

The Study of the Book of Revelation

The Seven Trumpets

Chapter 9

While the first four trumpets fell upon Imperial Rome because of their persecution of God's people and were described in just a few verses each. The last three trumpet were so intense that John describes them as "Woes!"

These "Woes" or "Trumpets" pronounce a greater punishment that was to fall on the power that would bring about the great tribulation of the "Dark Ages" times (538-1798 AD). Their punishment was the result of having more spiritual enlightenment than the pagans before them, yet they rejected the truth of God's Word, setting in its place human dogmas (doctrines) and traditions, such as, a new day of worship, false confession, earthly intercession instead of heavenly intercession, just to name a few.

With the Pagan Roman Empire now collapsed, this gave way to the Christian Church of Rome which was to become the Holy Roman Empire. Eventually every civil power would yield to the church as Papal Rome grew in power.

The fifth trumpet foretells the rise of the Arab Nation. Where was their beginning and what does the Bible say about them and Ishmael their father?

Genesis 16:10-12

*"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, **I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.** And the angel of the LORD said unto her, **Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael;** because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. **And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.**" KJV*

Notice how some other translation write verse 12:

Genesis 16:12

*"**He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.**" NIV*

Genesis 16:12

*"**This son of yours will be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives.**" NLT*

Genesis 16:12

*"**He will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers.**" NASU*

Loren Nelson describes this scene in his book, Understanding the Mysteries of Daniel & Revelation, "Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all claim Abraham as their father. Judaism is the oldest of these three world religions, leaving us the legacy of the writings of the Old Testament Scriptures. After the death and resurrection of Christ, the Christian church developed out of Judaism. At first the Christians met in synagogues as they were considered a Jewish sect called "the way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14). Jesus and His disciples proclaimed His fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies. When Christians could no longer meet in the

synagogues, the Christian church as a separate entity came into being. Six hundred years after Christ, a radical, militant religion arose. Mohammed and his followers gained power through ethnic cleansing and subjugation (to make submissive or subdued) of all who would not submit to this new philosophy. Islam venerates Abraham as its father and Jesus as a prophet, but today we can observe what the Scriptures predicted about children of Ishmael: "His hand shall be against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin."

Alberto Treiyer in his book, *The Seals and the Trumpets*, gives us some background on this:

"The Arabs emerged into Western civilization abruptly in the seventh century. They came so dramatically and powerfully that Beatus, a Spaniard monk of the eighth century, came to the conclusion that the symbol of the locusts of the fifth trumpet perfectly fits the Saracen Arabs. The Muslim expansion had been able to cover, from that time, Northern Africa, the Near East, and Spain. Many interpreters followed Beatus in this interpretation, even during the time of the Protestant Reformation (such as Luther, for example). Bullinger, by the second half of the sixteenth century, was able to make a clear distinction between the two great expansionist movements of the Muslims. He saw the Saracens and the Ottoman Turks in the fifth and sixth trumpets respectively. More than one hundred authors agreed with him over the years, causing this interpretation to become the classic Protestant interpretation until the nineteenth century."

Revelation 9:1-12 5th Trumpet - First Woe

"1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. 5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. 6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. 7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. 8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. 9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. 10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter."

The judgments associated with the fifth trumpet fall more specifically upon Papal Rome's persecution against God's people that were standing for truth and preaching the Word of God. This trumpet places us at the early part of the Dark Ages or 1260 years of Papal persecution.

"a star fall from heaven unto the earth" – This is better translated as ***"and I saw a star out of heaven having fallen to the earth."*** The next verses help us identify this star.

Revelation 12:7-9

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent,

called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

This points us to the time back in heaven, when Lucifer (Satan's name before he was cast out of heaven) rebelled and convinced a third of the angels of heaven to join him in his rebellion. God was long suffering, but there came a time when sin had to leave heaven. The created was no match for the Creator. Satan and his angels lost and were cast from heaven to this earth. The prophet's Isaiah and John point to this event in their respective books of the Bible.

Isaiah 14:12

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"

Revelation 12:4

"And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born."

