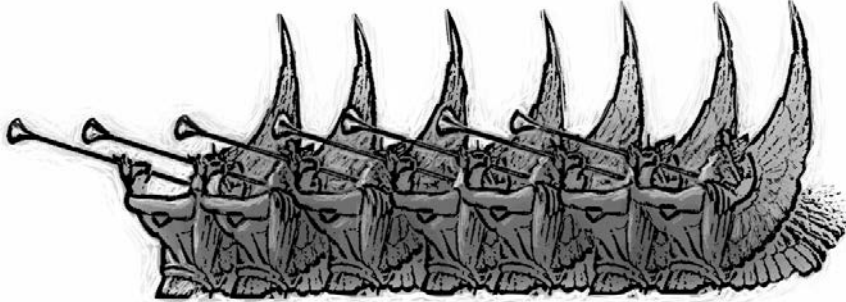


The Seven Trumpets



SABBATH—FEBRUARY 9

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Revelation 8:5, 13; Ezekiel 10:2; Revelation 10:1–4; Daniel 12:6, 7; Revelation 11:1, 2, 3–6.

MEMORY VERSE: “And when the seventh angel blows his horn, God will put His secret plan into action. It will be done just as He told it to the early preachers, His servants” (Revelation 10:7, NLV).



The seven last trumpets show to God's people that Heaven cares very deeply about their suffering.

WHEN JESUS OPENED THE 5TH LOCK, we saw that the cry of God's suffering people was a word picture for all God's loyal followers who ever suffered on the earth. John showed us this group of people as souls under the altar in heaven's sanctuary. Heaven's sanctuary is the place where God works to save His people. The souls under the altar shout to God. They ask how long it will be before God makes things fair (Revelation 6:10). The voice from heaven tells the souls to wait, because soon God will judge the people who hurt them. Revelation 6:15–17 show us Jesus when He comes back to this earth. At that time, Jesus will judge everyone who hurt His loyal people.

The suffering of God's people shown in the 5th seal is a word picture for the suffering of all God's people from Abel until the time when God will judge the ones who spilled “the blood of His servants” (Revelation 19:2, NKJV). Until then, God's suffering people must believe that God hears their prayers. The seven last trumpets show us that God already judged the ones who hurt His followers and that Heaven cares deeply about His people's suffering.

THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE (Revelation 8:5)

Revelation 8 starts with seven angels who stand in front of God. The seven angels are ready to blow their trumpets. But before any angel blows his trumpet, something else happens. This happening helps explain to us what the trumpets mean.

Read Revelation 8:3, 4. Then read this description about what happened every day in the temple in Jerusalem: every evening, a holy leader, or priest, put the lamb on the altar to be burned up. First, the priest poured the lamb's blood at the bottom of the altar. Then the priest took a gold pan inside the temple and offered special perfume on the gold altar in the Holy Room. When the priest came out again, he threw the gold pan down on the floor. The pan made a loud noise when it hit the floor. When that happened, seven more priests blew their trumpets to show that the special work they did in the temple was finished for that day.

In Revelation 8:3–5, we see that John uses many of the same words we just read that show what happens every evening in the temple. Where does the angel get the special perfume for his gold pan? He gets it from the “altar made of gold before [in front of God's] throne” (Revelation 8:3, NLV). This special perfume is a word picture for the prayers of God's people (Revelation 5:8). So, the prayers that the angel offers in front of God are the prayers from God's suffering people. God is now ready to answer their prayers.

Revelation 8:3–5 give us important information about the trumpets in Revelation:

- a. The seven trumpets are God's punishments for humans who break His law. God punishes evil humans because they have hurt His people, and His people have prayed to God to ask Him to give them justice.
- b. The 1st angel blows his trumpet after Jesus dies on the cross as God's Lamb. Each trumpet shows us a different time in history after Jesus' death until the Second Coming (read Revelation 11:15–18).

Read Revelation 8:5 and then Ezekiel 10:2. We read that fire is thrown on the enemies of God's people. Where does the fire come from? How does Ezekiel's vision about throwing fire on Jerusalem help us to understand better the trumpets in Revelation?



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WHAT DO THE TRUMPETS MEAN? (Revelation 8:13)

Revelation uses trumpets as a word picture to show us how God works to save His people. Trumpets were important in Israel during Old Testament times (Numbers 10:8–10; 2 Chronicles 13:14, 15). The trumpet sound helped people think about worship in the temple. People also blew trumpets in war, at the time when the crops were ready to pick and eat, and during festivals. During worship in the temple or during a festival, the trumpet sound helped people remember God and His Special Agreement with His people. The trumpet sound helped people get ready for the “day of the Lord” (Joel 2:1, NLV). During war, God’s people prayed. Then someone blew the trumpet. That was how God’s people asked God to save them. All this information helps us understand better why God used the trumpets in Revelation.



