

The Book Of Revelation Study 41

Revelation 8:6-13 (NKJV)

⁶ So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

⁷ The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

⁸ Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.

⁹ And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰ Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.

¹¹ The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

¹² Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.

¹³ And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

People today are very concerned about saving the environment.

Fears about the depletion of the ozone layer, pollution, the destruction of the rain forests, and global warming are constantly in the news.

There is a passionate concern to save endangered species, everything from whales to spotted owls to California condors, and a host of lesser-known species.

For many, protecting the environment has become far more than a concern for health and safety; it has become an issue of idolatry, as they worship "Mother Nature" by trying to protect and perpetuate the earth.

There is no question that fallen man has failed in his responsibility to properly care for God's creation.

Genesis 2:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

But the damage man has done to the earth pales in comparison to what God will one day do to it.

The powerful judgments of the future time of tribulation will utterly devastate the earth, causing wholesale, unimaginable destruction of the environment.

Eventually, after the Millennium, God will completely destroy (or uncreate) the present heaven and earth;

2 Peter 3:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Then after the whole universe has gone completely out of existence, He will replace it with a new heaven and a new earth.

Revelation 21:1 (NKJV)

¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

There is a sense in which the present age is man's day; he is free to do what he wants within certain limitations.

It is also Satan's day, during which the "god of this world"

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV)

⁴ whose minds the god of this age (world) has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Has been granted certain liberties within the parameters of God's purposeful, sovereign tolerance.

But God will not permit the present state of affairs to continue forever. He will end man's day, overthrow the usurper, Satan, destroy the present evil world system, and establish the earthly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That future time of judgment is known, appropriately, as the Day of the Lord. That Day involves a complete renovation of the universe and the earth by judgment and restoration.

As the time for the trumpet judgments to begin approaches, the world will have already experienced for years the frightening and relentless reality of God's wrath.

As that seven year tribulation period unfolds there will be wars, famines, plagues, devastating earthquakes, fiery celestial objects smashing into the earth, and a worldwide reign of terror by Antichrist, but the trumpet judgments will be even worse.

As noted in the Revelation 8:1 there is depicted a brief, half-hour interlude in heaven in response to the opening of the seventh and final seal.

So horrifying are the trumpet and bowl judgments contained within the seventh seal that its opening stuns the heavenly host of angels and redeemed people into silence.

That half hour of silence came to an abrupt end when the angel who stood before the altar flung his censer to the earth..

The resulting powerful earthquake was the signal for **the seven angels who had the seven trumpets, and they prepared themselves to sound them.**

Revelation 8:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

Now the serial judgments the trumpets unleash will hit the earth and its wicked people just as they are crawling out of the caves and rocks where they futilely attempted to hide from the fury of God's wrath during the sixth seal.

Thinking that things are getting back to normal they will be hit with the terrifying, rapid-paced trumpet terrors, followed by the bowl judgments.

These final judgments are likely the ones held back until the sealing of the 144,000 witness seen in

Revelation 7:2-3 (NKJV)

² *Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,*

³ *saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."*

The first four trumpets are described in brief and straightforward manner; far more detail is given about the last three.

The first four trumpets all deal directly with the earth. They do not symbolize political, social or economic judgment; those types of judgment come later in Revelation.

Nor do they describe any judgment that has ever happened in history in some locale or region. The trumpet judgments are actual, literal, physical events that will affect the whole earth.

God will use nature to punish sinners in that day. The partial destruction described by the repeated use of the word "third" in each of the first four trumpet judgments indicates that these are not the final judgments.

So now let's look at :

THE FIRST TRUMPET

Revelation 8:7 (NKJV)

⁷ *The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.*

Hail is frequently associated in Scripture with divine judgment as is **fire**, [Ex9:13-25; Job 38:22-23; Psa 105:32; Isa 28:2; Hag 2:17] [Gen 19:24; Psa 11:6; Ezek 38:22].

The combination of fire mixed with blood is reminiscent of *Joel 2:30* which describes the Day of the Lord.

Joel 2:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ *"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.*

The specific cause of the **hail and fire, thrown down to the earth**, is not revealed, but from a scientific stand point an earthquake of the magnitude and extent of the one in (8:5) would likely trigger worldwide volcanic eruptions.

