

Studying the book of Revelation (14)

Chapters 8—10

Concord Community Church

Dated 29/6/2025

Text: Revelation 8

Theme: The seriousness of God's coming judgment, the power of prayer, and the call to repentance before the trumpet judgments.

Key Verse: *“And when he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.”* — Revelation 8:1 (ESV)

Introduction: The Calm Before the Storm

The Book of Revelation reveals not only the glory of Christ and the future of the Church, but also the righteous judgment of God upon a rebellious world. Revelation 8 brings us to a **pivotal moment**—the opening of the **seventh seal**. What follows is both awe-inspiring and terrifying: divine silence, angelic intercession, and trumpet judgments that shake the natural world. In this chapter, **heaven pauses**, **prayers ascend**, and **judgment begins**.

I. The Seventh Seal: Divine Silence (Revelation 8:1)

“When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.”

A. What Does This Silence Mean?

- Heaven, usually full of praise and song (Revelation 4–5), falls silent.
- This is a **solemn pause**, as all of heaven awaits what will follow.
- Silence in Scripture often precedes divine action or judgment:
 - *“Be silent before the Sovereign Lord, for the day of the Lord is near.”* (Zephaniah 1:7)
 - *“The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”* (Habakkuk 2:20)

B. The Weight of God’s Judgment

- The silence signals the **gravity of what’s to come**—the trumpet judgments are about to begin.
- This is not the silence of inactivity, but of **reverence**, **awe**, and **anticipation**.

II. The Heavenly Altar and the Prayers of the Saints (Revelation 8:2–5)

A. Seven Angels with Seven Trumpets (v.2)

- These trumpet judgments are a **parallel** to the plagues of Egypt.
- Trumpets in the Bible signal **warning, war, and divine visitation** (Joel 2:1; Joshua 6; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

B. Another Angel with Incense (vv.3–4) *“He was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints...”*

- Incense symbolizes **prayers rising to God** (Psalm 141:2).
- These prayers include the cry for justice and deliverance from Revelation 6:10: *“How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood...?”*
- God **does not ignore** the prayers of His people. They are central to His plan.

C. The Fire Cast to Earth (v.5) *“Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it on the earth...”*

- The same prayers that rise in worship become a **catalyst for judgment**.
- There is thunder, lightning, earthquakes—clear signs of divine intervention (Exodus 19:16-18; Revelation 4:5).
- God's **justice is ignited** in response to the prayers and cries of the saints.

III. The First Four Trumpet Judgments (Revelation 8:6–12)

These judgments primarily affect the **natural world**—land, sea, rivers, and sky.

1. First Trumpet – Hail and Fire Mixed with Blood (v.7) *“A third of the earth was burned up...”*

- Echoes the **seventh plague in Egypt** (Exodus 9:23–25).
- Destruction of vegetation—agriculture and food sources—global impact.

2. Second Trumpet – A Mountain Thrown into the Sea (v.8–9)

- Likely a **symbolic or supernatural event**, possibly a massive meteor or volcano.
- Result: *“A third of the sea became blood... a third of living creatures died... a third of ships destroyed.”*
- Echoes the first plague of Egypt (water turned to blood).

3. Third Trumpet – The Star Called Wormwood (v.10–11)

- A blazing star falls on the rivers, making them **bitter and poisonous**.
- "Wormwood" is a bitter herb associated with **judgment and sorrow** (Jeremiah 9:15; Lamentations 3:15).

- Water pollution impacts human life and survival.

4. Fourth Trumpet – Darkness Strikes the Heavens (v.12) *“A third of the sun, moon, and stars were struck...”*

- Cosmic disturbances—reminiscent of the ninth plague of Egypt (Exodus 10:21–23).
- Spiritual and physical **darkness** as a symbol of judgment (Joel 2:31; Luke 21:25–26).

IV. The Angel’s Warning Cry (Revelation 8:13) *“Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth...”*

A. A Triple Woe

- A solemn declaration of **three greater judgments** yet to come (chapters 9–11).
- The term *“those who dwell on the earth”* often refers to **unbelievers** in Revelation.

B. God’s Mercy Still Present

- The warning is given **before** the remaining trumpets sound.
- Even amid judgment, God extends **a call to repentance**.

V. Lessons and Application for the Church Today

1. God Hears the Prayers of the Saints

- Our prayers are not wasted. They rise like incense to God and are part of His plan.
- James 5:16: *“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”*

2. God’s Judgment is Just and Certain

- The trumpet judgments show us that God's patience has limits.
- Hebrews 10:31: *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

3. Creation Itself Responds to Sin

- Romans 8:22 reminds us that *“the whole creation groans...”* under the weight of human sin.
- These judgments reflect ecological devastation tied to spiritual rebellion.

4. There is Still Time to Repent

- The angel's warning cry in v.13 is a **gracious call** to turn before it’s too late.
- 2 Peter 3:9: *“The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*

Conclusion: The Day is Coming—Are You Ready?

