

THE REVELATION TO JOHN

THE THINGS FUTURE, REVELATION 4 - 22

THE SEVEN TRUMPET JUDGMENTS, REVELATION 8:1-11:19

INTRODUCTION

- The seventh seal in Revelation 8:1 introduces the trumpet judgments of 8:2-11:19. The new judgments increase in severity and draw the world ever closer to the return of Christ. These judgments are most probably centered in the second half of the tribulation if not beginning it.
- John Walvoord, *The trumpets which sounded and are described in this chapter describe the sequence chronologically of the various judgments that are poured out on the world. As presented in Revelation, the seventh seal includes all seven trumpets just as the seventh trumpet includes all the seven bowls of the wrath of God. The effect is a grand crescendo which indicates that each judgment will come with increased severity and rapidity in the time just before the Second Coming.*
- Thomas Constable, *Now the chronological progression of judgments resumes. The scene that John saw continues to be in heaven . . . Verses 1 through 6 introduce the seven trumpets, just as 4:1–5:14 introduced the seven seals, and 15:1–8 introduces the seven bowls.*
- C. A. Blanchard, *The series of three sevens are really included in one series of seven, that is, the seven trumpets are included under the seventh seal and the seven bowls are included under the seventh trumpet, so that we have in fact a single series in three movements.*
- Charles Swindoll, *In the book of Revelation we foresee God using an intensifying series of judgments to capture the world's attention for the purpose of redemption. In fact, a major purpose of God's judgments in Revelation is to seize the world's attention when it refuses to listen. Swindoll gave note to C. S. Lewis, . . . pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.*
- Kendall Easley, *Now, at last, the Lamb breaks the seventh seal. Here we see and hear about events that belong strictly to God; end-time judgment on sin.*
- Grant Osborne, *With the breaking of this last seal the scroll is now fully open, and the way is now complete for the inaugural events that will end this world and initiate eternity.*

THE SEVENTH SEAL, THE CENSER AND THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS: REVELATION 8:1-17

- A. The opening of the seventh seal (1), *When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.*
1. Charles Ryrie, *With the opening of this last seal the book is now fully opened, and one would expect a holocaust to let loose. Instead, there is silence. All of the choruses of the elders and the cries of the angels cease. The stillness is so intense that it can be felt. This is a silence of expectancy, for this is the last seal. It is also a silence of foreboding that precedes the onslaught of judgments . . . Silence at this point, after all the vocal expressions of worship previously noted, would be an awesome thing.*
 2. Mark Hitchcock, *The silence described in Revelation 8:1 reminds one of Habakkuk's doxology: "The LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him" (2:20). Up to this point the mood in heaven has been that of shouting and the playing of harps. Suddenly it all changes dramatically with the opening of the seventh seal.*
 3. Earl Palmer, *It is the silence of mystery and intense waiting . . . There is communicated in a very dramatic way in this quietness the full and awesome authority of God. Everything must wait for his kingly move.*
 4. Thomas Constable, *For about half an hour awesome silence continued as all of those assembled around the throne waited expectantly to see what God would do next. This is probably a literal "about half an hour," since there are no clues in Revelation that we should interpret time references non-literally . . . The purpose of the silence, in John's vision, is apparently to prepare for what is about to happen, by heightening expectation of God's awesome judgments to follow (cf. Job 4:16; Ps. 46:10; Hab. 2:20; 3:3; Zeph. 1:7–8, 15, 17–18; Zech. 2:13).*
 5. Warren Wiersbe, *The scroll had now been opened completely, and perhaps even turned over; and all of heaven could see God's glorious plan unfolding. Perhaps the heavenly hosts were simply awestruck at what they saw.*
 6. Peter Leithart, *Silence is the prerequisite to hearing, and hearing is central to the Christian life. We walk by faith in the word of God that we hear, rather than by sight. We are silent before Yahweh so that we can be invaded by his voice, so that his trumpet can sound in our ears . . . Silence is an act of faith. Silence is a confession that our words are not determinative. Silence is a mute confession that God speaks the determinative, divine Word.*

