



2019 Q1 “The Book of Revelation” Lesson 7 The Seven Trumpets

by Lori Atkins

What are your thoughts about our study in this quarterly so far? Just wondering if anyone else has had their minds completely blown over the past couple of weeks?! I have been reading and studying extensively preparing to teach this week just like normal...but then, after our lesson two weeks ago on the seven seals, I was motivated to dig an study even more – because some of those new, paradigm-shattering concepts of what time periods in earth’s history are covered by each seal...and who the rider is in each seal...are so revolutionary and so contradict everything I have ever heard, everything I have ever been taught – I mean, I was born and raised on the concept of a good revelation seminar...and now what I am discovering has me thinking that there are a bunch of powerpoint slides out there that may need to be changed.

Again, in my research, every document I read, every presentation I listened to, every video I watched – prominent Adventist teachers, seminary professors, theologians, evangelists – all of them... 100%... agree with our quarterly’s view that the seven seals prophecy covers the span of time from Christ’s ascension to the second coming. But because I believe what we are learning and studying is so groundbreakingly different, even though I know Dr. Jennings reviewed the seals briefly last week, I’m going to do it again today because I think it is that vital and important.

Remember we talked about Bible prophecy often having more than one application – the lesson even acknowledged this by stating that the seven churches had historic, prophetic, and universal applications. This realization opens us up to the question, “Could the prophecy of the seven seals have more than one meaning?”

And we read this quote from EGW describing what is contained in the book of the seven seals:

“the history of God's providences, the prophetic history of nations and the church. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and the history of all ruling powers in the nations. In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close.” {9MR 7.2}

There seems to be so much more being described there than the last 2000 years of human history – something much broader and more encompassing – and believe there is compelling evidence to



support the explanation that the seven seals represent God's foreknowledge from the opening of the GC in heaven through to its conclusion...and here's quick recap of each one.

1st Seal – represents Satan's rebellion in heaven with these key elements:

- White horse, presents himself and pretends to be pure
- Holds a bow that shoots arrows
- Wears a crown – claims equality with Christ and later ruler of the Earth.
- Wants to conquer – dominate and compel

2nd Seal – The fall of mankind in Eden

- This rider takes peace from the earth! When did peace get taken from the Earth? After Pentecost or in Eden? I think this is one of the most compelling evidences against the limited historical scope of the seals.

3rd Seal – The history of humanity in the Old Testament up until Christ

- This was a period of spiritual starvation in which truth about God was difficult to find, but the Holy Spirit and the life of Christ could not be destroyed.

4th Seal – Christianity through the Middle and Dark Ages

- The power of the church to distort the truth about God by distorted teachings about God, restricting access to the Word of God, and introducing pagan god concepts.

5th Seal – 1844 and the opening of the Investigative Judgment

- individualities were being cleansed from sin and given white robes

6th Seal – The shaking and end-time rejection of God and rise of atheism and evolutionism

7th Seal – The final events culminating in the second coming of Christ

And is this important? Why? Remember we also learned last week that it is okay to have different views of various elements of Revelation as long as the following remain true:

- God is always portrayed as love
- God's laws are design laws
- Trust and faith in God are increased
- Fear and distrust in God are decreased
- You are growing to be more like Christ in character and method
- You become engaged as a worker to share the truth about God.



What happens if we see Christ as the rider with a bow who seeks to conquer?
Does it make a difference who/when we see peace being taken from the earth?
Does it make a difference if we Christ or Satan holding a yoke and binding us to something?
Does it make a difference if we see Christ or Satan bringing death and Hades?

I believe in this book specifically designed to be a revelation of God's love and truth, it is every bit as important to reveal the lies and the deceptions and the deceivers...in fact, I do not believe you can't do one without the other. It's so important that we see how Satan's deceitful, destructive actions throughout (not just human) history...have been countered repeatedly and consistently with God's loving intervention, intercession, and healing truth.

