

Earth-Dwellers Beware! (Part 1)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 August 2021

Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] Good to see you. Where have you been? Oh, I've been. Good to see you. Glad to be back. Glad to be out of the camper. It was good. It worked. Gradually figured it out. Things worked for the most part.

It was really good to go back east to Fargo, North Dakota and see my niece married and all her sisters and brother and my sister and her husband.

I have not seen them for years, so it was a great delight to see them. I just wish the drive was shorter. It was great. We had time in Estes, we were able to be in Estes.

The camping spot was not great, but we were in an RV resort, which I'm figuring out does not mean what I thought it meant, because we were in really an RV parking lot with views of RVs all the way around.

[1 : 20] So not my idea, but there was still the big Thompson River was nearby and we were still relaxing and that was good. Dave's barbecue, that's always good.

And then last weekend was a great time together, fellowshiping, laughing, a lot of laughing. I don't know, Debbie, that was a lot of laughing. Susan.

That was wonderful. I know, I'm not making fun of them. Actually, we enjoyed that thoroughly.

Laughing is very healing. So, and we had a time of sharing last Sunday morning as you all were meeting here at 10.09.

We were meeting there at 10.09. And we shared scripture, we shared song, we shared testimony. So it was just great. Good, good, good time.

Looking forward to next year already. So I hope more can come. One announcement before I begin. Next week, we plan to do a review.

[2 : 25] A number of weeks ago, we did a review of the first three chapters in Revelation looking at the seven churches. That was, I think, very fruitful to take time and stand back and kind of look and compare the churches and what Jesus particularly was interested in and what he was not interested in.

And to kind of get a handle on what church is really about. Now we need to review, after this week, five chapters from chapter four through today, through eight.

So before we get any further, I want to kind of take a break, come together next Sunday morning and kind of discuss some really important things. And I think two great themes come out in these last chapters.

One is worship. There are three chapters in Revelation, four, five, and seven, where worship is focused on.

And that's very, very important. Talk about that as well as, what about all this judgment that God is doing? How do we put that together and how does it make sense today and that kind of thing.

[3 : 29] So that's next week. So please come. Be part of that. So today we come to Revelation chapter eight. We are moving.

Okay. The lamb opens the seventh seal. We've been waiting for this since chapter five. So if you're able, please stand as I read from Revelation chapter eight.

We're just going to look at the, just this chapter. Revelation eight, beginning of verse one. When the lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer.

He was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne.

[4 : 37] And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints rose before God from the hand of the angel. 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. Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

The first angel blew his trumpet and there followed hail and fire mixed with blood. And these were thrown upon the earth. 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.

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. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died. And a third of the ships were destroyed.

[5 : 55] 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. A third of the waters became wormwood. And many people died from the water because it had been made bitter.

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.

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.

[7 : 10] So it reads. Let us pray. Father, grant us as always wisdom to not just hear and understand what's going on but know how it relates to us today.

Grant us clarity of thought. Help us to see, Lord, through all these symbols, through all these signs, what you're doing and why.

Let us never forget that the prayers of all the saints are bound up in what you are doing. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Please be seated. So when we were camping I had lots of opportunity to sit.

That's what I do on vacation. I sit. We even got a rocker so I could sit better. I'm feeling really old right now. But I was able to read and instead of reading Revelation for study and teaching, you know, I've got to put something together for Sunday, I was able to just kind of sit back and read.

[8 : 31] Just kind of sit back and get the bigger picture. Which is important in Revelation because it's easy to get lost in the details. In the middle of the forest and you can't, you're looking at the tree and you can't see the hole.

So this gave me a chance to kind of back up and look a little bit. And I think that was fruitful. I think that was fruitful.

So I want to begin with a question because we're getting into a lot of judgment here. Why does God bring severe judgments on earth?

He's done it in the past. He does it in the present and He will continue to do it. Why does He do that? Why does He bring severe judgments on the earth?

Well, it's the same reason He brought plagues on Egypt before the Exodus. To wake people up. To get attention.

[9 : 34] Time after time during the plagues of Egypt the Lord reminded Moses and the people of Israel why He was doing it.

In Exodus chapter 7 He says it was I do these things that you might know that I am Yahweh. Chapter 8 of Exodus.

