



A Study of Revelation

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Week Five – The 144,000 and Seven Trumpets (Revelation 7-9)

I. The 144,000 and the _____ (Chapter 7)ⁱ

◆ _____ Intermission Period (1-3)

- A heavenly image appears of four angels holding back the four winds from the four corners of the earth (Isaiah 11:12). Angels are often associated with forces of nature: wind (7:1), fire (14:18), and water (16:5).
- A fifth angel appears with God’s seal, commanding the other four angels to hold back the destructive winds until the servants of God have been “sealed on their foreheads.”

◆ 144,000 Jewish Witnesses (4-8)

- In Scripture, seals imply _____ and _____. Today, God’s redeemed are sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14). The 144,000 are sealed by the Father’s name on their foreheads. The seal protects them from the coming judgment of God in the seven trumpets.
- 144,000 signifies completeness.
- The 144,000 are all _____.
- 12,000 Jews from _____ are redeemed during the Tribulation to be witnesses for the gospel (Revelation 14:3). The list of tribes has key differences from
 - *Levi* (*Numbers 18:20-24; Joshua 13:14*) –
 - *Manasseh* –
- ❖ Other Descriptions of the 144,000 (Revelation 14:1-5)

◆ **Multitude of Redeemed (9-17)**

- These redeemed are from all “nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” (5:9).
- They are _____ (not sitting) before the throne, differentiating them from the 24 elders (the Church), because they were delivered from out of the Tribulation (vs. 14).
- Yet their eternal reward is the same as the those of the Church (vss. 15-17; see Matthew 20:1-16).

Comparison of the Redeemed in Revelation 7

Revelation 7:1-8	Revelation 7:9-17
Jews	Gentiles
Numbered – 144,000	Not numbered, nor could be
Sealed on earth	Standing in heaven before God’s throne

II. The Seventh _____: The Seven _____ (Chapters 8-9)

With the opening of the seventh seal come the seven trumpet judgments, which are followed by the bowl (vial) judgments, finally culminating in the destruction of Babylon and the Return of Christ. Something to note is that the areas directly affected by the trumpet and bowl judgments are the same.

Comparison of Trumpet and Bowl Judgments

The Trumpets	The Judgment	The Bowls
8:1-7		16:1-2
8:8-9		16:3
8:10-11		16:4-7
8:12-13		16:8-9
9:1-2		16:10-11
9:13-21		16:12-16
11:15-19		16:17-21

There are some key differences between the trumpet and bowl judgments, however:

◆ **Seventh Seal – *The Seven Trumpets (8:1-6)***

- During this silence, seven angels were given seven trumpets (*shofar*, Hebrew; *salpinx*, Greek). Trumpets served five important purposes among the Jewish nation:
 - To announce ceremonial _____ (*Josh. 6:1; 1 Chr. 15:24*)
 - To call people _____ (*Numbers 10:1-10*)
 - To announce _____ (*Numbers 10:9*)
 - To announce the _____ (*Numbers 29:1*)
 - To warn of the coming day of the _____ (*Joel 2:1*)
- Also during this silence, an angel pours the golden censer onto the golden altar in heaven.

➤ **First Trumpet – _____ *Struck (8:7)***

- “Hail and fire mingled with blood” reminds us of the _____ plague that God sent against Egypt (*Exodus 9:18-26*). The prophet Joel also promised “blood and fire” in the last days (*Joel 2:30*).
- The target for this judgment is the earth’s green vegetation, of which 1/3 is burned up.

➤ **Second Trumpet – _____ *Struck (8:8-9)***

- Turning water into blood reminds us of the _____ plague that God sent against Egypt (*Exodus 7:19-21*).
- Note that John did not say that a burning mountain was cast out of heaven, but that “something like” a burning mountain was cast into the sea. Regardless of what it is, the result is a trifold of calamity:
 - 1/3 of the sea waters turn to blood
 - 1/3 of marine life dies
 - 1/3 of the ships at sea are destroyed

Considering that about ___ of the earth’s surface is ocean, one can imagine the extent of this catastrophe.

