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## REVELATION

### Trumpets of Mercy Revelation 08

#### I. God's Judgement

- a. God's judgement reveals that God cares
  - i. Takes evil and sin seriously
    - 1. Corruption – turning a blind eye to evil to sin – bribes, favors, pay offs, blackmail, extortion
  - ii. God doesn't turn a blind eye to the injustice in this world – the harm that we cause one another – every lie, every act of hatred, every abuse – will be answered for
    - 1. It's interesting that people often ask why a good God allows evil, yet when He intervenes to judge or stop it, they question or criticize Him for acting.
- b. God's Mercy
  - i. God is serious about salvation
  - ii. **2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.**
  - iii. 7 Seals – 7 Trumpet Judgements – 7 Bowl Judgements = expanding like a telescope with increasing intensity
    - 1. As He extends His hand of judgement over an unbelieving world, He extends His hand of mercy

***Rev 8:1 When He opened 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 to them were given seven trumpets. 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.***

#### II. Seventh Seal – Seven Trumpets

- a. Each seal has been opened – a new judgement – building to this seventh seal
  - i. Opens to silence for about half an hour – following all the worship and praise...silence – what would cause this?
    - 1. ***Zech 2:13 Let all humanity be silent before the LORD, for from his holy dwelling he has roused himself.***
  - ii. Now in God's final judgement is at hand – the time referred to throughout scripture as the Day of the Lord
    - 1. A time the prophets described as the day of doom, great and terrible, a day of vengeance – Isaiah said Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand!

“Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate.”

- iii. Silence is a wonderful tool. Opportunity to pause and think, and consider ones condition
- iv. Something that is lacking in the noise of our culture
  - 1. ***Habakkuk 2:20: “The LORD is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him***
  - 2. ***Psalm 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!***
  - 3. Before I came to Christ, the silence was brutal – it was often more than I could bear – silence was deafening as I reflected on my current condition
- b. Prayers of the saints – specific prayers found in chapter 6 – the fifth seals was opened
  - i. ***Rev 6: 9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”***
  - ii. Those prayers are about to be answered
  - iii. An angel took the censer, filled it with fire, threw it to the earth – foreshadowing what is about to take place
- c. Seven angels are given seven trumpets, and they prepared themselves to sound
  - i. Trumpets are used for many reasons in scripture
    - 1. Calling God’s people together, calling people to battle, proclaiming God’s presence, celebrating feasts, announcing the arrival of a king, or a warning of judgement
    - 2. In all cases – it was about getting people’s attention for an important message – stop and listen
    - 3. In this case – warning of God’s judgement
    - 4. These trumpets are going to sound a warning – turn to Me with all your heart – return to the Lord your God – He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness and He relents from doing harm

***Rev 8:7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.***

***<sup>8</sup> Then 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. <sup>9</sup> And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. <sup>10</sup> Then 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 water.***

***<sup>11</sup> The name of the star is Wormwood. (bitter herb – Old Testament - symbolizes bitterness, sorrow, and judgement – consequence of idolatry and spiritual adultery to wormwood) A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter. <sup>12</sup> Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.***

***<sup>13</sup> And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”***

### III. How Long?

- a. First four trumpets – environmental destruction – final three will be much more personal

- i. Environmental discomfort – (putting it lightly) – it is God who created the skies, the land, the sea, the streams – they belong to Him
  - 1. Story of the men who finally learned to create a human being – “Get your own dirt”
- ii. Again – this is isn’t complete destruction – God is still showing restraint
- iii. Some of you who are familiar with the Old Testament and specifically the Exodus narrative recognize some similarities here
- iv. The tribulation saints were not the only ones to ask “How long?”
- v. The Lord asked Pharaoh, “How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?”
- vi. Numbers - The Lord said to Moses, “How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?
  - 1. Luke – Jesus cried out “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you?”
- vii. If human history is any indication, we are a stubborn people – slow to listen, slow to respond, slow to repent
- b. Turn to Me
  - i. Disciples asked Jesus, why do you speak in parables? - ***Mat 13:13 I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.’***
  - ii. Before we condemn those in the tribulation who refused to repent let’s spend some time looking in the mirror and ask ourselves why we are so reluctant to let go
    - 1. We may think “okay, I get it. Is it possible that, even as followers of Jesus, hearing we don’t hear, and seeing we don’t see?”

#### IV. Trumpets of Mercy

- a. Our eternal state and the condition of our souls is more important to God than our present comfort. It is by God’s grace that we feel the pain of sin.
  - i. Martin Lloyd Jones defines health as the state a person is in when he forgets he has a body
    - 1. I don’t give my left toe much consideration, until it runs into the corner of my dresser – then I think about for three days – when our body is functioning correctly, we don’t think about the individual parts
    - 2. But when something is wrong, it tells us. It gives us a sign. And the worse the condition the more dramatic the sign.
    - 3. And if we ignore that sign, by God’s grace, the pain gets worse. – Infection – starts small and spreads. But left untreated a serious condition can lead to death.
- b. Humanity is on the brink of an eternal separation from God – they must feel the weight of their terrible condition
  - i. That is where healing begins – when we feel the pain of our sin and we own it.

- ii. Friend was killed by a drunk driver – sentenced to 7 years in prison – I don't believe the lesson will be learned in those 7 years – if he was going to change it would have been when he looked into the eyes of my friend's parents and saw the anguish he had caused
    - 1. We read with the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet that people will seek death and they will not find it – sounds like torture – but it is opportunity
  - iii. Comfortably numb is the worst place we can find ourselves – unmoved by the compromises in our life – even as Christians there are things in us that simply don't belong – they cause conflict in our relationships, pain in our hearts – the worst thing we can do is ignore them
- c. ***Rev 9:20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.***
  - i. Unwillingness to repent is an unwillingness to let go – what will humanity grip to so tightly to that in the midst of all of this, they still won't let go?
  - ii. Murder – Jesus said if you hold anger in your heart against a brother you are guilty of murder – I want justice on my own terms
  - iii. Sorceries – pharmakia – magic potions – I want control over my feelings on my own terms
  - iv. Sexual Immorality – pornia – I want to act on my sexual desires on my own terms
  - v. Thefts – lust for things – I want material possessions on my own terms
    - 1. I want to be god over my own life – I will not turn over my rights to another
  - vi. ***Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.***
  - vii. ***1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.***
    - 1. True repentance is the proclamation that “Unless it comes from my Father's hand, I don't want it!”
  - viii. ***Joe 2:1-3 Blow the trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; For the day of the LORD is coming, For it is at hand: (2) A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations. (3) A fire devours before them, And behind them a flame burns; The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, And behind them a desolate wilderness; Surely nothing shall escape them.***
  - ix. ***Joe 2:12-13 "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." (13) So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.***

- x. *Joe 2:28-32 "And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. (29) And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. (30) "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. (31) The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. (32) And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.*