So that you will know that there is no one like me. chapter 8 of Exodus. So that you will know I am in the midst of the earth.

Not just far away in heaven I have come down. Chapter 9 of Exodus. To show you my power. Why? So that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.

Chapter 14 of Exodus. So I will get the glory. In other words all the plagues of Egypt the plagues of Revelation they're about the Lord.

[10 : 43] If you miss anything else if you don't grab anything else grab that. What this is all about is God saying here I am.

Are you looking yet? Are you listening yet? Are you paying attention yet? Woe, woe, woe to the earth dwellers.

Beware earth dwellers. I'm coming. If you have ignored me so far you will not be able to ignore this. What will you do with it? So in Revelation 8 we're seeing the same thing. Notice how it ends in verse 13. He does the first four trumpets and before he begins the next three trumpets it's a big warning.

By the way trumpets are a warning blast, right? They get people's attention. Seals are quiet. You know opening the seals, right? It's just something's hidden something's protected so it's opening it up and revealing something.

[11 : 51] Now the trumpets blast warn call okay? And if you didn't listen to the first four trumpets the eagle is saying you haven't seen anything yet because the last three trumpets it gets very intense.

Okay? Here though what we do see is that even as this judgment intensifies we see in the seals right there is one quarter is you know there's a limited judgment one quarter was the limit of the judgment.

Now in the trumpets we're going to see it gets bigger now it's one third. One third is bigger than one fourth right? Doesn't sound like it but it is. Right? It's getting more intense getting more severe but even though it's more intense and more severe it's still limited.

It's still restrained. God is still restraining himself. It's not till we get to the bowls that he pours out the whole thing. See with the seals and the trumpets it's okay but not all of it just part of it it's still restrained and I think the point is to get people to wake up and repent.

God is giving time. God is giving people time. He's giving people opportunity to wake up see their creator and respond appropriately.

[13 : 31] though it is judgment it is judgment with patience. It is judgment with reserve with grace with mercy.

So we come to chapter 8 verse 1 and finally the scroll of the future is opened. We first saw the scroll back in chapter 5 remember chapter 5 talks about I saw the one sitting on the throne and in his right hand was a scroll that was sealed with seven seals.

Here's this scroll what is the scroll apparently excuse me apparently the scroll is what the future is all about. It reveals the future how the world will end.

Well we all want to know that. We want to know what the future holds. How is the world going to end? That's what's in this scroll and yet chapter 5 starts out with who's worthy to open the scroll? Who deserves to open this scroll? Not just who's holy but who's worthy? Who gets the unique privilege to open the scroll of the future?

[14 : 48] And no one was found. Dramatic no one in heaven on earth was found worthy. And then one of the elders says to John hold on there is one. It's the lion of Judah.

He hears about a lion of Judah. He has conquered. He's worthy to open the scroll and then John hears lion turns and sees what? Not a lion at all but a lamb.

In fact not even a looking victorious kind of lamb but a slain lamb beaten and bloody. He's worthy. worthy. And the reason he's worthy is because he gave his life and he redeemed the sinners who rebelled against him.

That's what makes him uniquely worthy to open this scroll. So he sees the lamb. He's worthy. He has paid the debt of sinners.

All who turn and trust in him are now set free from their sins. He's worthy. So then chapter 6 begins to open the seals and the first four go real fast.

[15 : 59] The four horsemen. One, two, three, four. And we saw that those tragedies of the first four horsemen are things that happen all throughout history. In fact they're similar to what Jesus describes in Matthew 24 which Jesus says these are wars rumors of wars famines these kind of things are always going on.

Jesus says this is not at all the end. These judgments of the first four horsemen are things that are birth pangs. They're what is it?

Not the end but birth pangs. The beginning of birth pangs. That's what he said. These are just going on all the time. And so the first four seals show us things that we see all throughout history.

We saw in the first century we're seeing all throughout history. These are not future things these are things that are already going on. So we see the first four. Then we see the fifth seal open and it's

the picture of the souls.

I saw souls living people without bodies under the altar before the throne. This altar we're going to see this altar again in chapter 8.

[17:09] And these souls are crying out to the Lord how long oh Lord how long till you avenge our blood. How long must we wait until you do the right thing the just thing.