Beside spewing vast quantities of flaming lava (which could be blood red in appearance) into the atmosphere, the atmospheric disturbances caused by those eruptions could trigger violent thunder storms that would produce large hail.

Such thunderstorms would be in keeping with the imagery of (8:5);

Revelation 8:5 (NKJV)

⁵ *Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.*

Whatever the scientific explanation, this deluge of death was **thrown to the earth** by God with devastating effects.

The shocking result was that **a third of the earth was burned up**, rendering the soil in which crops are cultivated unusable.

Then **a third of the trees were burned up**, destroying fruit all over the earth.

Finally **all the green grass was burned up**.

The fire falling from the sky kindled raging infernos that consumed one third of the earth's vegetation and forests.

Once before;

Exodus 9:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ *And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field.*

We need to be reminded again that in the Bible Egypt is depicted as the world system, from which the Jews were released by the miracles of God, Saved from their slavery.

The effects of such catastrophic fires would be widespread and devastating, including destruction of crops, death of animals on a massive scale, loss of wood for construction, and the destruction of water sheds.

That is fitting judgment for those who *"exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator"* (Rom 1:25)

Fallen mankind has failed to recognize and honor God as Creator, choosing instead to make a god out of the earth.

But the environmental, evolutionary pantheism that devalues man, elevates animals and plants, and ignores the Creator will be severely judged.

I'm afraid "Earth Day" that year will be a gloomy and dismal affair; in a scorched and savaged world there will be little of the environment left to celebrate.

And there are worse judgments still to fall.

THE SECOND TRUMPET

Revelation 8:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ *Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.*

⁹ *And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.*

While the earth's population is still trying to recover from the devastating fire falling from heaven, John saw an even more terrifying sign of doom appearing in the sky.

As the second angel sounded his trumpet, something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea.

The judgment of the first trumpet fell on the land, that of the second trumpet will be on the sea.

God created the sea to be a blessing to mankind, to provide food, oxygen (much of Earth's oxygen comes from the phytoplankton and algae in the world's oceans.), and water from the rain-storms on the land that is originally gathered up by evaporation from the oceans.

But people have repaid God's gracious provision with ingratitude and idolatry, revering the sea as the supposed source of their remote evolutionary ancestors.

As He has devastated the land environment, the true God judges the sea.

The massive object plunging through the sky looked to the terrified observers on earth **like a great mountain burning with fire.**

This is evidently a giant meteorite or asteroid, surrounded by blinding gases set ablaze by the friction of the earth's atmosphere, on a collision course with the earth.

The current doomsday scenarios about an asteroid hitting the earth will come true with a vengeance.

Everyone will see it, either live or on television, and as the world's telescopes see it coming, many predictions will no doubt be made about whether it will hit the earth or not.

It will hit, striking somewhere in the world's oceans with an explosive power far greater than that of an atomic bomb.

Because all the oceans are connected, the devastation from that hit will spread across one-third of the ocean waters, causing **a third of the sea** to become blood.

Three catastrophic, supernaturally designed effects result from the collision: **a third of the sea became blood,** as a result of that effect **a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died.**

As with the first trumpet, it is impossible to say whether the blood was a miraculous deposit of actual blood. Perhaps more likely, the death of countless billions of sea creatures as **a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died,** could certainly account for the reddish tinge of the water.

This is reminiscent of the plague in which the water of the Nile turned to blood;

Exodus 7:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ *And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the Lord commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.*

²¹ *The fish that were in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.*

Similar words used by the prophet Zephaniah about God's judgment on Judah for their sin.

Zephaniah 1:3 (NKJV)

³ "I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, The fish of the sea, And the stumbling blocks along with the wicked. I will cut off man from the face of the land," Says the Lord.

The reddish hue of the sun shining through the pall of smoke from the impact might also give the oceans' surface a blood red appearance.

The impact will also generate unimaginable huge tsunamis (tidal waves). Those giant waves will destroy a **third of the ships** on the world's oceans, capsizing huge ocean going vessels and completely swamping ports.

The resulting disruption of commerce and transportation will cause economic chaos.

So the first two trumpets will bring devastating judgment on both the land and the sea, which are the beginning of the final catastrophes God will unleash on the sinful, rebellious world.