Revelation 8
The Seventh Seal & the First Four Trumpet Judgments

REV. 8:1 ➤ The Seventh Seal – Silence in Heaven for ½ Hour

The Great Judgment is completed. The opening of the 7th and final seal results in silence in Heaven for ½ hour; there are no sounds for this short period. This is interesting because even though God is eternal; time can still be marked in Heaven!

Note that this silence means that all those in Heaven, including the Four Living Creatures, the 24 Elders, the redeemed saints and the martyred saints, all who have been singing, praising and worshiping the Lord {Rev 4:8-9; 5:9-14; 7:10-12} are quiet. It also means that there are no noises or rumbling thunder or sounds of any other kind in Heaven during this period.

This silence can represent only one of two things. Either the silence emphasizes (a) the peace and quiet in the aftermath of the Day of the Lord [described in the 6th Seal] or (b) the hushed anticipation prior to the Day of the Lord [7 Trumpets and 7 Bowls of Wrath].

In keeping with interpretation (a), this would be a silence resulting from conditions immediately AFTER the Great Storm. After the judgment [i.e., God’s fierce wrath, Isaiah 13:9-13] when the dust has settled. This sense ² it hints at the millennial reign of the Messiah, Jesus Christ on this earth and the rest after the travail of the Jews going through the Time of Jacob’s Trouble {Jeremiah 30:7}.

However, in keeping with interpretation (b), this is a silence which represents the calm immediately BEFORE the Great Storm before the judgments [i.e., God’s fierce wrath, Isaiah 13:9-13] and establishment of Christ’s Kingdom that will shortly come to pass. In this case the opening of the 7th Seal alludes to the ominous silence of foreboding and awe before the storm.

¹ Remember from chapter 6 that the 7 Seals represent an overview of the entire seventieth week of end time Jewish prophecy found in Daniel 9:24-27. This includes the last half (3 ½ years) of this time period explicitly described by the 6th Seal in Rev. 6:12-17, which comprises that which the Bible refers to as the Day of the Lord's Great Tribulation. This refers to as here, the Day of His Wrath. This is a period of unprecedented divine judgment and disaster referred to by both Daniel 12:1 and Jesus in Matt. 24:21; if then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.² Note that interpretation (a) is based on the assumption that the 6th Seal, not the 7th Seal, is identified through descriptive similarity with the 7 Trumpets and the 7 Bowls of God’s Wrath. By this logic the 7th Seal seems to anticipate what happens after the Great Tribulation period. Also compare the 7th Seal with the 7th Trumpet and 7th Bowl of God’s Wrath (see Rev. 11:15-19 and Rev. 16:17-21). Note the following scripture: Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" (Rev. 16:17). Therefore, in this interpretation the silence is reminiscent of the rest by God on the 7th day, not because He was tired, but the fact that He was done with His work of creation. It is also comparable to Jesus’ last words on the cross (John 19:30). In this case the 7th Seal and the silence looks forward to the completed and finished work of Jesus Christ in judging pride, arrogance, rebellion, evil, corruption and injustice. It marks the conclusion of the God’s Fierce Wrath and the fulfillment of the Christ’s claim to earth; the scroll with the seven seals being the Title Deed. This silence is significant then because it represents cessation of Divine Judgment (Activity) at the end of the Great Tribulation period which is immediately followed by the Millennial Reign of Christ on the earth. In other words, the 7th Seal acts like an anti-climactic exclamation point after the Great Tribulation period. As such it speaks of Rest and Completed Work. Compare Genesis 2:1-3 where God rested on the 7th day.
which is about to be unleashed upon the earth and its inhabitants. 
In support of this view is Zephaniah 1:7-9 and 2:13 which says:

"Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD; for the day of the LORD is at hand, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; he has invited His guests. And it shall be, in the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel. In the same day I will punish all those who leap over the threshold, who fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit........” Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!"