B. Seven angels given seven trumpets (2), ***Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.***

1. Charles Ryrie, *With the opening of this seal comes the series of trumpet judgments. It has already been stated that I view these series of judgments as successive, in which case the trumpets come out of and follow the seals.*
2. Mark Hitchcock, *Remember, the scroll that Jesus is opening has seven seals. When the seventh seal is opened, the inheritance will be secured. But when it's opened, the seventh seal unleashes seven more judgments. The worst is still to come . . . There is agreement among futurists that the trumpets represent judgments; however, there is disagreement about the exact nature of the judgments. The disagreement revolves around whether the language is symbolic or should be understood in a more literal sense . . . those who view the trumpet judgments as literal events . . . the first four trumpets are separated from the final three, since the last three are designated as "woe" judgments. The first four describe real astronomical/ecological events that will pummel the earth during the Tribulation.*
3. Thomas Constable, *John saw someone, perhaps God, hand out seven trumpets to a group of seven angels who were standing before the heavenly throne (cf. 1:4; 3:1; 8:6; 15:1). Exactly who these angels were is not clear . . . They are apparently simply seven other angels who have great authority. These trumpets will apparently be different from the trumpet of God that is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and other trumpets mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament (Heb. 12:19; Rev. 1:10; 4:1), although the other trumpets similarly announce God's activity (cf. Ezek. 33:3).*
4. Kendell Easley, *Each angel received one of seven trumpets. This was not the ram's horn (Hebrew shophar) of ancient Israel but the metal instrument of the first century (a long tube with a mouthpiece and a flared end) usually connected with warfare (1 Cor. 14:8). Such trumpets were used for signaling, not for playing melodies, since they did not have valves like modern trumpets.*
5. John Walvoord, *The fact that these are angels' trumpets distinguishes them from the trumpet of God (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thes. 4:16) and from other New Testament trumpets (Heb. 12:19; Rev. 1:10; 4:1).*
6. Charles Swindoll, *To draw the eyes, ears, minds, and hearts of the world to Himself, heavenly angels will sound a series of trumpets—unmistakable signs of His power over the earth. For some, the sounds serve as calls to redemption, but for most, they will become terrifying reminders of wrath.*
7. H. A. Ironside, *Jericho fell at the sound of seven trumpets, and the world, as you and I know it, is going to fall at the sound of the seven trumpets of doom, blown by these angels of judgment.*
8. Warren Wiersbe, *Sounding seven trumpets certainly would announce a declaration of war, as well as the fact that God's anointed King was enthroned in glory and about to judge His enemies (Ps. 2:1–5). As trumpets declared defeat to Jericho, they will ultimately bring defeat to Babylon*
9. Grant Osborne, *. . . the trumpet judgments flow out of the prayers that ascend to God and are accepted by him. In other words, they are God's answers to the prayers of the martyrs in 6:9–11 for vindication and justice.*

C. The golden censer (3-6)

1. An angel appeared who led in worship (3-4), ***And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.***
 - a. another angel
 - 1) Charles Ryrie, *Before the sounding of the trumpets, an interlude occurs with the appearance of another angel. His function as a priest is clear; his identification is less certain. Some understand this to be Christ, our High Priest (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5). Others regard him as an angel, there seems to be no reason why an angel could not perform the functions described here.*
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *The vision at this point is very reminiscent of priestly service as it took place in Israel's tabernacle and temples. Another angel, this one acting as a priest, came into view and stood before the golden incense altar in heaven (cf. 6:9).*
 - b. a golden censer . . . given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints
 - 1) Charles Ryrie, *He adds incense to the prayers of the saints that ascend before God. Though the imagery is of the tabernacle worship, the meaning is now clearer in light of the finished work of Christ. The incense is the sweet savor of His life and work which gives efficacy to the prayers of the saints.*
 - 2) William Newell, *No saint's prayer is forgotten, but has its effect in due season, in bringing in the Kingdom, that is, our Lord's return!*
 - 3) John Walvoord, *In the Old Testament tabernacle a censer made of copper, probably heavy to handle, was used to carry coals from the brazen altar outside the tabernacle to the altar of incense inside. Later, in the temple, Solomon used censers made of gold (1 Kings 7:50; 2 Chron. 4:22).*