This "*fallen star*" symbolizes Satan who opens the symbolic bottomless pit. The bottomless pit, as described in Revelation chapter 20, is this earth, where Satan is not allowed to leave during the one thousand years. Since Satan uses humans to do his work on earth, in a secondary sense the "*fallen star*" symbolizes Mohammed, the instrumentality used by God to punish the apostate church-Papal Rome.

"the key" – Mohammed had contact with the two great religions of the time: Judaism and Christianity. His writings (the key) contain some elements of both. He claimed to be the prophet of God and claimed that his writings (the Koran) was given to him by inspiration. If the Koran and the Bible were both inspired by God, then it only makes sense that they would agree! Yet, they do not agree! The character of God and the truths laid out in the Bible are much different than that in the Koran. Also, the Koran has no time prophecies that can be verified.

"the bottomless pit" – The bottomless pit would represent a broken down, desolate area of the earth. Used here in the fifth trumpet would represent Arabia with its wilderness, desolate lands, and uninhabited regions. It's sudden and unexpected appearance caused them to expand from nothing, that is, from the "abyss" and emerge as a conquering empire.

"Smoke" – The smoke and darkness of Islam obscured the light of the gospel, the good news of the One who outshines the sun. It does not allow its citizens freedom to compare or even consider the light of the gospel. Both Papal Rome and Islam leaders control the interpretation of their holy book, while the people are kept in smoke-filled darkness. It is fitting that God used darkness out of Arabia during the fifth trumpet to punish the darkness of apostate Christianity. Here Papal Rome had to turn from focusing on hunting down Christians, to battling the Islamic fighters, to keep them from taking down the mother church.

"Locusts like Horses" – This describes the Saracenic invasion which blew in from the south like a destroying wind. Taylor Bunch describes this in his book, *The Revelation*: "*The Arabs were the most expert horsemen in the world and they lived*

and fought so much on their horses that the horse and rider were almost inseparable. With the swiftness of flying locusts they rode their famous Arabian horses into battle.”

“Crowns like gold...faces of men...hair of women...teeth of lions” – This accurately portrays in symbols the Saracenic Muslims. The Saracens’ turbans were greenish gold and their hair was long like a women’s hair, yet they had big beards so it was obvious that they were men. The symbol of their teeth as the teeth of lions represents the savagery in which they conquered and destroyed.

“Breastplates of iron...Sound of chariots...tails like unto scorpions” – This describes the weapons and armor that the Saracens used. Their leather breastplates were hard and as strong as iron, and their horses were also protected by armor. Their weapons included the sword, spear, along with bows and arrows. These skillful archers could shoot arrows behind them over their horses’ tails while in retreat. They would also lace their arrows with poison. This is symbolized by the scorpion.

“Five Months” – In that time period there were 360 days in a year, and 30 days in a month. Using the prophetic day for a year principle we can see that five months, each having 30 days would equal out to 150 prophetic days or literal years. The locusts only attacked during this five-month period. Josiah Litch connected the five-months (150 literal years) with the 391 years and 15 day’s prophecy of the 6th trumpet. He concluded they were in succession, that the 391 years and 15 day’s would immediately follow the 150 years. He believed the 150 years started with the first Turkish attack on the Byzantine Empire at Bapheum on July 27, 1299. Adding 150 years to that date led him to July 27, 1449.

Revelation 9:13-21 6th Trumpet - Second Woe

“13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. 16 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. 18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. 20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: 21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

Here we see the rise of the greatest and most powerful Muslim Empire, that would last more than 500 years, the Ottoman Empire. More than five centuries after the Muslim expansion into Syrian and Spain, the Ottoman Turks took power in eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Northern Africa. Under the fifth trumpet, the Saracens would hurt or torment, but in the sixth trumpet, the Ottoman Turks would slay and kill.