How long will evil get away with evil? How long before you make things right? And the answer not until the very last martyr has been killed.

that's going to be a while. Then they open the sixth seal and it's like the end.

Sun, moon, stars, stars fall from the sky, mountains flee away, islands are at it. It's the end, isn't it? Sounds like the very end.

It's like it's a long view. Here's what history is going on. Saints will be waiting for their vengeance. and then the sixth seal is like it just telescopes forward with a quick snapshot of the very end.

[18:23] And then we come to chapter seven. So we only have six of the seven seals. Then we take a break and we go to chapter seven which gives us a picture of two different groups. Or are they different groups?

Because one of the questions throughout all this is what about the believers? What about Christians? What happens to them more than all this other stuff is going on? And the wars and the famines and the deaths and the pestilence and the plagues and all this kind of stuff.

What happens to them? And so we get kind of a little aside back at the farm view of here's the ones on earth. They're called Israelites although when you read the list of Israelites there in chapter seven it's all different.

And one tribe, at least one tribe is missing. And so are they really Israelites? Well are they Israelites? Are they just so they're but with them they're in the tribulation and they are sealed. In other words they're protected. So all believers on earth who are serving God are protected from the judgments. The judgments are on them.

[19:28] And then you see another group. So it's just like chapter five where he hears lion but he sees lamb. Chapter seven the same way. He hears Israelites 12,000, 12,000.

That's what he hears. When he turns to look what he sees is a great multitude that no one can count from every tribe and nation and tongue.

So it's kind of like are they the same group or different groups from different perspectives? But I think they're really the same group. One is heard about the other one is seen.

So they're protected and they're rewarded. They see this great multitude at the end of chapter seven that is rewarded and then of course as happens in the book of Revelation worship breaks out.

Keep seeing worship breaking out when things happen in Revelation. God is praised. So that's where we are. So the scroll is open chapter five. The seals begin to be open in chapter six.

[20:33] The first six seals are opened. And then we are about to go to the seven trumpets. Here's the insight I got while I was gone.

I have the I reserve the right to change this later. one thing that maybe you already know about me or you should know about me is that I'm impatient to understand scripture.

And Revelation is not so easy to understand. So I'm impatient to get it and put it in a nice box and package it up. And the Lord keeps going, that's your box?

I don't think so. Let's start over, boy. So here's what I'm thinking. And on vacation I was able to kind of back up and kind of look at it without all the details.

And so what I think is happening is the seals, the first series of judgments, we've got seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bulls. Right? Some things seem to be repeated in later ones.

[21:40] Okay? So what's going on? Is it the seals first and then chronologically then the trumpets and then the bulls? Is it all that's how I used to look at it.

I don't think so. I think the seals give us a picture from the time of Christ all the way to the end. I think they're a long view.

I think the first series of judgments that are revealed to us are just kind of a big snapshot, long view. Here's what's going on all throughout history and here's the end.

seals six and seven. There's the end. That's one view. Now chapter eight, we're going to come back to the trumpets. So what's going on now? That's just going to be a different view.

It's still going to be from the time of Christ all the way to the end. So in other words, the trumpet judgments are, I think, happening now. We're already in them.

[22 : 40] But they're also a view, but whereas the seals are a long view, the trumpets now become more of a zoom in and see more details.

Because the trumpet judgments also end with the seventh judgment, which is the end. Then we get the bowls.

And with the bowls, it says when God pours out the bowls, his wrath is done. It's complete. And it's kind of like the microscopic view of the very end.

So you go from, I don't know if these analogies are good, telescope of the long view to the trumpets where it's a little more zoomed in, and then you go to the bowls where it's microscopic of the end.

What do you think? I might have to throw it out later, but that's kind of where I'm at. So I'm trying to get a handle on it. Right? But we have to be careful because I've been through this before.

[23 : 44] I got it all figured out. Oh yeah, I didn't think of that. Okay, start over. Okay, so I think that's where we're going. In other words, what we are reading right now is entirely relevant to us today.

The seals are absolutely relevant. The trumpets are relevant. I think they began quite a while ago, and I think they're patterns that repeat throughout history.

Okay? So let's look at, let's look at chapter eight. The severity of the wrath is increased. Now as we kind of zoom in, the lamb opens the seventh seal, new judgments begin.

