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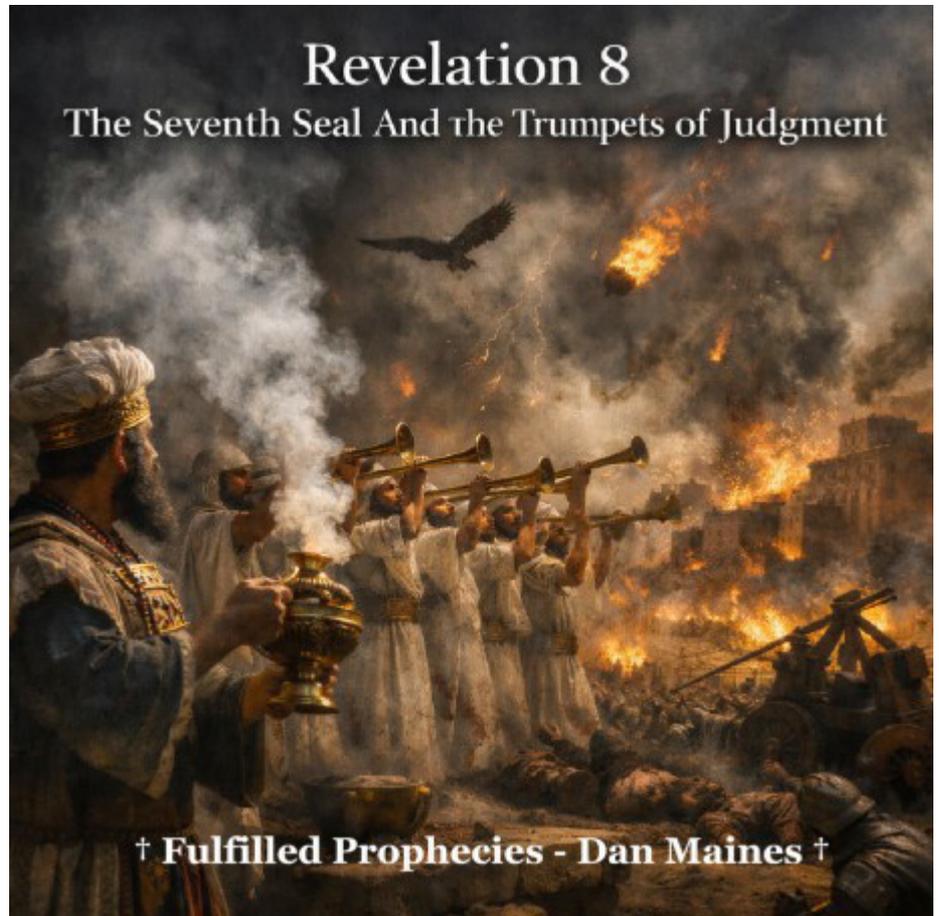
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## Revelation 8 The Seventh Seal And The Trumpets Of Judgment



By Dan Maines

## Revelation 8 The Seventh Seal And The Trumpets Of Judgment

### Introduction

† Revelation 8 brings us to the moment when the final seal is opened and the trumpet judgments begin. Everything in the previous visions has been moving toward this point. The saints cried out for justice, the Lamb opened the seals, and now heaven prepares for the response of God to the persecution of

His people.

† The imagery John records comes directly from the temple system and the language of the prophets. Silence, incense, trumpets, and fire from the altar were all part of Israel's worship and prophetic warnings. This chapter shows that the covenant warnings spoken through Moses, the prophets, and Christ Himself were reaching their fulfillment.

† From the fulfilled perspective, these events describe the judgments that unfolded in the first century leading to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Jesus said these things would happen in that generation, and Revelation shows heaven preparing for the judgment that would bring the old covenant age to its end (Matthew 24:34).

† The trumpet judgments follow the same pattern Jesus described in the Olivet Discourse, wars, upheaval in the heavens, and the surrounding of Jerusalem by armies, confirming that Revelation is describing the same first century judgment (Matthew 24:6-8, Luke 21:20).