“The four horns of the golden altar” – This is the Golden Altar of Incense that is in the

Holy Place of the Sanctuary, just before the veil that leads to the Most Holy Place. Taylor Bunch links this sanctuary imagery to the message of the trumpets:

“The altar of incense was the place where the priest ministered the blood of the victims slain at the altar of burnt offering in the court. The horns of the golden altar received the blood that atoned for the sins of Israel. This was a part of the “daily” service. The golden altar was symbolic of the mediatorial work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. The voice from the golden altar is therefore the voice of Christ. This is the only one of the seven trumpet-angels given specific instruction by Christ. It proves that His priestly ministry was still in progress during the sounding of the trumpets and that they therefore cannot be identified with the seven last plagues. It also shows that that during the first six trumpets the “daily” ministration of Christ was in progress and that He had not yet entered upon the last phase of His ministry represented by the yearly service in the most holy place. It was the failure of the church to recognize the priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary that brought the trumpet-woes upon the professed Christian world. The heavenly service was trampled under foot by Papal Rome through the institution of an earthly and counterfeit system, therefore the Turks were loosed against them.”

“Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates” – The four angels had been restrained until now, but under the sixth trumpet they were loosed to slay and kill. Remember, angels are messengers that do God’s bidding, just like the three angels of Revelation chapter 14 that deliver messages, but in reality it is to be given by God’s people on this earth. Loren Nelson describes it this way:

“When the Saracen Empire began to decline, it split up into four sultanies that governed at four locations: Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Baghdad. The word angels means messengers or ministers. As the leader of the Saracens that tormented Rome was called “the angel of the bottomless pit,” so the four sultanies of that same empire are also called angels or ministers of the empire. Beginning with the fifth trumpet, they were held in check only to hurt or torment, but now under the sixth trumpet, they are unleashed to slay and kill.”

“an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men” – Here we see the time period that Joseph Litch connected with the 150-year prophecy (Five Months) from the fifth trumpet. Let’s look at this prophecy in light of the day for a year prophetic interpretation.

1 prophetic hour	=	15 literal days
1 prophetic day	=	1 literal year
1 prophetic month	=	30 literal years
<u>1 prophetic year</u>	=	<u>360 literal years</u>
Added together this totals: 391 years and 15 days		

This would be the time allotted for the Ottoman Turk Empire to carry on its aggression and killing. Ellen White in her book, the Great Controversy, p. 334-335, shows how this amazing prophecy was explained by Joseph Litch before it was literally fulfilled:

“In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the

Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown "in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;" and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: "Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case."-- Josiah Litch, in Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy, Aug. 1, 1840. At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended."

"and the army of horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them" –

Two hundred thousand thousand is two hundred million. This symbolic number represents an innumerable number of soldiers. For four hundred years the Ottoman Empire collected not only taxes, but a tax of children. The conquered nations were required to give twenty percent of their young boys to the empire, to be trained as soldiers and administrators in government.

"Third part" – If we are to be consistent with the understanding of one-third, this would have to mean one-third of the old Roman Empire. Although Constantinople withstood the Saracens under the fifth trumpet, it finally fell to the Ottoman Turks under the sixth trumpet in 1453 AD. Constantinople, which was the richest and largest city of Europe, had now become the capital of the Ottoman Turk Empire. The conquest of Constantinople allowed the Turks to continue their invasion of eastern Europe, pushing as far north as modern day Poland and Austria.

Revelation chapter 10, and the beginning of chapter 11 go together; they are about the judgment beginning in 1844 AD. Chapter 10 describes the Great Disappointment, that happened on October 22, 1844, as sweet in the mouth and bitter in the belly. So far the first six trumpets have come from the Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary, but now chapter 10 and most of chapter 11 transitions us to the Most Holy Place where Jesus is our Judge and Advocate. Then the seventh trumpet brings us to the time of judgment and then down to the second coming of Jesus.

Revelation 11:14-19 7th Trumpet -Third Woe

"14 The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. 16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, 17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. 18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. 19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

“the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament” –

The Seventh Trumpet come from the Most Holy Place. The word “*testament*” means covenant. **The ark of the covenant is found in the Most Holy Place in the sanctuary.** It contained the 10 Commandments, Aaron’s rod that had budded, and a plate of manna. On the top of the ark of the covenant was the Mercy Seat, where the presence of God dwelt. One day a year God appointed a day, the tenth day of the seventh month, to cleanse the earthly sanctuary and His people from their sins. This was called the Day of Atonement. This pointed to the Great Day of Atonement where Christ would cleanse the heavenly sanctuary from the sins that had been confessed by His people. As a result of judgment, the seven last plagues fall on the wicked, also coming from the Most Holy Place.

