

## The Book Of Revelation

### Study 42

*Revelation 8:10-13 (NKJV)*

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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!"

### THE THIRD TRUMPET

As **the third angel sounded** his trumpet another flaming object hurtled toward the earth.

John described this latest of the "terrors and great signs from heaven"

*Luke 21:11 (NKJV)*

<sup>11</sup> And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

As a **great star that fell from heaven**.

The word here is *Aster (star)* and can refer to any celestial body other than the sun and moon.

The massive object that smashed into the ocean remained intact, but this object (possibly a comet or a meteor because of its fiery tail) disintegrated as it reached Earth's atmosphere.

The fact that it is described as **burning like a torch** supports that interpretation, since *Lampas (Torch)* was used in ancient times to describe meteors and comets.

The celestial object's fiery debris **fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters**, polluting the fresh water around the globe.

This is also reminiscent of the polluting of Egyptians' drinking water

*Exodus 7:21-24 (NKJV)*

<sup>21</sup> 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.

<sup>22</sup> Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the Lord had said.

<sup>23</sup> And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this.

<sup>24</sup> So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river.

Because of its deadly effects, **the star** will be **called Wormwood**, although the text does not reveal who will name it.

**Wormwood** translates *apsinthos*, word used only here in the New Testament. Wormwood is a shrub whose leaves are used in the manufacture of absinthe, a liquer so toxic that its manufacture is banned in many countries.

Wormwood is mentioned eight times in the Old Testament, where it is associated with bitterness, poison, and death.

*Deuteronomy 29:18 (NKJV)*

<sup>18</sup> *so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood;*

*Proverbs 5:4 (NKJV)*

<sup>4</sup> *But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword.*

*Jeremiah 9:15 (NKJV)*

<sup>15</sup> *therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.*

*Jeremiah 23:15 (NKJV)*

<sup>15</sup> *"Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets: 'Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, And make them drink the water of gall; For from the prophets of Jerusalem Profaneness has gone out into all the land.' "*

*Lamentations 3:15 (NKJV)*

<sup>15</sup> *He has filled me with bitterness, He has made me drink wormwood.*

*Lamentations 3:19 (NKJV)*

<sup>19</sup> *Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall.*

*Amos 5:7 (NKJV)*

<sup>7</sup> *You who turn justice to wormwood, And lay righteousness to rest in the earth!"*

*Amos 6:12 (NKJV)*

<sup>12</sup> *Do horses run on rocks? Does one plow there with oxen? Yet you have turned justice into gall, And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood,*

In three of these uses wormwood is connected with poisoned water.

In *Jer 9:15*, for example, God says of rebellious Israel, "Behold I will feed them, this people, with wormwood and give them poisoned water to drink"

Whatever the poison represented by the name **Wormwood** is, it is lethal since **a third of the fresh waters became** poisonous like **wormwood**.

This is the reverse of the miracle at Marah, where the Lord made bitter waters sweet.

*Exodus 15:24-25 (NKJV)*

<sup>24</sup> *And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"*

<sup>25</sup> *So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.*

The repeated pattern of one-third destruction (one-third of the earth and trees were burned up *V7*, one-third of the sea turned to blood *V8*, one-third of the sea creatures killed and one-third of the ships destroyed *V9*) demonstrates clearly that these are not random natural events, but divine judgments.

No human deaths were mentioned with the first two trumpet judgments, although they undoubtedly will take a severe toll of human lives.

But with the third trumpet judgment, John records that **many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.**

The rivers will run with deadly poison; the wells will become springs of death; the lakes and reservoirs will be filled with toxic waters.

People will be able to survive, for a time, the destruction of food supplies caused by the first two trumpet judgments, living off stored provisions.

But people cannot long survive without fresh water, and the loss of significant portion of the world's fresh water supply will cause widespread death.

The devastation caused by the first three trumpet judgments will leave the earth's inhabitants in a state of shock and fear.

Still, God has not finished pouring out His wrath on sinful mankind.

The death of **many** is only an indirect result of these first three blasts. The direct killing of sinners comes with the sixth trumpet.

*Revelation 9:15 (NKJV)*

<sup>15</sup> *So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.*

## THE FOURTH TRUMPET

*Revelation 8:12-13 (NKJV)*

<sup>12</sup> *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.*

<sup>13</sup> *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!"*

As **the fourth angel sounded**, the focus of divine judgment shifted from the earth to the heavens.

Still reeling from the effects of the first three ecological judgments, people will be desperately seeking answers to the crisis.

