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The Trumpets of Wrath, Pt 2

Revelation 9

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PowerPoint Presentation included: None

SermonAudio Blurb: In chapters 8-9 we have an escalation of the Great Tribulation. As each trumpet is blown an ever-increasing level of misery and judgment comes upon this world. We see again the work of spiritual beings affecting our realm of existence and we are again reminded that there is much more to God's creation than meets our eye. We also see the heart of humanity in the face of this judgment; not one of repentance but of continued pursuing anything but the True God.

I. Introduction.

- A. Last week we began to see the next layer of judgment upon mankind in the last days.
 - 1. These are the trumpet judgments due to the angels who sound forth a trumpet, out of which then comes some level of suffering and hardship.
 - 2. As stated many times, these problems and judgments do not get better, they get progressively worse and will culminate at the final judgment seat where all of humanity are judged individually before Jesus Christ.
- B. We left off at the end of Revelation 8 with the crying forth of the triple woes because of the trumpets that were still to come.
 - 1. Today we will see two of those final three.
 - 2. The last will be sounded in 11:15. Before this one is sounded there are some intervening visions/interludes that will lead up to it and give some important details for us to know.
- C. Read chapter 9.

II. Chapter 9—The Demons.

- A. Only two of the three trumpets are described here, the final one, much like the seventh seal, is going to be described in 11:15.
- B. The fifth trumpet:
 - 1. Note the star. How you viewed the star in 8:10 likely will impact how you view this one.

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- a. Here are the options again on 8:10:
 - (1) Some see it as some great leader.
 - (2) Others see it as an angel.
 - (3) Or it is another meteor-like object.
 - (4) The last two make the most sense and is likely an angel.
- b. A spiritual being/angel is probably my best answer simply because a meteor would not affect merely fresh water in the area of impact.
- c. “When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:7)
- d. What are some ways this has been interpreted?
 - (1) If you approach this from the Idealist view then you simply see this as referring to any great leader over the centuries.
 - (2) One popular thought is that it represented Mohammed. This is due to how he had gathered great armies and even marched against a corrupt and false form of Christianity.
 - (3) One key observation is found at the end of vs 1—the pronoun is masculine. So it is a personal being.
 - (4) Another point of help comes in 20:1 where it is an angel from heaven who was in possession of the key to the abyss. If this is the same angel, then we have our answer. However I think this is not correct.
 - (5) Many see this as referring to Satan.
 - (a) Luke 10:18 is a cross-reference, where Jesus said that He saw Satan as a star falling from heaven.
 - (b) This is very possible. However, Satan is featured rather strongly in Revelation and is named. This is a rather simple and passing statement that gives little information as to the identity.
 - (6) I think it is a reference to a demon/fallen angel but not specifically Satan.
 - (a) Notice 9:1 how it is written.
 - i) This star is from where?

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- ii) Notice that though he was “from heaven” that something else was true of him. He had fallen to the earth.
 - a) The idea of fallen here is describing a state of being that this angel was in.
 - b) His original abode was heaven but now his abode was earth.
 - c) This is different from 20:1 where the angel descends from heaven. Falling speaks of a failure and punishment. It speaks of moral ruination and collapse.
 - d) That is why demons are also called “fallen angels.”
- iii) Vs 11 gives the name of the leader of these creatures. But you should not assume this is a term for Satan
 - a) Again, in every other place in Revelation John uses the title Satan.
 - b) Likely this is a sub-leader under Satan.
- (b) This angel is given the key to the abyss, which we will discuss in a moment.
 - i) The key speaks to authority.
 - ii) But it also shows you a critical point of truth that is often forgotten by us. God is truly and fully sovereign.
 - a) This ability to unleash these hordes of creatures was not found in this angel himself.
 - b) It was given to him by God at God’s appointed time to accomplish God’s appointed purposes.

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- c) I also think it is noteworthy to remember that it is Jesus Himself who holds the keys of death and hades. It is Jesus who is granting the ability to open the abyss to this demon.
- 2. The bottomless pit/abyss.
 - a. Not hell. It contains creatures—which I believe to be demonic.
 - b. According to 20:1-3 it can be used to imprison them.
 - (1) 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3.
 - (2) Luke 8:31 is very helpful here as well.
 - (3) Jude 1:6 and 2 Peter 2:4.
- 3. The locusts (3-6).
 - a. Not your normal ones. Notice that they do not attack the vegetation, but mankind.
 - (1) Which of mankind?
 - (2) Those without the seal.
 - b. This harkens back to the Exodus again, where an angel of death passed over the land, sparing only those with the mark of the lamb's blood.
 - c. If this is still descriptive of what they look like, then they are simply terrifying.
 - (1) The terminology of vs 7-9 give possible symbolism, but there is clearly the idea of simile as well.
 - (2) The crowns might refer to authority.
 - (3) The faces might refer to intelligence.
 - d. Their power was to harm, but not kill (3).
 - (1) Again it is a huge point to grasp, they do not possess this authority in themselves.
 - (2) God is limiting and defining for them their ability and work.