What are we shown? I think we're shown two facts. Here's what I want to look at today. Verses one through five, we see the seventh seal, and in the seventh seal, we see that the prayers of all the saints are answered.

That's a nutshell of what happens here in the first five verses. As the seal is broken, we have silence, then we have the trumpets introduced but not begun, we have a sacrificial offering that happens, and in that offering, we have a mixture of incense, prayers, and fire thrown to the earth.

[25 : 00] So in other words, the prayers of all the saints are finally answered with justice, and they're intensely relevant to what God is doing.

All are prayers. Okay? And then as we get to verse six in the end, we see the first four trumpets blasts, and with that we see, here's what I think we're seeing.

We're seeing restrained judgment, still judgment is intensified, but it's still just one-third. It's restrained. Why? So that people have an opportunity to repent. God is holding back.

He has every right to just let it go. But why does he hold back? Why take so much time with all of this? So people can still repent, and no one can say, I didn't have an opportunity.

Yeah, he did. Okay? So that's what we're seeing. So first of all, the seventh seal, we see the prayers of all suffering saints answered with justice.

[26 : 10] So three things happen. Notice verse one. First, there's silence. The Lamb opens the seventh seal. There was silence in heaven for about half an hour. So there is time in heaven, about half an hour.

I guess John's looking at the clock. No. Silence. After all the worship that's been going on in heaven, right?

Twenty-four. The four creatures, holy, holy, holy. They never cease to say, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, right? And while they're doing that, then the twenty-four elders jump in, and they praise God.

And then the angels get involved. There's all kinds of loud worship going on. Not necessarily loud, but very reverent and intense worship. God's love.

That's always going on until the seventh seal is broken and that stops. Can you imagine the dramatic effect? All of a sudden the worship singing stops.

[27 : 09] The prayers of the saints under the altar stops. He breaks the seventh seal. Well, everybody waits.

Everybody anticipates. Just as worship by voice, worship allowed, it draws our attention to the Lord. We're focusing on Him. So can silence.

Be still and know I am God. stop talking. And that's what happens.

He breaks the seventh seal. This is the last seal. Now the scroll will be open. What's the Lamb going to do now? Right?

That's what's going on. Then a second thing happens. We're just told this, verse 2. I saw seven angels who stand before God and seven trumpets were given to Him.

[28 : 13] Nothing else is meant. They're just introduced. They don't start blowing yet. It doesn't begin until verse 6. So they're just introduced. Here they are. Somehow the trumpets are connected to the seals.

They will give a new perspective. We had the long view. Now we're going to get the zoom view. But before the trumpet comes, here comes the main focus of verse 3. Here's the third thing that happens.

Silence, trumpets, and now an offering. Now a sacrifice. We find that an angel, verse 3, is standing at the altar with a golden censer.

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 mentioned twice must be significant.

The prayers of the saints rose before God from the hand of the angel. In other words, it's ascending. It's like incense, the smoke going up, being a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

[29 : 16] That's a picture. Our prayers are like that. They're the pleasing aroma to the Lord. He loves to hear our prayers. They come as like an offering, like a sacrifice. It's an altar of incense.

Now, remember the picture of the temple? Where was the altar of incense? There were two altars in the temple. Yeah, two altars in the temple. One was outside the bronze altar where they did the burnt offerings, right?

Out in the court. Then you come into the temple and the temple building or the tabernacle is divided into two sections. So you have the holy place.

You go into the holy place, which the priests could do, go into the holy place. You have the table of showbread over here, the presence of Israel, the twelve loaves.

You have the lamp over here, the light, the seven branch light. And right in front of the veil is the altar of incense. Right in front of the veil.

[30 : 17] Behind that veil is what? The holy of holies. The very presence of God symbolized in the ark with the mercy seat and the chair beam over it.

Right? And one priest only went once a year in there to sprinkle blood over the mercy seat to make atonement for the sins. Okay?

So here's the table of incense. It's right before the presence of God. And the incense was to be burning all the time so the smoke might go up. Just a picture of the people's prayers to God coming before his presence.

Now we're no longer in the earthly temple. In chapter 8 we're in the heavenly temple. There's no veil anymore because Jesus broke the veil. Now the presence of God is right there and the incense goes right to him.