- 4) Warren Wiersbe, *In the tabernacle and temple, the golden altar stood before the veil and was used for burning incense (Ex. 30:1–10). This was the ministry Zacharias was performing when the angel told him that he and Elizabeth would have a son (Luke 1:5ff). Burning incense on this altar was a picture of prayer ascending to God (Ps. 141:2).*
- 5) Kendell Easley, *The effectiveness of incense is measured by its smoke. This incense is potent and acceptable, for it went up before God from the angel's hand. Once more we see that what the saints do on earth has a direct effect in the very presence of God.*

c. *all the saints*

- 1) Charles Ryrie, *At the very least they are the saints of the Tribulation who are living on the earth and who pray to God for an outpouring of His wrath on the godless rebels on the earth. But they may include the saints of all time whose longing petitions for the coming of the Lord's kingdom are now about to be answered.*
- 2) Thomas Constable, *The angel received much incense to add to the prayers of the saints, that is, all the saints who were already in heaven. This may indicate that the prayers of the Tribulation saints (6:10) combined with those of the rest of God's people who were requesting God's justice (cf. 5:8; 9:13; 14:18; Ps. 141:2).*
- 3) John Walvoord, *Like the golden bowls of 5:8, however, the golden censer offering incense here is symbolic of the prayers of all the saints.*
- 4) Charles Swindoll, *The offering of incense symbolizes the earlier impatient prayers of the martyred saints in Revelation 6:10: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" We are commonly taught that God's answer to any prayer will be "yes," "no," or "wait." In this case, we observe that unanswered prayers are sometimes stored up until God chooses to answer them in His perfect timing.*
- 5) Kendell Easley, *Are the prayers of the saints added to the incense, or does the incense equal the prayers of the saints on earth? Revelation 5:8 suggests the second interpretation. Thus we may better translate, "He was given much incense to offer, which is the prayers of all the saints."*

2. The angel cast the censer on the earth (5), ***Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.***

- a. Charles Ryrie, *After prayer ascends, judgment descends (v.5). The angel fills his censer with fire from the altar (not the golden altar before the throne but the bronze altar of judgment), and he casts it onto the earth. There follows a token or preview of judgments . . . a foretaste of the trumpet judgments to follow.*
- b. Thomas Constable, . . . *the angel took fiery coals from the altar, placed them in his censer, and threw them out onto the earth. These coals of fire, symbolic of judgment, produced symbols of catastrophe: thunder, lightning, and earthquake (cf. Ezek. 10:2–7). The censer thus became a symbolic instrument of judgment in response to prayer.*
- c. Grant Osborne, . . . *the priestly angel becomes an avenging angel in 8:5. The Levitical symbolism of 8:3–4 becomes apocalyptic, as fire from the altar is hurled to earth and spawns the storms of judgment.*
- d. Warren Wiersbe, . . . *the angel put the incense on the altar (presented the prayers before God) and then cast the coals from the altar to the earth! The parallel in Ezekiel 10 indicates that this symbolized God's judgment; and the effects described in Revelation 8:5 substantiate this view. A storm is about to begin! (see Rev. 4:5; 11:19; 16:18) . . . 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.*
- e. Craig Keener, *The sufferings of God's people invite his intervention, even if his time is not always our time (Ex. 2:23–25; Luke 18:7). What takes place in heaven clearly affects what occurs on earth (Rev. 8:5), and though we cannot always see the processes, many judgments come in response to human prayers.*

3. The time for trumpets had come (6), ***Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.***

a. *Anticipation*

- 1) Kendell Easley, *As the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them, we move into the time of the Great Tribulation, explicitly mentioned in Revelation 7:14. As we will shortly see, with the blowing of the first trumpet, the earth moves into a phase of divine judgment that it cannot possibly survive intact. The unraveling of the world now begins.*
- 2) Grant Osborne, *The dramatic power of the seals, trumpets, and bowls now resumes after the interlude of 7:1–17 and the events of 8:2–5. The divinely guided movement toward the consummation of world history and the beginning of eternity commences once more.*

- b. The source of the trumpet judgments.
 - 1) There is dispute as to the source of the trumpet judgments, are they the direct judgment of God or the result of human actions like nuclear and chemical warfare, global warming, etc.?
 - 2) Mark Hitchcock, . . . *a careful look seems to indicate the trumpet and bowl judgments are direct judgments from the hand of God, and not the result of human activity.*
 - 3) There is a key reason that these events are from the hand of God. Those experiencing the events on earth acknowledge that they are coming from God, note Revelation 11:13; 16:9, 11, 21.
- c. The time-frame of the trumpet judgments.
 - 1) Many put the trumpet judgments in the first half of the Tribulation.
 - 2) Mark Hitchcock, *I locate the seven trumpet judgments in the second half of the Tribulation for one simple reason - severity. The fourth seal judgment kills one-fourth of earth's population. The sixth trumpet judgment, kills one-third of those who are left. This totals one-half of earth's population. If the trumpets are placed in the first half of the Tribulation, along with the seals, then one-half of this people are dead "before" the great Tribulation even begins. This seems to go against the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:21-22, where He says that the final half of the Tribulation will be the worst time period in human history.*
 - 3) Thomas Constable, *Many futurist interpreters believe that this lull marks the middle of Daniel's 70th week and that the "birth pangs" now give way to the Great Tribulation.*