This silence in Heaven is one of reverence that anticipates the awesome events and plagues described by the 7 TRUMPETS and 7 BOWLS OF WRATH and is in itself a form of worship. As we study through these events and plagues, we ourselves will get a sense of awe and appreciation for these 30 minutes of silence!

Heaven stops in wondrous amazement to ponder the significance of the events about to unfold in Heaven and earth and that will precipitate the Lord Jesus return to earth and laying claim to what rightfully belongs to Him.

In this sense, the silence ultimately looks forward to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of a stone cut without human hands smiting the Gentile nations and growing to cover the entire earth. Daniel 2:34-25

"You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

Remember also from Revelation 5:3 that of all the creatures in heaven, on earth and under the earth, not one was found worthy to open the scroll by loosing the seven seals except the Lamb (v. 6) appearing as though it had been slain (Re from the foundation of the World).

Finally, the opening of the 7th SEAL looks forward Jesus Christ taking possession of this earth and instituting the 1000 year reign of the PRINCE OF PEACE {Refer to Rev. 20:1-4}. Note the following description of the 7th TRUMPET and 7th VAIL OF WRATH judgments:

"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”  Rev. 11:15

Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"  Rev. 16:17

And the supplemental passage in Revelation 12:5 tells us of that the Messiah born to Mary will rule absolutely.

She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.
In Rev 19:15 we learn that by the Messiah’s Word the nations are destroyed and He will rule them powerfully after having exhausted His fierce wrath upon a corrupt, immoral and utterly prideful generation.

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations.
And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

No wonder there is a hushed silence in Heaven, the 4 Living Creatures, the 24 Elders the redeemed and resurrected saints of God and the entire angelic host are in awe at what is about to shortly transpire. They are all observing 30 minutes of silence in honor and reverence of the mighty power of God to consummate His plan for all creation. Note that this means that the praise and singing has ceased, audible worship takes a short break in anticipation of the Ultimate Event; the coronation of the King of kings and LORD of lords over all the earth.

**REV. 8:2-6 ➤ Seven Angels with Seven Trumpets of Judgment**

Seven angels (Gk. ἄγγελος, a messenger) who stand before God’s throne are introduced and each are given a trumpet representing seven distinct judgments upon the earth, sea, air and mankind [in the latter half of the 7 years; during the 3½ years Great Tribulation]. Note that these judgments are in answer to the prayer and pleading of the souls of the saints under the altar of God in Heaven who were slain for the testimony they held {Rev. 6:9-11}.

Note that an 8th angel with a golden censer is given much incense to offer upon the golden altar which stands before God’s throne along with the prayers of the saints. That is, the precious prayers of those who have trusted in the shed blood of Christ Jesus washed by that blood through faith by God’s grace. Both the smoke of this incense and the prayers of the saints ascend before God. The idea here is that our prayers are a sweet smelling aroma to the LORD.

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3 At one time Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world and their glory if only He would bow down and worship him {Matt. 4:8-10}, but Messiah Jesus rightly refused. His answer was that only the Lord God is worthy to be worshipped and served. Jesus knew that one day all these kingdoms and their glory would be His by right and by His might power.

4 There is an old Empire gold mine in Grass Valley, California, which closed down in the 1940s had several stamping mills that ran 24-7 and generated a vibration in the ground that could be felt over a mile away. There were two yearly occasions on which these stamping mills were silent. These days were Christmas and Easter in honor of Christ’s resurrection. However, one year there was an additional day that the stamping mills were silent the day that the mine owner’s daughter was married!

5 These may possibly be seven archangels who are believed to be continually in God’s presence. For example, in the Apocryphal book of Tobit 12:15 we read; fl am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which represents the prayers of the saints, and who goes in and out before the glory of the Holy One. In Luke 1:19 we read, fl am Gabriel... I stand in the presence of God. A third angel here may be Michael who is referred to as a chief prince {Dan. 10:13}, contending with Satan {Jude 1:9} and who, with his angels, successfully fights with Satan and his angels {Rev. 12:7-8}. We are not told the names of these angels so we cannot be sure about who they are. Some believe these angels who stand before God are to be associated with the seven spirits of God who are before the throne {Rev 1:4; 4:5}.

