

# THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

## 1. FOLLOWING the seven seals, under what symbols was the next series of thrilling events shown the apostle John?

“And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given *seven trumpets*.” **Revelation 8:2.**

## 2. With what do these trumpets deal?

With the wars, commotions, and political upheavals which result in the breaking up and downfall of the Roman Empire,—the first four with the downfall of Western Rome, the fifth and sixth with the downfall of Eastern Rome, and the seventh with the final downfall of Rome in its broadest sense, or all the kingdoms of the world. See **Revelation 8 and 9 and 11:14–19.** A trumpet is a symbol of war. **Jeremiah 4:19, 20; Joel 2:1–11.**

## 3. Under what figures is the first trumpet described?

“The first angel sounded, and there followed *hail* and *fire* mingled with *blood*, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.” **Revelation 8:7.**

**NOTES** — “Twice, at least, before the Roman Empire became divided permanently into the two parts, the Eastern and the Western, there was a tripartite division of the empire. The first occurred 311 A.D., when it was divided between Constantine, Licinius, and Maximin; the other, 337 A.D., on the death of Constantine, when it was divided between his three sons, Constantine, Constans, and Constantius.” *Albert Barnes, on Revelation 12:4.*

To Constantius was given Constantinople and the East; to Constans, Italy, Illyricum, and northern Africa; and to Constantine II, Britain, Gaul, and Spain.

This trumpet describes the first great invasion upon Western or ancient Rome, by the Goths, under Alaric, from 395 A.D. to 410 A.D. In 408 he descended upon Italy, the middle “third part,” pillaging and burning cities, and slaughtering their inhabitants. Says Gibbon, in his “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” chapter 33, closing sentence, “The union of

the Roman Empire was dissolved; its genius was humbled in the dust; and armies of unknown barbarians, issuing from the frozen regions of the North, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe and Africa.”

**4. What striking figure is used to describe the destruction wrought under the second trumpet?**

“And the second angel sounded, and as it were *a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea*: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.” **Verses 8, 9.**

**NOTE** — This describes the invasions and conquests of the Vandals under the terrible Genseric—first of Africa and later of Italy—from 428 to 476 A.D. His conquests were largely by sea. In a single night, near Carthage, he destroyed, by fire and sword, more than half of the Roman fleet, consisting of 1,113 ships and over 100,000 men. See Gibbon’s “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” chapter 36.

**5. What was to take place under the third trumpet?**

“And the third angel sounded, and *there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp*, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; *and many men died of the waters*, because they were made bitter.” **Verses 10, 11.**

**NOTES** — The harassing invasions and conquests of Attila, the Hun, are foretold here. His conquests were characterized by fire, sword, and pillage along the Rhine, in Gaul, and northern Italy. He claimed descent from Nimrod, styled himself the “Scourge of God” and the “Dread of the World,” and boasted that grass would never grow again where his horse had trod. His greatest battle was at Chalons, in Gaul, 451 A.D., where of his 700,000 men from 100,000 to 300,000 are said to have been left dead on the field. See Gibbon’s Rome, chapter 35, and “Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World,” by Sir Edward Creasy, chapter 6.

Says Gibbon (chapter 34), "In the reign of Attila, the Huns again became the terror of the world;" and he proceeds to describe "the character and actions of that formidable barbarian, who," he says, "alternately insulted and invaded the East and the West, and urged the rapid downfall of the Roman Empire."

