

Small Group Leader's Guide

Revelation 8 | When the Trumpets Sound

Main Truth: God hears the prayers of His people, and Jesus brings judgment upon a fallen world. We can trust God, remain faithful, and live for what lasts forever.



Know It

God Hears the Prayers of His People

Read Revelation 8:1-6.

Heaven becomes silent as Jesus opens the seventh seal. The prayers of God's people rise before His throne with incense. Fire from the altar is then hurled to earth, connecting the prayers offered in heaven with God's unfolding judgment.

1. What do the prayers rising before God's throne reveal about how He values the prayers of His people? How does this encourage you when you feel your prayers go unheard?
2. The fire comes from the same altar where the prayers were offered. What does this connection teach us about trusting God to respond to evil and injustice? How can we seek His justice without becoming consumed by revenge?
3. What prayer have you struggled to keep praying because God's answer seems delayed? How can this passage help you pray with renewed trust this week?

Leadership Tips

1. Highlight the place of prayer before God's throne. Explain that incense accompanied worship in the Old Testament, and here it is offered with the prayers of the saints. "Saints" refers to God's people. The emphasis is that their prayers reach His presence and matter to Him—even when His response is not immediately visible.
2. Connect God's judgment with the earlier cry for justice. Revelation 6:9–11 describes martyrs asking how long God will wait to judge their persecutors. Revelation 8 shows that God has not forgotten His people or the evil done against them. Help the group distinguish trusting God for justice from personally seeking revenge.
3. Make room for honest struggles with unanswered prayer. Avoid suggesting that delayed answers indicate weak faith or that this passage guarantees the outcome someone wants. Listen with compassion, encourage persistent prayer, and invite members to support one another in a specific prayer need this week.

Jesus Unleashes the Trumpets of Judgment

Read Revelation 8:7–13.

The first four trumpets bring judgment upon the earth, sea, fresh water, and heavenly lights:

- First trumpet: A third of the earth and trees burn, along with all the green grass.

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- Second trumpet: A third of the sea becomes blood; a third of its creatures die, and a third of the ships are destroyed.
- Third trumpet: Wormwood makes a third of the rivers and springs bitter, causing many deaths.
- Fourth trumpet: A third of the sun, moon, and stars are darkened, reducing the light of day and night.

The chapter ends with a warning: three more trumpets remain.

1. What stands out to you about these judgments and their effect on things people depend upon every day? What do they reveal about the seriousness of sin and our dependence upon God?
2. Read 1 John 2:15–17. How does John's warning about loving the world connect with Revelation 8? Which temporary things most easily compete for your affection and trust in God?
3. How should the certainty of God's judgment affect the way we live and share the gospel? Name one step you can take this week to invest in what lasts forever.

Leadership Tips

1. Keep the trumpet judgments clear and grounded in the passage. The first four affect land, sea, fresh water, and heavenly lights. "Wormwood" names a bitter plant and emphasizes the bitterness of the poisoned water. Jesus opens the seventh seal, and the angels sound the trumpets under God's authority. Keep discussion focused on what the text states rather than identifying particular modern disasters.
2. Explain what it means to love the world. In 1 John 2:15–17, "the world" refers to the sinful desires and values that oppose God. John is not forbidding love for people or enjoyment of God's creation. Help members examine whether possessions, pleasure, status, or security have become more important to them than obeying God.
3. Guide the group toward faithfulness and compassionate mission. The warning of judgment should lead to repentance, eternal priorities, and concern for people who need Jesus. Encourage a concrete response: praying for someone, beginning a gospel conversation, serving a neighbor, or surrendering something that competes with devotion to Christ.



Prayer

Closing Prayer: Thank God that He hears His people. Ask Him to strengthen your trust, loosen your attachment to temporary things, and give you compassion and courage to point others to Jesus.