The 2nd trumpet is a word picture for God’s punishment against the Roman kingdom for killing Jesus and attacking God’s church.

The trumpets in Revelation 8:13 and Revelation 9:4, 20, 21 show us God’s punishments. Who does God punish?

The seven trumpets show us God’s punishments against the enemies who hurt His people (Revelation 8:13). At the same time, the seven trumpets are warnings. They warn the people on earth to turn back to God before it is too late. The trumpets also show us what will happen in the future from John’s time until the end (Revelation 11:15–18). The punishments that the trumpets show us do not happen everywhere on earth. They hurt only 1/3 of the earth:

- a. Trumpets #1 and #2 show us God’s punishments on the Jews in Jerusalem and the Roman Kingdom. These people groups put Jesus to death on the cross and attacked the New Testament church.
- b. Trumpets #3 and #4 show us what God did when the church turned away from Him during the Dark Ages and later when people in Europe started, in the 1500s, to wake up to Bible truth.
- c. Trumpets #5 and #6 show us that after the 1500s people will fight over religion. During this time, demons will start working very hard to turn people against God’s followers before Jesus comes back.

Yes, history is full of blood, pain, and sad stories. How should these stories help us know that Jesus’ promises to us really are wonderful?

THE ANGEL WITH AN OPEN BOOK (Revelation 10:1–4)

The 6th trumpet brings us to the end time. What does God ask His people to do during this time? Before the 7th angel blows his trumpet, John writes about a time that explains the special work that God’s people do and what they will experience in the end time.

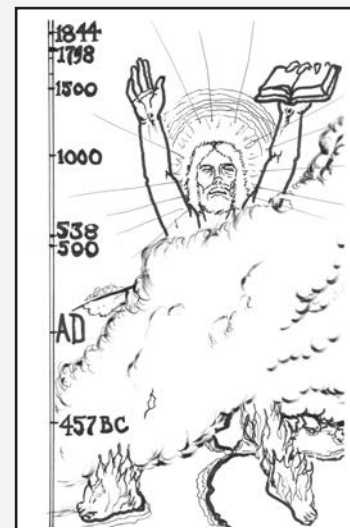
Read Revelation 10:1–4. What is happening here?

The powerful Angel in these verses is Jesus. He holds an open book. He puts one foot on the sea and one foot on the land to show us He is the Ruler over everything on earth. Also, the way that He stands shows us that the words He will say are important to everyone alive on the earth. His shout is the same as a lion’s roar. A lion’s roar is a word picture for God’s voice (read Hosea 11:10).

Compare Revelation 10:5–7 with Daniel 12:6, 7. What same words do you see in both sets of verses?

The Angel announces, “ ‘There will be no more waiting!’ ” (Revelation 10:6, ERV). The words “ ‘no more waiting’ ” come from the Greek word “chronos [khro'-nos]” “Chronos” shows us that the Angel is talking about a special time in the history of God’s people. This time is the same time that Daniel talked about in Daniel 12:6, 7. In those verses, an angel tells Daniel that God’s enemies will attack God’s people. These attacks will continue for “a time, times, and a half a time (3½ years)” (Daniel 12:7, NLV). The 3½ years are a word picture for 1,260 real years (A.D. 538–1798). Sometime after this time, the history of this earth will end.

So, when the Angel says, “ ‘There will be no more waiting!’ ” (Revelation 10:6, ERV), He means that the times that Daniel writes about are over. These times also include the 2,300 days in Daniel 8:14, which are 2,300 real years. The 2,300 years started in 457 B.C. and ended in A.D. 1844. The Bible gives us no more special time messages about things that happen to God’s people after 1844. “After this time in the history of God’s people, ending in 1844, the Bible gives us no more special time messages about the future.”—Ellen G. White Comments [ideas], *The SDA Bible Commentary [explanation]*, volume 7, page 971, adapted.



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JOHN MEASURES THE TEMPLE (Revelation 11:1, 2)

The Bible uses “eating” as a word picture to show us what happens when someone accepts a message from God and gives the message to other people (read Ezekiel 2:8–3:11; Jeremiah 15:16). When someone accepts God’s message, the message is good news. But sometimes when a person announces the message, it can cause a “sour” feeling when other people turn against the message or refuse to accept it.

In Revelation 10:9, 10, John experiences a time that is both sweet and sour when he eats the scroll or roll of writing paper. The scroll that John eats is a word picture for the time when God will show His people the meaning of Daniel’s end-time messages. John himself is a word picture for God’s church that must preach the Good News at the end of the 3½ years, or 1,260 days (1,260 years), in Daniel 7:25.

John’s experience also points us to the time at the end of the 2,300-year period. At that time, the group of people named the Millerites believed that Jesus was going to come back in 1844. That message was sweet as honey to them. But when Jesus did not come back, the Millerites experienced a sour feeling.

