

## First Trumpet: Destruction of Vegetation (v. 7)

**VERSE 7 The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood** (Καὶ ὁ πρῶτος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ἐγένετο χάλαζα καὶ πῦρ μεμιγμένα ἐν αἵματι [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. protos first + aor.act.ind.3s. salpizo sound, blast + conj kai + aor.dep.ind.3s. ginomai “there came” + noun nom.f.s. chalaza hailstone, hail; cf. 11:19; 16:21 + conj kai + noun nom.nt.s. pur fire + perf.pass.part.nom.nt.p. mignumi mix, mingle + prep en + noun instr.nt.s. haima blood*], **and they were thrown to the earth** [καὶ ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν γῆν [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. ballo cast, throw + prep eis to + art.w/noun acc.f.s. ge earth*]; **and a third of the earth was burned up** [καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῆς γῆς κατεκάη [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.f.s. ge earth + aor.pass.ind.3s. katakaio burn (up), destroy by burning*], **and a third of the trees were burned up** [καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν δένδρων κατεκάη [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. dendron tree + aor.pass.ind.3s. katakaio burn (up)*], **and all the green grass was burned up** [καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν δένδρων κατεκάη καὶ πᾶς χόρτος χλωρὸς κατεκάη [*conj kai + adj.nom.m.s. pas all + noun nom.m.s. chortos grass + adj.nom.m.s. chloros green + aor.pass.ind.3s. katakaio burn (up)*]]).

### ANALYSIS: VERSE 7

1. In contrast to the last three trumpets, the first four afflict natural objects, i.e., earth, trees, grass, sea, rivers, and the like.
2. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> have men as their special objects, and unlike the first four which are connected and interdependent, are separate and independent.
3. In contrast to these two, the first four have only an indirect effect upon mankind.
4. Besides these differences, the voice of the eagle in 8:13 separates the trumpets into two groups.
5. All humanity, except the 144,000 are adversely affected by the trumpet judgments.
6. The effect on believers is testing, while the divine visitation upon unbelievers is to lead them to repentance (cf. 9:20-21).
7. This latter purpose is realized in only limited cases.
8. The afflictions of the trumpets are much more supernatural in nature than the first six seal judgments.
9. The judgments beginning with the sounding of the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet were held back until the servants of God were sealed.
10. The combination of hail, fire and blood resembles volcanic activity in the Mediterranean basin that John was no doubt familiar with.
11. However, the regular use of OT material in the Apocalypse argues for a harbinger of Ex. 9:24 in this description (cf. Ps. 105:32).
12. Hail and stones fell in a shower of “blood” as hail and/or volcanic fireballs commonly fall in a shower of rain.

13. The allusion to the 7<sup>th</sup> plague of Egypt (Ex. 9:23-24) is clear, except here blood is added to the feature.
14. The combining of fire and blood recalls an end-time feature in Joel 2:30, but this is not the same event.
15. The OT prophets understood that the miracles of Egypt were to be repeated in the future (e.g., Isa. 10:22-25; 30:30; Jer. 16:14-15; 23:7-8; \*Ezek. 38:22; Mic. 7:15).
16. The question is whether or not the blood element is to be taken literally.
17. Blood is employed in Scripture literally and metaphorically.
18. This storm falling from the sky is red in color.
19. The hail is probably large rocks.
20. Fire supplies the heat associated with this phenomenon.
21. The casting of hail and fire mixed with blood has a threefold result.
22. The threefold repetition of the verb “burned up” (aor.pass.ind. *katabaino*) is for dramatic effect.
23. The destructive power of this plague lies in the fire that burns major portions of the earth’s vegetation.
24. It was the hail in the comparable Egyptian plague that wrought destruction of vegetation (Ex. 9:25).
25. The first object in the list is one third of all trees were destroyed around the world.
26. The second object is destruction upon “all green grass.”
27. This poses a dilemma, because grass still exists when the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet commences (:4).
28. A time lapse between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> trumpets allows time for the grass to recoup.
29. This plague seems to match up with what we know about volcanic activity which includes rocks (“hail”), fire and blood or a red effect.
30. However, there seems to be no good reason to take blood metaphorically.
31. Blood is also featured in the 2<sup>nd</sup> trumpet judgment.
32. If this is strictly a supernatural phenomenon then anything is possible.