6 ἀγγέλος [Gk. “salpigx”]: reverberation or vibration, the sound a trumpet makes. These could have been either made of some kind of metal or ram’s horns.
In Psalm 141:2, the psalmist desires that his prayers be like incense, a fragrant offering unto the LORD. See also 2 Cor. 2:14-17 where our witness of the Gospel is likened to the fragrance of incense, which is Jesus Christ Himself! It may be Heaven’s version of aroma therapy.

**APPLICATION:**

God always answers the prayers of His people but according to His sovereign timing and for His glory. As Christians, we are either a fragrance of 'death' to the unsaved or 'life' to the saved.

**The Significance of Trumpets:**

The significance as to why TRUMPETS and not some other kind of object is used is because of their Divine and historical purpose in being used for:

- Heralding important announcements {human or Divine}
- Calling to attention and/or activity {for organization or in warfare}
- Gathering together {for assembly, instruction or blessing}

Note that trumpets have a special significance to both Israel and the Church—those called out ones to God.

**Significance for Israel**

*Call for defense and offense; also prophetic of future Regathering/Restoration.*

Num. 10:1-10; Joel 2:1-2, 15-17; Jer. 4:5-8é é é é é é é ....Rev. 8:7-9:21

Lev. 23:23-25 [Feast of Trumpets] é é é é é é é é é é .. Rev. 7:1-8; 7:9-17


**Significance for the Church**

*Gathering together and call to Heaven in the "Rapture".*

Lev. 23:23-25; 1 Thess. 4:16-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-53é é é ..Rev. 5:8-9, 13-14; 12

All three of the primary purposes of trumpets outlined above are realized in the blowing of these 7 TRUMPETS as they announce the Judgments of the GREAT TRIBULATION period also known as:

[2] The "Day of the LORD" {Isaiah 13:6; Zephaniah 1:14; 14:1}
[3] The time of Jacob's Trouble {Jeremiah 30:7}
[4] Great Tribulation {Daniel 12:1}

That DAY was previously described in Old Testament prophecy with a high degree of consistency (see notes on Rev. 6:12-17 and especially Zeph. 1:14-18 and Joel 2:1-2, 10-11 which all relate judgment with trumpets).

The phrase "voice as of a trumpet" is often used in scripture and it is sometimes used to describe the voice of the LORD, see e.g. Dan. 10:5-6 and also Rev. 1:9-15. The purpose of trumpets can be correlated with other passages of scripture:

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7 Elsewhere, Christians are told they are to have the flavor of salt {Matt. 5:13} and to let their speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt {Col. 4:6}.
In these Judgments (and the ones to follow), the LORD is revealed as the \textit{Righteous Judge} of Heaven and earth \cite{Psalms 96:1-13; 97:1-12}.

**THE NATURE OF THESE JUDGMENTS:**

It is also to be noted here that the Judgments represented by the 7 Trumpets are similar to the plagues God brought upon Egypt during the ministry of Moses and which were climaxed by the final judgment during the Passover. This was the death of all first-born and the \textit{salvation} of all who had the \textit{blood} applied over their doorposts.

Thus, the power and purpose of these Trumpet judgments were already demonstrated in the Old Testament - to reveal God's divine displeasure, fulfill His Will and to harden men's hearts to force them to choose sides and show their \textit{true colors}.

