Revelation 8
The Trumpet Judgments Begin

Introduction
A. In chapter 6 we began the 7 seal judgments as the first one introduced the Antichrist in the first 3½ years of the great tribulation and beginning with the second seal we find ourselves into the 2nd half of the Tribulation Period...a time of great suffering and judgment.
B. In chapter 7 we were given a parenthetical look with John at the work of evangelism and the great cost of discipleship during this time.
C. In chapter 8 we pick up again chronologically from the end of chapter 6. With the opening of the 7th seal, we are introduced to the next set of judgments, the 7 trumpets.
D. Both the trumpets and bowls that follow cover the areas of judgment but the bowls do so with strengthening intensity. First, the earth itself is judged, then the sea, rivers, heavens, demonic torment, armies and finally nations in that order.
E. With the trumpets also come the speculators who want to identify with what John sees, giving insight, they say, to the metaphors John employs. Their conjecture is certainly no way to teach the Bible.
F. In fact, many of these plagues found here are similar to the ones found in Egypt in the days of Moses when God gave Pharaoh and the Egyptians an opportunity to do as He required. There too, the judgment of God fell upon the wicked in their rebellion. The only difference is these are worldwide and much more severe in strength, length and effect.
G. Tonight: the first 4 trumpets sometimes known as the 1/3 judgments for with the sounding of each, 1/3 of something is greatly affected. These first four focus on life supporting systems upon the earth: we cannot live without God’s care, though these have taken Him for granted for too long.

Verses 1-2
A. Silence in heaven for half an hour. Silence can be golden, but here it is the somber calm before the storm (Zep.1:7, Zec.2:13, Hab.2.20).
B. And we see 7 angels standing before God who are issued trumpets. These 7 angels might be archangels: meaning primary...we know Gabriel stood before God (Lk.1:19) and that Michael is called an archangel (Jude 1:9) . We see an archangel is involved at the rapture (1Th.4:16).
C. Trumpets in the Old Testament were used for 3 main purposes found in (Num.10). To call the people together for prayer or announcements, to summon an army to war, and for special occasions as in the giving of the law, feast days, anointing of a king, call to fast, etc. 
   1. In the New Testament, it had 2 main purposes: the Rapture of the Church and the announcement of impending judgment to come.

Verses 3-6
A. (3-5) We see here the importance of studying the Old Testament description and layout of the Tabernacle, which was a type of heaven (Heb.9:24). Each portion speaks of an aspect of the work of Jesus. We learn there of the Altar of Incense and its significance, placement and use.
B. (3) Notice the fire for the incense on the golden altar was taken from the Altar of Sacrifice outside the Tabernacle. All prayer and worship is only acceptable to God when it is lit by the fire of sacrifice: the Altar where the Lamb was slain and His blood shed.

C. The angel was given much incense and in the Old Testament it was made from God’s specific formula, which was not allowed for personal use under penalty of death (Ex.30:34-38).

D. (4-5) The prayers of the saints (Ps.141:2) rising before Him (2Chr.30:27) (Act.10:4). Awesome to think our prayers to God come up before Him and He is pleased by them and they are saved as valuable. These prayers are cries to God to set things right....David (Ps.59:13); Asaph (Ps.83:14-18).

E. (5) Note the fire thrown to the earth comes from the Altar of Sacrifice; that same fire where the Lamb was offered; His blood poured out and that same fire that had brought sweet-smelling incense before the Lord.

F. The judgment of God against man in its most basic sense is the rejection of His Son Jesus and His sacrifice. The altar that can cleanse (Isa.6:5-7) will also judge (Mt.21:44). The Lord is a consuming fire (Ex.24:17, Deu. 4:24, Heb.12:29) who will either refine or destroy, but each life will be touched by the fires of God in one way or the other.

G. As fire hits the earth: noises, voices....as in (Rev.4:5) and as heard at Mt. Sinai as the Law was given (Ex.19:16): God is speaking!

Verse 7: 1st trumpet
A. Hail and fire mingled with blood where 1/3 of the trees and all the green grass is destroyed.
B. Compare (Ex.9:18-35) the 7th plague in Egypt and (Joel 1:15-2:1; 2:30). Sodom and Gomorrah were judged in a similar manner (Gen. 19:24,28).
C. The word for tree is fruit tree and grass includes wheat, oats, rice. In Egypt both men and beast lost their lives as the “fire mingled with blood”.
D. Speculate as we might, know that God will bring this to pass and the supernatural works of God do not need natural explanations.

Verses 8-9: 2nd trumpet
A. The sea is affected with 1/3 of it turned to blood, 1/3 of the creatures in it die and 1/3 of the ships upon it are destroyed.
B. Compare (Ex.7:14-21) where it was localized to the Nile and its tributaries; here the judgment is worldwide and since nearly ¾ of the world is ocean, imagine the destruction. The prophets said this (Hos.4:3, Zeph.1:2-3).

Verses 10-11: 3rd trumpet
A. Fresh water falls victim to the wrath of God next as the wormwood or bitterness takes 1/3 of the drinking water from man.
B. Compare the experience of the children of Israel at Marah (Ex.15).

Verses 12: 4th trumpet
A. This time, it is the heavens that show the effect of the judgment of God as 1/3 of the sun’s light and energy is removed.
B. Compare (Ex.10:21-22) where this judgment was localized and very short-lived. Here it will be worldwide and of much longer duration. So wrote the prophets (Isa.13:10-11, Amos 5:20). The 4th vial will alter and reverse this to intensify the sun to the point of causing burning heat (Rev.16). Then just prior to Jesus’ return, again a darkening (Mt.24:29-30).

Verse 13
A. The grace of God sends an angel to warn that it will only be getting worse. Maybe some will repent and turn to God in faith. We can only pray they do.