### Second Trumpet (vv. 8-9)

#### **VERSE 8 The second angel sounded, and *something* like a great mountain**

**burning with fire was thrown into the sea** [Καὶ ὁ δεῦτερος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ὡς ὄρος μέγα πυρὶ καιόμενον ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. deuterus second + noun nom.m.s. angelos + aor.act.ind.3s. salpinzo sound + conj kai + conj hos like + noun nom.nt.s. oros mountain + adj.nom.nt.s. megas great + noun instr.nt.s. pur fire + pres.pass.part.nom.nt.s. kaio burn + aor.pass.ind.3s. ballo throw + prep eis into + art.w/noun acc.f.s. thalassa sea*]; **and a third of the sea became blood** [καὶ ἐγένετο τὸ τρίτον τῆς θαλάσσης αἷμα [*conj kai + aor.dep.ind.3s. ginomai become + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.f.s. thalassa sea + noun nom.nt.s. haima blood*]],

**VERSE 9 and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died** (καὶ ἀπέθανεν τὸ τρίτον τῶν κτισμάτων τῶν ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ τὰ ἔχοντα ψυχὰς [*conj kai +*

*aor.act.ind.3s. apothnesko die + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. ktisma creature + art.gen.nt.p. ta “which were” + prep en + art.w/noun thalassa sea + art.w/pres.act.part.nom.nt.p. echo has “had”; this participle stands in apposition with the genitive of “the living creatures”; this appositional nominative, a grammatical rarity, is rather common in Revelation (cf. 2:13, 20; 3:12; 9:14; 14:12) + noun acc.f.p. psuche soul; “life”];*  
**and a third of the ships were destroyed** [καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν πλοίων διεφθάρησαν [conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. ploion ship + aor.pass.ind.3p. diaphtheiro utterly destroy]].

ANALYSIS: VERSES 8-9

1. One opinion sees the mountain as representing a great kingdom (e.g., Babylon).
2. The figure of a mountain to represent a kingdom is an occasional figure in the OT (e.g., Ps. 48:1; Jer. 51:25).
3. What works against this interpretation in the present instance is the use of the comparative conjunction *hos* (“like”) to indicate it was not an actual mountain, but a burning mass so large as to be like a “great mountain.”
4. A second view has connected the fall of the mountain-like object with volcanic activity.
5. But this also falters in that it was not something from the mass, but the mass itself that fell into the sea.
6. This allows for the comparative *hos* and falls into the category of falling “stars” from heaven under the 6<sup>th</sup> seal.
7. This maintains a basically literal approach to the text that incorporates provisions for figurative language when the text itself so indicates.
8. “The sea” into which it the burning mass is thrown is the sea as a whole, not just the Mediterranean Sea.
9. Is this actual blood or only a blood-like color?
10. The sea around Tera, an island near Patmos where volcanic eruptions were frequent, was often a bright orange color.
11. This may be what the description means, but it is doubtful, because the text says the sea becomes blood, not *like* blood.
12. On the basis of his vision John believed that a large part of the earth’s seas, quite literally, turn to blood as it had under the first plague in Egypt.
13. On a natural level it is impossible for an object like a burning mountain to turn one-third of the sea into blood, cause one-third of marine life to perish, and destroy one-third of all shipping vessels.
14. The impact of this trumpet is beyond anything the advance of science has a frame of reference for.
15. Man is in no position to question the manner and extent of what God devises and implements.
16. The noun *ktisma* refers to something created (cf. 1Tim. 4:4; Jam. 1:18), which in this context must mean marine life.
17. Ships on the high seas meet with calamity when this calamity strikes.

18. They meet with destruction attributing a quasi personal life to ships in view of their human crews.

### Third Trumpet Judgment (vv. 10-11)

**VERSE 10 The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch** (Καὶ ὁ τρίτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀστὴρ μέγας καιόμενος ὡς λαμπάς [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. tritos third + noun nom.m.s. angelos + aor.act.ind.3s. salpinzo sound + conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. pipto fall + prep ek + art.w/noun abl.m.s. ouranos heaven, sky + noun nom.m.s. aster star + adj.nom.m.s. megas great + pres.pass.part.nom.m.s. kaio burn + conj hos like + noun nom.f.s. lampas torch; lamp*]), **and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters** [καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν ποταμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. pipto fall + prep epi upon + art.w/adj.acc.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.m.p. potamos river, stream + conj kai + art.w/noun acc.f.p. pege fountain, spring + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. hudor water*]).

**VERSE 11 The name of the star is called Wormwood** (καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἀστέρος λέγεται ὁ Ἄψιλθος [*conj kai + art.w/noun nom.nt.s. onoma name + art.w/noun gen.m.s. aster star + pres.pass.ind.3s. lego be called + art.w/noun nom.m.s. Apsinthos signifying bitterness; “Wormwood”*]); **and a third of the waters became wormwood** [καὶ ἐγένετο τὸ τρίτον τῶν ὑδάτων εἰς ἄψιλθον [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. ginomai become + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. hudor water + prep eis into + art.w/noun acc.f.s. apsinthos wormwood, absinthe, dark green oil made from certain strong-smelling plants with white or yellow flowers; alcoholic; called wormwood and used to kill intestinal worms*]), **and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter** [καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀπέθανον ἐκ τῶν ὑδάτων ὅτι ἐπικράνθησαν [*conj kai + adj.nom.m.p. polus many + art.w/noun gen.m.p. anthropos man + aor.act.ind.3p. apothnesko die + prep ek from + art.w/noun abl.nt.p. hudor water + conj hoti + aor.pass.ind.3p. pikraino become bitter*]).