**Table 8-1** compares four of ten judgments upon the Egyptians described in Exodus with their respective \textit{Trumpet} and \textit{Bowl of Wrath} judgments described in the book of Revelation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Egyptian Plague</th>
<th>Trumpet Judgment</th>
<th>Bowl of Wrath Judgment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water turned to blood: Ex. 7:19-21</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} Trumpet: Rev. 8:8-9</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} &amp; 3\textsuperscript{rd} Bowls: Rev. 16:3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sores afflict men: Ex. 9:8-10</td>
<td>5\textsuperscript{th} Trumpet: Rev. 9:5-10</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} Bowl: Rev. 16:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hail mixed with fire from sky: Ex. 9:22-26</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} Trumpet: Rev. 8:7</td>
<td>7\textsuperscript{th} Bowl: Rev. 16:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darkness covers land: Ex. 10:21-23</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th} Trumpet: Rev. 8:12-13</td>
<td>5\textsuperscript{th} Bowl: Rev. 16:10-11</td>
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</table>

Before the trumpets are sounded the angel that was given much incense to offer with the prayers of the saints, takes some of the coals and fire from the altar and hurls them to the earth. This has the effect of causing noises, lightening, lots of thunder and an earthquake. It is not clear whether these manifestations occurred in Heaven or on earth - but compare these manifestations with those in Rev. 4:5; 11:19 and 19:6 where Heaven is in view. This appears to be a cue for the seven angels with trumpets to get ready to blow them! \textit{Ready you're on deck}.  

The activity described here, which precedes the judgments of God and is in preparation for their actual execution, is very similar to the preparations for sacrifice described in Leviticus 16:12-14:

\textit{Then he [the High Priest] shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil. And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die. He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.}

Now what follows after this is not a \textit{pretty picture}. It appears that the actions of this angel then are in preparation for the \textit{sacrifice} of God's wrath \cite{Eph. 2:1-3} are trampled in His \textit{winepress} \cite{Rev. 14:15-20}. This will occur when the Messiah, our Faithful High Priest, returns to earth at the very end of the \textit{Great Tribulation} as King of kings, and Lord of lords:
And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.” — Rev. 19:16-18

Exactly how these plagues, the TRUMPET and BOWL OF WRATH judgments, actually happen has been cause for much discussion — much of it wild speculation. But there are sixty-five other books before this one and most of them need to be understood before attempting to understand the Book of Revelation.

For example, as will be discussed in below, some expositors believe the fire being thrown to earth as part of the 1st TRUMPET judgment could be lightening (and in context that makes sense). However here, as with all the judgments to follow, it is best to remember that they originate from God and therefore initially conclude that they are divine in origin. That is, we know what hail, fire and blood are. But here these elements are put together by God in an unnatural way. Again, how this happens may be unclear but for God, who created all things and set them in order, it is not impossible to put literal hail, fire and blood together.

Finally, it must be remembered that God has all power over His creation and his control over matter and energy is fine-tuned. He has control not only over the severity, but also the extent of each judgment. He was able to exempt the Jews from the plagues that were sent upon the land of Egypt (see for example Exodus 9:24-26; 10:22-23). In similar fashion, during the last half of the seven year Tribulation period there will be at least 144,000 Jews that will be spared from these judgments (see Rev. 12:13-16).

APPLICATION:
Contrast Exodus 19:9-19 with Hebrews 12:18-24. Believers in Jesus Christ have not come to the loud sound of a trumpet blast speaking of fear and danger! Believers have come to the mount of the Heavenly Jerusalem, to the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, to the spiritual congregation of the "first-born" which have been born from above (John 3:3) and to Jesus the mediator of the New Testament of the sprinkling of His blood!

Those who have had the blood of Jesus Christ sacrifice applied to their hearts and been washed in the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:13-14; 10:22; 12:24; 1 Peter 1:2; Rev. 1:5) have passed over from judgment, condemnation and death to life everlasting (John 5:24; 1 John 3:14; Romans 8:1, 31-39). Jesus puts it this way in John 5:24:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

REV. 8:7 ➢ The 1st Trumpet Sounds – Hail+Fire Mixed with Blood: Earth’s Vegetation is Burned

“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.”
The 1st TRUMPET is sounded. Hail and fire mixed with blood were thrown to the earth. Where they were thrown from is not specified, but it is safe to assume from somewhere above the earth from the sky. In this first plague the earth vegetation is burned by fire. The description details that 1/3 of the trees are burned up and all the green grass [i.e., not dry, vegetation: grass, shrubs, plants and flowers] which, by implication, covers the same geographic region {1/3 of the vegetation} was burned up.

