

Summit Woods Baptist Church
Sermon Study Equipping Class

Revelation 8:1-12

Remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed.

❖ Day 1

Read Romans 8:1-12.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. Commands are double-underlined. Generally, the main indicative clauses remain to the left, and the other clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

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

² And I saw the seven angels who stand before God,
and seven trumpets were given to them.

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.

⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

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.

⁶ And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.

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,

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and a third of the trees were burned up,
and all the green grass was burned up.

⁸The 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, ⁹

and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died;

and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰The 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. 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.

¹²The 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.

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1. If possible, after reading the passage aloud, and before diagramming/structuring the passage or reviewing the diagram, attempt to summarize the main events as best as you can from memory. Once you've tried it from memory, go back and check. What did you miss? What did you get right? What details stood out to you as primary and noteworthy?
2. In light of what we have seen regarding seals 1-6 (chapter 6) and the interlude (chapter 7), should our interpretation of this passage be driven by a symbolic/allegorical approach, or a literal one?
3. At the breaking/opening of the seventh seal in 8:1, there is a silence for a half hour. There is a location emphasis given: in heaven. Using the context of Revelation 6:16-17, why is it significant that this silence is only in heaven, and not on earth as well as heaven?
4. Read Habakkuk 2:20; Zephaniah 1:7-8; Zechariah 2:13. What is the function of silence in terms of God's acts of judgment? How do these Old Testament texts bring light to this period of silence in Revelation 8:1?
5. God exists outside of time and is not affected by it. The same would also apply to heaven, since His immediate presence is there, and it is a spiritual realm. Accordingly, how might this half-an-hour pause in heaven be possible?
6. The definite article "the" used with this mention of seven angels in 8:2 seems to suggest that they are a specific category of angels whose definite location and service is connected to the presence of God. Where else in Scripture do we find a reference to an angel of presence?

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❖ Day 2

Read Romans 8:1-12 again.

7. Trumpets are the most-referenced musical instrument in Scripture, and were used in ceremonial processions, for announcing the new year, and in order to assemble Israel for war, journeys, and special feasts. In light of Joel 2:1 and Zephaniah 1:14-16, what is the purpose of trumpets in Revelation 8?

8. Where else in Scripture do we see seven trumpets used in the context of God's judgment? What is the difference between that prior example and what we see in Revelation 8?

9. As with the seven categories of human classes that encompass all of humanity (Revelation 6:15), is there any significance to the fact that the seals, trumpets, and bowls occur in installments of seven?

10. We have previously seen an altar in Revelation 6:9. Is the altar in Revelation 8:3 a new altar or the same one? Why or why not?

11. In Revelation 5:8, there was a mention of incense. How is it different than what is stated regarding incense in 8:3-4?

12. Review the first six seals (Revelation 6). How is the opening of the seventh seal the same as the first six? What elements are different?

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13. In 8:3, some commentators believe that the angel who stands before the altar with the prayers of the saints and incense is Christ, Himself. Based on what we have seen so far in the Book of Revelation, and give a close reading of chapter 8, why or why not might this be the case?

14. In 8:4, the prayers of the saints rise up before God. How is this different from what we last saw in reference to the prayers of the saints in the fifth seal of Revelation 6:9-11?

15. How does Revelation 7 contribute to the difference between the prayers of the saints in 6:9-11 and 8:4?

❖ Day 3

Read Romans 8:1-12 again.

16. Read Exodus 19:16-19 and compare it to Revelation 8:5-7. What elements are contained in both passages, and which are not?

17. In the first four trumpets of 8:7-12, what are the tools of judgment, and what do they target?

18. The passive voice is used in 8:2 (were given), 8:3 (was given), 8:7 (were thrown), 8:8 (was thrown), and 8:12 (were struck). In light of the use of the passive voice (the “divine passive”) throughout the Bible, what does this suggest about the ultimate source of these events?

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19. In 8:7-12, is humanity the focus of the first four trumpet judgments?

20. Summarize the impact of the first trumpet in 8:7, second trumpet in 8:8-9, third trumpet in 8:10-11, and fourth trumpet in 8:12-13.

21. Previously, where did we see God's judgment held back on the earth, trees, and sea?

22. Personal Application: How should this passage reassure us and cause us to act?

23. Summarize this passage in 21 words or less.

As you prepare for Sunday, pray for a right understanding of the wrath of God. Pray with gratitude for the salvation from the wrath of God which you have received as a believer. Pray that you would hate your sin deeply better understanding the wrath it deserves.