

<b>Series</b>	Gamma 16 – Study 9
<b>Topic</b>	The Seven Trumpets
<b>Reference</b>	Revelations 8-9
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Welcome back to Gamma 16 for another study; study nine today. We're almost there at the halfway mark, Revelations chapter 8 and 9. Let's start with a word of prayer.

Lord, we ask that be with us tonight, help us understand what it means by the seven trumpets that they are indeed your hand in the lives of the world for a particular purpose. We asked for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Now let's look at where we are. We were looking at Revelations chapter 6, which was got six seals and now today we've been looking at the seven trumpets. Now, here we are. Last week, Revelations 6, we looked at the four seals, which is the horsemen and apocalypse followed by the fifth seal; the martyrs saying, you know how long. Then final judgment, who can stand? And the two people, the same, the church is sealed and saved. They are cast as the true Israel and they are also the multi-racial redeemed.

Two ways of looking at the same group of people, which is basically the church. If you look at one angle of the church, they are the new Israel. That's why the church is called 144,000. Right? If you look at another angle they're seen as a multi-racial firstfruits of mankind, redeemed from every tongue, tribe and nation.

#### **So, who can stand?**

The church.

#### **Why can it stand?**

Because the church is sealed. It has the name of the Lamb and the Father, right.

Now after the church is sealed, judgment will start to roll on, the seventh seal and judgment, chapter 8 and 7. Chapter 8 verse 1.

1 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 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 all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, 4 and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

Here you have got of all the seals and being broken and all the judgment coming out, suddenly there is silence in heaven. It is like a breathless anticipation where all the drama that it leads into this.

#### **Why the silence?**

Well, two reasons. Silence because of judgment the silence because the prayers are being listened to.

If you look, the judgment has silence. This idea, this concept comes from the Old Testament, Zephaniah. Looks at Zephaniah

7 Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. 8 And on the day of the Lord's sacrifice— "I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire.

So silence is before their punishment.

Isaiah 47: 5-6

5 Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for you shall no more be called the mistress of kingdoms. 6 I was angry with my people; I profaned my heritage; I gave them into your hand; you showed them no mercy; on the aged you made your yoke exceedingly heavy.

So here is punishing the Babylonians and before he punishes them, he sits them in silence. So silence gives you the horror of judgment. Remember in those days in the school, when you've been naughty. I remember the headmaster comes in and the headmaster doesn't shout. The discipline master shouts, headmaster says keep quiet and the quietness puts the fear of God in you because you don't know what he's going to do. Then he comes out with a big rotan. So it's that kind of idea. Silence gives you this concept, this experience of the horror of judgment.

And then silence is important because it indicates that the prayer is being listened to. Not that God cannot do two things at one time, which is lot like chewing gum right. It is just that, it is metaphorical that God is listening to this. If you look at Revelations chapter 8,

2 Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 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 all the saints on the golden altar before the throne,

So here the silence is when all the incense is being given and we know prayers and incense for chapter five, which we have gone through, the incense is basically metaphorical for the prayers. This is like the Old Testament tabernacle priest, they come and they actually offer incense because the fragrant or odor is metaphorical for what is acceptable to God. So the angel brings before God on the golden censer and is all this incense and basically it's a symbol of prayer that is being accepted as an aroma, which is very pleasing to God.

**And why is it a pleasing and excepted? How can God accept the prayers of saints? Why?**

Because chapter 5 tells you, it is because of the Lamb. Because of what the Lamb has done our prayers are being answered. And then what happens when you God answer the prayers? Revelations 8:5 says,

5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

Wow! Silence, the prayers go up to God and God responds to the pray. And how does God respond? Lightning and thunder and an earthquake. This is the background. This is the Old Testament background. In the Old Testament background, God was upset with the people of Israel. In a vision God speaks to Ezekiel, because they were having idolatry and idolatry always triggers judgment. In Ezekiel God says,

17 Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it too light a thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations that they commit here, that they should fill the land with violence and provoke me still further to anger?"

