



REVELATION

FOLLOWING THE WAY OF THE LAMB

Session 10

Prayer, Trumpets, and Interrupted Judgement
Revelation 8:1-11:19

Dwelling in the Word

1. Prayerfully read through Revelation 8:1-11:19 (or pick a subsection like 11:1-19; you may also want to watch the Bible Project video together: bibleproject.com) and reflect on the following questions. 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? Why? 2) What does this passage communicate to you about God? 3) How would you like to respond to what God may be desiring to accomplish in you?

Digging Deeper

1. The Six Trumpet plagues, in some ways, echo the plagues brought on to Pharaoh and the Egyptians before the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt. Skim or read through Exodus 7-12 to refresh yourself with these; notice the repeated statements of the reason for their emancipation, “Let my people go, so that they may worship me.” In what ways were the circumstances of Revelation’s readers similar to those of the Hebrews? How do you think hearing the trumpet plagues would have made them feel?
2. The 5th and 6th Trumpet Plagues affect humankind directly with five months of torture and then death for a third of humanity, but those who had God’s seal were protected (see 7:1-3; 9:4). The Hebrews were also protected through a death plague in Egypt through a visible ‘sealing’ of their residences with lamb’s blood (read Exodus 12). Jesus, represented in Revelation as the passover lamb (see also 1 Corinthians 5:7), offered his blood not just for us to escape death but as our pathway to true life. How could a deeper understanding of being ‘sealed’ by Jesus’ blood and the Spirit change the way you understand your circumstances? And maybe even reality itself?
3. Worship is a central theme in both Exodus and Revelation. Immediately after the Red Sea crossing Moses and Miriam led the people in a song of rejoicing and worship, Read Exodus 15:1-21 and notice its themes. Next read the 7th Trumpet worship that follows the Six Trumpet plagues in Revelation 11:15-19. Notice the striking similarity of themes, especially the establishment of a sanctuary dwelling place for God and his people.
4. Craig Koester comments on this section, “Wrath alone does not move people to repent, which is why continued witness is needed. Readers are assured that God’s justice will be done, but the delay allows time for the church to bear witness to the unrepentant world” (*Revelation*, 436). Reflecting on Rev 11:1-14 and the idea of interrupted judgement (that it’s God’s mercy shown through Jesus’ followers that helps brings people to repentance), how does this change the way you’ve understood this part of Revelation?

For Groups

1. Our chapters this week can be heavy to read through. We know ultimately that God is victorious and there will be light even in the dark times. Share with one another a moment when some sort of physical light has brought you joy. E.g., the lights on a Christmas tree, coming home from a trip to see lights on at home, people waiting for you.
2. Chapter 11:15b states that “he will reign forever and ever.” This is a phrase that is repeated in the Hallelujah Chorus which is one of the most well known songs in Handel’s Messiah. Take time to listen to the song together: Royal Choral Society: ‘Hallelujah Chorus’ from Handel’s Messiah (search YouTube). Make note of what you are experiencing as you listen to the words, and to the voices.
3. Again in chapter 8 we are given the image of the prayers of God’s people ascending up to God like the smoke from incense. Take time this week to pray for places around the world that continue to experience conflict. Pray that they would experience peace and healing from the many impacts of war and civil unrest.

Living it Out

1. In Edmonton we may not see the same types of disasters that are described by the trumpet judgments but there are still so many that experience pain and suffering. What is one thing you could do this week to be a light, be hope to someone or a situation around you?
2. God’s delay in answering the prayers of the martyrs (6:10) is because he does not want “anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2Peter 3:8-10); this introduces the idea of “interrupted judgement.” The Gospel of God’s grace means that humans don’t get what they deserve. How does this idea of grace over judgement (or interrupted judgement) change the way you judge others? How can you live a grace-filled life?



PRAYER, TRUMPETS, AND INTERRUPTED JUDGEMENT

Revelation 8:1-11:19
November 26, 2023 | Tyler Williams

APPROACHING THE TRUMPETS

- The Seventh Seal and the First Trumpet overlap.
- With the First Trumpet, John backs up and tells the narrative from the perspective of the world.
- Loosely based on the plagues against the Egyptians (Exodus 7–11; Ps 78).

APPROACHING THE TRUMPETS

- Seals 1-6 culminate with cataclysmic signs that cause people to ask, “Who is able to stand?” Followed by an interlude with a vision of the redeemed followers of the Lamb standing in the presence of God (7:1-17).
- Trumpets 1-6 begin with plagues against the cosmos and end with humanity under judgement: but people refuse to repent (9:20-21). Followed by an interlude to show how the suffering witness of the faithful helps move others to give glory to God (10:1-11:14).

7 Seals (6:1-8:1)	7 Trumpets (8:2-11:19)	The Dragon & the Beasts (12:1-14:20)	7 Bowls (15:1-16:21)
1: Conquest 2: Violence 3: Economic Hardship 4: Death	1: Earth 1/3 scorched 2: Sea 1/3 to blood 3: Water 1/3 bitter 4: Sun 1/3 darkened		1: Sores 2: Sea to blood 3: Rivers to blood 4: Scorching sun
5: Martyrs 6: Cataclysm	5: Locusts (1 Woe) 6: Calvary (2 Woe)		5: Darkness 6: Demonic Frogs
Interlude (7:1-17)	Interlude (10:1-11:14)		Interlude (16:15-16)
7: Silence (7 Trumpets)	7: Consummation (no 3rd Woe!)		7: Earthquake

Intensification →

SILENCE, PRAYERS, & THE CENSER

- The Seventh Seal brought 30 minutes of silence (8:1-2).
- Trumpets were used in war and worship, here the first six are warnings, while the seventh surprisingly introduces worship.