Okay? Our prayers go right to him. They don't go through a priest. Okay? They don't go through somebody else.

[31 : 21] They go right to the Lord. And the angel's picturing that with holding this censer which is just some kind of implement to carry the coals and the incense.

Right? So we're told that he takes the censer and there's a bunch of incense added from the altar apparently. And then to that he adds symbolically the prayers of all the saints.

So they are mixed with the censer. Mixed with the incense. And then we're told the smoke goes up before God. Then verse five, look at what happens.

The angel took the censer. Now it's already got incense and prayers in it. And he adds to that, now he takes more fire from the altar. And he adds that to the prayers and the incense.

And what does he do with the prayers and the incense and the fire? He takes it and he throws it upon the earth. What is that?

[32 : 22] That's a symbol of judgment. Fire from heaven upon the earth that is mixed with the prayers of the saints. And what it will accomplish is justice.

As each judgment, as each seal, as each trumpet, as each bull, it is God's wrath coming out, justice being done, evil being stopped, all things being made right.

And we're told in verse 5 that as soon as he throws this incense prayer fire to the earth, there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, lightning, and an earthquake.

After the seventh trumpet, the very same thing happens. in chapter 11, verse 19, they blow the seventh trumpet, they announce that God's kingdom has come.

Verse 19, that God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of the covenant was seen within his temple. There's the ark, by the way. We've been missing the ark, you know where it is? It's in heaven. It's right there. He sees the ark of the covenant was seen within the temple.

[33 : 46] And what happens at the end of the seventh trumpet? There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, earthquake, and heavy hail. Same thing happens in chapter 16 after the seventh bowl was poured out.

Verse 17, chapter 16, 17, the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne saying, it is done.

And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake. Four things happen at the end of each series of judgments. seal is broken, silence, preparation of the seven trumpets, the prayers with fire thrown to the earth, peals of thunder, rumbling, lightning, earthquake, end of the series of judgment.

Perhaps picture a long shot view of the end. Seals give us a span view, long view, of God's history with the church.

I want you to think about something here. Why are prayers added to the incense, and then added fire, and then cast upon the earth?

[35 : 04] Why are prayers part of that? What do prayers have to do with justice? what do prayers have to do with making things right?

What do all the prayers of the saints have to do with God making things right?

well, at the very least we can say, prayers matter. Prayers matter.

They literally come to the Lord's hand, and they are instruments in His hand. He chooses to use our prayers as part of what He does to make things right.

our suffering matters. Where did these prayers come from? What kind of prayers are these that come before Him?

[36 : 07] Remember back in chapter 6? The fifth seal is broken. He sees the souls of those who had been slain under the altar, and they're praying out how long before vengeance?

Those were prayers of the altar. Now we see prayers of the altar again, not just of those who were martyred, but of all the saints. So in other words, I think it's the answered prayer of suffering saints. They're answered with justice. Have you prayed? Have you prayed in agony? Have you prayed in suffering?

Have you prayed in hard times? God hears those prayers and He answers them. Prayers of those who suffer are answered.

Prayers of those who wait, pray and cry out to the Lord how long are answered. Prayers that are where we endure hardship and we pray for the Lord's strength are answered.

[37 : 05] Prayers where we pray in pain, where we hurt, are answered. Prayers where we are lonely and we feel like we are lost, they're answered.

Prayers wondering why God are answered. Prayers of anguish over our sin are answered. when we feel like giving up and we're praying through that, they're answered.

Prayers in depression are answered. Prayers, all those prayers that we've thrown up with an anxious soul with grief for lost ones, for lost loved ones are answered.

That's what this says to me. They go up like smoke before the Lord. He is pleased. When we're in pain and we're crying out to Him, He's pleased.

That's sweet. Oh, my children are leaning on me. They're looking to me. Oh, I'm going to help them.

[38 : 12] Huh? What do you think? I think I'll help them. What difference do our prayers make? They make all the difference in the world. Will God answer my prayers?

Well, yeah. Okay, so He's answering them in the future and the end. Okay, He's going to make all things right. What about now? I kind of need them now. Well, yes, Hebrews 4 says, since we have a great high priest, talking about Jesus, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. Some cold, removed high priest that hears our prayers and doesn't really empathize with it.

