

# The Seven Trumpets

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Preacher: Rev. Thomas Hinson

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning, church. Happy Memorial Day weekend. Welcome to those of you who are here every week. Welcome to those of you who are maybe visiting family, friends for the first time. You are here in the middle of a series that we started some time ago, looking at this fascinating book at the end of the Bible called Revelation.

The book of Revelation has provoked probably more speculation and more works of fiction than any other book in Scripture. It's a fascinating book. The entire book is a vision that is given to the Apostle John while he's in exile on the prison island of Patmos.

And it's a wild vision. I mean, I have to say, if you're here, especially if you're not a Christian or have never really spent much time reading the Bible, this is very unique even for the Bible.

I mean, you read the passage that we just heard and it's easy to think that John's just kind of wandering around, comes across some wild mushrooms, digs in, and this is everything that comes out of that.

It's kind of mind-boggling. And it's easy to just kind of write it off because it's so bizarre and to think this is just crazy. You know, when we talk about this in our weekly staff Bible study, that's the sort of common reaction is just, this sounds crazy.

[ 1 : 1 9 ] And yet, what we've seen is that Revelation is a book that is actually aimed at our imaginations. It's aimed at the way we imagine the world.

And it's meant to help us reimagine the world. So we read it the way that we would read any poetry. There's an enormous amount of vivid imagery. Most of it's drawn directly out of the Old Testament. And this imagery has a purpose. In other words, Revelation uses the extraordinary to help us understand and perceive the ordinary.

It uses the extraordinary to help us understand and accurately perceive the ordinary, the everyday stuff of our mundane lives.

And Revelation is continually reminding us of this fact that things are not as they appear. Things are not as they appear. And that's what we're going to see this week when it comes to things like prayer or suffering or evangelism.

[ 2 : 2 5 ] Things are not as they appear. And often, faith means trusting God's vision of reality more than our own perception of reality. And so that's what we're going to see.

We're looking at Revelation chapters 8 and 9. We heard part of it read just for the sake of time. We couldn't read all of it. We heard part of it read, but we're going to be focusing on all of chapter 8 and all of chapter 9.

We're going to be seeing God's vision of reality. And this entire section of Revelation is organized around seven trumpet blasts. And so it's interesting if you think about a trumpet and the meaning that a trumpet has in the Old Testament.

Trumpets essentially had three connotations. And these are actually the three themes that show up in chapters 8 and 9 of Revelation. First of all, a trumpet signaled a call to worship.

So we'll see something about worship. Second of all, a trumpet signaled a warning. It was a warning to God's people. And so, and then thirdly, a trumpet was a call to war.

[ 3 : 2 6 ] So this is our outline as we look at this passage together. Worship, warning, and warfare. Let's pray and then we'll open God's word together. Lord, we thank you for your word.

We thank you that we can open your word knowing that even when there are parts of it that are bizarre or parts that we don't understand or parts that are offensive or challenging, we know that we open your word trusting you to speak.

And that's what we need. Not just words on a page, but the living God speaking to his beloved children. And we pray this, Lord, for our good, but ultimately that you would be glorified as we

proclaim and receive your word.

In your son's name, amen. So first of all, a trumpet blast signals a call to worship. And these passages show us something about worship.

Trumpets were used to summon all of God's people, especially on the day known as the Feast of Trumpets. Now, I want to give you a little context, especially if this is your first time diving into Revelation with us.

[ 4 : 27 ] All the way back in chapter four, we see that John is taken up into the heavenly throne room where worship is underway. So this entire vision is happening in the context of a worship service.

And so John is invited to the heavenly worship service. In that sanctuary, everything is oriented toward the throne of God. The lamb of God, Jesus, arrives on the scene.

This is the ascension. And then Jesus takes this sealed scroll, which is sort of God's plan for the world, and he begins to break open the seals. And that's what we looked at a couple of weeks ago. But here's what I want to focus on.

When you get to chapter eight and the seventh seal is open, look at what it says in verse one.

There was silence in heaven for about half an hour. In fact, I'm going to pull this up on the screen. It's so much that I want to make sure we're all tracking. When the lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. We ask, well, why does the heavenly worship service stop?