The cause of this destruction is primarily from the fire falling from the sky onto the earth. The fire may actually be a reference to lightning, although there is a distinct Greek word for that, which is used in Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19 and 16:18. In that case it means that the lightning starts fires that rage out of control and destroy 1/3 of the earth vegetation.

Note that this judgment is very similar to the one on the Egyptians described in Exodus 9:22-26 where hail was mixed with fire but there was no blood involved [although that was included in the plague on the Nile and fresh water].

Blood Was this real blood or is this speaking figuratively of something that looked like blood? It is best to conclude that this is referring to actual blood since there is nothing in the context of this passage to indicate otherwise. Where did the blood come from? God could simply make it as He did with the fresh water of the Nile (Exodus 7:19-25; Psalms 105:29; Psalms 78:44). We know that God has the power to transform chemical compounds as Christ did by turning water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana (John 2:7-9; 4:46). See also the plague of the 2nd TRUMPET {Rev. 8:8} and 3rd BOWL OF WRATH {Rev. 16:4}.

But why would God use real blood? Blood was a sacred commodity which was used during the sacrificial rituals in the Tabernacle. For example, blood was sprinkled on the door lintels and posts during the PASSOVER {Ex. 12:22-23}. It was also sprinkled on the ARK OF COVENANT which resided in the 'holiest place' in the Tabernacle {Lev. 16:14-16}.

The Israelites received special instruction in the proper disposal of blood {i.e., it was not to be drank and it was to be buried in the ground; Gen 9:4; Deut. 12:16, 24; 15:23; Ezek. 24:7}.

The Word if God declares that the life of the flesh is in the blood which is why it was used in the animal sacrificial system as atonement of sin. You see, the Word of God tells us that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin {Heb. 9:22}. Sin represents death while blood represents life The sacred nature of blood is also demonstrated by the fact that there is a prohibition and penalty on shedding it unlawfully {e.g., murder; Gen. 9:5-6}.

The answer to the question, But why would God use real blood? is given in a simple, straightforward way in Rev. 16:5-6 [in answer to the petition of the martyrs in Rev. 6:9-11]. The judgment of God takes priority here:

And I heard the angel of the waters saying: “You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.”

This becomes most obvious in the plague of the 3rd BOWL OF WRATH. {Rev. 16:4}

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8 Lightning [796 astrape (as-trap-ay')] Gleaming, a bright flash. Derived from asterð the Greek word for ótardó

Revelation 8
When 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. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

The 2nd Trumpet is sounded. A great (mega) mountain burning with fire is cast into the sea, 1/3 of the sea becomes blood, 1/3 of the sea life is destroyed, and 1/3 of the ships are destroyed. Compare this Trumpet judgment with the 2nd Bowl of Wrath where the blood in the sea turns into a putrefying state of a decomposing corpse and ALL the sea creatures die (the other 2/3).

The Greek word for mountain here refers to something tall and massive. Notice that the Greek grammar indicates that this thing was like a mountain, not an actual mountain, it only resembled one. But it was in appearance like a mountain and therefore was something large made up of what looked like rocky earth and it appeared to be on fire. The implication is that this mountain is flung into the sea from above, from the sky.

Notice the devastating impact this burning mountain has on the sea: (a) It turns the entire sea into blood in similitude to God striking the Nile by turning it into blood {Exodus 7:19-25}. (b) Not only that, but the tsunami caused by its impact into the sea destroyed 1/3 ships by either sinking them or smashing them against the shore. The turning of the waters into blood is a supernatural effect. [See notes on blood in v. 7].