So therefore idolatry provokes God to anger. Right. And in this particular vision, God seals his people before judgement, so in the vision Ezekiel sees six men, with one scribe and Ezekiel chapter 9,

4 And the Lord said to him, "Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it."

So therefore with all idolatry going on, the people who are grieved by the sin and idolatry go on, they are the ones who basically groan and say, Oh my God, the sin of this city is terrible and they are mourning for that. They are the ones where the true people of God. So therefore Ezekiel is told, the scribe goes through and he basically marks on there forehead, they are his people. Then after they've been sealed, in a vision with Ezekiel God commands six executioners to go through the city. Verse 5,

5 And to the others he said in my hearing, "Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity. 6 Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women, but touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my sanctuary."

Which means judgment will come upon the people of Israel and there is no pity. When the six executioners go around, every single living man, woman and child will be killed, except those who have the mark on their heads. Those who are the true people of God and this is a kind of picture that Revelations picks up. And then Ezekiel chapter 10.

1 Then I looked, and behold, on the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire, in appearance like a throne.

So here is a picture of the angels near the throne of God. Is a throne of God picture.

2 And he said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim (which is next to the throne of God). Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city." And he went in before my eyes.

So this is a picture of judgment. Now, if you look back. The fifth seal, all the saint saying, you know, Lord, how long will you judge and avenge our blood? Then in chapter 7, do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our lord, following like Ezekiel. Ezekiel prophecy had the people of Israel committing idolatry, but before God judges, he seals the saints and the same thing here. So, you actually have the seven seal coming out. The seven seal silence for the prayers of the saints will be heard. And once the prayers of the saints have been heard, the angel took the censer, filled it with fire and through it upon the earth, right. And then this judgment. And now we have the seven trumpets. The seven trumpets are the actual results of the answering of the prayers of the saints, they are judgment events, and that shows you the immense power of prayer that we actually have as a recourse as saints, when God hears our prayers, he stores our tears in his bottle and it's before him and we are before his throne.

So therefore you have the structure and basically the seals, the trumpets and bowls are in parallel and you have got the seven trumpets and trumpets are actually important symbols, they are actually symbols of war. When you blow the trumpet, it's sounds the time actually for festivals, it also sounds the time for a battle cry. When the fall of Jericho, they march around seven times and then they blew the trumpet before the walls actually fell down. There's an Old Testament background of Holy war.

Now you have in Zephaniah.

14 The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. 15 A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

So therefore these are called apocalyptic trumpets, which basically announce or herald the coming of the last day of God. In fact, the Qumran community, which is like a nomadic community, there was an outskirts of the people of Israel. That is where the dead sea scrolls were being discovered. They write prayers for destruction of enemies and pasted them on trumpets to be blown just before the battle. And here you have the first angel

Rev 8:7 The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

So you have a depiction, each trumpet has a depiction of the judgment event. So here the judgment event is he below the trumpet, hail, mix of blood thrown upon the earth and then the bottom half of the verse describes the effect and these are environmental effects of that first trumpet

And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

So you actually have if you look at the four trumpets together. You can actually categorize them. You've got trumpet one, two, three and four, and then you've got the event. Then you've got the consequences. The event that the first one was hail, fire, blood thrown on the earth. The event of the second is the burning mountain thrown into the sea. The third one, the star fell from heaven hitting one third of the rivers and fresh water. And a fourth trumpet is a third of the sun. The moon, the stars are struck. The results of all this, the consequences one third of the earth and the trees are burnt. All the grass is burnt, one third of sea creatures died, one third of ships are destroyed. One third of the freshwater polluted, uh, and causing death of many people and the light is dimmed by one third and the shorter day and night.

So that's how you categorize the effects of the trumpet. Let's look at the event of the trumpets. All right. This is a pattern of the judgment event, is cast as a cosmic event.