### **Revelation 8:1**

When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

† The silence represents awe before the outpouring of judgment. In Jewish temple practice silence accompanied the offering of incense, a solemn moment before God acted.

† Habakkuk 2:20 says

The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him.

† In the temple service the people stood outside in silence while incense was offered inside the sanctuary. Luke records this exact moment during the priestly service, showing how familiar

this imagery would have been to Jewish readers (Luke 1:9-10).

† This silence marks the transition from the opening of the seals to the trumpet judgments. Heaven pauses before the judgments begin.

### **Revelation 8:2**

And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

† Trumpets were instruments of warning and judgment. In Israel they announced war and divine intervention (Numbers 10:9).

† The imagery echoes Joshua 6 where seven priests blew seven trumpets before the walls of Jericho fell.

† John uses that same imagery to show that Jerusalem, like Jericho before it, stood under divine judgment.

### **Revelation 8:3-4**

Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense ascended from the angel's hand with the prayers of the saints before God.

† The altar imagery reflects the temple in Jerusalem. The prayers of persecuted believers rise before God.

† Psalm 141:2 says

May my prayer be counted as incense before You, the raising of my hands as the evening offering.

† Revelation earlier showed the martyrs crying out for justice under the altar (Revelation 6:9-10).

† This vision shows that those prayers are now being answered.

### **Revelation 8:5**

Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and hurled it to the earth; and there were peals of thunder, sounds, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

† The same altar that received the prayers of the saints now becomes the source of judgment.

† Ezekiel 10:2 describes fire taken from the temple and scattered over Jerusalem as a sign of destruction.

† The thunder, lightning, and earthquake language represents divine judgment being unleashed.

† Josephus recorded that the temple itself was consumed with fire during the Roman siege in AD 70.

### **Revelation 8:6-7**

And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. The first sounded, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

† The first trumpet echoes the plague of hail and fire that struck Egypt (Exodus 9:23-24).

† These plagues also mirror the covenant curses warned in the Law if Israel broke the covenant (Deuteronomy 28:22-24).

† The repeated use of a third shows partial judgment rather than total destruction.

† Josephus recorded widespread fires and devastation throughout Judea during the Roman siege.

### **Revelation 8:8-9**

The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was hurled into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.

† In prophetic language a mountain symbolizes a kingdom or ruling power.

† Jeremiah 51:25 calls Babylon a destroying mountain that God would cast down.

† The burning mountain imagery reflects the collapse of a ruling power under judgment.

† Josephus recorded naval battles on the Sea of Galilee where ships were destroyed and the waters were filled with blood.

### **Revelation 8:10-11**

The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the waters, because they were made bitter.

† Falling stars symbolize the fall of rulers or leaders.

† Isaiah 14:12 uses this imagery to describe the fall of a king.

† Wormwood represents bitterness and judgment (Jeremiah 9:15).

† During the revolt corrupt leaders plunged the nation into chaos and suffering.

### **Revelation 8:12**

The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened, and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.

† Darkened heavenly bodies symbolize political collapse and the fall of ruling authorities.

† Isaiah 13:10 used this imagery when describing the fall of Babylon.

† Joel also used the same language when describing national judgment (Joel 2:10).

† Josephus recorded that leaders were murdered and the city descended into chaos during the war.

### **Revelation 8:13**

Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to those who live on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.

† The eagle warns that even greater judgment is coming.

† Eagles were the symbol carried by Roman legions.

† Moses warned Israel that if they broke the covenant God would bring a nation against them like an eagle swooping down (Deuteronomy 28:49).

### **Matthew 24:28**

Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

† Jesus used this imagery to describe the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem.

† Tacitus recorded that Roman standards bearing the eagle were carried into battle during the siege.

## **Historical References**

† Josephus described the fires consuming Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple during the Roman siege.

† Tacitus recorded the devastation that fell upon Judea during the revolt.

† Eusebius wrote that Christians remembered the warning of Christ and fled Jerusalem before its destruction.