#### **6. What was to occur under the fourth trumpet?**

"And the fourth angel sounded, and *the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars*; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." **Verse 12.**

**NOTE** — This trumpet brings us to the fall of Western Rome, in 476 A.D. when the Herulian barbarians, under the leadership of Odoacer, took possession of the city and scepter of Rome; and the great empire which had hitherto been the empress of the world was reduced to a poor dukedom, tributary to the exarch of Ravenna. Its luminaries, or civil rulers, were smitten, and ceased to shine. "Italy now became in effect a province of the empire of the East. The Roman Empire in the West had come to an end, after an existence from the founding of Rome of 1,229 years." *Myers's "General History," page 348.*

#### **7. What was to be the character of the last three trumpets?**

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven saying with a loud voice, *Woe, woe, woe*, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" **Verse 13.**

#### **8. After the fall of Western Rome, what power in the East arose to harass and overrun the Roman world, East and West?**

Mohammedanism, commonly known as the Turkish or Ottoman power, which arose in Arabia, with Mohammed, in 622 A.D.

#### **9. How is the fifth trumpet, or first woe, introduced?**

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw *a star fall from heaven unto the earth*: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; *and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit*. And there came out of

the smoke *locusts* upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.” **Revelation 9:1-3.**

**NOTES** — Attila is symbolized by the star of the third trumpet (**Revelation 8:10, 11**); Mohammed, by the star of this trumpet. The bottomless pit doubtless refers to the wastes of the Arabian desert, from which came forth the Mohammedans, or Saracens of Arabia, like swarms of locusts. The darkening caused by the smoke from this pit fitly represents the spread of Mohammedanism and its doctrines over Asia, Africa, and portions of Europe. Their power as scorpions is strikingly seen in their vigorous and speedy attacks upon, and overthrow of, their enemies.

“Over a large part of Spain, over north Africa, Egypt, Syria, Babylonia, Persia, north India, and portions of Central Asia were spread—to the more or less perfect exclusion of native customs, speech, and worship—the manners, the language, and the religion of the Arabian conquerors.” *Myers’s “General History,” page 401.*

#### **10. What command was given these locusts?**

“And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.” **Verse 4.**

**NOTES** — When the Arabian tribes were gathered for the conquest of Syria, 633 A.D., the caliph Abu-Bekr, the successor of Mohammed, instructed the chiefs of his army not to allow their victory to be “Stained with the blood of women and children;” to “destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn;” to “cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle,” and to spare those religious persons “who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God in that way;” but, he said, “you will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns: be sure you cleave their skulls and give them no quarter till they either turn Mohammedan or pay tribute.” In this, Mohammedanism, itself a false religion, is revealed as a scourge to apostate Christianity.

“In a short time they [the Mohammedan Saracens] had taken from the Aryans all the principal old Semitic lands, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Babylonia. To these was soon added Egypt.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article “Mohammedanism.”

### **11. What were these locusts said to have over them?**

“And they had a *king* over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon [margin, a destroyer].” **Verse 11.**

**NOTES** — For hundreds of years the Mohammedans and invading Tartar tribes, like the locusts (**Proverbs 30:27**), had no general government or king over them, but were divided into bands, or factions, under separate leaders. But in the twelfth century Temuljin, king of the Mongols, or Moguls, who is described as “the most terrible scourge that ever afflicted the human race,” built up an empire “at the cost,” it is estimated, says Myers in his “General History, page 461, of “fifty thousand cities and towns and five million lives.” This was followed by the more permanent Tartar empire founded by Othman a century later, commonly known as the Ottoman Empire, and ruled by the sultan.

From the first, the great characteristic of the Turkish government has been that of a “destroyer.” Speaking of a war by the Turks upon the Byzantine Empire in 1050, Gibbon (chapter 57) says: “The myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of six hundred miles from Tauris to Erzeroum, and the blood of one hundred and thirty thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet.”

In 1058 the Turks wrested the Holy Land from the Saracens, desecrated the holy places, and treated the pilgrims to Jerusalem with cruelty. This brought on the nine unsuccessful crusades of the next two centuries for the recovery of the Holy Land.

### **12. What definite period is mentioned under this trumpet?**

“And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men *five months*.” **Verse 10**. See also **verse 5**.

**NOTES.**— “It was on the twenty-seventh of July, in the year 1299,” says Gibbon, “that Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia,” in Asia Minor, “and the singular accuracy of the date,” he adds, “seems to disclose some foresight of the rapid and destructive growth of the monster.” “*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,” chap. 64, par. 14. This, then, we take to be the beginning of the period referred to.

