up to Christ's Second Coming.
- At that time Jesus will return as the conquering King of Kings.
- This book was given to John the Apostle as a series of visions he received while imprisoned on the island of Patmos.

- In Chapter 1, the glorified Christ appears to His servant John.
- In Chapters 2 & 3, John recorded Jesus's messages to seven different churches.
- In Chapters 4 & 5, John gets a glimpse of the throne room of heaven.
- In Chapter 6, Jesus begins to open the scroll He received from God the Father.
- Revelation 8 & 9 Introduction
- With the opening of each of seven seals on the scroll, various judgments are unleashed upon the earth.
- In Chapter 7, we see that despite the horrible judgments on a rebellious world, God has a people reserved for Himself.
- Here in Chapters 8 & 9, further judgments will be released, more serious than those previously seen. Judgment intensifies.

Revelation 8 & 9 Outline

- I. Prelude to the Seven Trumpets 8:1-6
- II. The Trumpets Begin to Sound 8:7 – 9:19
- III. The Response to the Trumpets 9:20-21

Prelude to the Trumpets 8:1-6

- 8:1 The seventh seal was not opened directly after the first six. It is opened now.
- This silence can be viewed as the "calm before the storm." The judgments upon the earth are about to intensify. See also:
 - Habakkuk 2:20
 - Zechariah 2:13
 - Zephaniah 1:7

- 8:2-6 To help us understand the context of the incense, we can look back at:
 - Revelation 5:8
 - Revelation 6:9-11
- 8:4 The smoke of the incense rises before God as sweet-smelling prayer.
- 8:5 The angel throws fire to the earth, which immediately feels the effects.
 - Prelude to the Trumpets 8:1-6
- 8:2-6 Warren Wiersbe points out,
- *“Like it or not, the prayers of God’s people are involved in the judgments that He sends. The throne and the altar are related. The purpose of prayer, it has often been said, is not to get man’s will done in heaven, but to get God’s will done on earth—even if that will involves judgment.”*

The Seven Trumpet Judgments		
The 1st Trumpet	Rev 8:7	The Trees and Green Grass Are Struck Hail and fire mingled with blood are thrown to the earth. The result is that one third of the trees are burned up as well as all of the green grass.
The 2nd Trumpet	Rev 8:8-9	The Sea is Struck A great mountain burning with fire strikes one third of the sea. One third of the sea becomes blood. One third of the living creatures in the sea and one third of the ships are destroyed.
The 3rd Trumpet	Rev 8:10-11	The Rivers and Springs of Water Are Struck A star named Wormwood falls to the earth and turns one third of the rivers and springs of water to blood. While the Second Trumpet struck the salt water, this one strikes the fresh.
The 4th Trumpet	Rev 8:12	The Sun Moon and Stars Are Struck One third of the natural light in both the day and the night will be darkened by this plague.

The Seven Trumpet Judgments		
The 5th Trumpet	Rev 9:1-12	Demonic Locusts These locust-like demonic creatures will come out of the abyss. They do nothing but torment people with scorpion-style stings. No one will be allowed to die and the suffering will last for five months.
The 6th Trumpet	Rev 9:13-21	Demonic Horsemen Four angels, which have been bound up to this moment will be released and given authority to kill one third of mankind. They will do so by means of 200,000,000 horsemen who inflict harm through fire, smoke and brimstone.
The 7th Trumpet	Rev 11:15, 16:1-21	The Seven Bowls These judgments are all part of the Seventh Trumpet. They will come later, in the Great Tribulation, and will complete the wrath of God, which will be poured out upon the earth at that time. During this period Satan Himself will be cast down to earth until Christ finally defeats him at His coming.

Response to the Trumpets 9:20-21

- History shows that when God continuously shows His mercy, people do not generally turn to Him in thanks.
- They typically go on in their evil ways and assume that God approves.
- Psalm 50:16-23 is instructive here.

- In allowing us true freedom, God has allowed the human race the freedom to rebel against Him.
- For thousands of years we have been in rebellion against the infinitely good, wise, holy and loving God who created us.
- For thousands of years, the world has had the opportunity to plead for His mercy.

- Since Christ's death and resurrection, the love of God toward us has been clearer than ever before.
- At the end of the present age, God will systematically judge this rebellious world before a new age begins.
- The response He desires is repentance and faith – a turning toward Christ.

- John Walvoord comments,
 - *"In spite of the dramatic judgment inflicted ... those who survive are declared to be unrepentant. Such is the hardness of the human heart even though faced by worldwide destruction and divine judgment from God and a clear testimony of God's power to deal summarily with every human soul."*

- Robert L. Thomas points out,
 - *"The survivors shunned repentance. ... They absolutely failed to change their conduct, their creed, or their attitudes toward God, which would have appeared to be the least they could do in light of what the world had just experienced."*

- F. F. Bruce observed,
 - *"Plague and similar disasters, which bring out the best qualities in some people bring out the worst in many others. ... God has pledged His ready pardon wherever a glimmer of repentance is shown, but what if men persist in impenitence?"*

Revelation 8 & 9 Conclusions

1. God wants to hear your prayers, which are like a pleasant aroma to Him.
2. God's love and His justice must both be considered in order to clearly see Him.

We like the idea of a God of love. We dislike a God of justice.

One of the reasons we do not like the idea of God's judgment is because we cannot see the seriousness in the offense of our sin. All is against God and is therefore an offense committed against infinite goodness, holiness, justice and love. Sin constitutes an infinite offense and God is under no obligation to save anyone.

3. God's love and His justice were equally made clear at the cross.

Yet Christ died for our sins. An infinitely holy, good and loving Savior went to the cross to satisfy the demands of justice. Our sin, an infinite offense, is satisfied by an infinite sacrifice. The justice is more perfect if we are saved than if we are lost. The reason punishment must be eternal is that justice can never be satisfied by any number of finite beings. It is totally satisfied in Christ.

4. The appropriate response for people like us who have rebelled is repentance and faith in Jesus.

Ezekiel 18:23 Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "*and* not that he should turn from his ways and live?"

Ezekiel 18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!"

Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'