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Seven Trumpets and the Little Scroll
Series: Between a Rock and a Hard Place
May 23, 2021
Revelation 8-10

I. **Structure of Revelation**

- A. **Revelation 1:19** (NASB95) — 19 “Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.”
1. **Have seen**
 - a. Vision of Christ in Chapter 1
 2. **Are**
 - a. Current state of 7 churches
 3. **After these things**
 - a. **Revelation 4:1** (NASB95) — 1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place **after these things.**”
 - b. Chapters 4-22
- B. **Theme**
1. **Jesus Christ is coming**
 - a. Tribes of earth will mourn over Him
 - b. Eschatological triumph of Christ over the anti-Christian forces of evil in the world and in the heavenly realms
 2. **Purpose – encourage the churches under great pressure**
 - a. Series: Between Rock and a Hard Place
- C. How is this purpose accomplished?
1. **Four visions**
 - a. **“In the Spirit”**
 2. **Revelation 1:9–10**
 - a. First vision
 - (1) The glorified Christ
 - (2) The messages to the seven churches
 3. **Revelation 4:1–2**
 - a. Second vision
 - (1) The heavenly vision
 - (2) The tribulation
 4. **Revelation 17:1–3**
 - a. Third vision
 - (1) The mystery of Babylon
 - (2) Judgment of Babylon

- (3) Final triumph and consummation
- 5. **Revelation 21:9–10**
 - a. Fourth vision
 - (1) The New Jerusalem
- D. **Structure of the 2nd Vision**
 - 1. **Chapter 4 – Almighty God on His throne**
 - a. He’s the One in charge; sovereign over human history
 - b. He holds the scroll
 - 2. **Chapter 5 – Lion and Lamb**
 - a. He’s worthy to break the seals and open the book
 - b. He’s earned the authority to control the unfolding of human history as it moves toward its conclusion
 - c. Due to the nature of the book and the seals
 - (1) The seals take place before the contents of the book are opened
 - (2) Tribulation unfolds before redemptive and judicial events come to their conclusion
 - 3. **6.1-8.1 – Seven Seals**
 - a. Rider – white horse; conqueror
 - b. Rider – red horse; takes peace from earth; makes men slay each other
 - c. Rider – black horse; wheat and barley for denarius; don’t damage oil and wine (famine)
 - d. Rider – ashen horse; death with Hades close behind; authority over 1/4 of earth; killed with sword, famine, pestilence, wild beasts
 - e. Martyrs; “how long”; white robes; told to wait until other martyrs
 - f. Natural catastrophes; Earthquake – sun darkened, moon turned to blood; great people afraid; recognition that the day of wrath had come
 - (1) Interlude
 - (a) 144,000 sealed
 - (b) Great multitude in white robes
 - g. Silence in heaven for ½ hour; angels given trumpets; prayers of saints; thunder, lightning, earthquake; no real content
 - 4. **General pattern of the Seals**
 - a. **Increasing difficulty**
 - (1) Human society
 - (2) Nature
 - b. **Brief period of extreme tribulation**
 - (1) Especially seen in trumpets and bowls
 - (2) Seem to be included in the 7th seal
 - (a) 7th seal has no content
 - (b) Book would be open
 - (c) Trumpets and bowls are the contents of the book
 - c. **The end**

E. Previous message

1. Made case for

a. 1st Seal (rider on white horse) not a judgment, but the proclamation of the gospel

(1) No plague or judgment indicated

(2) White always indicative of Christ or the redeemed or good angel

(3) Implication

(a) In the midst of tribulation, the gospel will go forth and have its victories

(b) We should imagine Christ riding on white horse, breaking down enemy strongholds with His divine bow when we witness

b. Interlude – the 144,000 of Israel and the Multitude from every people, tongue, tribe, nation are two visions of the same group – the Church

(1) Chapter 6 ends with question – Who is able to stand?