A Bible month consists of thirty days; five months would be 150 days. Allowing a day for a year, 150 years from July 27, 1299, would reach to July 27, 1449. During this period. the Turks were engaged in almost constant warfare with the Greek Empire, and yet without conquering it.

**13. With what statement does the fifth trumpet close?**

“One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.” **Verse 12**.

**14. What command is given under the sixth trumpet?**

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, *Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates*.” **Verses 13, 14**.

**NOTES** — These four angels are understood to refer to the four leading Turkish sultanies—Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Bagdad—of which the Ottoman Empire was composed, situated in the country watered by the river Euphrates. As a striking parallel it may be noted that under the sixth plague (**Revelation 16:12-16**), the four angels of **Revelation 7:1-3** will loose the winds of war, the waters of the river Euphrates (the Turkish Empire) will be dried up, and the armies of the nations will assemble for the battle of Armageddon.

**15. What warlike scene is given under this trumpet?**

“The number of the armies of the horsemen was *twice ten thousand times ten thousand*: . . . and the heads of the horses are as

the heads of lions; and *out of their mouths proceedeth fire and smoke and brimstone.*” **Verses 16, 17, R.V.**

**NOTES** — “In the year 1453, Mohammed II, the Great, sultan of the Ottomans, laid siege to the capital [Constantinople], with an army of over 200,000 men. After a short investment, the place was taken by storm. The cross, which since the time of Constantine the Great had surmounted the dome of St. Sophia, was replaced by the crescent, which remains to this day.” *Myers’s “General History,” edition 1902, pages 462, 463.*

Thus Constantinople, the eastern seat of the Roman Empire since the days of Constantine, was captured by the Turks.

Reference also seems to be made here to the use of firearms, which began to be employed by the Turks toward the close of the thirteenth century, and which, discharged from horseback, would give the appearance of fire and smoke issuing from the horses’ mouths. In the battle of Armageddon, to which allusion may here be made, an army of “twice ten thousand times ten thousand,” or two hundred million, will doubtless be assembled.

### **16. What was the result of this warfare by means of “fire, and smoke, and brimstone”?**

“By these three was the third part of men killed.” **Verse 18.**

**NOTE** — This shows the deadly effect of this new means of warfare. “Constantinople was subdued, her empire subverted, and her religion trampled in the dust by the Moslem conquerors.” *Elliott’s “Horae Apocalypticae,” Vol. I, page 484.*

### **17. What definite period is mentioned under this trumpet?**

“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an *hour*, and a *day*, and a *month*, and a *year*, for to slay the third part of men.” **Verse 15.**

**NOTE** — An hour in prophetic time is equal to fifteen days; a day stands for a year, a month for thirty years, a year for 360 years. Added together, these amount to 391 years and fifteen days, the time allotted for the Ottoman supremacy. Commencing July 27, 1449, the date of the close of the fifth

trumpet, this period would end Aug. 11, 1840. In exact fulfillment of the words of inspiration, this date marks the fall of the Ottoman Empire as an independent power. His empire wasted beyond hope of recovery in a war with Mohammed Ali, pasha of Egypt, the Sultan of Turkey submitted to the dictates of the then four great powers of Europe, and his minister, Rifat Bey, on that very day, Aug. 11, 1840, reached Alexandria, bearing, not the sultan's ultimatum, but that of the powers, to place in the hands of the rebellious pasha. Since then Turkey has existed only by the help or sufferance of the great powers of Europe, and has commonly been referred to as "the Sick Man of the East."

**18. With what announcement does the sixth trumpet close?**

"The second woe is past; and, behold, *the third woe cometh quickly.*" **Revelation 11:14.**

**NOTE** — The definite period under the sixth trumpet brings us to 1840, when Turkey lost her independence. Her final downfall, we understand, will come at the opening of the seventh trumpet.

