

Home Church Study Questions
Based on the SAC Sermon May 22, 2022

Sermon: Revelation Series #14
Text: Revelation 8

Icebreaker Question: What traditions or practices do you and/or your family have for the May long weekend? Any "surprises" happen this past May long weekend?

Question 1: Take time to review and reflect on what has happened so far in the first 7 chapters of Revelation.

The Bible Project has a 10 minute video that gives a helpful summary of the first 11 chapters of Revelation (Ok, so you'll get a bit of a peak into the upcoming chapters as well)

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/revelation-1-11/>

a) What is one thing that has really stood out for you personally so far? Has it changed your life at all?

Read Revelation 8

Question 2: Most Christians know that prayer is a vital part of following Jesus and a key to living in intimacy with God.

Based on Revelation 8:1-5 I (Lisa) have come to the conclusion that prayer is the most practical and productive thing we can do as God's children and witnesses.

a) Do you agree? If so, would you say that your current practice of prayer demonstrates this? Why or why not?

b) What are some of the obstacles or challenges you face in living a life of prayer?

Question 3:

a) What can you discover in the following passages of Scripture regarding the burning of incense and the Israelites' communication with God?

Exodus 30:1-10

Psalms 141:1-4

Luke 1:8-10

b) What implications and applications for prayer can we make based on how the prayers of all God's people are now being mixed with incense on the altar before God, then combined with the fire from God's altar and thrown back to earth?

Question 4:

a) In my sermon I agreed with Bible scholars who

a) interpret the sounding of the trumpets as warning alarms to those on earth who are opposed to God's rule and reign, and

b) interpret the fraction "1/3," as it relates to the destruction and devastation that happens on earth as a result of the sounding of the first four trumpets, as a number that symbolizes "mercy."

Currently God's judgements are only "partial" judgements.

These judgements are indeed harsh, but not so harsh as to bring complete devastation.

What "warning alarms" are sounding in our world today in regards to the depletion and destruction of our earth's natural resources: vegetation, trees, grass, sea life, fresh water, stratosphere, etc?

What hinders people from acknowledging God's mercy and judgement in relation to the devastation and death our world experiences on a daily basis?

b) What parallels can be made between the plagues described in Rev. 8 and the plagues of Egypt leading up to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt?

What lessons learned from the Exodus story can be applied to our world today?

c) God is both just and merciful. Has this chapter helped you to understand how God, as a just judge, is also merciful? What are the tensions and questions you still have regarding God's justice and His mercy?

Mission for this Week.

Choose 2-4 specific things, people and/or events that your group will commit to pray for this week. Mix it up -- make your list diverse.

Each of you plan a few times during the week when you will pray for these things (Mark your calendars if that helps you keep your commitment).

Journal your prayers - highlighting how you notice the Spirit of God speaking to you, or guiding you, or strengthening you, or convicting you.

Next week share your experiences, insights, as well as observations of how you hear and see God at work in your life and in the lives of those you are praying for — or not!