#### **Are they literal or are they symbolic?**

They obviously have to be symbolic because the star can't fall and hit the earth because the star is a million times bigger than the earth. All right. So it must be symbolic. If you'd go back to the Ezekiel language, remember the people of God were sealed and then what happens was this heavenly scene of the throne, Ezekiel saw that, and it was supposed to fill your hands with burning coals and you throw this coals from the throne of heaven, it came down onto the city. You see that, smashing out to the city. It's a cosmic event. It describes judgment of God in terms of cosmic event. In real life did you see meteorites come from heaven from the throne? No. In real life, Jerusalem fell in 586 BC. So what you actually have is physical judgment in terms of war, the fall of the city, famine and death and the rape of the women, all that is described in using cosmic language. While the seals, the first, of all the seals described the devastation that happens on earth, four horsemen, the pale horse, the great horsemen and all that, but the trumpets describe judgment from the heavenly point of view. It is like God's point of view, while the seals describe the judgment from the man's point of view, right?

So you've got consistent with imagery in the Old Testament. The Old Testament imagery fill up your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim and scattered them over the city. So as far as Old Testament is concerned, this picture of judgment is you take the coals from heaven and throw it down to the earth? Revelations 5 and

*And then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth.*

So same kind of depiction as Old Testament, that's where he got the picture from. The angels in heaven take up the fire and throw it on the earth and then on the earth we have got cosmic phenomenon. We have got a hail fire blood. We have got the burning mountain thrown into the sea stars, fell from heaven, a third of the sun. You see all these are cast from the heavens point of view. All right, is cosmic phenomenon. So it's consistent with Old Testament imagery. So Peter preaches in Acts chapter two to explain how the people can speak in tongues because they have got the spirit. All right. So he says

*Acts 2: 17 “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;*

And then the last days are basically he refers to are basically a time between the coming and the first coming of Jesus and the second coming of Jesus, we are now living in the last days. In the last days there is a prophecy that people will receive the Holy Spirit, right? So this is a period of tribulation, the last days. And then in the last days I will

*19 And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; 20 the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.*

So therefore Peter is saying, look, you know, in the last days God will show you all this miraculous signs, cosmic signs. All right. And this language is actually taken from the Old Testament of Joel. In Joel it says,

*Joel 2:30 “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.*

You see this cosmic language, and then you look at Ezekiel 32,

*7... I will cover the heavens and make their stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light. 8 All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over you, and put darkness on your land, declares the Lord God.*

So therefore there is cosmic imagery of the end time judgment of God against the Jews and what actually happened at the crucifixion. When the crucifixion happened there was darkness on the sixth hour over the whole land until the ninth hour when the suns lights fail and the curtain of temple was torn into two and in Matthew chapter 27,

*When the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.*

This is what actually happened but described in Joel in very cosmic terms. Right. The sun didn't exactly

fall down from the sky. This is actually what happened. So therefore you actually have apocalyptic imagery to describe the judgement on earth as being meted out from heaven in response to the prayers of the saints.

### **Why does God use this imagery?**

Because it's terrifying. This symbolic terrifying judgment from God is cast in such a way is as if the very foundations of the world is actually shaking. And then next let's look at the consequences of divine judgment.

The consequences are the first four trumpets describe environmental effect directed at humans. Fifth, six, and seven describe direct effects on human itself. So is partial judgment, all of them are not complete. They're partial judgment. The purpose is to warn us that there is more there is to come. In the first four trumpets, these are actually literary and theological models are taken from the Exodus. So, therefore if you go back and read Exodus, the plagues of Exodus are very similar to these particular trumpets. So that's where we actually get our models from. So you have got all these 10 plagues and some of them are repeated in the trumpets and they describe environmental effects of the vegetation being burnt up and we can see in our own lives around the world. You've got the bush fires every few years. We've got haze that fill up our nation, wildfires are increasing with global warming. There's a feedback loop, as more fires, more carbon being built up. We can see the effects already. In fact, if you look at the last 20 years from 1995 to 2015, 90% of our disasters are weather related with floods, storms, heat waves and droughts. 2.3 billion people are affected, killing 157,000 over that 20 year period of time.