(2) Chapter 7 answers it – those who are sealed

(3) The John hears the number of those sealed – 144,000

(a) Called Israel

(b) But not described in quite the way national Israel would be described

(4) Then John sees the multitude in heaven – people from every tongue, tribe, nation

(5) Cf pattern of the vision in Chapter 5 (Lion and Lamb)

(6) The Multitudes and two visions of spiritual Israel, the Church

(a) Sealed on earth

(b) Eventually saved in heaven

(7) Implications

(a) Should we remain during the tribulation, though we are subject to the anger of the beast, we are sealed from the wrath of God

(b) We will stand before the Father and the Son worshiping, washed white in the blood of the Lamb, hungering and thirsting no more, all our tears wiped away, partaking of the springs of the water of life – all because we're sealed

2. 8.1 – Seventh Seal opened

a. Silence in heaven for ½ hour

(1) Awesome, rapt anticipation of what is sure to come next as the judgment of God increases in intensity

(2) No specific judgment – encompasses the trumpets

II. Second Vision Continues

A. Structure

1. **8.2 – Seven Trumpets given to angels**
 - a. Revelation 8:2 (NASB95) —
 - (1) 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.
2. **8.3-5 – another angel with censer with incense**
 - a. Fire hurled to earth, thunder, lightning, earthquake
 - b. Revelation 8:3-5 (NASB95)
 - (1) 3 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.
 - (2) 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.
 - (3) 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.
3. **8.6-13 – Trumpets 1-4**
 - a. Revelation 8:6–13 (NASB95) —
 - (1) 6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.
 - (2) 7 The first sounded, and there came **hail and fire, mixed with blood**, and they were thrown 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.
 - (a) Terrible natural devastation
 - i) Still only partial
 - ii) Not directly focused on humanity
 - (3) 8 The second angel sounded, and something like a **great mountain burning with fire** was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood,
 - (4) 9 and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.
 - (a) Sea into blood
 - (b) Third of creatures died
 - (c) Third of ships destroyed
 - (d) Severe, though still partial
 - (5) 10 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.
 - (6) 11 The name of the star is called **Wormwood**; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.
 - (a) Third of rivers and springs
 - i) Bitter water

- ii) Many die
 - (7) 12 The fourth angel sounded, and a **third of the sun and 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.
 - (a) Again, partial, not directly aimed at humanity
 - (8) 13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "**Woe, woe, woe** to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"
 - (a) Announced by eagle
 - (b) Directed at **those who dwell on the earth**
 - i) Key phrase – pagan world hostile to God
 - (c) Woes directed at the ungodly (Trumpets 5, 6, 7)
 - i) Not on the sealed church
4. **9.1-12 – Trumpet 5 – Star fallen from sky to earth**
- a. Revelation 9:1–12 (NASB95) —
 - (1) 1 Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him.
 - (2) 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.
 - (3) 3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
 - (4) 4 They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
 - (5) 5 And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man.
 - (6) 6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.
 - (7) 7 The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions.
 - (8) 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.
 - (9) 10 They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months.
 - (10) 11 They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his

name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.

(11) 12 The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.

- b. Given key to abyss
- c. Releases demonic powers of affliction likened to locusts
- d. Locusts not to harm vegetation but afflict people who are not sealed for 5 months
 - (1) Makes them want death, can't find it

5. **9.13-21 – Trumpet 6 – Four angels of Euphrates**

a. Revelation 9:13–21 (NASB95) —

- (1) 13 Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,
- (2) 14 one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”
- (3) 15 And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind.
- (4) 16 The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.
- (5) 17 And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.
- (6) 18 A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.
- (7) 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm.
- (8) 20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;
- (9) 21 and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

- b. Adds death to the torture of the 5th Trumpet
 - (1) 1/3 died
 - (2) Still only partial
- c. Rest of mankind did not repent!

