

Week 4: Chapters 8-11

The Seven Trumpets

For this session make sure to use the handout on seals, trumpets, and bowls.

What elements of Exodus 7-10 do you see in the trumpet judgments?

Structure for chapters 8-11:

- Structure of the seals:
 - First four are related: Horsemen
 - Seal 5 and 6 are connected – finish with a question: “Who can stand?”
 - Interlude – even though judgment seemed immanent with the 6th seal
 - The Interlude addressed the issue of “Who can stand?”
 - The answer was “Those sealed by the Lamb.”
 - There is an overlap between the seals and the next judgments: trumpets
 - 7th seal – silence suggesting judgment
 - Throne room vision
- Structure of the trumpets:
 - First four are related: plagues of earth, sea, fresh water, & sky
 - Trumpet 5 and 6 are connected as “woes” of demonic armies
 - They finish with an issue: no one repented
 - Interlude – even though it seems judgment is immanent
 - The interlude addressed the problem of ‘no one repented’
 - The answer is the faithful people of God suffering and giving witness
 - When that witness finishes, punishment is reduced (1/10)
 - People give glory to God
 - Throne room vision

The First Four Trumpets

The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

“The rest of humankind, who were not killed by these plagues, **did not repent** of the works of their hands or give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. And they **did not repent** of their murders or their sorceries or their fornication or their thefts.”

-Revelation 9:20-21

“The gruesome parabolic description of the demons is intended to shock the true people of God out of their complacent condition, as they realize what spiritual specters really lurk behind the idols.”

-G.K. Beale commentary

We want to ask the wrong question: We ask, “When?” but the question being posed to us here seems to be “Whose side do you give your allegiance to?”

Are you sealed by the Lamb or judged by the Lamb?

Are you ruled by God who created all things or Abaddon the destroyer?

Quotes to consider:

“The point is not to predict a series of events. The point is to evoke the meaning of divine judgment which is impending on the sinful world”

Bauckham, Theology p.20

“Again the author is not describing what will happen but using images to create a sense of the horrible nature of undergoing God’s wrath.”

Witherington, Revelation p.156

Chapter 10: Angel and a Scroll

What might the 7 Thunders be?

John is given a scroll to eat. Why?

Chapter 11: The Temple and Two Witnesses

Descriptions of the people of God

11:1-2 described as –

11:3-13 described as –

12:13-17 described as – ?

Formulas equaling 3 ½ years or in one case 3 ½ days are used:

11:2 – 42 months gentiles trample the outer court

11:3 – 1,260 days witnesses testify

11:9-11 – 3 ½ days witnesses dead

12:6 – 1,260 days woman in wilderness cared for

12:14 – time, times, and a half a time woman nourished in wilderness

13:5 – 42 months beast exercised authority

Is it possible these visions could all be telling the same story?

What does 3 ½ signal to the reader?

Issue: No one repented. Is it addressed?

- Judgment in Old Testament:
 - Isaiah 6:13 – 1/10 are left from judgment
 - Amos 5:3 – 9/10 perish from judgment
 - 1 Kings 19:18 – only 7,000 faithful left
- “At that moment there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.”
Revelation 11:13
 - What happened?
 - What changed?
- “Therefore, the visions in Revelation 11 will disclose to readers how the suffering of God’ servants mysteriously helps to bring about the conversion of the ungodly.” Koester p.103

The Seventh Trumpet