SATURDAY

Some early insight (spoiler alert) into the authors' attitudes and viewpoints regarding what the seven trumpets represent...as well as their picture of God and how He and His law operate. So there is some correlation between the vision of the seven trumpets and the scene of the fifth seal – we just discussed this fifth seal where we saw

“... under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed. (Rev 6:9-11, NIV)

Again, what does this mean...is this language literal or symbolic? Of course, it is symbolic with the sanctuary a metaphor for God's plan to heal and restore...the altar represents hearts and minds that have the Holy Spirit burning within...and the incense signifies their praises and prayers ascending.

So, not surprisingly, the quarterly seems to focus in on these souls under the altar, crying to God for “justice and vindication”...in fact, the lesson states,

“The voice from heaven urged them to wait, because the day was coming when God would judge those who harmed them...and points to Revelation 6:15-17 as a picture of Jesus returning to this earth and bringing judgment upon those who did evil to His faithful followers.”



What does this mean? How do you hear it? How has it typically been taught?

Saturday's last paragraph says,

“The vision of the seven trumpets shows that, throughout history, God has already intervened on behalf of His oppressed people and has judged those who harmed them.”

Has God intervened throughout history? On whose behalf – only His oppressed people?

“The purpose of the seven trumpets is to assure God's people that heaven is not indifferent to their suffering.”

Is this the real purpose for the revelation of the seven trumpets? Let's examine these trumpets a little more closely and see if we agree on whether that is their purpose...or whether there are other possible reasons why they might be included in John's revelation.

SUNDAY

The Prayers of the Saints

We first see this reference to the seven trumpets in Revelation chapter 8, after the 6th seal has been opened, and during an interlude before the 7th seal is opened.

Do you remember what time in earth's history this represents, based on our past 2 weeks of study and brief review?

The events of the 6th seal included a great earthquake, the sun turning black, the moon turning blood red, and the stars falling. Then the sky rolled back, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Our alternate understanding is that this language references the war between God and Satan, where it's being fought, and the weapons being used. This language is symbolic of the warfare moving into its final phase – where an escalating spread of the true gospel is met with escalating darkness and evil, and it takes place between the shaking and end-time rejection of God (evidenced by the rise of atheism and evolutionism)...and the final end-time events culminating in the second coming of Christ.

So it is at this point we see the story in Rev 8:3-4 that correlates closely with the description of the daily services in the temple in Jerusalem, where at the evening sacrifice the lamb was placed on the altar of burnt offering, and the blood was poured out at the base of the altar...then an appointed priest took the golden censer inside the temple and offered incense on the golden altar in the Holy Place.



When the priest came out, he threw the censer down on the pavement, producing a loud noise...at that point, seven priests blew their trumpets, marking the end of the temple services for that day.

Please read Revelation 8: 3 through 6. You can hear the strong parallels between this scene in John's vision and the daily temple service, right?

The quartererly concludes again, "The seven trumpets are God's judgments on rebellious humanity in response to the prayers of His oppressed people."

Agree or disagree?

Same Rev 8 passage from the Remedy:

"But a different angel, holding a golden censer and standing in front of the golden altar, was burning a large amount of incense mixed with the prayers of the saints. This symbolized the character of Christ, burning within the hearts of God's representatives on earth as they prayed for the revelation of God's character of love and the redemption of humankind. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth. This symbolized the Holy Spirit empowering God's spokespersons to reveal the truth with stunning clarity. There was an incredible shaking of the minds of the people, accompanied by flashes of brilliance that battled rumblings of confusion and the thundering of opposition. Then the seven angels holding the seven trumpets prepared to sound them, which represents seven warning messages of truth trumpeting the approaching end and exposing Satan's counterfeits to God's Remedy."

And don't forget...this is also right around the time when the Holy Spirit is being withdrawn from the earth (why?), and the 4 angels who had been holding *back* the winds of strife...were waiting for what? Remember the 144,000 and the "sealed of God"? What did these folks represent? And what was their purpose...why is there an interlude – why did the angels continue to hold and why did these seven trumpets not sound until they were sealed? How many groups will there be at the end of time?