SILENCE, PRAYERS, & THE CENSER

- The prayers (8:3-5) are the martyr's pleas for divine help (6:10).
- A truly just God cannot allow the injustice against the faithful followers to continue forever.
- Desire for God to manifest his reign on earth, as it is in heaven.



TRUMPETS 1-4: HARM TO CREATION

1. **First Trumpet:** Plague on Earth – Hail and fire, mixed with blood destroy 1/3 of the trees, all the green grass (8:7; Exod 9:13-35).
2. **Second Trumpet:** Plague on Salt Water – A fiery object is thrown into the sea and turns 1/3 to blood, 1/3 of sea creatures died; and 1/3 of ships destroyed (8:8-9; Exod 7:14-25).

TRUMPETS 1-4: HARM TO CREATION

3. **Third Trumpet:** Plague on Fresh Water – A “great star” called “Wormwood” falls on and poisons 1/3 of the fresh water (8:10-11).
4. **Fourth Trumpet:** Plague of Darkness – 1/3 of the sun, moon, and stars were darkened (8:12; Exod 10:21-23).

The first four Trumpets show divine restraint and bring about harm to God's creation (cf. Rom 8:22).



TRUMPET 5/1ST WOE: LOCUSTS

5. **Fifth Trumpet:** The First Woe (8:13-9:12).
- A star falls from heaven (angel or demon?) and releases demonic locusts (Exod 10:4-6; Joel 1:3-4; 2:25) from the Abyss, whose king is Abaddon (9:11).
 - The Locusts are unnatural (9:4-5); grotesque (9:7-10); and demonic (from the pit).
 - Torment unbelievers (9:6), while the followers of the Lamb with the seal are spared (9:4).



TRUMPET 6/2ND WOE: CALVARY

6. **Sixth Trumpet:** Second Woe (9:12-21).
- Four “bound” Angels are released and with their Demonic Cavalry.
 - The Cavalry: Unnatural (9:18-19); grotesque (9:17-19); and demonic.
 - They kill 1/3 of humankind.



TRUMPET 6/2ND WOE: CALVARY

“The rest of humankind who were not killed by these plagues **still did not repent** of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts” (9:20-21).



INTERLUDE: INTERRUPTED JUDGEMENT

Instead of proceeding to the Seventh Trumpet, judgement is interrupted with an extensive interlude (10:1-11:14).

- Another “mighty Angel” (10:1; cf. 5:2) brings the now open scroll to John, who told to eat the scroll and proclaim its contents (cf. Ezek 2-3).



INTERLUDE: INTERRUPTED JUDGEMENT

- Measuring the Temple (11:1-2; cf. Ezek 40-43; Zech 2).
- The Temple – figurative of the church (1Cor 3:16; 6:19; 2Cor 6:16; 1Pet 2:5; Rev 21:16, 23).
- “They will trample on the holy city for 42 months” (11:2) = three and a half years = 1,260 days = half of seven (11:3; 12:6; 12:14; 13:5; cf. Dan 7:25; 12:7).
 - Represents the church age; the already not yet time between Christ’s first and second coming.



INTERLUDE: INTERRUPTED JUDGEMENT

- The Two Witnesses (11:3-14).
- Two Witnesses = two olive trees (Zech 4:3) = two lampstands (Rev 1:20) = the church.
- The reason why there are two goes back to what constitutes a legal witness in the OT (Deut 17:6; 19:15; John 8:17; Matt 18:16; 1Tim 5:19).



INTERLUDE: INTERRUPTED JUDGEMENT

- The Witnesses have prophetic powers like Elijah (2Kings 1; 1Kings 17); and Moses (Exod 4-11).
- The church is to take up the mantle of Moses and Elijah and proclaim and live out God’s message to the world.
- They are martyred by the Beast (11:7), but then after three and a half days are raised to life by God (like the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision: 37:5; 10).



INTERLUDE: INTERRUPTED JUDGEMENT

- “The rest feared *and gave glory to the God of heaven*” (11:13).
- The witness of the followers of the Lamb is effective when only wrath is not.



TRUMPET 7: CONSUMMATION

- Instead of a third woe, the Seventh Trumpet (11:15) brings the consummation:
- “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever” (11:15).



RESPONSE

Interrupted Judgement – It is God’s mercy shown through Jesus’ followers that brings the nations to repentance.

“Wrath alone does not move people to repent, which is why continued witness is needed. Readers are assured that God’s justice will be done, but the delay allows time for the church to bear witness to the unrepentant world” (Craig Koester, *Revelation*, 436; cf. Rom 2:4).



RESPONSE

Understanding Delay – This delay in judgement is ultimately because of God’s love for all peoples.

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2Peter 3:8-10).