

Day 246, Revelation 8

by David Servant

The seven trumpet judgments in Revelation 8 are a result of the prayers of the saints being answered, and they will be a time of God's holy wrath on the earth.

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:16

Topics: "Gods Wrath", "End Times"

Description

David Servant delves into the humorous yet thought-provoking joke between a Presbyterian and a Baptist regarding the rapture, using Scripture to shed light on the solemnity of the judgments during the breaking of the seventh seal and the subsequent trumpet judgments. He emphasizes the connection between the prayers of the saints and the unfolding judgments, suggesting that the prayers for vengeance are being answered. David explores the protection of Christ's followers from God's wrath during the trumpet judgments and discusses the potential geographical interpretation of the afflictions described in Revelation. He concludes by highlighting the consistent portrayal of God's wrath throughout Scripture, emphasizing the importance of being saved through Jesus from God's wrath.

Transcript

Today's reading reminds me of an old joke about a Presbyterian and a Baptist. The Presbyterian makes the claim that Presbyterians will be the first to be taken up in the rapture. "Does not Scripture say, 'There was silence in heaven for about a half an hour'? (8:1). That must be when God's frozen people, the Presbyterians, arrive!" His Baptist friend counters, "Oh no, Baptists will be in heaven first. The Bible says, 'The dead in Christ will rise first!'" (1 Thes. 4:16).

I suspect, contrary to that joke, that the reason for the half-hour of silence in heaven is not due to the arrival of the Presbyterians, but because of the solemnity of the judgments that are about to occur on earth at the breaking of the seventh seal. This begins the seven "trumpet judgments," the first four of which all affect one-third of the earth in various catastrophic ways.

You probably noticed that the seven trumpet judgments are preceded by mention of "the prayers of all the saints" (8:3), symbolized by the smoke of incense that arises from an angel's golden censer before God's throne (8:4). The judgments that follow are clearly related to those prayers, as we read that the angel fills the censer with fire from the altar and then throws it to the earth, which results in thunder, lightning and an earthquake. It seems that the martyrs' prayers for vengeance, of which we read in 6:9-10, are finally being answered after an initial delay. Remember that the Lord initially promised that He would avenge their

deaths once additional martyrs suffered their fates. If the multitude before God's throne of whom we read in the final part of chapter 7---who came "out of the great tribulation"---were those additional martyrs, then perhaps chapter 8 begins to describe the answers to the prayers of the initial martyrs.

Surely, if any followers of Christ remain on the earth during those first four trumpet judgments, they will be protected from God's wrath. Some speculate that the repeated mentioning of the afflictions that plague one-third of the earth indicate a geographical third of the earth. That is, when we read that "a third of the trees were burned up," John doesn't mean that one-third of all the trees across the entire planet will be burned, but that in one geographical third of the earth, all the trees will be burned. This principle would seem to be true regarding the second trumpet judgment when "a third of the sea became blood" (8:8). Still, it isn't clear enough to make a confident assertion either way.

To those who are inclined to believe that the trumpet judgments should not be taken literally, it is helpful to remember that much of what John describes of earth's future judgment is similar to the judgments that the Egyptians experienced prior to Israel's exodus. Moreover, Jesus spoke of similar future judgments in literal terms: "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:25-26).

Revelation offers a true revelation of God's holy wrath, and those who say that the God of the New Testament is different from the God of the Old haven't read Revelation too closely. Aren't you glad that you've been saved from the wrath of God through Jesus?

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