[ 5 : 30 ] It goes on in verse two to say, then I saw the seven angels who stand before God and seven trumpets were given to them. And we're asking, so something big is about to happen.

All of the singing stops, all of the praise stops, everything halts. You could hear a pin drop. Everybody's holding their breath. The angels get ready. They have their trumpets, but everybody's waiting for something.

You say, well, what are they waiting on? Well, we go forward. And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer. And he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of the saints on the golden altar before the throne.

Here's the answer. Why does the heavenly worship service stop? Why does everything go silent? In order to hear the prayers of the saints. They're waiting for the prayers of the saints to be offered before the altar.

And this is an amazing scene as we continue to read. And it says, The smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints rose before God from the hand of the angel. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth.

[ 6 : 42 ] And there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. So this is what they were waiting for.

They were waiting for the prayers of the saints to fill up this bowl, which God then mixes with incense and fire, and then casts it back on the earth.

And this is, I want to stop here and just reflect on what this is showing us. Remember we said that revelation helps us to see things the way they really are and encourages us to trust God's vision of reality rather than our own perception of reality.

Well, when it comes to prayer, I think this is something we really need. Because I don't know if you're anything like me, but often when I pray, and I'm a pastor, right? I'm like a professional prayer. And I get paid to pray, right?

And yet often when I, not really, but often when, often if you want to be totally frank, often when I pray, there's this little voice that thinks, what am I doing?

[ 7 : 43 ] Am I just a guy sitting in a room talking to myself? Right? There's that little voice that says, is this utterly meaningless and pointless? Or if I am sure that God is there, am I thinking, well, you know, God's going to do what God's going to do?

And I'm just saying this little prayer, but does this have any bearing on what God is going to do? Or is this just more of a therapeutic exercise for me? You know, am I just praying because it helps me feel better?

But God's really going to do what God's going to do. These are the kinds of thoughts that I hear. And I don't know if I'm the only one. I hope not. I don't think so. And what this is showing us, I mean, you could preach a whole series just on this passage.

There's an entire theology of prayer here. And we don't have time to draw it all out, but I just want to show you a few things that this shows us about prayer. Number one, this image shows us that God delights in prayer.

I mean, God delights in your prayer. This says that when we pray, our prayers are like incense to the Lord. They're a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

[ 8 : 48 ] Incense is a good thing. And so our prayer delights the Lord. And you know, I was thinking about this and I was thinking about my own kids. I was thinking about my boys who are sitting right there.

And I think that, you know, there they are. And oftentimes, and oftentimes, you know, all throughout the day, from different places in the house, I hear their voices crying out, Dada!

Dada! You know, and sometimes they're wanting something that I can give them because it's a right thing to want. Other times, they're wanting something that I have to say no. You know, if I let you do that, you would die.

You know, there are things, all kinds of requests coming in, right? But I'll tell you this, I'll tell you this, every single time I hear their little voices say my name, it delights me.

These are my boys who I love, who I would die for, I'm crazy about. and every time I hear their voices call my name, it fills me with delight. It doesn't matter what they're asking for.

[ 9 : 49 ] And this is what it's telling us about God. If that's true about me, how much more does God delight to hear your voices when you call out to your heavenly Father? Prayer delights God, right?

So it shows us that. It's like a pleasing aroma. Number two, this is very important, it shows us that there's no such thing as wasted prayer. There's no such thing as wasted prayer.

We are so time bound that, you know, I'll pray for this or that on a Tuesday and if God hasn't done anything by like the next Tuesday, then I assume that, well, maybe God just, that request came onto God's desk, you know, he kind of stamped, declined, and he kind of pushed it into the trash pile and then he just says next, you know, what's the next request, right?

And he forgets about it. And this is a very different way of understanding prayer. This shows us that, it gives us this poetic image, I don't think it's literal, but it's a poetic image of all of the prayers of God's people across the centuries being gathered together.

Every single word, every single syllable is carefully gathered into this bowl, into this heavenly censer.

[ 11 : 04 ] And what we see here is that everything is kept safe. Every prayer, every word is kept safe. And you recognize that even though God doesn't always do what we want him to do when we want him to do it, one day God will answer all the prayers of the saints.