We don't have that kind of high priest. Christ. But we have one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin, without falling, without failing.

He has felt the temptation as deep as we feel it. He has felt it very, very real. We see it in the garden. Father, let this cup pass. I don't want this cup.

[39 : 29] That's my will, but not my will. He very much felt the temptation to quit, to go the easy way.

Just send the angels down now. Right? Oh, he could have done that. I can't do that, but he could have done that. Boy, if I had that power, right?

I don't think I could hold that off. He could. We have one who has been tempted in every way as we are yet without sin. Therefore, let us with confidence draw near to the throne of grace.

Why? Why draw near so that he can take our prayers and answer them way long in the future? No. He can take our prayers that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

When I need it. And usually I need it now. God so yeah, our prayers make a huge difference in what God is doing long term, but they also make a difference right now.

[40 : 42] Right now. And it's because Jesus is there. It's because he's there I can go with confidence. I don't have to go into the old temple where, oh, I can't cross this line. I can't even get close to him.

Well, now I can he's right there. Excuse me. He knows it's dribbling.

I don't know why. So Christ not only hears our prayers, but he gives mercy and grace in time of need and he will make all things right. Now we come to verse 6 where the scrolls now open and the trumpets begin.

So we saw in the seventh seal, we saw that the prayers of the saints, the prayers of those who are suffering, their prayers are answered with justice.

Now we see trumpets. We see the first four. Just like with the seals, we see four in a row and then there's a distinction. Here the same thing. We see the first four trumpets and they're distinguished from the last trumpets.

[41 : 51] So we see a set of four again. They come with rapid succession. What we see in the four trumpets is restrained judgments that give earth dwellers the opportunity to repent.

Because notice verse 13 in chapter 8, the last verse is addressed to the earth dwellers. Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth. Earth dwellers. That's what they are.

They're earth dwellers. You're not earth dwellers believers. Oh, we're here. you know, we pass time. We're just a passing through. We're heaven dwellers.

People of earth are merely earth dwellers. That's the whole of their existence. So woe to them, warning to them.

Restrained judgments give earth dwellers the opportunity to repent. There's time. It's not the end, but it is serious. So in the first four, we see a rapid succession, the trumpets. We see verse seven, the first one blew his trumpet.

[42 : 56] What happens? Hail, fire, mixed with blood, thrown upon the earth. A third of the earth is burned, a third of the trees are burned, and all the grass is burned. So in each of one of these trumpets, a piece of creation is targeted.

So in the first one, earth is targeted. In the second one, verse eight, he blew his trumpet. Something like a great mountain burning was thrown into the sea. So the sea is targeted. The third one, verse 10, a star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, fell on what?

Rivers and waters and springs. Water is attacked. Then we see the fourth one, verse 12, the sun, moon, and stars are attacked, part of creation. They're attacked, they're darkened.

So notice that creation is targeted. But also notice that what is implemented, what is used to target them are symbols of judgment, symbols we've seen from the Old Testament that are judgment pictures.

Hail, fire, blood in the first one. Verse seven, hail, fire, blood. Well, the Old Testament talks about hail and fire and blood. Okay, verse eight, fire again.

[44 : 08] Again, fire is used here in verse eight and again in verse ten, the burning, the blazing star. And then we see in verse twelve, there's another symbol of judgment, darkness.

Darkness. That's a symbol of judgment. Before Jesus died on the cross, remember, for three hours on the cross, it was darkness. Darkness.

So, we see that. So, way back when we began this book in Revelation chapter one, verse one, John says, I am writing these things, or Jesus says to John, I'm writing, you write these things, I'm going to show you, give you visuals of what must come to pass.

I'm going to make known to you, or literally, I'm going to signify to you the things that are going to happen. Signify, I'm going to use signs. I'm going to use symbols. And so, we have to be careful as we read these visions. So, in other words, verse eight, something like a great mountain.

[45 : 25] Now, the words should kind of clue you. Something like a great mountain. So, in other words, probably not a mountain, something like it.

a symbol. Is it a physical blazing meteor? Or is it a symbol? Is it a sign?

Because when we get to chapter 17, we find out that sometimes mountains stand for kings. The beast had seven heads, seven hills, seven mountains, seven kings.