Although some have identified this object with a volcano because it is burning, a volcano does not make sense here. When God descended on Mount Sinai, 'the mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness' (Deut. 4:11); but there is no evidence that it was a volcanic eruption.

Some Bible expositors insist that this judgment is not to be taken literally, because a mountain falling into the sea could never turn it into blood. They have found all sorts of fanciful, figurative explanations and applications of every detail in the plague's description. But why spend all this time and ingenuity on vague notions and personal biases, trying to explain it as something other than John says it is. It is best to take God at face value.

But John does not tell us that it was a literal mountain, but that it was a literal burning massive object that looked like a mountain on fire. Exactly what it was is not revealed, but its effect upon the waters of the sea surely is. It turned it into blood and it destroyed 1/3 of the ships on the sea. An ordinary mountain, even a volcanic one, would not do this; but that falling, fiery mass, which had the appearance of a burning mountain, superintended by God, does it.

So what could this be? A meteor or asteroid coming from space would also appear to be on fire as it burns going through the atmosphere. Therefore, this mountain is most probably referring to a meteor or asteroid from space hitting the sea. How big it will be we are not told, but it will be large enough to cause the damage described here.

Which part of the earth's seas or oceans it impacts is also not specified, but many expositors believe it was the sea that John and the early Christians would have been familiar with: most likely the Mediterranean Sea. It is around this body of water that the greatest recorded events of world history and of the Church took place. It is the central sea of ancient and Biblical history and its very name indicates it is the middle sea of the earth.
Hosea 4:1-2 says; ÒThe fishes of the sea also shall be taken awayÓ. The LORD also declares as recorded in Zephaniah 1:3; Ò will consume....the fishes of the sea.Ó Isaiah 2:16 further declares: ÒThe day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is high and lofty ... and upon all the ships of TarshishÓ (i.e., Spain). And here, under the 2nd Trumpet judgment, the John beholds and records exactly how these predictions are to be fulfilled.

REV. 8:10-11 ➢ The 3rd Trumpet Sounds – “Star” Falls from the Sky: The Freshwater is Poisoned

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. 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.

The 3rd Trumpet is sounded. A great (mega) ÓstarÓ burning like a lamp [i.e., ÓtorchÓ Gk. lampas] falls from Heaven to earth and 1/3 of the earth’s fresh water (rivers, streams lakes and wells) is poisoned. Compare this judgment with the 3rd Bowl of Wrath.

The Greek word9 for óstaróhere refers to any bright, heavenly body; like a star. The English word Óastroðis derived from this Greek word and as is the word Óastronomyó the study of stars.

This great óstaróhas a specific name; it is óWormwoodó [the bitter oil from a plant10 which can be poisonous].

Note that this large óstaróis at the same time both similar to (in size) and unlike the great mountain burning with fire we saw in the 2nd Trumpet judgment. This object is uniquely described as being somewhat spherical in shape like a planet or star (i.e., without the irregularities of a Ómountainó). It is also completely lit up like a lamp or torch.

So what could this be11? It is different than the ósomethingóthat looked like a great mountain but related to it in that it also falls from the sky. If it is not a meteor or asteroid then it is most probably a comet! Comets are believed by astronomers to be made up primarily of frozen water or ice and are sometimes referred to as giant, ófifty snowballsÓ

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9. Star. [Gk. “aster”: round and bright, shining object] Thus this word usually refers to a planet or star. However, on some occasions the word is applied to angels or pastors as messengers from God. See for example Rev. 1:16, 20 and Rev. 9:1-2.

10. Wormwood. The genus Artemisia (Natural Order Compositae), “wormwood,” has five species of shrubs or herbs found in Palestine any one of which may furnish a bitter taste. The name is derived from the property of many species acting as drugs which expel parasitic worms from the body (Anthelmintics), while other varieties such as the medicinal plant Artemisia absinthium, are used in the manufacture of a distilled, highly alcoholic beverage (140-160 proof) which must be diluted with water to drink.