† Victorinus connected the trumpet imagery with divine judgments falling upon rebellious nations.

† Clement of Alexandria wrote about the destruction of Jerusalem confirming the words spoken by Christ.

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† God hears the prayers of His people and acts in history.

† Christ's prophecies were fulfilled exactly as He said.

† Nations that reject truth eventually collapse under corruption.

† The same God who judged Jerusalem continues to rule over nations.

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** Do the trumpet judgments describe the destruction of the physical world?

**A** No. The imagery follows the language of the Old Testament prophets describing the fall of nations.

Isaiah 13:10

For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light.

**Q** Why does Revelation use Exodus and prophetic imagery?

**A** Because the destruction of Jerusalem was another covenant judgment similar to those earlier events.

Deuteronomy 28:49

The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you will not understand.

**Q** Did Jesus say these events would happen in the first century?

**A** Yes. Jesus placed the judgment of Jerusalem within the generation that heard Him speak.

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

**Q** Why does Revelation repeatedly mention a third being destroyed?

**A** The use of a third shows partial judgment rather than total destruction. God was restraining the devastation until the final collapse of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Ezekiel 5:2

One third you shall burn in the fire at the center of the city when the days of the siege are completed, then you shall take one

third and strike it with the sword all around the city, and one third you shall scatter to the wind.

**Q** Why are trumpets used to announce these judgments?

**A** In the Old Testament trumpets were used to warn the people and announce battle or divine intervention. The trumpet blasts in Revelation show that God was announcing judgment just as He had warned in the Law.

Numbers 10:9

When you go to war in your land against the adversary who attacks you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, so that you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and be saved from your enemies.

**Q** Why does Revelation use language similar to the plagues of Egypt?

**A** The judgments mirror the plagues of Egypt because Jerusalem had become like Egypt by persecuting God's people. Just as God judged Egypt for oppressing Israel, He judged Jerusalem for rejecting the Messiah and persecuting the church.

Revelation 11:8

And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

**Q** What does the silence in heaven show about God's judgment?

**A** The silence shows reverence and anticipation before God acts. Just as the people were silent during the temple incense offering, heaven pauses before the judgments begin.

Habakkuk 2:20

The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before

Him.

**Q** Why are the judgments described in symbolic language?

**A** The prophets often used symbolic language to describe the fall of nations and rulers. Revelation follows the same prophetic pattern. The imagery communicates the severity of the judgment without describing the literal destruction of the universe.

Isaiah 34:4

And all the heavenly lights will wear away, and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; all their lights will also wither away as a leaf withers from the vine, or as one withers from the fig tree.

**Q** Do the trumpet judgments describe events that must still happen in the future?

**A** No. Revelation opens by saying the events it describes were about to take place for the first century readers. The book was written to warn them about the coming judgment that would soon fall on Jerusalem.

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place.

**Q** Does the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars mean the universe will literally collapse?

**A** No. The prophets regularly used cosmic language to describe the fall of nations and rulers. It was symbolic language understood by Jewish readers.

Isaiah 13:10

For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light.

**Q** Could Revelation 8 describe modern world wars or global disasters?

**A** No. Jesus clearly placed the judgment connected with Jerusalem within the generation that heard Him speak. The Roman siege of Jerusalem in AD 70 fulfilled these warnings exactly.

Luke 21:20

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## **Source Index**

† Revelation 8; Matthew 24:6-8; Matthew 24:28; Matthew 24:34; Luke 1:9-10; Luke 21:20; Psalm 141:2; Habakkuk 2:20; Exodus 9:23-24; Deuteronomy 28:22-24; Deuteronomy 28:49; Jeremiah 9:15; Jeremiah 51:25; Isaiah 13:10; Isaiah 14:12; Joel 2:10; Ezekiel 5:2; Ezekiel 10:2; Revelation 6:9-10

† Josephus, Wars 3.9.3; 4.5.2; 4.6.3; 5.6.3; 6.4.5; Tacitus, Histories 5.13; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5; Victorinus, Commentary on the Apocalypse; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata.

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