B. **Implications of the Trumpets**

- 1. **Trumpets represent the wrath of God** poured out on those who dwell on

the earth, the ungodly

- a. Those in allegiance with Satan, with Antichrist, who have the mark of the beast, who worship Antichrist
 - b. Those with the seal of God are protected from the wrath
 - (1) Those who worship the Lamb
2. **Evil and good become abundantly clear** as the end approaches
- a. No middle ground
 - b. All loyalties become plain
3. **God is sovereign** in all of this, even over the demonic
- a. He gives the key to the abyss to the Star fallen from heaven
 - b. Angels bound (by God!) at the Euphrates were released at God's command
4. **Nature of evil and the demonic is revealed**
- a. Now enticing; demonic realm wants you to think it's your friend
 - b. In reality the demonic realm hates humanity
 - (1) Not just godly humanity; all humanity
 - c. Once released, they attack those who dwell on the earth who haven't been sealed and protected by God!
5. **The wrath of God is merciful** in addition to being judicial
- a. Still time to repent!
 - b. But the wrath of God is not rehabilitative or redemptive
 - (1) They don't repent!
 - c. Repentance requires regeneration

III. **More of the Second Vision – John's Commission**

A. **10.1-4 – The Angel's Revelation**

1. Revelation 10:1-4 (NASB95) —
 - a. 1 I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;
 - b. 2 and he had in his hand a little book which was open. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land;
 - c. 3 and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.
 - d. 4 When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."
2. Another strong angel, down from heaven
 - a. Magnificent appearance
 - b. Has little scroll, book
 - (1) Open in his hand
 - (2) Contents plainly visible
 - c. One foot on land, the other on the sea
 - (1) As if this prophecy concerns the whole world

3. Multi-media revelation – includes sound
 - a. 7 thunders
 - (1) Usually referring to God’s voice
 - (2) **Psalm 29:3** (NASB95) — 3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The LORD is over many waters.
 - b. Angel is the mouthpiece of God
 - (1) 7 = its completeness
 - (2) Thunder = power
 4. Remarkable thing
 - a. Message is clear; John understood it; starts to write it
 - b. Don’t write it! Instead told to seal it
 5. Some things are revealed; some things are to remain secret
 - a. Until God’s time to reveal it
 - b. **Deuteronomy 29:29** (NASB95) — 29 “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.
- B. **10.5-7 – The Angel’s Announcement**
1. Revelation 10:5–7 (NASB95) —
 - a. 5 Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven,
 - b. 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT, that there will be delay no longer,
 - c. 7 but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.
 2. No more delay – judgment of the end is imminent
 3. Mystery of God is finished
 - a. Mystery – something in the mind of God that He revealed to men
 - (1) Mysterious in that men can’t know it apart from divine revelation
 - b. But God has revealed it – to His servants the prophets
 - (1) Preached = euangelisen (Lit, preached the gospel)
 - c. The end of God’s redemptive plan has been preached and is about to unfold
- C. **10.8-11 – The Scroll and John’s Commission**
1. Revelation 10:8–11 (NASB95) —
 - a. 8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, “Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land.”
 - b. 9 So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, “Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.”

- c. 10 I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.
 - d. 11 And they said to me, “You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.”
 - 2. Told to take the scroll and eat it
 - a. Sweet in mouth, bitter in stomach
 - 3. John eats it
 - a. Cf my friend Marty eating the check
 - b. Told to prophesy about peoples, nations, tongues and kings
 - 4. Not the first one to receive this kind of commission
 - a. **Ezekiel 2:9–3:3** (NASB95) —
 - (1) 9 Then I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it.
 - (2) 10 When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe.
 - (3) 1 Then He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”
 - (4) 2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll.
 - (5) 3 He said to me, “Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you.” Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.
 - b. Told to eat scroll
 - c. Contained lament, mourning, woe (bitter)
 - d. Tasted sweet
- D. **Implications of the Commission**
 - 1. **Even prophets don’t have to know everything**
 - a. And don’t even have to say everything that they know
 - b. Some things are secret, belong only to God
 - 2. **God’s history will be finished**
 - a. The preaching of the gospel is integral to its conclusion
 - 3. To the true prophet, **the words of God are sweet**
 - a. But they **contain hard things**
 - 4. **John needs all the encouragement he can get**
 - a. Most severe judgments are about to take place (7th trumpet, 7 bowls)
 - b. John can’t stop here; must continue, even though hard things must be said