D. The first four trumpets (7-13)

1. Introductory notes

- a. Kendell Easley, *The blowing of the first four trumpets devastates the world of nature as a warning for people to repent of their sins . . .*
- b. Grant Osborne, *The intensification of judgment continues, with the trumpets destroying a third of the earth after the seals destroyed a quarter of the earth.*
- c. Charles Swindoll, *As we arrive at the seven trumpet judgments beginning in chapter 8, however, that temporary restraint of God's wrath will be removed. The first four trumpets will sound in short, rapid, staccato blasts, taking up only six verses. In contrast, the events surrounding the fifth through the seventh trumpet judgments will extend from chapter 9 to 11. The first four trumpet blasts will partly impact both the ecosystem and atmosphere of the earth, drastically altering living conditions on the planet . . . The limits placed on these judgments remind us that God will still be exercising restraint in the early stages of the tribulation, allowing room for repentance and salvation even in the midst of wrath.*

2. The first trumpet (7)

- a. The judgment (7a), ***The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth.***
 - 1) Charles Ryrie, *Of course, symbols are often used in this book, but they are so stated. Here there is no indication that these are symbols, so it seems better to understand them plainly.*
 - 2) John Walvoord, *It is not clear how the hail and fire could be mixed with blood, but in a supernatural event this was possible.*
 - 3) Robert Thomas, *At several points the prophet Amos uses God's miraculous work of deliverance from Egypt as a reference point for the way He will deal with His people in the future (cf. Amos 2:10; 4:10; 8:8-9; 9:5-7).*
 - 4) Grant Osborne, *This is built on the seventh Egyptian plague (Exod 9:13-35), in which God sent hail mixed with lightning and thunder, the worst storm in Egypt's history, destroying all vegetation (Exod 9:18).*
 - 5) Kendell Easley, *This is similar to what God had predicted through the Old Testament prophet Joel: "I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth blood and fire and billows of smoke" (Joel 2:30). What happened when this storm reached earth is like—but much beyond—the seventh of the plagues on Egypt (Exod. 9:13-35) . . . John is not concerned to provide information about the mechanism for this disaster, other than the hand of God.*
- b. The results (7b), ***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.***
 - 1) Charles Ryrie, *This shows clearly that God is in complete control, allowing the judgment to affect only one-third of the earth but all of the grass . . . The judgment of the first trumpet presents a grim picture of devastation on the vegetation of the world.*
 - 2) John Walvoord, *The effect of having a third of the earth an a third of the trees . . . burned up will be catastrophic because it will destroy at least a third of the earth's crops.*