Every prayer ever uttered. It may not be in our timing. It may not be the way we want. But no prayer is lost or forgotten or rejected. They're all carefully gathered together.

And that leads to the third thing that this shows us about prayer. And this is the most amazing to me. God's kingdom advances through prayer. God's kingdom advances through prayer.

And we have to understand, God is sovereign, which means God can do whatever he wants. God doesn't need us for anything. This is unlike the Greco-Roman gods and goddesses who sort of needed the worship and service of human beings.

Our God doesn't need anything. His plan doesn't need to hinge on us. And yet what this shows us is that God has so designed his world and us that our prayers actually do become necessary for the unfolding of God's plan.

[ 12 : 25 ] All of heaven holds its breath while the prayers of the saints are gathered and offered. And here's the thing we need to see. Only when the bowl is full, only when the bowl is full does God then mix it with incense and the fire of the Holy Spirit and then cast the prayers for vindication and judgment and renewal back down on the earth.

This shows us that prayer matters. Right? So Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers who ever lived, lived in the 19th century, had a ministry that transformed thousands upon thousands of lives.

Most people would agree just one of the most gifted preachers who ever lived. Often people would come to visit him in his church and they would want to sit down with this great man and say, what is the secret to your success?

You know, what's your preaching strategy? Who did you learn from? Who do you listen to? You know, how do you do it? And he'd stand up and he'd lead them down into the basement of the

church to the basement prayer room where most often you would find parishioners from his congregation praying.

There were people in there praying almost all the time. And Spurgeon would say, this is the secret to our success. Prayer, and this prayer room, is the powerhouse of the church.

[ 13 : 44 ] And he would compare it to a mill. He says, you know, if the engine room in a mill shuts down, the whole mill grinds to a halt. And he says, it's the same with prayer.

Prayer is the engine room of the church. It all is driven by and hinges on prayer. Prayer drives the church. Prayer is also the engine room of God's kingdom.

This is how the kingdom advances in the world. And so what this is showing us is that we're not sideline spectators in God's plan. We're not just here to say, good job, keep it up. Now we could be, God would be perfectly just in designing it that way.

But this shows us that God actually gives us a causal role. And you know, Blaise Pascal wrote that prayer is God's way of giving human beings the dignity of causality.

And I love that. God, he doesn't have to, but he says, I'm going to give you the dignity of playing a causal role in the coming of the kingdom. Only when you pray, only when you pray will the kingdom advance.

[ 14 : 47 ] And this is just kind of blowing my mind when it comes to how I think about my own prayer life. God doesn't have to rely on us, but he chooses to rely on us. And so, you know, here's the so what before we move on.

I think we often think of prayer as the thing we do before we do the real work. You know, like I'm going to go do the important things. I'm going to go have this meeting and all my brilliance is going to come out and it's going to change lives.

But before I do that, I should probably pray. And that's just a complete backwards way of thinking about it. Prayer is the real work of God's people. Everything else we do, all the things that we think we have to offer, all of our degrees and gifts and training, all that is very secondary and it's very subordinate.

The real work that we are given to do is the work of prayer. Prayer is the engine room of the kingdom of God. So God has been teaching me this this past year.

He sets me up in situations where I try everything I got and it all fails. And then in desperation, I pray and God does something amazing. And again and again and again, I feel like I've just been humbled to remember prayer is the real work that we've been given to do.

[ 15 : 54 ] So I think this is why we should be praying regularly for our friends, for our marriages, for our kids, for our community, for our government leaders. This is why every week when we gather, we set aside time to pray as a church.

And so I want to challenge you, if you just take a moment and think, is there some part of your life or something that you feel like you have come to the Lord and you've prayed to God and you feel like God just hit declined and he just kind of shifted your request off his desk and he turned his attention elsewhere, if that's what you feel like about that part of your life, I want you to consider taking up that prayer again.

Take that thing and I want you to commit to praying every day for that. Do it for a month. Do it for two months. And just see what God might do if you resume that prayer.

So this is what the trumpets teach us first is the importance of worship, the importance of prayer, and the way that prayer is the engine room of the kingdom of God. That's number one.