### ANALYSIS: VERSES 10-11

1. The most natural understanding of this star falling from the sky is that it is a meteor.
2. Ancient usage of *lampas* (“torch”) to denote a meteor shooting through the sky confirms this identification.
3. In 6:13 we took the term symbolically in light of the banishment of Satan and his angels, and the fact physical stars remain in their place as seen in the 4<sup>th</sup> trumpet judgment.
4. This special star lands on and pollutes a third of earth’s fresh water systems, including rivers and springs.

5. This recalls the first Egyptian plague that contaminated the drinking-water supply (Ex. 7:21).
6. This was a familiar token of divine punishment (cf. Jer. 9:15).
7. The star is dubbed by humans Absinthos translated “Wormwood” in the English versions, a word found nowhere else in the Greek NT.
8. The OT equivalent is רושׁ (rosh) and is so translated 8x (Deut. 29:18; Prov. 5:4; Jer. 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7; 6:12).
9. It is used in the OT as a symbol for divine judgment.
10. Absinthos is a plant with a bitter taste appearing in several varieties in Palestine.
11. It was used medicinally to kill intestinal worms, hence the name wormwood.
12. It is made into a liqueur.
13. Wormwood was not a poison per se, but its consumption could lead to death.
14. Here however, the falling meteor is called “Wormwood” but the poison it spreads is deadly, whatever its classification.
15. It is clear from verse 11 that “many” but not all who drink the water polluted by the dispersion of this contaminate die.
16. This falling “star” scatters its deadly poison over one-third of earth’s fresh water systems be they rivers/streams or springs.
17. People have to drink water to survive and this results in many deaths in the areas affected.
18. The waters do not become literal Wormwood, but only embittered by it.
19. Probably the preposition *eis* would have been omitted from the text if the waters had become literal wormwood as in 8:8.
20. The blood in 8:8 is probably the same pollutant as in the 1<sup>st</sup> plague of Egypt, meaning that one-third of the earth’s oceans do not become 100% blood!
21. It would not take allot of whatever this blood is to kill off marine and plant life in the oceans, as was the case with the Nile River in the time of Moses.
22. The particular contaminate, probably not actual wormwood, has as bitter unpleasant taste, and when taken in high concentrations leads to serious illness and even death for many.

#### The Fourth Trumpet Judgment (v. 12)

**VERSE 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** (Καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ἐπλήγη τὸ τρίτον τοῦ ἡλίου καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῆς σελήνης καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀστέρων [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. tetartos fourth + noun nom.m.s. angelos angel + aor.act.ind.3s. salpinzo sound + conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. plesso strike + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.m.s. helios sun + conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + art.w/noun gen.f.s. selene moon + conj kai + art.w/noun gen.f.p. aster star*], **so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it** [ἵνα σκοτισθῆ τὸ τρίτον αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα μὴ φάνη τὸ τρίτον αὐτῆς [*conj hina (purpose) + aor.pass.subj.3s. skotizo become dark + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third + pro.gen.m.p. autos it; “them” + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. hemera day + neg me + aor.act.subj.3s. phaino shine + art.w/adj.nom.nt.s. tritos third*

+ *pro.gen.f.s. autos* “it”), **and the night in the same way** [καὶ ἡ νύξ ὁμοίως [*conj kai* + *art.w/noun nom.f.s. nux* night + *adv homoios* in the same way]).

#### ANALYSIS: VERSE 12

1. In the restoration of the earth on D + 4, God established the sun to rule the day, and the moon and stars to rule the night (Gen. 1:14-19).
2. Darkening is as symbol for judgment in the OT.
3. Amos called the day of the Lord a day of darkness (Amos 5:18; cf. Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:2; Mk. 13:24).
4. The fourth trumpet contributes to that anticipation.
5. How the functional darkening of the heavenly bodies can produce a reduced duration of daylight, moonlight, and starlight is as puzzle.
6. Yet man’s ability to grasp the “how” of the cause and effect is no grounds to attribute error to the author.
7. The way this takes place belongs to the supernatural.
8. The Creator can certainly devise a means by which light coming to the earth from the heavens is reduced by one-third.
9. The object of the striking is the sun, moon and stars (all light bearers).
10. The verb *plesso* “to strike” has a cognate noun *plege* which is sometimes translated “plague.”
11. The sun’s output will be reduced by one-third for an undetermined period of time, along with the moon and stars.
12. This same striking will come against the stars of heaven reducing their magnitude accordingly.
13. The magnitude of the light coming to the earth from these sources will be reduced by one-third.
14. This will have a profound effect on the psychological well being, if not the physical well being, of all humanity.

