

Pursuing Resilience in Revelation

Signs That the Walls Are Crumbling

Revelation 8

Intro

Between 1939 and 1940 1.5 million people were evacuated from the major urban areas around the U.K. in an attempt to try and protect Britain's most vulnerable from the Blitz attacks of Hitler's air troops. By the time the war had ended, that number had reached 3.75 million and it is estimated that $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population of Britain has been impacted in one way or another by these evacuations. If $\frac{1}{3}$ of a population is affected, that's a situation within which everyone would know someone who had been touched. The people of Britain would never be the same after these events and yet Hitler's evil wrath is nothing compared to God's righteous judgment which is coming to our world.

Scripture tells us that the people will flee to the mountains, and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the earth will be devastated by each event. Yet there will be no escape because the one they have pitted themselves against isn't an evil dictator whom the Lord gave them grace to bring down. Rather, they are in rebellion against God and God will bring His justice to bear on this world. It is coming and as we will see today, the only safe place to be is in Christ.

Like the people of Britain evacuated their children to safer places during WW2, our Father has evacuated us into the arms of His son so that though we may face difficulty in this broken world, we won't taste the sting of death. Rather we will always be spared from the worst of what is coming onto this world, but that cannot be said for those who are continuing to reject Christ's grace and live in rebellion against Him.

For the Christian, though we may feel insecure in this world at times our security is sure in Christ. For the unbelieving world, though they may feel secure in this world at times they never have been. Their security rests in quicksand which threatens to take them at any moment.

The day of the Lord's judgment is at hand. This news is wonderful for all who have placed their faith in Christ, and terrible for anyone who has not.

Discover

- I. The breaking of the seventh seal is the beginning of the end for this world as we know it. (1-2)
 - A. The passage begins with 30 minutes of silence likely due to the host of heaven standing in awe of the Lamb who is now fully dressed for war and ready to unleash judgment upon the wicked in both heaven and on earth.
 1. This echoes also the silence and solemn atmosphere which would be in the temple each morning as the Lamb would be sacrificed and the elements for that day's worship were prepared.
 2. Be still, says the Lord, and know that I am God.
 - a) The stillness in heaven is a cue to us, that we must also make time for silence in our lives that we might behold the Lord and join the choruses of praise all across creation.
 - B. Joshua marched around Jericho for 6 days and on the seventh day they marched 7 times with the 7 trumpet blasts. Then the walls came down. So it is with the Son of Man. His seventh seal unleashes His 7 trumpet blasts, each one crumbling the walls of the kingdom of man until finally the entire wall will fall.
- II. God hears the prayers of the saints asking for justice in the world and He fully intends to answer us. (3-5)
 - A. The coals burn and purify (see Isaiah 6).
 - B. For the believer, the heat of the Lord is a purifying baptism but for the rebellious it burns them up.
 - C. Somehow our prayers are involved in this process. I think the Lord put this here to remind us that He hears us, and that our cries for justice are being heard. One day soon He will bring it. Our enemies will be judged and we must keep trusting in His timing, His will, and His faithfulness.
- III. If the seals bring the calamities, the trumpets are the calamities. (6-12)
 - A. These trumpets are the seventh seal and they judge the false gods of this world, a parallel to the plagues of Egypt and God's judgment on the Egyptian pantheon.
 - B. Trumpet 1 parallels the Egyptian plague of hail, fire, and blood in Exodus 9.
 1. The Egyptian plague fell on every place except Goshen where God's people dwelt.
 2. Like the Egyptian plague also, this plague decimates the land but here it decimates not only Egypt, but the entire world.
 - C. Trumpet 2's imagery comes from Jeremiah 51 which alludes to judgment on Babylon (the destroying mountain) for its sins against Israel. Often in Scripture, Babylon figuratively represents human culture in rebellion against God. God is

burning up the destroying mountain, laying waste to the city of man in order to make way for the city of God.

1. The water turns to blood like in Egypt, and this kills many of the creatures in the waters leading to food scarcity.
2. The ships are destroyed as a great blow to the pride and strength of men (Isaiah 2:16).

D. Trumpet 3 is the falling of a star called Wormwood.

1. Wormwood is a poisonous substance which was used as a test for the faithfulness of Israelite women under the Old Covenant law.
2. This trumpet likely alludes to a test for the world. Wormwood is a fallen angel who poisons the world with deception. All will drink the bitterness this fallen angel brings, but the pure of the Lord will not be poisoned by what Wormwood brings but will rather remain true to the Lord. This serves to distinguish the sons of God from the sons of Satan.

E. Trumpet 4 parallels the Egyptian plague of darkness.

1. The darkness is a judgment upon the gods of the earth who are personified by people as astrological bodies. God will show them as wanting and having no glory of their own, but only stolen valor which they took from Him.
2. This also exposes the kings of this world who have yoked themselves to the gods of this world rather than to the one true God.

IV. The difficulty will likely increase for this world as the trumpets continue to sound, but the Lord will preserve His saints. (13)

A.

Nurture

Who is God? He is the Lamb who is worthy to open the seals.

What has God done? He has unsealed His agents of righteous judgment in the world.

Who are we? We are His righteous ones, clothed in white, heard by our Father, and preserved out of this world.

What are we being called to do? Pray for justice, trust in the Lord, and call people to repent and believe in Jesus.

Act

We are called to walk by faith rather than in despair as we see these judgements unfolding. We are called to pray. We are called to warn those around us about the judgment which is coming upon this world because of sin and to tell them of a savior who is both the buyer and seller of our iniquities.