Number two, the trumpets offer us a warning. They give us a warning that we all need to heed. It says, as the trumpets begin to sound, hail and fire and blood come and they destroy a third of the earth.

[ 17 : 13 ] It says that there's a burning mountain that collapses. It says that the sea turns to blood. And then it tells us that demonic locust hordes are unleashed to torment human beings.

Sounds like a horror movie. You know, and I don't think anybody thinks that really there will, well there's probably some people who think this, but I think most people agree that this is not literally talking about a hole opening in the ground and demonic locusts coming out.

This is all metaphor and imagery. It sounds bizarre to us, but what we need to understand is if you were in the first century and you were hearing this and you were hearing about all of these things, you would immediately go to one place in your mind.

You would think of the Exodus. You would think of the greatest story of deliverance in Israel's history. The Exodus was the primary defining event in Israel's history. It defined them as a people. And so once we recognize that this is meant to evoke memories of the Exodus, then we realize the way to interpret this is to look at it through the lens of the Exodus.

[ 18 : 23 ] That's how we're meant to read this. And so we say, oh this is talking about biblical plagues. What was going on in Egypt a long time ago when God sent plagues on Pharaoh?

Remember, God's people were enslaved by the Egyptians and so God sent plagues to set them free. And you ask, okay, well back then what was the point of the plagues? Why did God send ten awful plagues on the Egyptians? And if you go back to Exodus 5, the starting point, you see why. Moses goes for the first time to Pharaoh and Moses says, the Lord says, let my people go that they may worship me.

And here's Pharaoh's response. This sets the whole thing off. Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? And you say, wrong answer, Pharaoh.

Right? Everything that comes after that for chapter upon chapter upon chapter of nightmare, it all is a result of those fatal words. Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice?

[ 19 : 27 ] And so what we see is the purpose of the plagues is this. God is wanting to demonstrate to the whole world there is only one God and there is no one like that God. And you see that refrain throughout all of the plagues.

Before each of the plagues, God says that they may know that I am the Lord. That they may know that there is no one like me. That they may know that I am the only God. Plague after plague after plague to teach the same point. Right? So the purpose of the plagues is this. There's only one God, Yahweh, and there's no one like him.

And so, okay, so that's our lens and so we say, okay, well if Revelation is telling us that God will send more plagues on the earth, not just to Egypt but on the whole earth, that more plagues come, they have come throughout history, they will continue to come.

If this is what we're seeing here, then what does that tell us? If you put on your sort of exegetical hat, well, it tells us that the Exodus never ended. It tells us that we are still in Exodus.

[ 20 : 32 ] It tells us that the whole world is enslaved and that God is calling out, let my people go, but that is going out over all the earth.

The entire unbelieving world is like Pharaoh saying, who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? Right? And we're all slaves and we're not slaves to Egypt, we're slaves to idols.

And idol worship is the thing that sits behind both Exodus and Revelation. The core problem with human beings is that we worship idols. And if you say, well, how do you get there in Revelation? How could you possibly say it's actually all about idol worship? Actually, the end of chapter 9 tells us that very thing. No, no, no, chapter 9.

Let's see. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails. Verse 20, the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood which cannot see or hear or walk.

[ 21 : 57 ] So this entire section is summed up there. All of this was meant to get the people to repent of their idol worship and they didn't repent. And so we know that it's all about idols.

So all of these plagues, as awful as they sound, and here's kind of a challenging idea, these plagues are actually acts of mercy. They're acts of mercy. God allows a finite amount of suffering and calamity in order to wake people up to the truth that they're enslaved to idols.

And you say, well, God would cause harm to bring healing? Yeah, it's hard to understand, but not crazy. I mean, that happens at the doctor's office all the time. Right? Doctors know that sometimes they have to cause pain in order to bring healing.

That's how we are meant to understand the plagues. So God uses suffering like a crowbar to pry our hearts free from the grip of idols.

So I want to give a couple of examples of what this might look like. You say, well, why would I need that in order to see the idols that I worship? And here's the problem.

[ 23 : 00 ] It's very hard to see the idols that we are worshiping when everything's going well. Like when life is good and I'm happy and my needs are met, it's hard to see the things that I'm really depending on because I'm not really aware of it.