#### Angelic Announcement (v. 13)

**VERSE 13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven** (Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἤκουσα ἑνὸς ἀετοῦ πετομένου ἐν μεσουρανήματι [*conj kai* + *aor.act.ind.1s. eidon* see + *conj kai* + *aor.act.ind.1s. akouo* hear + *adj.gen.m.s. eis* one; “an” + *noun gen.m.s. aetos* eagle; vulture + *pres.dep.part.gen.m.s. petomai* fly + *prep en* + *noun loc.nt.s. mesouranema* midheaven, midair, directly overhead], **saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth** [λέγοντος φωνῆ μεγάλης, Οὐαὶ οὐαὶ οὐαὶ τοῖς κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς [*pres.act.part.gen.m.s. lego* say + *noun instr.f.s. phone* voice + *adj.instr.f.s. megas* great; “loud” + *particle of interjection repetede 3x: ouai* woe + *art.w/pres.act.part.acc.m.p. katoikeo* dwell, settle down + *prep epi* on + *art.w/noun gen.f.s. ge* earth], **because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound** [ἐκ τῶν λοιπῶν φωνῶν τῆς σάλπιγγος τῶν τριῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν μελλόντων σαλπίζειν [*prep ek* (source) + *art.w/adj.abl.f.p.*

*loipos remainder, rest + noun abl.f.p. phone voice, sound; “blasts” + art.w/noun abl.f.s. salpingz trumpet + art.w/adj.gen.m.p. treis three + noun gen.m.p. angelos angel + art.w/pres.act.part.gen.m.p. mello be about + pres.act.infin. salpinzo sound]) !”*

ANALYSIS: VERSE 13

1. John signals an interruption in the reporting of the sequence of trumpet judgments.
2. This brief interlude is designed to draw everyone’s attention to the extreme severity of the final trumpet judgments.
3. Once again John calls attention to the fact that in his visions he is constantly seeing new things transpire.
4. Verse 13 serves as a transition between the four plagues that wreck environmental havoc and the final three woes that are targeted against the physical being of men on the earth.
5. “Eagle” has much stronger MS support than “angel”, the rendering of the KJV.
6. While animate creation rarely is granted the ability to speak (cf. Gen. 3:1-5; Num. 22:28-30) there is a problem with taking this “eagle” as a literal bird of prey.
7. The noun is also used of the vulture class of predatory birds as in Matt. 24:29; Lk. 17:37, that sense is inappropriate here.
8. Eagles feed on live prey while vultures feed on carcasses.
9. Some see this as a literal bird.
10. A literal bird that is intended to warn humans of the impending woes would not only have to be granted the ability to speak, and to speak in a very loud voice in many languages; this bird would have to be large enough to be seen, and more importantly, it would have to be exceedingly fast to canvass all the earth in so short a time.
11. This “eagle” is an angel morphed into a very large eagle that will cover the earth with a very important announcement.
12. We have already seen an angel manifesting the form of a flying eagle in connection with the 2<sup>nd</sup> living creature (Rev. 4:7).
13. And then there is the eagle motif in connection with the flight of the Jews in Rev. 12:14: “But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman (Israel), so that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time (one year) and times (two years) and a half time (1/2 year), from the presence of the serpent (Satan).”
14. So there is ample support for taking this eagle as angelic.
15. We will note other angels who make dramatic and worldwide announcements to humanity in chapter 14.
16. Then there is the angel that announces the fall of America and illustrates the finality of the judgment by casting the Statue of Liberty into the ocean (Rev. 18:21)!
17. The hapax *mesouranema* (“midheaven”) establishes the eagle’s sphere of flight.
18. This is the place where all can see him and hear his “loud voice” assuring total coverage around the globe.
19. Broad coverage is important, for the disasters will touch all humanity.
20. His announcement is brief introduces by three “woes” corresponding to the three final trumpet blasts.
21. The last three judgments are much more grievous than the first four.
22. This announcement forebodes that the last three judgments will have to have a new name “woe” reserved for them (cf. 9:12; 11:14).

23. Double “woes” are for emphasis in Ezek. 16:23; Rev. 18:10, 16, 19, but the triple woe refers to dire calamity for humanity at large.
24. The triple woe only occurs here in the Bible.
25. Again, the immediate object of the triple woe is “those who dwell upon the earth.”
26. They comprise three judgments that will bring humanity to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, and that is not a good thing from the perspective of negative volition.

END: Revelation Chapter Eight

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