11. This óstarócould possibly also be an angel. In Rev. 9:1-2 the óstarófalling from Heaven is referred to by the personal pronouns óhimóand óheó We see that stars are used to symbolize spiritual beings, either good or bad: In Rev. 1:16, 20 seven stars are used to symbolize angels. In Isaiah 14:12-14 we find that Satan (Lucifer) wanted to exalt his throne above óthe starsóof God; i.e. God’s heavenly angels. However, Jesus Christ is the superior, exalted óstaróChrist is called the óDay staró(2 Pet. 1:19), the óMorning staró(Rev. 2:28) and the óBright and Morning staró(Rev. 22:16). The great óstaróin this case would therefore be a Heavenly messenger, an angelic being. However, because no personal pronoun is used here it is best not to associate the great star with an angelic being but as an inanimate object.

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It is interesting to note the derivation of the English word "disaster." It is a compound word derived from two Greek words "dis" [twice, again] and "aster" [star] meaning the coming again of the star. Ancient cultures associated comets [periodic in nature] with bad luck, famines and general devastation. When they came around again they were a cause of great fear.

A comet speeding through the earth’s atmosphere would quickly melt into water and the heat (burning) would create an enormous steam cloud. This steam would condense as rain and shower a large area of the earth! If this is a comet, then the ice might also contain chemicals that are bitter and poisonous to mankind. Such an event happening over land would surely pollute the streams, rivers and lakes and could cause the plague described here.

**APPLICATION:**

Bitterness and wormwood are related: During the devastation caused by the Babylonian attack on Jerusalem the conditions inside the city were horrific. In Lamentations 3:15 Jeremiah, who was an eyewitness to these events writes; ÓHe has filled me with bitterness, he has made me drink wormwood.Ô

It is interesting that God warns us against becoming bitter by letting resentment fester and turn us into a putrefying agent wherever we go. Oftentimes, such an attitude is the result of some devastating, traumatic or unjust event that has happened in someone’s life; which causes that person to blame God and then become bitter against Him and other people.

I once worked with a man like this. I once asked Bob, “What makes you so bitter and abusive towards people?” He told me that years earlier a drunk driver had killed his daughter and fiancé a week before she was to be married by T-boning their small car with a pick-up truck loaded with cement. Their car was smashed into a block wall and they both died instantly. The woman who hit them was coming from a party and driving recklessly because she was upset. A breath test at the scene of the accident indicated she was completely intoxicated. The trial was a travesty of justice. This woman had a child and because of that the judge let her off with only three days in jail and a $500 fine. It also turns out that this woman had killed another person in Arizona while drunk with a similar light sentence given to her. Because of the injustice of this verdict and grief the father felt, he naturally became so angry that he lashed out at the judge exclaiming, “What, you’re letting her go free so she can go back out and kill my other daughter?” He later wrote that judge a letter wishing that someday, if he ever had any children, that the same thing would happen to him. His personality had become a combination of Rodney Dangerfield and Don Rickles – and he had ended up with no real friends. I was one of the few people to treat him with kindness and respect but only because of the love of Christ in me. And ironically, it was because he knew that I was a Christian he thought it a challenge to insult me to the extent that he hoped I would resort to using foul language. (To his disappointment, that never happened). I couldn’t help but have compassion on this man and tried to witness to him about the forgiveness and peace available through repentance from sin and belief in Jesus’ sacrificial death for sin and His resurrection. But unfortunately, he held on to his bitterness and did not want any part of God. His bitterness had poisoned his life and caused him to reject the only thing that could save him. I left that company not really knowing what was going to happen to him.

Consider the following scriptures:

ÔRé ..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 wormwoodÔ Deut. 29:18

ÔFor I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.Ô Acts 8:23
Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

†  He 12:14-16

The problem with unchecked bitterness and resentment is that it causes a person to either become disillusioned, sorely disappointed or greatly dissatisfied, which eventually leads to gross sin and evil in a person’s life. The ultimate source of bitterness and resentment is envy and pride.