So, is it a physical mountain coming down? Or is it a king, a nation, an empire coming down, burning up? Okay?

See where it gets a little trickier? A star falls. So, the next one, verse 10, a great star fell from heaven. Okay, when do stars fall from heaven? This is a great star.

[46 : 25] Chapter one, stars can mean angels. Remember, seven stars in his hand, those are the seven angels of the churches. They can also mean men, because in chapter 12, when he talks about, he sees the picture of the woman, and the woman has what?

Sun and moon and a crown of 12 stars on her head. Gee, who is she? She's Israel. She's Israel. Remember Joseph's dream? I saw the sun and the moon and the 11 stars bound down to me? So, sun daddy, moon mama. I don't think he called her that.

So, sometimes stars can mean angels. Sometimes stars can mean men, tribes. Is that what it means? In chapter 12, we're going to see that a particular angel who falls from heaven is also called the dragon and the serpent and the devil.

Is this telling us about Satan falling from heaven? Could be. I don't know. I'm sorry.

[47 : 44] It's really tempting to go there. But if these trumpets are again like the seals, kind of a spanning picture all across the ages, maybe these trumpets were already being blown after the death of Christ.

Because in chapter 12, we learn that when Jesus goes up to heaven, there's war in heaven and a third of the angels get thrown down.

The dragon gets thrown down. In other words, when Jesus goes up to heaven and sits on his throne, ain't no more room for that boy. You're going down.

And so the devil comes down and he's a bit upset. And he's going to take his vengeance out on the church.

So is that what's happening? Then you see verse 12, the sun gets darkened and the moon and the stars again. What does that mean? When Jesus talked about the sun, moon, stars in Matthew 24, he was talking about the end of the nation of Israel because he said those things were going to happen before one generation is complete.

[48 : 57] It's going to happen in 70 AD when the temple is destroyed. That's the end for Israel as a nation. 2,000 years have gone by. They rebuilt that temple.

How do they worship? How do they take care of their sins? There's only one way and it isn't the temple. So the other thing I want you to note in these tragedies, these are really plagues.

These plagues are very similar to the plagues of Egypt. Hail fire. Exodus 9, that was one of the plagues. Verse 8, the sea turns to blood.

Well, remember the first plague in Egypt? The Nile is struck and the Nile turns to blood. Oh, man, that sounds familiar. Water turns to blood. Can't drink it.

Verse 12, sun, moon, stars turn to darkness. Well, remember one of the last plagues in Egypt in Exodus chapter 10 was darkness. They could feel it.

[50 : 06] It was so dark they could feel it. So these are plagues happening sort of like God has done before. Nothing really that new.

He's used darkness, he's used hail, he's used fire. He's done these things before. But here now they're not coming on Egypt, now they're coming upon earth dwellers. And yet they're partial.

They're just one third are affected. So his judgments are restrained still. Throughout history his judgments are coming but they are restrained.

Why? Well, one reason is that you may know that I am the Lord and that you will know that there is no one like me, that you will know that I am in the midst of the earth, that you will see my power and that my name should be proclaimed in all the earth so that I will get glory.

That's one of the reasons the plagues are coming. But there's another one that's hinted at in verse 13. Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth. Warning, warning to the earth dwellers. [51 : 13] Who are the earth dwellers? That's going to be a favorite term of revelation for the rest of the book. It's going to talk about the people of the earth who do not follow God. They're just simply called the earth dwellers.

Those who dwell upon the earth because that's their sum total of existence. They're just all about the earth. They just live for now. They just live for the things of earth. Their lives are merely earthly. Their securities are in the earth. Their values are in the earth. They have no hope in anything else. They have the hope in things that are of the earth. Their families, their jobs, their homes, their possessions,!

Their weekend! I can't wait for the weekend. I get off work and I get to go do something for me. Now, I'm all for that.

We take vacations. But if that's all you live for, if that's the big hope, if that's life, that gets pretty tiresome after all.

[52 : 21] Only so many toys can, you know, the novelty wears off. Only so many escapes before it's just meaningless. If you're an earth dweller and that's all you have is things of earth.

If your hope is in the next politician, good luck. Especially if there are ones that are maybe symbolized in Israel, in this book, as being darkened.