- 3) Charles Swindoll, *This no doubt will decimate crops and forests, filling the air with smoke and ash. Though this first judgment is not directly aimed at human beings, it will indirectly affect food supplies, the global economy, and health on a massive scale.*
 - 4) Kendell Easley, *In modern terms, this is worldwide ecological catastrophe: a third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. Modern industrial damage to earth's environment is nothing compared to this.*
 - 5) Warren Wiersbe, *One can well imagine how this would affect not only the balance of nature, but also the food supply. The Greek word for trees usually means "fruit trees"; and the destruction of pasture lands would devastate the meat and milk industries.*
3. The second trumpet (8-9)
- a. The judgment (8), ***The 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.***
 - 1) Charles Ryrie, *The instrument of the second judgment is described as "something like a great mountain burning with fire." It is not necessary to attempt to find something in the realm of experience that can match this description. John really does not say what the instrument of judgment will be, but he clearly reveals its effect.*
 - 2) John Walvoord, *The explanation of a huge mountain being cast into the sea may be a reference to a large object falling from heaven.*
 - 3) Thomas Constable, *John was clearly describing supernatural interventions, not natural happenings.*
 - 4) Kendall Easley, *We aren't meant to know the mechanism of this destruction. It is enough that he who created sea life on the fifth day of Creation now destroys a third of that life (Gen. 1:20-23).*
 - 5) Warren Wiersbe, *Some interpreters take "the sea" to mean the Mediterranean Sea. However, this would make a relatively small impact on the world, since the Mediterranean covers only 969,100 square miles and averages just 5,000 feet deep. It is likely that all the major bodies of saltwater are included in this judgment.*
 - b. The results (9), ***A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.***
 - 1) Charles Ryrie, *A third part of the sea will become blood, causing the death of a third part of the life in the sea and the destruction of a third part of the shipping world. The far-reaching implications of such judgments are staggering to the mind. Concerning the destruction of marine organisms, for instance, Henry Morris says, "These constitute the lowest and most basic components of many of the world's food chains, so their destruction must produce a domino effect on many higher forms of life.*
 - 2) John Walvoord, . . . *for a large material object to fall into the sea. . . Such, of course, would be devastating as it would cause mountainous tidal waves . . . Reference to blood as a divine judgment is found in the plagues of Egypt (cf. Ex. 7:14-22).*
 - 3) Charles Swindoll, *This enormous devastation strikes both life in its depths and ships on its surface (8:8-9). The impact on human life would be inestimable. Those who depend on ocean life for food would suffer hunger and hardship on an unprecedented scale. The destruction of seafaring vessels would cause disruption in global trade as well as a crisis of security when the navies of world powers are significantly reduced.*
 - 4) Kendell Easley, . . . *the fraction means that the loss is critical but not yet fatal, a severe warning designed to bring about repentance. Just try to imagine how the world's nations will try to deal with disposing of billions of marine corpses.*
 - 5) Warren Wiersbe, *Considering that the oceans occupy about three fourths of the earth's surface, you can imagine the extent of this judgment. The pollution of the water and the death of so many creatures would greatly affect the balance of life in the oceans, and this would undoubtedly lead to further insoluble problems.*
4. The third trumpet (10-11)
- a. The judgment (10-11a), ***The 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. The name of the star is Wormwood.***
 - 1) The object
 - a) John Walvoord, *The star falling from heaven was undoubtedly a large object naturally blazing as it entered the atmosphere and apparently having chemicals that made the water bitter . . . This fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water; in other words, waters other than the oceans.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *Next a great star (perhaps a meteor or comet) fell from heaven on the fresh water sources on earth. Sometimes stars represent angels (e.g., 9:1), but here something mineral seems to be in view. This star too was on fire (vv. 7, 8) and was burning like a torch.*

- c) Charles Swindoll, *As if the judgments on land and sea weren't enough to bring the world to its knees, the third trumpet will bring another dreadful blow (8:10–11). John saw an object like a star falling from heaven, which impacted one third of the fresh water springs, rivers, and bodies of water.*
- 2) Its name
- Charles Ryrie, *The instrument of judgment will be a great star that is labeled Wormwood . . . Compare Proverbs 5:4 and Lamentations 3:15.*
 - John Walvoord, *Wormwood is a bitter desert plant mentioned only here in the New Testament. It is mentioned seven times in the Old Testament where it represents sorrow and bitter judgment (Deut. 29:18; Prov. 5:4; Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7) . . . possibly a reference to the experience of the Children of Israel at Marah (Ex. 15:23-25) where the waters were bitter and a tree had to be cast into the water to sweeten it.*
 - Thomas Constable, *Wormwood means bitter (cf. Deut. 29:18, et al.). It was the name of a bitter herb that was not fatally poisonous but harmful. It was also a symbol of divine punishment (Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7).*
- b. The results (11b), ***A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been made bitter.***
- Charles Ryrie, *The judgment of the third trumpet affects one-third of the fresh water supply of the world (again reminding us that God is in complete control). The waters will become bitter (apparently lethal), causing many to die.*
 - John Walvoord, *Here the effect seems to be chemical and physical, and the result is that many people died from the waters that had become bitter. These judgments coincided with what Christ predicted that the events of the Great Tribulation would exceed any judgment of the past or future (Matt. 24:21).*
 - Charles Swindoll, . . . wormwood is a “bitter, aromatic herb ... with clusters of small, greenish yellow flowers” that grows in desert regions and often symbolizes the bitterness of life. This name indicates that the waters that had once provided fresh nourishment to one third of the world’s population will become polluted and poisonous. As a result, many will perish (8:11).
 - Kendell Easley, *So far John has witnessed destruction of a third of the features on the earth’s surface. Next he observes a similar fate among objects in the sky.*
5. The fourth trumpet (12), ***The 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.***
- Charles Ryrie, *The fourth judgment will affect the sun, moon, stars, and the uniformity of the day-night cycle. The sun, moon and stars will be affected by one-third. This might mean one of two things: the twenty-four-hour cycle is reduced to 16 hours, or the output of the power of the sun, moon, and stars is reduced by one-third. . . The Lord Himself predicted in the Olivet Discourse these “signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars” (Lue 21:25). Perhaps this shortening of the days and nights is what is referred to in Matthew 24:22 . . .*
 - John Walvoord, *This trumpet relates to heaven in contrast to the three preceding judgments which fell on the land, sea, rivers, and fountains of water . . . It is far better to take this passage in its literal sense which is in keeping with all the prophecies preceding this period which describe it as a time of unprecedented trouble.*
 - Thomas Constable, *Darkness is a common symbol of judgment in the Old Testament, and the day of the Lord was to be a time of both figurative and literal darkness (Amos 5:18; cf. Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:2; Mark 13:24). The darkening of the heavenly bodies predicted in this verse also serves to warn of more judgment to come.*
 - Charles Swindoll, *Those places in the area hit hardest by these plagues will have already lost power and deteriorated into desperation and despair. Add natural darkness to this situation and the result will be anarchy and chaos. Rioting, looting, and crime will exacerbate the horrors experienced around the globe.*
 - Grant Osborne, *The darkness here prepares for the fifth bowl judgment when the kingdom of the beast is “darkened” and his followers “gnaw their tongues in agony” (16:10).*
 - Kendell Easley, . . . in Genesis God had pledged Noah that “as long as the earth endures ... day and night will never cease” (Gen. 8:22). *What John now describes must be the beginning of the end of the world.*