Revelation 8 brings us face-to-face with the **righteousness of God**, the **seriousness of sin**, and the **power of prayer**.

It teaches us that silence in heaven does not mean inactivity—it is the stillness before divine action.

Our prayers matter, God is just, and the trumpet is sounding.

TEXT: REVELATION 9

Theme: God's righteous judgment, the reality of spiritual warfare, and the need for repentance.

Key Verse: *"The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues did not repent..."* — Revelation 9:20 (ESV)

Introduction: The Sound of Warning

Revelation chapter 9 continues the unfolding of God's judgment through the sounding of the seven trumpets. By this time, four trumpets have already sounded, and now we move into the intensified judgments of the **fifth and sixth trumpets**, also known as the first and second "**woes**". These woes are not only terrifying in their imagery, but also deeply theological in their meaning. They reveal the extent of God's wrath against sin, the reality of demonic activity, and humanity's tragic hardness of heart.

I. The Fifth Trumpet — The First Woe: Demonic Torment (Revelation 9:1–12)

A. The Fallen Star and the Bottomless Pit (vv.1–2)

"And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit." (v.1)

- This "fallen star" is a symbolic representation—possibly Satan or a powerful demonic entity.
- He is **given** the key, which implies divine permission and control—God still reigns.
- The opening of the **Abyss** (Greek: *abussos*) unleashes a horde of demonic forces.

B. The Plague of Locusts (vv.3–6)

- These are **not literal locusts**; their description is symbolic and terrifying:
 - They look like horses prepared for battle.
 - They have crowns, faces like men, hair like women, teeth like lions, breastplates of iron, and wings with the sound of chariots.
- Their mission is **not to kill** but to **torment** those **without the seal of God**.
- The torment lasts **five months**, the lifespan of actual locusts—a sign of divine limitation.

"In those days people will seek death and will not find it..." (v.6)

A picture of unbearable agony—spiritual and emotional anguish, yet without release.

C. Their King: Abaddon/Apollyon (v.11)

- Hebrew: *Abaddon* / Greek: *Apollyon* — “Destroyer”
- A reminder that **destruction and chaos** are under the leadership of evil, but still within God's sovereign boundary.

Application:

- God's judgment is not random; it targets rebellion and wickedness.
- The protection of God's people (sealed ones) echoes **Ezekiel 9** and reminds us of **divine preservation**.
- Even in judgment, God limits the power of evil (five months).

II. The Sixth Trumpet — The Second Woe: Demonic Slaughter (Revelation 9:13–19)

A. Four Angels Bound at the Euphrates (v.14)

- These angels are **bound**, indicating they are evil and restrained until God permits their release.
- The **Euphrates River** represents the boundary between Israel and hostile empires (e.g., Assyria, Babylon). This is a symbolic location where **judgment invades from the outside**.

B. Army of 200 Million (v.16)

- Not literal human soldiers: likely another vision of **demonic forces**, described as:
 - Horses with lion's heads.
 - Fire, smoke, and sulphur coming from their mouths.
 - Tails like serpents.

“A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues...” (v.18)

- The scope of judgment intensifies. From torment (5th trumpet) to death (6th trumpet).

III. The Tragedy of Unrepentant Hearts (Revelation 9:20–21)

A. The Response to Judgment

“The rest of mankind... did not repent.”

- Despite the severity of judgment, humanity clings to:
 - **Idolatry**: Worship of demons, idols of gold, silver, stone, and wood.
 - **Immorality**: Murders, sorceries (Greek: *pharmakeia* — includes occult and drug abuse), sexual immorality, theft.

B. God's Desire is Repentance, Not Destruction

- God's judgments are meant to awaken sinners, not merely punish them.
- The refusal to repent despite such terrifying signs shows the **depth of human depravity**.
- This echoes the **plagues of Egypt**—Pharaoh hardened his heart despite many warnings (Exodus 7–11).

IV. Lessons and Warnings for Today's Church

1. Evil is Real and Active

Demonic powers are not myths. Paul reminds us:

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood..." (Ephesians 6:12)

2. God is Sovereign Over All

- Even demons cannot act without divine permission.
- The timing, limit, and extent of their judgment is **precisely controlled**.

3. Repentance is God's Desire

- God uses judgment to call for repentance. As in 2 Peter 3:9:

"The Lord... is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

4. The Church Must Be Sealed and Ready

- Those who had the seal of God were untouched.
- This sealing represents the **Holy Spirit** (Ephesians 1:13, Revelation 7:3).
- Are you marked as God's own?

Conclusion: A Trumpet Call to Repent

Revelation 9 is terrifying—but it is also full of mercy.

The judgments are warnings, not final.

They show us that sin opens the door to demonic torment and destruction.

Yet even in wrath, God remembers mercy (Habakkuk 3:2).

Let this passage stir **reverent fear**, **genuine repentance**, and **bold witness** in us.