**Publisher's Note:** It is the sixth plague in which the Moslem Empire will be destroyed to make way for the "kings of the east." This will be her final downfall as it will usher in the world for Armageddon and the Second Advent of Jesus which is the seventh trumpet and seventh plague.

**19. What is to be finished when the seventh trumpet is about to sound?**

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished *the mystery of God*, according to the good tidings which He declared to His servants the prophets." **Revelation 10:7, R. V.**

**NOTE** — The mystery of God is the gospel. **Ephesians 3:3-6; Gal. 1:11, 12.** When this trumpet is about to sound, therefore, the gospel will close, and the end will come. The "time of trouble," of **Daniel 12:1**, and the seven last plagues and the battle of Armageddon, spoken of in **Revelation 16**, will take place when this trumpet begins to sound.



**Publisher's Note: To be more distinct, the mystery of the God is the character and person of Christ being formed within each believer, Christ within, the Hope of glory. This is the Gospel Message by which each person so surrendering to the work of the Spirit, will overcome sin and self and will be sealed to the final day of their accomplished redemption.**

**20. What event marks the sounding of the seventh trumpet?**

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, *The kingdoms of this world are become, the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.* And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned.” **Revelation 11:15–17.**

**NOTE** — The seventh trumpet, therefore, brings us to the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom.

**21. What is the condition of the nations, and what other events are due or impending at this time?**

“And *the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*” **Verse 18.**

**NOTES** — The closing scenes of this world's history and the judgment are clearly brought to view here. Ever since the loss of independence by the Ottoman Empire in 1840, the nations have been preparing for war as never before, in view of international complications and a world war which all fear is inevitable upon the dissolution of Turkey and the final disposition of its territory. Towering above all others, the Eastern question has been the one of paramount concern to them.

The investigative judgment began in heaven in 1844, at the close of the prophetic period of 2300 days. See studies on: “A Great Prophetic Period;” “The Atonement In Type And Antitype;” “The Judgment;” “The Judgment-Hour Message;”

and “The Fall Of Modern Babylon.” When this is finished, the time of reward will have arrived, the end will have come, and the saints will themselves sit in judgment. See **Revelation 20:4; 1Corinthians 6:1–3.**

**22. What scene in heaven was presented to the prophet as the seventh trumpet was about to sound?**

“And *the temple of God was opened in heaven*, and there was seen in His temple *the ark of His testament*: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

**Revelation 11:19.**

**NOTES** — This forcibly calls attention to the closing work of Christ in the second apartment, or most holy place, of the sanctuary in heaven, which began in 1844. See readings referred to in preceding note. The reference to the ark of God’s testament is a forcible reminder also of that which is to be the standard in the judgment,—the law of God, or Ten Commandments. See **Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Romans 2:12, 13; James 2:8–12.**

From its closing words—the reference to “great hail”—the seventh trumpet evidently embraces the seven last plagues (see **Revelation 16:17, 18**); and from its opening words—“the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord”—it marks the setting up of God’s everlasting kingdom.

FIRST TRUMPET	SECOND TRUMPET	THIRD TRUMPET	FOURTH TRUMPET	FIFTH TRUMPET	SIXTH TRUMPET	SEVENTH TRUMPET
Invasion from the North by The GOTHs	Naval Attack on Italy by the VANDALS	Western Empire Invaded by the HUNS	Last Emperor Dethroned by the HERULI	FIRST WOE Conquests of the SARACENS	SECOND WOE Conquests of the TURKS	THIRD WOE Nations Angry; God's wrath impending Mystery of God Finished
ALARIC	GENSERIC	ATILLA	ODOACER	MOHAMMED OTHMAN	FOUR SULTANIES	Nations preparing for Armageddon
DOWNFALL OF WESTERN ROME				DOWNFALL OF EASTERN ROME (Constantinople) (Ottoman power)		DOWNFALL OF THE WORLD