

REVELATION—UNVEILING THE END, ACT 2 THE EARTHLY DRAMA

STUDY FIVE

First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13

Here is an opportunity to be quiet. The hour of God’s final judgment is coming—the hour when all God’s faithful will be vindicated, when all wrongs will be punished, when all sins will be exposed and judged. Satan will be ultimately vanquished along with his ugly host of demons. Humanity will be humbled, and Christ will be exalted. And all of heaven now waits in suspenseful expectancy.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

THINK about the patient parent who’s spent the whole day listening to his or her children bicker. Or the loving spouse whose partner constantly complains about a nagging knee pain but refuses to visit a doctor. Or the caring person whose sibling maintains an unyielding addiction that’s caused so much damage. Each of these people likely want to scream the same thing . . .

“I’ve had *enough!*”

The book of Revelation portrays God expressing a similar feeling. For millennia, He has watched evil damage His beloved creation. He has listened closely to the cries of His children. He hears them share their fears, their pains, their losses—and His heart is filled with compassion. All the while, He’s upholding perfect patience and acting with perfect timing.

This world will not always be as it now is. A day will come when God decides that enough is *enough!* Enough of Satan harming His children. Enough of sin tearing families apart. Enough of death stealing the abundant life He wants everyone to enjoy. In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we will see what happens when God offers the final response to all our prayers.



First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Is something in your life making you want to say, “I’ve had enough”? Express your need to God in prayer as you prepare to learn about His intention to restore you and the rest of His creation.

Father, sometimes I can't help but feel like I've had enough with the brokenness of this world. Yet I find comfort in Your promise that You will repair Your creation to a state of perfection. As I study Your Word today, give me patience and hope as I await this day. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Revelation contains a series of visions in which God carries out His cyclical judgment against Satan, sin, and death. The first cycle began as the slaughtered Lamb unfurled a scroll closed with seven seals. As He opened each seal, a new form of God’s judgment reached the earth. According to [Revelation 8:1–2](#), what happened when the Lamb broke the seventh and final seal? What did John see?

Nested within this seventh seal were the seven trumpets—the next set of judgments. By framing the vision this way, God revealed that the cycle of judgment wasn’t yet completed but starting anew. For this second cycle, though, John included some interesting details about the motivation behind God’s action. What image did John see in [8:3–5](#)? What did this image represent?

Turn now to [8:6–13](#) to see what happened when the angels blew these horns of judgment in response to the cries of God’s people.

First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13



Observation: The First Four Trumpets

Like warriors preparing to lead a battle march, the seven angels lined up with their trumpets in hand (*Revelation 8:6*). In succession, each sounded a horn whose music announced God’s judgment against evil. As you read about these first four judgments, use your observation skills to keep track of how John described each judgment.¹

According to *Revelation 8:7*, what did John see when the *first* angel blew his trumpet?

According to *8:8–9*, what did John see when the *second* angel blew his trumpet?

According to *8:10–11*, what did John see when the *third* angel blew his trumpet?

According to *8:12*, what did John see when the *fourth* angel blew his trumpet?

An eagle suddenly appeared to John, circling overhead as it cried out a foreboding message: “Terror, terror, terror to all who belong to this world because of what will happen when the last three angels blow their trumpets” (*8:13*). This cycle of judgment would continue, but for now, let’s stop to consider the significance of the first four trumpets.

First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13



Interpretation: The Prayers of the God's People

The cycle of trumpet judgments began with the rising of “the prayers of God’s people as an offering on the gold altar before the throne” (*Revelation 8:3*). What truth does this passage teach about prayer? Consult your Bible-study resources, like Pastor Chuck’s commentary, *Insights on Revelation*, or *Constable’s Notes*, which is available for free at netbible.org.² Record some timeless principles about our prayers and God’s response in the space below.

Many of the seal judgments were human-on-human atrocities like war, conquest, and murder. Yet the first four trumpet judgments were natural disasters not caused by human influence. What does this observation reveal about the extent of the curse of sin? In what ways will Jesus ultimately restore this element of the curse upon His second coming?

These are unanswered prayers of the saints that God has accumulated—if you will. They’re contained in a golden bowl. This is symbolic language, but the point is this: God values the prayers of His people. God hears those prayers. And God responds in His time. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: The Plagues of Egypt

Many of the trumpet judgments God sent in *Revelation 8:1–13* are nearly identical to the plagues He sent against Egypt when the people of Israel were enslaved there. Read the following passages and summarize how each plague parallels the trumpet judgments. Pay special attention to the last verse in each plague sequence.

Exodus 7:14–22

First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13

Exodus 9:13–35

Exodus 10:21–27

Each plague in Egypt ended with God hardening Pharaoh's heart and Pharaoh refusing to release the Israelite slaves. How did Pharaoh's response foreshadow how others would later respond to God's judgment? What does Pharaoh's response teach about the extent of sin?

All of this is designed to remind humankind that it is not about us. It's about our Creator. We need that reminder every day we live as we go through every accident of life, which appears to us at times to be so unfair, or so ill-timed, or so devastating. But all of it falls in the category of His plan. So don't forget it's all about Him. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Tunes of Hope

Have you been crying out to God in prayer about the evil of this world? This passage reveals that your prayers have risen to God like an incense offering. Though the stench of sin is foul, the aroma of trust is pleasing. Pastor Chuck Swindoll developed four timeless truths based on this passage:

- God values and responds to the prayers of His people.
- God can communicate spiritual messages through natural disasters.
- God gives His harsh judgments a holy purpose.
- God won't quit until His plan completes its course.

First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13

What kinds of injustices have you been praying about lately? Do you sometimes feel like God will never answer your prayer? How does this passage offer you a sense of hope—even as you wait for God to respond to the evil surrounding you?

Nature is a great teacher. When we experience fires and floods, earthquakes and tornadoes, disease and death, we realize how little control we have over our circumstances. Yet, God hasn't lost *any* power. How have you seen God work despite these kinds of evil for your good and His glory?

As you look to the future consummation of God's plan for creation and consider your place in this plan, do you sense the Holy Spirit urging you to say, "Enough!"? Enough of a sinful habit? Enough poor treatment of a family member? Enough of a wavering walk with Jesus? Use the space below to reflect and consider how He might be urging you to make present changes in light of God's eternal plan.

We don't need to experience a blackened sun to know that this world is a dark place. The long shadows of Satan, sin, and death touch everything around us. Sometimes it feels they will even extinguish what little light is left. Yet the Light of the World sits on the throne of creation, and the darkness cannot overcome Him. And we will all rest in the warmth of His light on that glorious day when He returns and declares, "I've had *enough!*"

First Blasts of the Trumpet Plagues

Revelation 8:1–13



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for the reminder that You will not allow the evils of this world to persist forever. Strengthen me to join the chorus of eternal saints in prayer as I await the day Jesus Christ returns to restore His creation. Help me to say, “Enough!” to the sin in my own life as I seek to grow in Christlikeness. It’s in His patient name I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, “[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#).”
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on Revelation*, Swindoll’s Living Insights New Testament Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2014).

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Brad Smith, writer and content strategist, *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 2003, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