There will be no doubt seminars, conferences, emergency sessions of the United Nations, discussions among scientists, all desperately and futilely seeking to cope with the damage to the earth's ecosystems.

In the midst of that frenzied activity comes a new disaster in the sky, as a **third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were smitten.**

The word is *Plesso (were smitten)* is the verb from which the noun "plague" derives

*Revelation 11:6 (NKJV)*

*<sup>6</sup> These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.*

*Revelation 16:21 (NKJV)*

*<sup>21</sup> And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.*

The heavenly bodies are hit with a plague from God **so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.**

This partial eclipse, reminiscent of the ninth Egyptian plague;

*Exodus 10:21-22 (NKJV)*

*<sup>21</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt."*

*<sup>22</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.*

This eclipse is temporary, as God will later increase the amount of heat coming from the Sun;

*Revelation 16:8-9 (NKJV)*

*<sup>8</sup> Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire.*

*<sup>9</sup> And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.*

At this point however, the loss of heat coming from the sun will cause temperatures to plunge drastically all over the world.

That will severely disrupt the earth's weather patterns and the seas' tides, leading to violent, unpredictable storms and tides, the destruction of crops and further loss of animal and human lives.

The Old Testament prophets associated such signs in the heavens with the Day of the Lord.

*Isaiah 13:9-13 (NKJV)*

*<sup>9</sup> Behold, the day of the Lord comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it.*

*<sup>10</sup> For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine.*

*<sup>11</sup> "I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*

*<sup>12</sup> I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.*

*<sup>13</sup> Therefore I will shake the heavens, And the earth will move out of her place, In the wrath of the Lord of hosts And in the day of His fierce anger.*

Speaking through the prophet Ezekiel God declared:

*Ezekiel 32:7-8 (NKJV)*

<sup>7</sup> *When I put out your light, I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, And the moon shall not give her light.*

<sup>8</sup> *All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you, And bring darkness upon your land,' Says the Lord God.*

The heaven tremble wrote Joel,

*Joel 2:10 (NKJV)*

<sup>10</sup> *The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness.*

*Joel 2:31 (NKJV)*

<sup>31</sup> *The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.*

*Joel 3:15 (NKJV)*

<sup>15</sup> *The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness.*

Now the dimming of the celestial lights sets the stage for a startling and ominous announcement.

As John looked, he heard an eagle flying in mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

The imagery is that of a strong bird of prey rushing to consume its victim, in this case referring to the rapid approach of God's final vengeance;

*Deuteronomy 28:49 (NKJV)*

<sup>49</sup> *The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,*

*Hosea 8:1 (NKJV)*

<sup>1</sup> *"Set the trumpet to your mouth! He shall come like an eagle against the house of the Lord, Because they have transgressed My covenant And rebelled against My law.*

*Habakkuk 1:8 (NKJV)*

<sup>8</sup> *Their horses also are swifter than leopards, And more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead; Their cavalry comes from afar; They fly as the eagle that hastens to eat.*

Depicted in the vision as **flying in mid-heaven**, the bird of prey would be at the height of the mid-day sun, thus visible to all.

His loud voice assures that all will be able to hear his pronouncements.

The eagle's dire warning is that the last three trumpet judgments will be even more devastating than the first four.

While double woes are used for emphasis (*18:10; 16; 19; Ezek 16:23*)

The eagle's triple pronouncement of **woe, woe, woe** introduces one threat for each of the remaining three trumpets **about to sound**

*Revelation 9:1-21 (NKJV)*

<sup>1</sup> Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

<sup>2</sup> And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.

<sup>3</sup> Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

<sup>4</sup> They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

<sup>5</sup> And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man.

<sup>6</sup> In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

<sup>7</sup> The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.

<sup>8</sup> They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.

<sup>9</sup> And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle.

<sup>10</sup> They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months.

<sup>11</sup> And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

<sup>12</sup> One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

<sup>13</sup> Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

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

<sup>15</sup> So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.

<sup>16</sup> Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

<sup>17</sup> And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.

<sup>18</sup> By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed--by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths.

<sup>19</sup> For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm.

<sup>20</sup> But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.

<sup>21</sup> And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

**God's wrath and judgment will come upon those who dwell on the earth.**

**That descriptive phrase is used in Revelation as a technical term for those who reject the gospel.**

Although they will acknowledge that the disasters they have experienced have come from God, they will not repent.

They will be destroyed because they fail to heed the warning God addresses to all sinners; *Hebrews 3:7-8 (NKJV)*

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice,

<sup>8</sup> Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness,