

The Trumpet Judgments
Revelation 8 & 9
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1A. Introduction

The seventh seal of the scroll reveals the next series of judgments: the seven trumpet judgments. The focus of these judgments is directed toward man and his environment.

2A. The Seven Trumpet Judgments (8:1-9:21).

1B. Prelude to the Seven Trumpets (8:1-6).

The use of trumpets is associated with something of outstanding importance (see Ex. 19:16; 20:18; Jer. 4:5; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16).

2B. First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck (8:7).

A third of the earth is burned up – including 1/3 of the trees and all the green grass.

3B. Second Trumpet: Seas Struck (8:8-9).

A third of the sea creatures died and 1/3 of the ships were destroyed.

4B. Third Trumpet: Waters Struck (8:10-11).

This judgment is directed toward the fresh water supply – 1/3 of the rivers and the springs of water.

The term *wormwood* is only used figuratively in the Bible of bitter things: perverted justice (Amos 5:7; 6:12); result of idolatry (Deut. 29:17); God's chastisement (Jer. 9:15); result of a relationship with an immoral woman (Prov. 5:4).

5B. Fourth Trumpet: Heavens Struck (8:12-13).

The light of the sky was reduced by one third. Without a third of the sun a third of the day was lacking normal light, and a third of the night was without light from the moon and the stars. These should be taken in a literal sense. Just as the first three trumpets dealt with a third of the earth, so the fourth trumpet deals with a third of the heavens.

Announcement is made that the remaining three trumpets will be much more severe than the first four. The term *woe* is a very strong term: (1) expressing extreme displeasure and calling for retributive pain on someone or something (e.g. Matt. 11:21); doubled or tripled for emphasis (Rev. 8:13; 18:10); (2) substantively; *woe*, *disaster*, *calamity* (Rev. 9:12).¹

6B. Fifth Trumpet: Locusts from the Bottomless Pit (9:1-12).

The pronoun *he* in verse 2 is referred to as a king in verse 11, which indicates that the star that fell to the earth was a person rather than a fragment of a star (cf. Isa. 14:12-17;

¹ Friberg Analytical Greek Lexicon.

Luke 10:18). This star, probably representing Satan who is cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:9), was given the key to the bottomless pit (some translations say "abyss"). The bottomless pit is the home of demons (cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3). Satan will be confined there for a thousand years during the reign of Christ on earth (Rev. 20:1-3).

Walvoord describes the scene clearly: Here the star (Satan) used his key to allow demons in the Abyss to come out and afflict the earth. Visually this event was represented as a great smoke, darkening the sky and the sun. Out of the smoke came creatures called locusts with the deadly sting of scorpions. While they were harmless to natural vegetation and trees, they stung people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.²

7B. Sixth Trumpet: Angels for the Euphrates (9:13-21).

This judgment seems to relate to the final military conflict described in 16:12-16 (cf. Dan. 11:40-45). At the sounding of the sixth trumpet John heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God. The sixth angel was then instructed to release the four angels who were bound at the Euphrates River. These four angels are clearly demons, as holy angels are not bound. The release of these four is minutely timed at a particular hour and day and month and year, and they kill a third of the world's population.

The fourth seal (Rev. 6:7-8) resulted in a fourth of the earth's people being killed. Here a third of the remainder were put to death. These two judgments alone, disregarding all intervening judgments, would account for the death of half the earth's population. This fact is to be taken literally as it confirms the statement by Daniel (Dan. 12:1) and the words of Christ (Matt. 24:21) that the Great Tribulation will be without precedent and would end in the death of all mankind if it were not stopped by His second coming (Matt. 24:22).³

8B. Seventh Trumpet: The Kingdom Proclaimed (11:15-18).

The proclamation of the kingdom brings us to the last events of the period: the bowl judgments. The proclamation is in anticipation of the second advent of our Lord and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (19:11-21).

²Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (2:952). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³Ibid. (2:953)