

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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Mission Statement

This study of the Book of Revelation gives special attention to the testimony it provides concerning our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10; cp. 1:2), leading us to worship and serve Him in everything.

- I. What you have seen (Rev 1).
- II. What is now (Rev 2–3)—the seven churches of Asia Minor.
- III. What will take place after these things (Rev 4–22).
 - A. The Seven Seals (4:1–8:1)
 - B. The Seven Trumpets (8:2–11:19)
 1. Preparation for the Seven Trumpet Judgments (8:2–6)

“And I saw” introduces a new vision.

 - a. The Seven Angels with the Seven Trumpets (8:2, 6)
 - Trumpets used to sound an alarm during war (Jeremiah 4:19; Joel 2:1) as well as for gathering people together (Exodus 19:16; 20:18; cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:16).
 - Compare with the seven spirits in Revelation 4:5 and 5:6. The author seems to identify a certain defined group.
 - Jesus taught that angels will be involved in future judgments (Matthew 13:39–41, 49–50; 16:27; 25:31).
 - b. The Angel with the Golden Censer (8:3–5)
 - This angel stands over (or, at) the altar in Heaven (cp. 6:9–10).
 - Who is this angel?
 - ✓ Some say “angel” in Revelation is always a spirit being.
 - ✓ Some say Christ is the “angel of Yahweh” only in the Old Testament.
 - ✓ Some say this is Jesus Christ.
 - ✓ This is “another” (*allos* = of the same kind) angel (8:3).
 - What is this angel’s work?
 - ✓ Does he serve as an angel-priest acting as an advocate for the martyrs?
 - ✓ He offers incense with the prayers of the saints (8:3–4; cf. 5:8).
 - ✓ He throws on the earth the censer with fire from the altar (8:5).
 - ✓ Symbolic of divine judgment. See Ezekiel 10:1–2, 6–7.
 2. The First Four Trumpet Judgments (8:7–12)

The time has arrived to do the harm that God postponed temporarily in 7:3.

 - a. **First Trumpet**—Hail, Fire, Blood (8:7)
 - Compare the seventh plague on Egypt (Exodus 9:22–25).
 - See Joel 2:30—descriptive of the future Day of the LORD (Yahweh).

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- 1/3 of the trees burn up.
 - All of the green grass burns up.
- b. **Second Trumpet**—“Like” a Great Burning Mountain Cast into the Sea (8:8–9)
- A large meteorite or asteroid?
 - 1/3 of the sea becomes blood. Cf. first plague on Egypt (Exodus 7:19–20).
 - 1/3 of all sea creatures die.
 - 1/3 of all ships destroyed.
- c. **Third Trumpet**—The Star Called “Wormwood” (8:10–11)
- The “star” could be a meteor or a comet or asteroid.
 - Wormwood is a bitter plant used in the Old Testament to symbolize divine judgment (Jeremiah 9:15; cf. Proverbs 5:4). The spirit (45–74% alcohol) absinthe (Greek word in text is *apsinthos*) is produced from wormwood with other herbs (like anise and fennel). Wormwood contributes thujone, a psychoactive ingredient.
 - 1/3 of the rivers and fountains become bitter.
 - Many men die.
- d. **Fourth Trumpet**—Celestial Catastrophe (8:12)
- Compare the ninth plague on Egypt (Exodus 10:21).
 - 1/3 of the sun darkened.
 - 1/3 of the moon darkened.
 - 1/3 of the stars darkened.
 - “so that . . . the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.”
 - ✓ Shortened day?
 - ✓ Reduction of light? (Less intensity or fewer hours? Longer night?)
 - ✓ Cf. Matthew 24:21–22
3. The Last Three Trumpet Judgments—**Three Woes** (8:13–11:19)
- a. Introduction to the Woes (8:13)
- An eagle, not an angel—a bird of prey.
 - “Woe, woe, woe”—especially grievous series of judgments.
 - “to those who dwell on the earth”—first four trumpets targeted the environment; next trumpets target mankind.
 - “because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound”—a heightened expectancy for what is to come.

Questions for Discussion

- a. Why can't the angel with the golden censer be Jesus Christ?
- b. What is the significance of “one-third”?

Implications Regarding Jesus Christ

- ▶ The wrath of Jesus Christ brings these judgments (cp. 6:16–17).
- ▶ Only three chapters lack any reference to Jesus: chapters 8 (vv. 2–13), 9, and 18.
- ▶ These judgments come upon those who are not in Christ Jesus—they rejected Him.