- E. A warning concerning the next three trumpets (13), *Then 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!”*
1. Charles Ryrie, *At this point John heard and saw “an eagle” (not “angel” as in KJV), announcing woes to come. These will be inflicted on “those who dwell on the earth” (v.13). The means of punishment will be the last three trumpets of the angels that were yet to sound. Terrible as the first four trumpet judgments will be, the last three will be worse and are thus designated “woes.” The warning is that trumpets five, six, and seven will bring a heightened degree of divine displeasure and consequent disasters.*
 2. Thomas Constable, *John next saw, on earth, an eagle that interrupted the angels by flying through the sky in mid-heaven. This eagle warning those living on the earth to beware of the last three trumpet judgments. The eagle announced the last three trumpet judgments, which are also referred to as woes (9:12; 10:14). They are especially bad because they have people rather than the objects of nature as their targets. There are several examples of double woes in Scripture (18:10, 16, 19; Ezek. 16:23), but a triple woe announces an even worse calamity. The objects of these judgments are earth-dwellers, and their judgment is partially in response to the prayers of the Tribulation martyrs (cf. 6:10).*
 3. Kendell Easley, *Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth.” What a contrast to the cry, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,” spoken by the four living creatures around the heavenly throne. Three horrors correspond to the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels, each progressively worse.*
 4. Warren Wiersbe, *Could this be the eagle like living creature that John saw worshiping before the throne? (Rev. 4:7–8) Will God send it on this special mission? We cannot say for sure, but it is a possibility.*

SUMMARY

- Charles Swindoll, *The judgments described in Revelation 8 will be so dreadful that no amount of government aid, relief efforts, or advanced preparation will be able to bring recovery . . . God won’t stop until His plan is accomplished. This is a hard lesson to accept—and even harder to live through. The sad reality of the first four trumpet judgments is that they are only the beginning. In our own lives, we can choose to heed the warnings of God’s Word, or we can harden our hearts. Either way, God eventually will work out His plan, which is our sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3).*
- Kendell Easley, *Earth, sea, rivers, and heavens that God has sustained virtually unchanging for eons at last are brought to catastrophe. Is there any wonder that Bible scholars call this the Great Tribulation?*
- Grant Osborne, *Each judgment affects a different part of life—the material world (the first), food supply, trade and commerce (the second and third), heat and light (the fourth). These judgments together demonstrate that the earth-dwellers, those who live only for this world, have chosen foolishly, for only in God can there be true life. The things of this world will always turn on us and leave us unsatisfied and bereft. We dare not depend on them.*