

THE REVELATION

JUNE 2, 2024

Chapter 8

F. Sounding of the Trumps in Heaven (8:6-15:4)

1. Trump One – Hail, Fire and Blood on Earth (8:6-7)

Rev 8:6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. ⁷ The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

In this rehearsal for the future, permission was granted by the LORD, and the first trumpet had been blown. John saw “hail and fire, mixed with blood, … thrown to the earth.” The LORD used this same plague in Egypt (Exodus 9:18-24). The hail and the fire rained down on the earth. The hail and the fire came from the clouds, the first in the form of ice, the second in the form of lightning that caused fires on the earth. The mixing of the hail and fire “with blood” occurred on earth with the deaths of animals and humans who were not protected when Moses warned everyone to bring their cattle and servants into shelters. The same should be understood here. In the future, when the first trumpet blows, hail from the clouds will begin to fall, and the lightning will cause fires on the earth, and humans and cattle will die. With those fires, one-third of the earth, the trees, and the green grass will be burned up. Whether or not the effects of this event will last a day, a week, or a month really does not matter. Within a year, the destruction of that vegetation will begin to recover and be greener and better than the old growth; it is just the natural way of nature.

Can the world survive with a third of the vegetation destroyed? Scientists tell us that through harvesting trees and crops each year in the United States, the remaining vegetation of this nation produces only 60% of the oxygen needed for the population of its citizens. If that is the case, the answer is yes. Furthermore, we can thank the LORD for the four angels that control the winds of the earth for importing the rest of the oxygen we need to survive.

Nevertheless, with one-third of the vegetation destroyed, it will necessitate realigning government relationships for nations to survive. That being the case, realignment of trade among governments will establish new relationships – enemies will become friends, and friends will become enemies in trade agreements – this would include Israel and its traditional enemies. This trumpet will be given time to work to have its desired effect. The second trumpet, ready to blast at the nod of the LORD, will have to wait. This seemingly natural disaster, directed by the LORD, begins the troubles that will lead man to fall in line with the LORD’s plan to squeeze Israel to bow its knee and call Him *Messiah*.

2. Trump Two – Mountain Thrown in the Sea on Earth (8:8-9)

Rev 8:8 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 creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.

With new national relationships established, the time will come for the LORD to grant permission for the second angel to blow his trumpet. With that, another natural disaster will seem to occur. It is “like a great mountain burning with fire … thrown into the sea.” John does not say it is a mountain; he says it looks “like a” mountain. The best interpretation of this “mountain” would be that this is a space rock of some kind that enters the earth’s atmosphere and begins to burn as it passes through the skies. It is so large that it is not consumed within the short distance from the outer atmosphere to the surface, and it causes great destruction on Earth.

John tells us it “was thrown into the sea.” It was not thrown into the *oceans*. Had it been thrown into the oceans; John would have said so; that word was available to him in his language. This “great mountain” was thrown into the only sea John was familiar with, the *Great Sea*, now called the *Mediterranean Sea*. Therefore, a third of the sea’s creatures died at its impact, crushing them when it hit and filling the sea with their blood. One-third of the ships in the *Mediterranean Sea* would fall victim to the collision of this “great mountain.” This devastation would seriously affect the nations that border the *Mediterranean Sea*. It will require those nations, which rely so heavily on the sea, to make new allies. This, too, will take time, but perhaps not as much time as needed for the effects of the First Trumpet. With this Second Trump, the LORD is squeezing ten nations around the *Mediterranean Sea*. These are the nations of the remains of the two legs of the fallen Roman Empire. It is the Renewed Revived Roman Empire.

3. Trump Three – Star Fell to the Earth (8:10-11)

Rev 8:10 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 waters. 11 The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.

This “great star fell from heaven” at the blast of the third trumpet. It was not one of those stars that fell in the sixth seal, this was a new and different star. The name of this star is “Wormwood,” which in the Old Testament is translated as hemlock – a poison, fresh water that was pure, clean, and clear for the people to drink the day before was clear but deadly when this star struck the rivers and streams. It is reasonable that this star fell on a third of the freshwater rivers and springs that feed the *Mediterranean Sea*, but even if it fell on all the rivers and springs of the world, it does not matter. With the disaster in the *Mediterranean Sea* and the disaster of one-third of the freshwater rivers and springs, the LORD made it increasingly difficult for independent countries to survive without the help of neighboring countries. This, too, caused a realignment of nations – regionally. By the time of the start of the seven years of *Tribulation* for Israel, at least four rulers were recognized in the Scripture, and the four kings were identified as being from the north, south, east, and west.

To be consistent in the interpretation of this book, this “great star” had to be a heavenly creature sent to poison one-third of the fresh waters. If this had been some space object, such as a real star or rock, the poison would have affected the waters, vegetation, and the land. It did not. It was a surgical strike on just one-third of the fresh rivers and springs; therefore, it seems logical that this star was a heavenly creature sent with the specific job of poisoning a specific target on earth – rivers and springs around the *Mediterranean Sea*.

4. Trump Four – Darkening of Sun, Moon, and Stars (8:12-13)

Rev 8:12 The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, 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.

With the nod of the LORD, the fourth angel blasted the sound of his trumpet, and the lights of the great heavens visible from earth were reduced to one-third of their normal radiance. Here, we see *stars* mentioned again. We have recognized *stars* as heavenly creatures because John described them as how they fell from heaven like the falling *stars* he had seen during his life. However, in this passage, John does not say that these *stars* fell from heaven; rather, they remained in the heavens along with the sun and the moon. They did not leave their places in the visible heavens where they had stood at their posts to shine since they were created on the fourth day. Because these stars are still in their place in the visible heavens coupled with the sun and the moon, there is no reason to consider them heavenly creatures, but rather exactly what they were, the stars that even we can see in the sky.

a) Eagle Flying in the Sky (8:13a)

Rev 8:13a Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice,

With the darkening of the light from the sun, moon, and stars to one-third of their normal brilliance, John saw “an eagle flying in midheaven.” First, where is “midheaven?” This term is found only in the REVELATION, and it means *the zenith*, which is the highest point in the earth’s atmosphere that can be traversed by flying creatures such as birds and insects. The Bible presents the concept of three heavens. Our atmosphere is the first, outer space is the second, and God’s home is the third. In this concept, the midheaven would be compared to *outer space*, where no earthly creatures like eagles can fly. Therefore, John used the ancient definition that indicates that this eagle was flying in the zenith of our atmosphere, where it naturally flies.

The *eagle* is not an angel. Almost every manuscript available to Church scholars renders the Greek as “an eagle flying.” That said, a few newer copies of Scripture have altered the text to say an angel flying, but these have not been viewed as authoritative by Church scholars since their production.

There is no reason to presume any symbolic reason in this passage but to take it literally as it is on the four corners of the page – an *actual* eagle flying.

But this eagle can speak! Now, do we have a reason to wonder about this creature? I think not! If the LORD can cause a donkey to speak to Balaam, how hard can it be for the LORD to cause an eagle to speak understandable words? Frankly, most birds can parrot speech to some degree. From a human perspective, the miracle with the donkey would have been much more difficult than causing a bird to speak Greek. But from the LORD’s perspective, nothing is impossible with God.

b) Woe to the Earth (8:13b)

Rev 8:13b "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!"

This “eagle flying in the midheaven” was, without a doubt, divinely appointed to speak the words in this verse. No normal earth-bound eagle could have known that three trumpets were still set to

sound in heaven. With its cry, we learn that each trumpet blast was a “woe,” expressing *grief or denunciation*. In other words, extreme trouble was about to come upon the earth.