Today 785 million people, one in nine lack access to safe water and 2 billion people as intrigue, even like access to a toilet. In fact, 14 out of 20 mega cities in the world are now experiencing drought. Look at Cape Town. In the Cape Town, instead of each person using 350 liters of water a day, they're down to 50, which means nobody can take a shower more than twice a week, and nobody can use potable water to flush their toilet. So water is a scarce resource. These are in dark, all the areas in the world where water is of dark, a scarce resource for at least 9 to 12 months of a year. Of all the three trumpets trumpet, one, two, and three, whatever happens the environmental effects are in the end, famine. When you destroy your environment, you've got nothing to eat, nothing to grow, just like the Exodus plagues. There is a net effect, is environmental destruction and famine.

The fourth one is a little bit more different.

**12 The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.**

So therefore this is a picture of darkness. It's like the ninth plague, which is you know the penultimate plague of darkness over the whole land of Egypt, and this is basically symbolic of a spiritual or cultural or mental darkness over the world. It describes the lostness of people in idolatry, separated from the light of God. And then after that you've got an Eagle, which is a symbol of judgment crying with a loud voice.

**13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"**

Which means you've got the last three trumpets, trumpet five, six, and seven and they're all described as

woes, which means they are really bad trumpets. You think the first four trumpets were bad, the last three trumpets were particularly bad. Why? Because they affect not just the environment, which indirectly affects humans, but they affect humans directly. And the fifth trumpet is this.

1 And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.

Hey hang on. You have got the star falls from the sky. Right. And then suddenly he was given the key. The star is a person, right. So therefore, what is this person and his name later on, they have a King over them, which is the hordes of hell, the angel of the bottomless pit. Who is the angel of the bottomless pit? In Hebrew its name is Abaddon and Greek is called Apollyon, which is basically the destroyer. So no prizes for you to guess this must be Satan. So here you have Satan falling from heaven. Okay. Who gives him the keys to hell? Jesus. Very odd. You've got Satan. You thought Satan so powerful, so fearsome, you have to cowl before him but who gives him the keys to hell, Jesus. Revelations 1 says, Jesus, I hold the keys to death and hell. In fact, the devil can't get to his own hell. You need keys from Jesus. Ask God, Hey God please give me some keys, so I can go back to hell.

The hell is not his personal domain, is locked up and only acts when God gives him the keys. And then when he goes there, he releases demonic creatures.

3 Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. 4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

Here he releases demonic creatures. They are allowed to torment for five months, but not to kill, the torment is like a torment of a scorpion when it stings, excruciating pain and in those days, people will seek death, but will not be able to find it, long to die but death will escape of free from, so basically they are caught in a vicious circle. This is the effects of the hordes from hell as a way. And then the appearance of them. What did they look like? Here you actually have,

7 In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, 8 their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; 9 they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10 They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails.

And here what does it look like? I mean, it looks like locusts. In those days they've got locusts. Today is like a loud sounds like a breastplate, like armor. We could interpret this as Apache helicopters. You know what, maybe they're the waging war by Apache helicopters can cause torment and not dead. They can't fire a missile and you don't die but you are tormented, is not likely. So, the plagues in Egypt were common. Basically out of the 10 is locusts. This language is taken from Old Testament judgment language of Joel. The time of Joel Israel actually went through an actual locust infestation, but Joel used the locust infestation as a language to warn them of a coming nation that will come and overtake them and destroy them. And so therefore he says, Joel 1:4 warns Israel.

4 What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten. What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten.

6 For a nation has come up against my land, powerful and beyond number; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness.