God wants us to deal with our anger and grief in a way that does not destroy our relationship with Him or others. The apostle Paul gives us one solution:

† Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. † Philippians 4:8-9

REV. 8:12-13  ➢ The 4th Trumpet Sounds – The Light from Heavenly Objects is Reduced by 1/3: the Earth is Darkened

The 4th Trumpet is sounded. The intensity of light from the sun, moon and stars is reduced by a factor of 1/3. Compare the plague of darkness upon the Egyptians described in Exodus 10:21-23.

Perhaps this is caused by the dust and debris thrown into the earth’s atmosphere from the previous TRUMPET judgments, which block out 1/3 of the light from all heavenly sources! Or it may be that the solar output of the sun is significantly decreased. Or it could possibly be due to a combination of both these conditions.

At this point we should note that the 4th BOWL OF WRATH affects the sun in a way that causes mankind to be scorched with heat. But how would it be possible for the sun to both be dimmed by a factor of 1/3, yet remain hot enough to plague mankind with unbearable heat?

One way is for the sun to greatly expand in a short amount of time, which would simultaneously cause both affects. Astronomers refer to such stars as red giants. In this way, the heat production of the sun would be significantly reduced (making it darker), but its surface would be closer to the earth (making it hotter). God would have to initiate this rapid change in our sun.

The 4th TRUMPET JUDGMENT is the last one described in this chapter. The final three TRUMPET JUDGMENTS are described in the next chapter 9 and Revelation 11:15-18.

A personage appears in the midst of Heaven crying with a loud voice [from Gk. ónegas big, large and φόνεον tone, sound of disclosure] ñwoe, woe, woc to those on the earth during the sounding of the last three TRUMPETS 5 thru 7.
Although most translations have an \textit{angel} doing the shouting here, the Greek text is not the word \textit{angelos} (meaning messenger) but \textit{aetos} (ah-et-os’) meaning an \textit{eagle}. The last three Trumpet Judgments are introduced as \textit{Woes} by an \textit{eagle} flying through the midst of Heaven. Compare this announcement of woes with that of Jesus proclaiming \textit{eight} woes upon the scribes, Pharisees and \textit{hypocrites} \textit{[Matt. 23:13-33]}.

Why an eagle? Why not? An eagle flies to the lofty places, is swift in its flight and descent upon its prey. An eagle is majestic as it soars effortlessly in the sky carried by thermal currents beneath its wings.

God’s sudden arrival to judge His enemies is likened to the swift arrival of an eagle \textit{[e.g., Jeremiah 49:20-22; Hosea 8:1]}.

On the other hand, God’s care for His chosen people is likened to the way of an eagle with its young:

\begin{quote}
As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, So the LORD alone led him, and there was no foreign god with him. \textit{– Deut. 32:11-12}
\end{quote}

Remember one of the four living creatures had a face of an eagle.

Those who wait on the LORD will have their strength renewed and they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint \textit{[Isaiah 40:31]}.  

In \textit{Exodus 19:4} the LORD describes Himself as an eagle in taking Israel out of Egypt on His \textit{wings} and the Egyptians could not do anything about it. 

The \textit{woman} in \textit{Revelation 12}, which represents Israel, is again given the \textit{wings} of an eagle so that she might fly away and escape the persecution of Satan.

Evidently in Heaven there is at least one angelic being that God created that looks like an eagle and given the power to speak (perhaps not unlike the voice a parrot) but unlike an actual bird this creature is intelligent. Such an angelic being surely must be an awesome sight to behold.

We now continue to the description of the next two Trumpet Judgments [the 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th}] in chapter 9, a parenthetical or supplemental section in \textit{Revelation 10:1 -11:14} and the 7\textsuperscript{th} and final Trumpet Judgment in \textit{Revelation 11:15-18}.

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