

Revelation 8:1–11:14

Memory Verse: *Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done* (Rev. 22:12 NIV).

Background Helps:

The opening of the seventh seal (8:1) introduces the trumpet judgments. The first four trumpets (chap. 8) impact various aspects of nature or the environment: the earth (or vegetation), the sea, the fresh waters, and the heavens (or sky). Then trumpets five and six (chap. 9) bring judgment directly upon man himself. Notice that in each of these cases, the judgment, while severe, is only partial: one-third of the vegetation, one-third of the seas, one-third of the fresh waters, one-third of the heavens, five months of torment (for those without the seal of God, 9:4), and one-third of mankind. These are warning judgments. Man still has opportunity to repent (9:20-21). The full and final outpouring of God's wrath awaits the bowl judgments in chapter 16.


Lesson Helps:

While you may want to survey the contents of all four chapters with your class, in your lesson aim you can vary the emphasis. For example:

1. My students will learn about the power of prayer to influence world events, so that they will pray regularly for our world and for the coming of Christ's kingdom. This lesson takes its departure from 8:1-6 where we see the effectiveness of the prayers of the saints. All that transpires in the following chapters, including the judgments upon the wicked and the salvation of the saints, is directly influenced by the prayers of God's people. Encourage your class to exercise their authority in prayer.
2. My students will learn about the coming judgments of God, so that they will repent before it is too late and receive God's mercy. This lesson would focus on a description of the trumpet judgments in chapters 8 and 9. Notice also, however, the indications of God's mercy: the partial nature of these judgments (in each case one-third), the protection of those who are sealed (9:4), and the implied function of these trumpets to call people to repentance (9:20-21). Urge your students to receive God's mercy now, offered through Jesus Christ, in order to avoid future judgment.
3. My students will learn about the role of John (chap. 10) and the two witnesses (chap. 11) in proclaiming the word of God, so that they will witness for Christ in these last days. These two chapters (10:1–11:14) constitute an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets. (See the similar earlier interlude between the sixth and seventh seals in chapter 7.) In chapter 10, John is given the little book to eat and is commissioned to continue his prophetic ministry. In chapter 11, the story of the two witnesses and their prophetic ministry is told. The task of John and these two witnesses is an example for us to follow in these last days. Urge your students to look for opportunities to witness to their friends this week.

Assignment:

 Read Revelation 11:15–16:21.

 Memorize: Revelation 11:15 NIV.