It's only when the bottom drops out of life that you really begin to see what you worship and what you rely on. And so just to give a couple of examples, let's say that you tend to make an idol out of the admiration of other people.

I don't know if anybody wants to admit that, but for some of us, that's an idol. It's something that we rely on. I am nothing. I am worthless.

My life is empty unless people admire me, unless I can be respected, unless I have prestige, right? So normally people who worship that are pretty good at getting it.

You know, so somebody really wants the admiration of other people, so you learn how to gain admiration and you're used to being the kind of standout person, the smartest person in the room, the most impressive resume, right?

[ 24 : 02 ] And so normally that need is getting met and so you're not aware of how much you need it. But then imagine something really embarrassing happens, right? You're publicly humiliated. Something awful happens and you're humiliated.

Some people, when they have an embarrassing experience, they can just kind of brush it off, laugh at themselves and move on. Other people, if they're publicly embarrassed, will be devastated. Now, if you are devastated by something like that, it's worth asking, is there an idol under the surface? You know, I can't laugh it off. I can't move on. That thing that happened four years ago, I'm still ruminating on it at night as I lay in bed. Chances are, there's an idol there and you didn't realize how much you needed the affirmation until after you lost it and then you realized how much you were depending on it.

So that's an example of how God can bring a plague. The embarrassment is God trying to wake you up. God trying to liberate you. One more example, let's say we make an idol out of our work. Some of us do make an idol out of our work. And you say, well, you know, I don't really need to be told, I don't need to suffer to know that I make an idol out of my work. I mean, I'll admit it freely right now.

[ 25 : 17 ] Yes, I work too much. It's too important to me. I don't need to suffer to realize that. Well, here's the thing we need to realize. A lot of our idols like work are surface level idols. Yeah, I know I work too much.

But under that idol, there are deeper, more core idols. And you're not going to know what those core idols are through simply self-reflection.

Often it takes a plague to awaken us to the truth of those deeper core idols. So think about why people make an idol out of work. Well, lots of different reasons.

Some people make an idol out of work because it's a way to gain prestige and self-respect. I work a lot because I want prestige. Other people work a lot because making money is what gives them a sense of safety and security.

And the only way I feel safe in the world is if I'm making money. Some people worship work because it gives them a sense of power and control over other people. Some people worship work as a way of avoiding painful feelings.

[ 26 : 19 ] Those are four completely different reasons to work and to make an idol out of work. very different idols that look the same on the surface. And so the only way to know what is really driving you is if God sends a plague.

You lose your job. You go for months and months and months unemployed. You can't find another job. You know, I've known people over the years in a place like D.C. that happens a lot. You get laid off or you finish school and you're looking for a job and people can just spend months and months looking.

And I see some people are able to endure that and they're okay. Ultimately, they know they're going to be okay. Other people are just wrecked by it. They don't know who they are. They're devastated. They have no sense of self or worth. If that is you, it may be that there's an idol at work. Right? So these trumpets in Revelation are waking us up to the reality of the world we live in.

They call us to worship, reminding us that prayer matters and they serve as a warning. The Exodus never ended. God is continuing to visit plagues upon us to allow a limited amount of suffering so that we will wake up to the idols that we serve.

[ 27 : 30 ] Third and final point, we'll make this quickly. For the sake of time, trumpets signal warfare. They're a call to battle. And the sixth trumpet, we see that the focus shifts away from evil plagues to a heavenly army.

And, you know, this is just so rich that we just have to read it. I mean, just... Release the four angels who were bound to the great river Euphrates.

So the four angels who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of mounted troops was twice 10,000 times 10,000. I'm pretty sure that's like 2 million. I heard their number and this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them. They wore breastplates of color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur and the heads of the horses were like lion's heads.

That's pretty consistent with Revelation, right? The fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. By these three plagues, a third of mankind was killed by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths.

[ 28 : 37 ] For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails. For the tails are like serpents with heads and by means of them they wound. I mean, again, fantastic imagery but what we are to understand is this.

This is a heavenly cavalry of 200 million fire-breathing warriors with lion heads. Again, it's like right out of a kids movie, right?