➤ **Third Trumpet – _____ Struck (8:10-11)**

- This star falls on the earth’s fresh water supply, both rivers and “springs of water” (e.g., wells, lakes, and river sources).
 - There are about ___ principal rivers in the world, from the Nile (4,180 miles long) to the Tigris (1,180 miles long). In the United States, 75 large rivers are reported, starting with the Mississippi River (3,710 miles long).
 - One third of these rivers and their sources will become so polluted that the drinking their waters will be certain death.
- _____ is where our English word *absinthe* comes from, which is a distilled, highly alcoholic beverage popular in some countries of the world. It literally means “undrinkable,” and in the Old Testament it was synonymous with sorrow and great devastation (Deuteronomy 29:18; Proverb 5:4; Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15; Lamentations 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7).

➤ **Fourth Trumpet – _____ Struck (8:12)**

- Destruction of heavenly lights reminds us of the _____ plague that God sent against Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23).
- While the first three trumpets affect 1/3 parts of the earth, the fourth plague affects the entire globe, because its attack is on the world’s source of light and energy—the sun. With 1/3 less sunlight, there will be 1/3 less energy to support the life systems on earth.

❖ *“Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth!” (8:13)*

At this point, an angel (most manuscripts have “eagle”) flies throughout heaven pronouncing three “woes.”

- The three “woes” refer to the final three trumpet judgments about to be blown (Revelation 9:12; 11:14).
- The phrase “inhabitants of the earth” is found twelve times in Revelation (3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8). Literally stated, “them that _____ on the earth,” it does not merely mean the earth’s occupants but a specific *kind* of people: those who live *for* the world and the things it offers (1 John 2:15-17).

➤ **Fifth Trumpet – Army of _____ from the Bottomless Pit (9:1-12)**

- The “star fallen from heaven” is a person. This “fallen star” was ejected from heaven long ago—_____ himself (see Isaiah 14:12-14; Luke 10:18).
 - He is the “king” who rules over these spirits (9:11), and his names are “Abaddon” (Hebrew) and “Apollyon” (Greek), both of which mean “_____.”
- Satan “was given the key” to the bottomless pit, implying that he does not have possession of it until God’s appointed time.
- The “bottomless pit” (literally “pit of the abyss”) is described as the abode of demons (Luke 8:31).
 - The Antichrist (“beast”) ascends out of this pit (Revelation 11:7; 17:8).
 - Satan is bound there during the Millennial Reign of Christ (Revelation 20:1-3).
- Out of the billowing smoke which darkened the air came locusts, the _____ plague that God sent against Egypt (Exodus 10:1-20). However, these are not like the physical insects (9:4-9):
 - They are forbidden to destroy vegetation, but commanded to torment ungodly humanity (4-5).
 - Their warhorse-like bodies suggest that they are powerful.
 - Their human-like faces and hair suggest that they are intelligent spiritual beings.
 - Their lion-like teeth suggest that they are ferocious.
 - Their crown, armor, and wings suggest that they are a swift and majestic army.
 - Their scorpion-like tails describe that their torment, though not fatal, is excruciating.
- The pain from these demonic locusts do not kill, but it is so intense that humans will want to die and actually _____ but, strangely, death will flee from them (Jeremiah 8:3).

➤ **Sixth Trumpet – _____ from the Euphrates River (the East) (9:13-21)**

- Each angel is charged with leading a part of a vast army (totaling 200 million!) sent to kill a _____ of humankind.

❖ “*But the rest of mankind...did not repent*” (9:20-21)

A fourth of the world’s population has already been killed with the opening of the fourth seal (Revelation 6:8); now, with a third of the remaining population being killed, _____ of the world’s population will be dead by the end of the sixth trumpet—3 ½ years from the beginning of the Tribulation.

Yet the remaining inhabitants of the earth persist in their wickedness even while God is judging them.

With the end of the sixth trumpet, we come to the midpoint of the Tribulation period, 3½ years have passed. During this time, despite the cataclysmic judgments that have been raining down on the earth, the Antichrist has been seen as a peacemaker and a special friend to Israel. However, in the middle of the Tribulation (Revelation 10-14), his true character will be revealed. Not only will God’s judgment continue and intensify, but the wrath of the Antichrist will now be poured out onto the nation of Israel.

ⁱ Notes for this section have been adapted from excerpts from Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Victorious* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985).