Joel 2:4 Their appearance is like the appearance of horses, and like war horses they run. 5 As with the rumbling of chariots, they leap on the tops of the mountains,

See the language of Revelations is taken from Joel. And in those days you actually the Babylonian army come. There was no Apache helicopter at all, but this is basically judgment language. All right, now these hordes from hell will cause damage. They will cause suffering and this suffering is actually prophesied in Deuteronomy. In Deuteronomy God actually tells his people, if you follow my covenant, obey me, you will get blessing. If you don't these are the consequences.

Due 28:28 The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind, 29 and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways. And you shall be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help you.

60 And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you.

65 And among these nations you shall find no respite, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot, but the Lord will give you there a trembling heart and failing eyes and a languishing soul.

Metaphorical language for mental, psychological, spiritual torment. As you look at a world that we live today, the lifetime odds of getting clinical depression is going to affect 1 in 5 of us. A million people in the world commit suicide every single year. 90% of people who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable psychiatric disorder. Loneliness data coming out from UK shows about half the population suffer and grapple with loneliness. Drug abuse, these are the countries that have got the most drug abuse all over the world. They are actually trap in a vicious cycle of one. They first wanting to experiment on drugs, then they're addicted to drugs. They wouldn't get off, they can't and it's a vicious circle. They want to die and they can't.

So God uses demons. He allows the demons to judge human beings and you've got anxiety disorders. You've got fear, you've got depression, you got anguish, you got loneliness, all these are described, people who do not worship God who worship idolatry, this is what's going to happen. So it causes psychological, this trumpet is psychological suffering, that will make them yearn for death and yet unwilling to commit suicide. Right. And they were told not to harm those would God sealed. These locusts they don't harm the grass of the field and they only touch the people who do not have the seal of God on their forehead. So when we have to seal of God, the name of Jesus Christ on our heads, it's just not a seal, it is not a name. It is a manner of living, it is a commitment of our lives. It is a preoccupation of what we are, we are the people of God. We walk with the symbol of Jesus on our heads. We're not going to be harmed by these, because we have an eternal hope. They don't have an eternal hope. They are harmed. They are tortured by this continuing fear, anxiety, depression. Why? Because they don't have a real hope. We have a real hope.

Now the sixth trumpet and the sixth trumpet,

13 Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God,

Remember the golden altar. Four horns means all powerful. Horns depict power and remember what happened at the fifth seal, the saints were under the altar. So this is exactly where God is. And it is a response to the fifth seal when people say, how long God, how long and basically what God is doing is allowing the trumpet to blow the angel is blow the trumpet, and then there is an unleashing of more



judgment. All right. So.

14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

So this is north. We don't know whether these are bad angels or just normal angels. Now look at the words,

15 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.

Why would they say that? Well, because it is all planned. It's no accident. You don't simply say you guys release the hordes from hell. No, it's actually plan and time for the precise hour, the day, the month in the year, which means it is under the control of God who says the six angel who blows a trumpet. All right otherwise the angels are bound. They can't move until the trumpet is blown. The trumpets is blown, and then predetermined time these four angels release the hordes that would kill a third of mankind. It's an uncountable hordes,

16 The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number.

So this is a huge uncountable number or hordes. What they look like is amazing, but important thing I want you to look at is their description.

18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.

So where is the power of these hordes that come from hell. These are not like the locust. They come from hell, which basically have psychological, clinical depression and torment. They actually not only have spiritual death, they have got physical death, they also kill you. And how did they kill you? Their mouth, the mouth is deception. What is the serpent come? Do you want to be like God? Implying God had, you know, when he intoxicated Eve's mind in the garden of Eden. On the day the forbidden fruit, you will not die. So basically these hordes that come out not only cause physical death, they also cause spiritual deception and spiritual deception leads to spiritual death. Right?

18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths.