"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts..." — Hebrews 3:15

Call to Action / Altar Call

- Are you sealed with the Spirit of God?
- Are there idols in your life that need to be cast down?

Text: Revelation 10:1–11

◆ Introduction

Revelation 10 is a remarkable interlude between the sounding of the **sixth and seventh trumpets**. It presents a **pause in judgment**, much like the one between the sixth and seventh seals (Revelation 7). God once again gives **John a personal and prophetic insight**, preparing both him and the church for what's to come.

In this chapter, we meet a **mighty angel**, a **little scroll**, and a **command to prophesy again**. It speaks of **divine authority**, **sweet yet bitter truth**, and **the ongoing mission of the church in tumultuous times**.

I. The Appearance of the Mighty Angel (Revelation 10:1–3)

“I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire...”
(Revelation 10:1)

A. Divine Majesty and Power

- The **description** is striking and majestic clothed with a **cloud**, which often symbolizes God's presence (Exodus 13:21).
- The **rainbow on his head** echoes the covenant sign from Genesis 9:13, pointing to **God's mercy amid judgment**.
- His **face like the sun** recalls Christ in Revelation 1:16, suggesting this angel may represent **Christ or His authority**.

B. Global Authority and Unshakable Judgment

- One **foot on the sea and one on the land** (v. 2) indicates **global dominion**—he speaks for God over all creation.
- The **loud voice like a lion** speaks to power and kingship (cf. Hosea 11:10, Amos 3:8).

Application:

In a world full of chaos, the church must never forget that **God reigns over land and sea**. **His purposes will not be thwarted**, and **His messengers come in power**. We are not abandoned in tribulation.

II. The Mystery of the Seven Thunders (Revelation 10:3–4)

“When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices... but I heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.’” (vv. 3–4)

A. God's Hidden Counsel

- Seven thunders = **powerful declarations**, possibly of judgment.
- But John is **commanded not to write them down**.

B. A Reminder: God Has Secrets

- As Deuteronomy 29:29 says, “*The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us.*”
- Not everything is revealed in prophecy. We must trust in **God’s sovereign knowledge**.

Application:

We often crave full understanding, but God’s silence reminds us to **walk by faith, not by sight** (2 Corinthians 5:7). Our call is not to **know everything**, but to **trust fully**.

III. The Delay is No More (Revelation 10:5–7)

“There should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel... the mystery of God would be finished.” (vv. 6–7)

A. No More Delay

- The angel swears by the eternal God—**the time of waiting is over**.
- The long-anticipated “**mystery of God**” is about to be completed.

B. Fulfilment of God’s Plan

- “Mystery of God” = the **full redemption and judgment** promised throughout Scripture (cf. Romans 16:25–26, Ephesians 1:9–10).
- God’s purposes **will be fulfilled**—nothing can stop the **seventh trumpet** and the coming of the kingdom (see Revelation 11:15).

Application:

As the church, we live in expectation of that **final trumpet**. The delay may seem long, but God assures us that His plan will **surely come to pass**. “*He who promised is faithful.*” (Hebrews 10:23)

IV. The Little Book and the Prophetic Call (Revelation 10:8–11)

“Take and eat it... it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.” (vv. 9–10)

A. The Little Book

- Likely contains a **prophetic message**—similar to Ezekiel’s scroll in Ezekiel 2:8–3:3.
- The **sweetness** reflects the joy of receiving God’s Word.

- The **bitterness** reflects the sorrow of judgment and rejection that often follows the message.

B. Call to Prophecy Again

- “You must prophesy again...” (v. 11)
- John—and by extension, the **church**—must continue to **declare God’s Word** to *“many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”*

Application:

God’s Word is **both sweet and bitter**. As believers, we are called to **speak the truth**, even when it’s hard or painful. We must carry on the mission of **evangelism, warning, and hope**—no matter the cost.

◆ Conclusion: Standing in the Pause

Revelation 10 is a divine pause—a moment of grace and reflection before the final trumpet. It is a chapter of **majesty, mystery, and mission**. The angel speaks for heaven, the thunders remind us of the unknown, and the scroll calls us to action.

Beloved, are we ready to **eat the book**—to receive the Word fully, and declare it boldly? Are we trusting God in the **delays**, and preparing for the day when **there will be no more delay**?

✚ Call to Action

1. **Receive the Word** – Take time daily to delight in God's Word (Psalm 119:103).
2. **Declare the Word** – Share the gospel with boldness and clarity (2 Timothy 4:2).
3. **Trust in Delay** – Wait in faith for the Lord's perfect timing (Habakkuk 2:3).

📖 Key Scriptures for Further Study

- Ezekiel 2–3 – Eating the scroll and the prophetic burden
- Psalm 119:103 – “How sweet are Your words to my taste!”
- Matthew 24:14 – “This gospel... will be preached in all the world.”
- Hebrews 10:35–37 – “He who is coming will come and will not delay.”