It's like, you know. And yet the commentator Peter Lighthouse makes a convincing argument that this is in fact another representation of the spirit-filled church.

So you say, well, who is this big lion-headed fire-breathing cavalry? Well, it's you. This is Revelation's depiction of you and me. This is the church and the world.

The fire that they breathe is the spirit-filled preaching of the gospel. The lion heads show us that they bear the image of the lion of Judah. So this is the church and the church is going to war against the idols and the idol worshipers in the world.

[ 29 : 43 ] And you say, well, are we killing people? No, not literally. Again, this is metaphor. We are killing, you know, in verse 6, it tells us that the people who are being tormented by the demonic locust hordes, remember that?

Those people are suffering and they're longing to die. They're longing for freedom. And so then God sends the cavalry to set these people free. They're not actually killing these people.

They are turning them into living sacrifices. When people hear the preaching of the gospel, they die to themselves, they die to the power of idols, and they are raised to new life in Jesus Christ as living sacrifices.

And so this is not literal killing. It is actually saving people from the torment of idols and the demons behind them. And you say, well, what about the snake-headed tails? I mean, again, it's bizarre and here's how we would read this.

The church has the power to bless and to curse. That's something we don't often talk about. The church has the power to bless and to curse. You have an opportunity to hear and to respond to the gospel.

[ 30 : 49 ] If you reject the gospel, if you let it pass you by, then you are given over to the serpent. The church has that authority in the world. And so this scene reveals the truth about the church in the world that we are at war.

Now you may right now feel like you're at war with your kids trying to keep them from, and we don't often think of that, and you think the biggest battle that you're fighting is just keeping your kids quiet. I feel that all the time.

My wife feels it all the time. But don't be fooled. Right now, sitting in this room, we are at war. There is a battle taking place, and human beings hang in the balance.

But as Paul says in Ephesians 6, lest we get the wrong idea, we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

We are fighting a spiritual war against idols and the demonic forces behind those idols. So here's the quick point I want to make. When it comes to evangelism, I think often we feel squeamish about it.

[ 31 : 56 ] We feel like in this day and age, sharing your faith with other people is closed-minded and backwards. Nobody does that anymore. We live in a morally and religiously pluralistic society. Everybody should just believe what they believe.

But we need to see evangelism through the lens of Revelation chapters 8 and 9. We should not think of this as just one worldview versus another or one set of ideas versus another.

The trumpet reminds us that we are at war because we're still in the Exodus. And all around us, human beings are enslaved to idols. The people who come and worship here are coming as slaves to idols.

And so God calls his church to be like Moses. You know, the church is like Moses confronting Pharaoh, confronting the unbelieving world and saying, let my people go. So every time we share the gospel, we're giving someone a chance at freedom.

That's what you're doing. You're speaking to a slave and you're saying, this is how to be free. And you know, I love the words from Penn Jillette, you know, the kind of performer, magician.

[ 33 : 05 ] He's a well-known atheist. But at one point he said this in an interview. He said, you know, even though he's an atheist, he says, I don't respect people who don't proselytize. He says, I don't respect that at all.

He says, you believe that there's a heaven and eternal life or whatever and you think that it's not really worth telling people because it would make it socially awkward? And then he says this, how much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and to not tell them that?

And I love, it's so true, you know, I'm a slave. I am tormented by the things that I've given my life to. I'm tormented by my need to be beautiful. I'm tormented by my need to be smart.

I'm tormented by my need to be successful. I'm tormented by my need to be comfortable. And in every case, I'm a slave. And you actually have the good news that could liberate me from these things?

And you're just not going to tell me because you don't want me to be offended? That's what he's saying. So we need to see that faith means trusting God's vision of reality more than our own perception.

[ 34 : 08 ] And the trumpets show us three things. Worship and the prayers of the saints advance the kingdom of God. Warning needs to be spoken to the world that we are still in the exodus and that we are still slaves to idols unless we fight.

And so finally the trumpets show us that even though it seems benign, everything seems peaceful, we are at war. That God's vision of the church is that we are a fire-breathing lion-headed cavalry.

And as crazy as that sounds, when we speak the gospel, we are speaking in the fiery power of the Spirit. And this is God's means of setting people free for his glory. Let's pray.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.