Then the Angel (who is Jesus) tells John to “ ‘tell what will happen again’ ” (Revelation 10:11, NLV) to all the people on the earth. Here, John himself is a word picture for Sabbath-keeping Adventists. God chose Sabbath-keeping Adventists to tell everyone on the earth about Jesus’ Second Coming and the messages of Daniel and Revelation about what will happen in the future at the end time.



The scroll that John eats is a word picture for the time when God will show His people the meaning of Daniel’s end-time messages.

Read Revelation 11:1, 2. What is John ordered to do?

These verses pick up where we left off in Revelation 10. God tells John to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshipers. The Bible uses the act of measuring as a word picture to show God’s work as our Judge (read Matthew 7:2). The temple that John must measure is the temple in heaven where Jesus works as our High Priest. A high priest is a holy leader who works to save his people from sin. The temple, the altar, and the worshipers all point us to the day when God will judge the earth. On that day, God will “measure” the works of His people and judge their sins. Revelation 11:1 points to the time when God will judge His people right before Jesus’ Second Coming. During that time, God will judge **only** His people, who are in the temple.

THE TWO WITNESSES (Revelation 11:3–6)

Read about the two witnesses in Revelation 11:3–6. How do the two witnesses act the same as Zerubbabel and Joshua in Zechariah 4:2, 3, 11–14? How are the two witnesses the same as kings and priests or holy leaders?

The idea about the two witnesses comes from Jewish law. Jewish law says that at least two witnesses must agree about something for it to be accepted as true (John 8:17). The two witnesses are a word picture for the Old and New Testaments. These two parts of the Bible cannot be separated because God commands His people to announce all of the Bible's truth to everyone on earth.

In the book of Revelation, the two witnesses (the Old and New Testaments) announce what will happen during the 1,260 years (A.D. 538–1798). The two witnesses wear black clothing during the 1,260 years while they preach God's message about the future. But what do the black clothes mean? In many countries, people wear black clothes to funerals (Genesis 37:34). So, the black clothes show us a time when Bible truth was "buried." It was covered and hidden by human ideas.

Read about the two witnesses in Revelation 11:7–13. Describe what happens to them at the end of the 1,260 days, or years.

The wild sea-animal power "kills" the two witnesses (the Old and New Testaments). This killing is a word picture for what happened to the Bible during the French Revolution. At that time, the French government attacked the Bible and made laws against religion. But the two witnesses come back to life from the dead. Their coming back to life shows us that people start to read the Bible again. Right before the end of time, God's people will preach the Bible in a new and powerful way. This last announcement of Bible truth also will be sweet for God's people, but sour too. Why? Because people who do not love God will attack God's followers for preaching Bible truth.



The two witnesses are a word picture for the Old and New Testaments. The two witnesses also can be a word picture for God's people when they show other people Bible truths.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: The 7th trumpet (Revelation 11:15–18) tells us about the time when this earth’s history ends. At that time, God will show His power as King. The people on this earth have been at war with God for many thousands of years. Humans have been under Satan’s control for a long time. But God will take control of the earth. After Jesus died on the cross and went back to heaven, God announced that Jesus was the true leader of the earth (Revelation 12:10, 11). Yes, Satan continues to make much trouble on earth. Satan knows his time on this earth is almost over (Revelation 12:12). The 7th trumpet shows us that God will end the fight against His government. Then He will rule over the earth.

The rest of the book of Revelation is about end-time happenings. The 7th trumpet shows us five things about those end-time happenings: **(1) Different countries on earth are angry.** Revelation 12–14 show us that Satan also is very angry (Revelation 12:17). Satan works with the wild sea-animal power and the wild land-animal power to get the people on earth ready to fight against God’s people. **(2) It is the time for God’s anger against evil.** What is God’s answer to the angry people on the earth who are against Him? God’s answer is the Seven Last Troubles. “These are the last troubles, because after these troubles God’s anger is finished” (Revelation 15:1, ICB). **(3) God will judge the dead** (Revelation 20:11–15). **(4) God will reward His servants** (Revelation 21–22). **(5) God will destroy those people who destroy the earth.** Revelation 19:2 tells us what will happen to end-time Babylon. End-time Babylon is a word picture for three things: (1) the Roman Catholic Church (Revelation 17), (2) the Protestant churches that have turned away from God’s truth (Revelation 14:8), and (3) all false religions everywhere. God judges Babylon for destroying the earth. God will destroy Satan, his armies, and the evil powers that help him. When God does that, then the big war between good and evil will be over (Revelation 19:11–20:15).



God will destroy those people who destroy the earth.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

1 There are times when people make fun of the Good News about Jesus. They turn away from what we preach. They make fun of us too. That can give us a “sour” feeling in our stomachs (Revelation 10:10). Who can you think of in the Bible that experienced the same things? What can we learn from their suffering and their faith?