I believe everyone alive then will be brought to the ultimate decision point – fear or love, selfishness or giving, do I love myself so much that I will do whatever is necessary – including kill you – that I might live...or do I love you so much that I will do whatever is necessary – including die – that you might live? This IS the war, the battle that is being fought in these texts.

So how will every single living being on earth be brought to this decision point? I believe it is these warning messages and events...the disasters and catastrophes that happen as the four winds are



loosed...that get people's attention – where even the most agnostic and atheistic folks are asking what's happening – and the sealed of God have a healing answer and can rightly represent God, and while there are still hearts open to hear...while the Holy Spirit's presence is still here on this earth, many choose love and are saved.

But we will also see when we look at the later trumpets, that eventually, just as the saved are so settled into the truth that they cannot be moved...so the lost are so settled into the lies that they will not be moved, no matter how dire and urgent the warnings become.

Are “warning messages of truth trumpeting the approaching end” the same as “God's judgments on rebellious humanity”...do you hear those the same?

The last paragraph in Sunday's lesson does say that the throwing down of the censer “also may be a warning that Christ's intercession will not last forever.”

What does that mean? Why won't it?

MONDAY

The Meaning of the Trumpets

While most of the New Testament references to trumpets are right here in Rev 8 and 9, the Greek words for trumpets/trumpeting occur 144 times in the Old Testament, and 105/144 (73%) of those references concern either signaling in warfare, worship, and prayer – or a combination of these. In ancient Israel the trumpets were always to be handled by the priests, even in warfare...providing a spiritual parallel signaling trumpets represented a prayer to God for intervention in battle.

Likewise, in the temple and on feast days, the blowing of trumpets invited God's spiritual intervention in the lives of his people. Essentially, trumpets in the Bible represent covenant-based prayer, calling on God to remember His people. The quarterly says,

“The seven trumpets are a response to the prayers of the suffering saints of God. It assures them that God has noticed their suffering, and, even though He may seem silent in their experience, He is already acting in history against those who have persecuted them.”

I watched a presentation on The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets by Dr. Jon Pauline and Dr. Graham Bradford. Again, these are leading theologians...religion professors...and they had this to say:



“To those who are abused and oppressed, the trumpet message is this: God hears your prayers – it may not seem like He’s acting now, but He is acting even when you cannot see it. He is making note of what you have suffered and the day is coming when He will address that and bring justice. Just as the trumpets offer comfort to those who pray...those who have been abused, they also should be a warning to those who oppress, to those who do the abusing – because the day is coming, may not be right away, but in time, in history, God does act. Those who act abusively, oppressively toward others, the Day of Judgment does come. So, if we are acting in ways that are harmful to other people, and no consequences seem to come to us, that’s just the way it is right now. When God has marked those, there is a judgment at the end when God does respond to those prayers of the saints. So the trumpets, in a real sense, are a call to repentance, especially to those who are hardened, to those who feel like, ‘I can get away with anything,’ the trumpets have some powerful things to say to them.”

Can we “act in ways that are harmful to other people and no consequences come to us?” Why?

Do people who abuse an oppress “get away with it” if God does not “mark” those deeds, and then intervene to impose judgment/punishment? Why?

In the middle of Sunday’s lesson, point (b) indicates the timeframe of these seven trumpets begin at Christ’s resurrection and run consecutively throughout history until the Second Coming...which differs somewhat from Dr. Jennings’ view in the Remedy paraphrase, where the trumpets are viewed as seven last warning messages to the people of earth at the end of time in order to prepare the world for the coming of Christ and expose Satan’s fraud. The particular timeframe and who is impacted in each trumpet event are open to various interpretations, so I think it’s okay to examine possible explanations by considering the merits and then asking – why is this important, what does it tell us about God, what does it say about God’s character and methods – those are the really important considerations, not locking in on an absolute meaning for each trumpet as these are presumably future events.

