

All Things New: The Seventh Seal and the Trumpets Begin – Revelation 8

1. “How are we all doing?” (*High, Low & Buffalo*)

- i. High – What was a high point in your week? What was good or went well?
- ii. Low – What was a low point in your week? What was a challenge, disappointment, or struggle?
- iii. Buffalo – What was something interesting, random, or different that happened this week?

2. “Revelation 8 finishes something that started in Revelation 6. Let’s take a moment and skim through Revelation 6. What do we remember about the first six seals on the scrolls?”

3. “With that in mind, let’s read Revelation 8! We know it was meant to be read out loud. Can one or two people read Revelation 8? Try to read a little *slower* than usual. For the rest of us, try to imagine what John saw as we listen. Can we “see” what we hear?”

4. “What images stick out to you from this chapter?”

5. “If you are new to Jesus, how does this chapter make you feel? If you already know Jesus, how comfortable would you be explaining this chapter to someone who doesn’t know Jesus?”

6. “Someone speaks after each of the first six seals on the scroll were opened, but the seventh and final seal on the scroll is followed by silence.”

How do you imagine half an hour of silence would feel immediately after a period of “loud”¹ praise?

7. “Revelation is closely connected to the Old Testament. The fall of Jericho was a picture of God’s judgment of sin and God keeping His promise to bring Israel into a new land. Can someone read Joshua 6:1-5?”

What similarities and differences do you see between these verses and Revelation 8?

How comfortable are you with the idea of God bringing justice through judgment?

On the other hand, how would you feel about a God who doesn’t address evil?

¹ Revelation 7:10

Which feels more real to you today: that God will bring justice, or that God will bring us home?

8. “Revelation 8 is also a picture of the Exodus, when God used 10 plagues to deliver Israel from Egypt (e.g. plagues of thunder & hail, the water turning to blood, and darkness). Can someone else read Exodus 6:1-8?”

In both Exodus and Revelation, the people of God saw the impact of the plagues/trumpets. What do you think it would be like to live through something like this?

Optional: Break into smaller groups for this section

9. “What we ‘see’ in Revelation is meant to change what we do, say, and believe. It should also impact how we pray. Revelation 5:8 describes the prayers of God’s people as ‘golden bowls of incense.’ In Revelation 6:10, those who have died because of Jesus pray a prayer of lament – “How long, O Lord, until you bring justice?” In Revelation 8, we see bowls filled with prayer mixed with fire and begin the blowing of the seven trumpets – God bringing justice through judgment.”

Do you believe that prayer makes a difference in the world?

*Do you believe **your** prayers make a difference in the world?*

What makes you pray for justice? Why might you pray, “How long, O Lord?”

10. God delays justice and judgment for a time (Revelation 6:11), but not forever. The trumpets are a kind of alarm or wakeup call that calls people to repent.

Have you experienced a ‘wakeup call’ that has caused you to make a needed change in your life? This be almost anything: your health, relationships, spiritual life, your job, etc.

Are you currently hearing ‘alarms’ (whether from God, others, or through situations in your life) that are calling you to make a needed change? In other words, is there something important for you to do (or stop doing) that you’ve been avoiding?

11. “Thanks for sharing _____. Can I pray for you?” Take time to pray for each other.

12. “Thanks everyone! Same time next week? Who will lead / host / bring