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- (3) Reminiscent of Job where God and Satan interact.
- e. A key lesson is that they are seeking to harm those who are “on their side.”
 - (1) A key reminder that sin is the great destroyer.
 - (2) Satan and his legion of demons serve God’s purposes and they are no friend to the sinner.
 - (3) This also again shows how it is God who is sovereign in all ways and it is He who uses evil and evil beings for righteous and good purposes.
- f. There is another passage that has a strong connection to this passage: Ezekiel 9:3-6.
- 4. The impact of the locusts (7-12).
 - a. Notice the horror of this time.
 - (1) It is a bit frustrating when this whole chapter is interpreted symbolically to refer to the general work of demons upon those who are not followers of God throughout time.
 - (a) It diminishes the true horror of what we read.
 - (b) And it also fails to explain vs 6.
 - (2) Mankind is sorely assaulted for a period of 5 months.
 - (a) Once again to read how this number is treated by many is a bit humorous.
 - (b) Because of the assumption that this is all symbolic and therefore it should be understood in a non-literal way there are all sorts of explanations given.
 - (c) First, over and over you will read that numbers in Revelation are usually not literal though never is this shown in any substantial way.
 - (d) So some simply say it doesn’t mean 5 months and then ignore it completely (Beale).
 - (e) Others will say it means a long period of time (Beasley-Murray).

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- (f) Others say it means a short period (Kiddle).
- (g) And other simply say it is figurative and has no meaning of time in it (Lenski).
- b. What is their response to this (6)?
 - (1) Not repentance but merely death. They will long for it.
 - (2) But notice what death does—it flees from them. Death is not just hard to find, it actively runs away from all who desire it.
 - (3) We must remember that even death is under the sovereign control of God, just as these demons are.
 - (a) Again this is important to remember for I find too often we speak about God as sovereign but we tend to be a bit vague about what that means.
 - (b) Consider the following passages:
 - i) Judges 9:23.
 - ii) 1 Samuel 16:14-16, 23.
- C. The sixth trumpet:
 - 1. This is the second woe, and great it is.
 - 2. Four bound angels, probably fallen angels, for no where else are the elect angels bound.
 - a. Frightening though is the thought. For how many thousands of years have they been bound all the while waiting for release to accomplish their purpose?
 - b. Think of the hatred building. They are like vicious animals lunging against chains seeking only to destroy.
 - 3. Euphrates River—Two options, either are acceptable in my view.
 - a. The first is that it is literal, that this massive army shall arise from this area. Note that Euphrates also involves the land of that area.
 - b. The second is that it is referencing great judgment.

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- (1) Jeremiah 51:63-64 ““And it will come about as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates, and say, “Just so shall Babylon sink down and not rise again, because of the calamity that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted.” Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.””
4. The purpose—to kill 1/3 of mankind—try to get your head around that!
5. The army:
 - a. One view is that this is referring to a great army of humanity. China today can muster this many.
 - b. A better view is that this army of demons are under the four angels, and are simply more demons.
 - (1) The description of them fits this better.
 - (2) Secondly, the power and methods used also helps.
6. With the 5th trumpet, the demons terrorized but did not kill man. But with the 6th trumpet, this is now ratcheted up to bring a massacre.

III. Conclusion.

- A. The heart of mankind (20-21).
 1. Over and over we see the call by God to repent, to turn away from our sins and idols.
 - a. Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations. (Ezekiel 14:6)
 - b. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matthew 3:2)
 - c. And they went out and preached that men should repent. (Mark 6:12)
 - d. And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)
 - e. "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has

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fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead. (Acts 17:30-31)

2. How many times have you perhaps said when a person becomes very ill or some tragedy strikes them, “Well maybe this will get them to believe and be saved.”
- B. Beloved, God is sovereign over all and it is God who saves man.
1. Man left to himself will go to hell clinging to his false gods and baubles.
 2. In the midst of such a time of horror and terror they will not flee to the safety and salvation found in Christ.
 3. This is one of the most powerful passages on the true state of humanity without God’s mercy in their lives.
- C. The power to save is not found in punishment or troubles. The power to save is found only in the good news of Jesus Christ. Therefore it is the gospel which we must be faithful to bring to those who are perishing.
- D. Six trumpets have blown, there is one more to go....

IV. Benediction/Doxology.

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Small Group Questions

- **Summer Break**