Let’s quickly review the contents of the seven trumpets, and we are going to contrast the traditional NIV with the Remedy...we have done this in the last couple of weeks with the seven churches and the seven seals, and I thought it was really powerful to see side by side how tweaking or shifting a word or a meaning even slightly completely changes the perspective and the paradigm and how I understand and receive that message.

We are starting in Rev 8:7-9:



Trumpet 1

NIV: “The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down on the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.”

The quarterly suggests that the use of Old Testament judgment-y language of hail, fire, and blood represents God’s judgment on the Jerusalem that had rejected Christ.

Now from the Remedy:

“The first angel sounded his trumpet, and a hailstorm of fiery truth revealing the Remedy achieved by Christ's shed blood was poured upon the earth. One-third of the earth was consumed in fiery turmoil, and the hearts of one-third of earth's leaders and people burned within them as the truth shone forth.”

Does a hailstorm of fiery truth and the Remedy achieved by Christ’s shed blood, and believers’ hearts burning as they shine forth truth change your picture of God when reading this passage?

Trumpet 2

NIV: “The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.”

The lesson suggests proposes that this second trumpet recalls God’s general judgments on all who oppose him, in particular the fall of ancient Babylon...so this trumpet is associated with the fall of the Roman Empire (comparing Peter’s apparent designation of Rome as “Babylon”).

Now from the Remedy:

“The second angel sounded his trumpet, and a huge mountain of truth revealing God's kingdom, ablaze with love, was made known to the sea of earth's inhabitants. One-third of the people accepted the Remedy and partook of the life of Christ, symbolized by the blood—they died to self and gave up their selfish trade.”



Trumpet 3

NIV: “The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water — the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.”

The lesson suggests that the biblical imagery and symbolism suggest a perversion of truth and a rise of apostasy; therefore, they associate this trumpet with the condition of the church in the Middle Ages.

Remedy: “The third angel sounded his trumpet to make it known that an angel, like a brilliant star blazing through the sky, had fallen from heaven, and one-third of the people had their minds filled with his lies about God. This attack was called Bitterness, and many people died from drinking in his bitter lies.”

Trumpet 4

NIV: “The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.”

The quarterly suggests that the sources of light being darkened represents the symbols of truth being partially eclipsed and parallels the deepening of apostasy in the church.

Remedy: “The fourth angel sounded his trumpet with the warning that one-third of people would believe the lie of evolution and no longer recognize the light from the sun, moon and stars as evidence of God's creatorship. The minds of one-third of the people would be darkened and their hearts hardened by this lie, both night and day, as they no longer searched for God.”

Trumpet 5

NIV: “The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months, and the



agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes. During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.”

The lesson suggests that the transition from partial darkness to total darkness represents the triumph of religious apostasy and secularism in the modern age. With God and truth totally eclipsed, sinful humankind is left to the demonic torment of destructive desires.

Remedy: “The fifth angel trumpeted his warning, and I saw a fallen angel symbolized by a star falling from the sky to the earth. The fallen angel had the key to accessing the abyss, symbolizing spiritualism and mysticism being the key to accessing the pit of demonic influences. He opened the abyss, and smoke rose from it like that from a huge furnace, symbolizing the immense rise in popularity and acceptance of spiritualism and mysticism. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke, symbolizing the minds of people having become dark and no longer looking to God for enlightenment. Out of the smoke came locusts that had the power of scorpions. As locusts consume the fruit of the land, so too the sting of sin consumes the fruit of the Spirit. The locusts were unable to harm the people whose minds were so settled into the truth about God that they could not be moved—symbolized by the healthy grass, plants, and trees—but could harm those whose minds were not sealed into the truth about God. They were not able to inflict direct physical harm, but caused tortured thinking and mental anguish for five months. And the agony suffered was from the sting of living outside God's design for life—the scorpion-sting of sin. Dying to self and being renewed in righteousness is preferable to living in the anguish of sin, therefore many will seek to die to self and be renewed, but they will not find it, because they seek their own mystical method of renewal.”