Because our world leaders are going to get more darkened. We look at America. as a nation, are we not darker than we used to be?

Are our leaders not more darkened? They could care less and less. Rick talked about it earlier. Used to mean something. It's disregarded now.

What kind of times do you think we're living in? Could it be? God is increasing the judgment on our land.

[53 : 37] He has brought other nations to their end. Will he not do the same with our own? If we disregard him over and over and over again and we change his laws to our laws.

God is to God is to know that used to be a no-no. Now it's okay. Because we know better. Do we? Do we really?

So here come these threats. Whoa, whoa, whoa. The threats do not come on the servants of the Lamb.

No, these are to the earth dwellers. And though they're threats, God warns for the purpose of repentance. When we come to the end of chapter nine, so in chapter nine we'll see the fifth and then the sixth trumpet blow.

And this is how it ends. Look at the end of chapter nine, verse 20. The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands, nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their immorality or their thefts.

[55 : 08] In other words, they just keep breaking the commandments disregarding God. So in other words, even though God brings these woes, these tragedies, these calamities, most people will ignore it.

Most people will not change. Most people will not repent. The rest did not repent. They did not turn. they did not wake up.

Beloved, I don't think that means without exception, no one does repent. This is an opportunity to repent. When God wakes you up and you know it's God, don't waste that time.

Just go. Come, we just sang, and I love that song, come as you are. come with your brokenness, come with your shame. Oh, I gotta fix my shame.

No, you don't. He fixes your shame. Come, come, come, come, come, come, come. Whatever you believe about the end of the world, okay, however the world will end, whatever you believe about the end of the world will shape how you live today.

[56 : 27] right? If you believe that God will make all things right, that will shape the way you live, because you have hope.

Even in hardship, you have hope. I can suffer this because he will make it right, and he's worth my suffering. If you don't think God will make it right in the end, you think there's no end, it's just, oh, maybe we get reincarnated, maybe, you know, we just fade out, maybe we just stop existing.

Oh, don't think that you stop existing. Souls are eternal. If you think there's nothing, then that will shape your life.

I will live for nothing. And if I die, then you should just eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow I die, right? But we know better, don't we?

Listen to how Paul says it. He says to those who say, you know, those people over there, those are sinners, I'm okay, I'm not that kind of sinner.

[57 : 39] Listen to what Paul says to those righteous people. You have no excuse, oh man, every one of you who judges, who says, yeah, they're sinners, not me. For in passing judgment on another, you condemn yourself.

because you, the judge, practice the very same thing. Oh no, I don't. Log in the eye. You do the same thing.

We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. Question, do you suppose, oh man, you who judge those who practice sin, yet, you know, you do them yourself?

Do you suppose that you will escape the judgment of God? Or, here's another good question, do you presume on the riches of his kindness, and forbearance, and patience?

Do you presume he'll always be patient, he'll always be kind, he'll always be enduring my sinfulness, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

[58 : 55] It's his very restraining of his wrath on you that should lead you. We can all say that, can't we? When God shed the light in my eyes, it's like, oh, he has been gracious to me.

I gotta come, right? judgment? But because of your hard and impenitent heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God's judgment, righteous judgment, will be revealed.

Are you presuming on his grace? Are you presuming on his patience? Oh, he hasn't struck me yet. So what do these judgment tell us?

Number one, that the Lord will make all things right. His justice will reign and he hears the prayers of his saints. Secondly, the Lord gives people an opportunity to repent. Few will.

What about you? What will you do? Doesn't matter what other people do. What will you do? Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word.

[60 : 12] These are heavy words to think, Father, of how you are righteously reigning and ruling over this earth.

We thank you, Lord, that you have put that into the hands of Jesus. He understands sinners. He understands our failures. He understands the temptations we go through.

And so we thank you, Father, what a righteous person to hold the reins of the future. We trust him.

And we thank you, Lord, that our prayers, even when we cry out to you and we're in pain and we're suffering and we're hurting, we thank you, Lord, that you store up all those prayers. You both immediately give us help in time of need, but you also store those up.

And, Father, I pray for everyone under the hearing of this voice, that, that they would hear the purpose of your judgment to wake up, to turn to you and trust you.

[61 : 25] We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.