



STUDY GUIDE • WEEK 4 • REVELATION 8-9

WE ARE SO EXCITED YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR OUR DEAR CHURCH SERMON SERIES. THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS THE CAPTIVATING, POWERFUL, AND AT TIMES CONFUSING LAST BOOK OF THE BIBLE. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT GOD WILL SPEAK TO YOU THROUGH THIS SERIES. EACH WEEK, ALONG WITH THE SERMON OUTLINE, WE WILL PROVIDE A FOUR-PAGE STUDY GUIDE TO HELP YOU READ, UNDERSTAND, AND APPLY THE CHAPTERS COVERED. WE HOPE THIS WILL BE HELPFUL FOR YOU PERSONALLY AS WELL AS FOR DISCUSSION AND SHARING WITH YOUR LIFE GROUP, FAMILY AND FRIENDS. AS MATT SMETHURST SAID, *"GOD DID NOT GIVE US THE BOOK OF REVELATION SO WE'D BUILD BOMB SHELTERS IN THE BACKYARD. HE GAVE US THIS BOOK SO WE'D BUILD BIGGER DINNER TABLES AND INVITE OUR FRIENDS OVER AND TELL THEM ABOUT JESUS."*

WITH LOVE, PASTORS GLENN AND ERIC

UNDERSTANDING REVELATION 8

In chapter 8 the seventh seal is opened and seven angels appear with seven trumpets, ready to proclaim the purposes of God.

The seventh Seal cues seven angelic trumpeters who with them bring seven judgments. Each angel and their corresponding trumpet symbolizes a cataclysmic event to occur.

- The first angel and trumpet brought the destruction of a third of the earth.

- The second angel and trumpet brought disaster to the sea. The mountain mentioned in verse 8-9 is believed to represent some leaders who persecuted believers.

- The third angel and trumpet affected the water supply, bringing death to many people. The blazing star named Wormwood is considered by some scholars to be an eminent governor; others take it to be some person in power who corrupted the churches of Christ.

- The fourth angel and trumpet attacks the sun, moon, and stars.
Darkness falls upon the earth.

In the middle of judgment God pauses. He decides to give additional warning of what is to come and at the same time give people an opportunity to repent. While some may think that God brings judgment because He is an angry God. In actuality, He brings judgment because He is a just God. In order for God to be who He is, He must judge sin. Yet even in the judging process, God offers opportunity for repentance because that is his heart.

READ • REVELATION 8 : 1 - 13

APPLICATION

- Amid seals and trumpets, why do you think there was this silence (v. 1)?
- What do altars and incense teach about prayer (vv. 3-5)? Does this imagery seem far removed to you, or are you able to picture it clearly?
- What events follow the sounding of each of the first 4 trumpets (vv. 7-12)?
- What parallels do you see between the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets?

UNDERSTANDING REVELATION 9

Chapter 9 begins with the fifth trumpet represented by a star falling from heaven and opening the bottomless pit; out of which come swarms of locusts. The sixth trumpet is followed by the loosening of the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates.

- The fifth angel and trumpet release Satan. It is during this time that those who have rejected God are tormented, however those who possess the seal of God on their foreheads are protected.

- The sixth angel and trumpet bring an immense amount of death. Four angels are released along with an army of 200 million which is probably a demonic army. They proceed to kill one third of all the people on the earth. Those who survive this period however still refuse to repent.

At the end of chapter 9 (verses 20-21) instead of turning to God in repentance, the people of earth dig in with their defiance even more. The hearts of men have grown so hard that even among great tragedy and death they refuse to turn from sin and run towards God. They continue to reject his love and compassion. This shows you the danger and power of a hardened heart. That's why the Bible warns against hardening your heart (Ephesians 4:18-19, Hebrews 3:7-11) – there are dangerous consequences associated with it.

READ • REVELATION 7 : 1 - 21

APPLICATION

- What is most frightening to you about these plagues and judgments? Why?
- Why do you think so many of the plagues described here stop short of complete devastation?
- Why do you think the survivors in the last days still refuse to turn to God—especially after seeing all of the horrible judgment all around them?
- What has caused you to harden your heart?

WEEK 3 • REFLECTION

SERMON

What stood out to you from the sermon? How will you apply it to your life?
Who will you share it with?

READING

What modern-day realities does the imagery of these plagues bring to mind for you? How might they have applied equally well in John's day?

PRAYER

In your prayer time this week, implement silent meditation on God's word and on what God has done for you. Choose a section of scripture, like Psalm 121, or another that is meaningful or encouraging to you, and read it several times, pausing to reflect how each verse applies to you. End your prayer time by giving thanks to God and how he has been faithful to you.