Trumpet 6

NIV: “The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar that is before God. It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of the mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand. I heard their number. The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur. A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads



with which they inflict injury. The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.”

Why not? The quarterly suggests the events of this trumpet again echo biblical accounts of ancient Babylon, so the sixth trumpet describes an opposition to God similar to that of end-time Babylon.

Remedy: “The sixth angel trumpeted his warning, and I heard a voice—coming from the horns of the golden altar before God—which is Christ speaking while he works to cleanse the minds of his people. The voice said to the sixth angel, who held the warning trumpet, "It is time to release the four angels bound to the great river Euphrates, who have stood as a barrier protecting the people." Then the four angels who had been waiting for that hour, day, month and year were released, and they let go of what they held back; and one-third of people on earth died. The number of the enemy forces was more than two times ten thousand times ten thousand—the number was beyond counting, symbolizing the number composed of peoples from the entire world. The horses and riders were a conglomerate of diverse forces uniting together to oppose God. They were assembled in three main divisions: Those who believed the lies about God and promoted them through churches had breastplates of fiery red; those who practiced mysticism and spiritualism had breastplates of metallic blue; and those who merely pursued political power and coerced with the power of the state had breastplates of sulfur yellow. They were all bent on destroying truth, love and freedom, as symbolized by their horses with heads like the heads of lions. They destroyed with fiery lies, smoky mysticism, and coercive pressure. One-third of humanity had their characters destroyed by the combined effect of the fiery lies, smoky mysticism, and coercive pressure. The power of these enemy forces came from the lies and falsehoods they promoted—symbolized by the smoke coming from their mouths, and by their tails being like heads of snakes, which were able to inflict injury. The rest of humanity whose consciences were not completely seared by these assaults still refused to turn away from their own self-promotion; they continued to trust demons, and the idols of their own hearts’ desire, that are not even alive. They did not turn away from destroying others, or from mystical and magical practices, or from sexual immorality or theft.”

Trumpet 7

Rev 11:15-19 NIV: “The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.’ And the twenty-four elders, who were seated



on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: ‘We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. The nations were angry, and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small— and for destroying those who destroy the earth.’ Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.”

Remedy: “The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and loud voices proclaimed in heaven: ‘The kingdom of selfishness, based on earth, has been eradicated, and the earth has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ; and he will reign forever and ever.’ And the twenty-four elders who were seated on thrones before God humbled themselves in awe and admiration, and said, ‘We are thankful to you, Lord God Almighty—who lives today and who has always existed—because you have unveiled your great power and begun to reign in truth and love. The nations of the selfish world lived in anger, and you have let them reap what they have chosen. The time has come for accurately diagnosing those who sleep in the grave, for rewarding your spokespersons—the prophets, and your saints, and all those who revere your character of love, both small and great, and for the destruction of those who destroy the earth.’ Then God’s Healing Plan—represented by the Sanctuary—was disclosed, and at its heart was Jesus the Lamb, who unites the universe into one, represented by the Ark. And there came flashes of insight, rumblings of understanding, peals of thunderous adoration, a foundational collapse of earth-based thinking, and a great hailstorm of truth.”

WEDNESDAY

Eating the Scroll

Eating in the Bible is used to describe the acceptance of a message from God in order to proclaim it to the people. When received, the message is good news; but when it is proclaimed, it sometimes results in bitterness as it is resisted and rejected by many.

Has anyone here experienced this?

John’s commission to “prophesy again” to the world points to Sabbath-keeping Adventists, raised up to proclaim the message of the Second Coming in connection with the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation...is this what John’s commission points to?

What were we raised up to proclaim?



Bottom box: “Keeping in mind how central blood was to the Day of Atonement ritual, how can we always keep before us the reality that the judgment is good news? Why is this truth so important?”

THURSDAY

The Two Witnesses

The idea of two witnesses comes from the Jewish legal system which requires at least two witnesses to establish something as true.