Revelation 15:5-7

*“And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And **the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.**”*

“were lightnings...voices...thunderings...an earthquake...and great hail” – This points us to the end of the seven last plagues, the last being the plague of hail, which will usher in the Second Coming of Jesus!

Revelation 16:17-21

*“And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and **there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.** And there were **voices, and thunders, and lightnings;** and there was a **great earthquake,** such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And **every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.** And there fell upon men a **great hail** out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God **because of the plague of the hail;** for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”*

Comparison from the Sanctuary:

At the Seven Golden Lamp Stands: The Seven Churches [Revelation 1:14-15]

1. Sees the Glorified Savior
2. with eyes like flame of fire,
3. whose voice is like the “sound of many waters”.

From the Throne (Table of Shew Bread) comes: The Seven Seals [Revelation 4:5]

1. Flashes of lightening
2. Sounds
3. Peals of Thunder

From the Golden Altar of Incense comes: The First Six Trumpets [Revelation 8:5]

1. Peals of Thunder
2. Sounds
3. Flashes of lightening
4. Earthquake

From the Ark of the Testimony comes: The Seventh Trumpet and Seven Last Plagues [Revelation 11:19]

1. Flashes of lightning
2. Sounds
3. Peals of thunder
4. Earthquake
5. Great hailstorm

From the Holy of Holies with the seven last plagues comes: The Second Coming of Jesus [Revelation 16:17-21]

1. Lightning
2. Sounds
3. Peals of thunder
4. Greatest of earthquake
5. Greatest of hailstorms

Reasons why the Trumpets cover all of Christian history; from the cross to the second coming:

1. The book of Revelation is historical (Protestant) not futurism.
2. The seven churches, the seven seals and the seven trumpets are “*repeat and enlarge principle of the same time period*” like Daniel two, seven, eight, and eleven.
3. The Sanctuary is prophetic with each of the three sections covering the ministry of Jesus.
4. The trumpets along with the seven churches and seven seals are started and initiated in the Holy Place or first compartment of the Sanctuary.
5. To pull the seven trumpets out and put them in the Holy of Holies with the seven last plagues, is to take them out of their context.
6. All of Scripture puts the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place not the Most Holy place, with the exception of Hebrews.
7. Hebrews 9:4 is out of synch with the rest of Scripture on the placement of the Altar of Incense. Reasons for this could be:
 - a. A translating error.
 - b. Paul making a theological statement not a location statement. I tend to favor this because on the day of Atonement the Altar of incense had the blood placed on it as well as the mercy seat. So on that one day it could be included in both compartments.
8. The book of Revelation places it in the Holy Place. In Chapters 1-11 we are in the Holy Place. The Most Holy place is not opened or mentioned until Revelation 11:19. There is no appearance of the Altar of incense in the Most Holy place in Chapters 11:19 through chapter 22.

The book of Revelation, particularly the portion with the seven trumpets, centers on preparing people spiritually for the great day of the Lord. The seventh and last trumpet is to awaken a spiritually sleeping world, proclaiming that its God, Judge, and King is about to return, and He will require faithfulness of all His peoples of the earth.

As the seventh trumpet sounds, a long-awaited announcement is made: the kingdoms of this earth belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel work has ended and the two witnesses have fulfilled their work. When all of God’s people are sealed, the angels of God cease to hold the winds of strife. Revelation 10:7 announces: “*In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*” The intercessory ministry of Christ is finished during the seventh and last trumpet. The last soul has been saved; all have decided whom they will worship and obey: the

beast or Jesus Christ. The last verse of Revelation chapter 11 lays the foundation for understanding God's covenant relationship with His people. It also sheds light on the difference between those who worship the Creator according to His covenant law and those who rebelliously worship the beast. God's people have His laws written in their minds and in their hearts through the sealing work of the Holy Spirit. They have stood faithful to Him through the judgment, the time of the mark of the beast, and the seven last plagues. They are ready to look into the face of Jesus and proclaim: *"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."* Isaiah 25:9