And this is formula, which describes the judgment formula from judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. So the effects of the hordes is also to kill people. And this is directed to the whole of unbelieving mankind. If we look at this final 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 nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

So the whole idea is to judgment, so that mankind will realize that they cannot depend on the worship of idols or wealth or power. Because they are powerless against the judgment of God. And yet, despite these horrors that have been released against mankind they never repent. The same thing happened to

the pharaohs. Remember these plagues take the shape of the Exodus plagues, 10 plagues, and the 10 plagues were inflicted on the people of Egypt, especially the Pharaoh to show him that all his gods. He worshipped the god Rah, the god of sun and God caused in the ninth plague the sun to be completely obliterated for three days.

Through these plagues God demonstrated to the people of Egypt that their worship of their idols and their gods were useless. And instead of turning them towards him, they actually hardened the hearts. You look at Pharaoh, he hardened his hearts. So today, let me end chapter, the two studies there are back to back. They talk about judgment and we need to know a few things about judgment. Judgment shows us who God really is. Here is a mural and someone actually said

*The mural of God's character as if God's character is like a drawing and a mural are painted and a landscape of judgment. If you avoid preaching on judgment then we will be hiding God from our people.*

We cannot see God. It's like painting a mural, unless you paint judgment there, you will not see God. You see, if God is good and merciful and righteous and gracious and sovereign and imminent and Holy and majestic and powerful, he has to be painted against a backdrop of what is not good and what is not merciful and what is not righteous and what is evil for us to have a whole picture.

So judgment actually allows us an opportunity to see who God is, no matter how unpalatable we want to think about talking about judgment. The dual fact of God's judgment is that it shows us the consequences of our sin. At the same time it shows us the dimensions of God's mercy in response to the consequences of our sin.

God's judgment also points us in the right direction. When we are wrong he points us to the opposite direction. It directs us towards godliness, because we are faulty human beings, we are sinful human beings. We always think we got it right and when judgment comes for the believer at least, it will basically correct us and move us to watch godliness. And for the unbeliever, it will move them to realize that they cannot trust in their idols and they have to turn to the right and true God.

Judgment also points us that there is worse to come. It points us that this world is going to get worse and unless you repent things will actually get worse. If you will look at the COVID 19 crisis, we have 1.2 million deaths, infected 50 million all over the world. It's not quite as bad as the Spanish flu where the 15 million deaths and 600 million infected or the superbugs they're coming more to come. They're going to affect many of us. What about the Black Death in Europe? Twice effecting and killing one third of the population.

We could always say that some people are Christians are doing this. They are the plague you see COVID, it's God judgment on the world and we point their fingers at our non-Christian friends. Oh, this is God's judgment. You are guilty. Is that how we are to approach God's judgment? When we actually have God's judgment, this is what Daniel responded.

**Daniel 9:3 Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.**

Our response as people of God is not to turn around and point to all non-Christians, ha, ha ha ha, these are trumpets that are meant for you because you have sinned. No, in solidarity with mankind and

in reflection of our own sin when catastrophe comes, when COVID-19 comes return to God and we pray and we plea for mercy and we confess our sins and we too have sinned and we repent. And when we share in the lamentation and suffering of the world suffering with COVID, we are in a position to observe, and yet lamentations 2:23,

*Your mercies are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness.*

That's how we are to approach a pandemic in our suffering or judgment falls on all mankind because we too are sinful and we repent. Lastly, God's judgments are at the heart of the gospel. The whole reason Jesus came to earth was to glorify God and taking upon himself the judgment that we deserve and thus paying for our sins by the sacrifice of his own life. God's judgments are at the heart of the gospel. You can't go to tell someone the good news of Jesus Christ if they don't understand why it's good. It is good simply because there's a terrifying judgment that we all deserve. And if he doesn't understand the dimensions and magnitude of this terrified eternal judgment, how can he appreciate the love and the glory and the sacrifice and the grace of Jesus Christ. Judgement is at the heart of the gospel of God.

I hope we have been encouraged and understand more of the majesty of God through this lesson.