

## *Revelation 8:1-13*

*Revelation 8:1-13 1When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.*

*3Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. 4And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. 5Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.*

*6And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.*

*7The 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.*

*8The 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, 9and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.*

*10The 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. 11The 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.*

*12The 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.*

*13Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, 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!"*

I read a story this week on the airplane flying home from Portland. About a 13 year old girl who had some kind of deficiency syndrome where she almost has to live in one of those bubbles.

So severe that she no longer tried to attend school, or have friends. She had basically had to withdraw from life - her health was so fragile.

One day she watched the movie about the 13 year old girl that the shark bit her arm off while she was surfing. And she decided she wanted to learn to surf.

She hired a trainer, and a small miracle came about over time. As she surfed and enjoyed the ocean, her doctors discovered that her body started producing the chemicals it needed to be normal.

The ocean; the smells, the noise, the beauty, the energy of the waves, the endless repetition - it has a magic effect on our sense of well being.

Well being is what I want to talk about for a minute.

Think about your sense of 'well-being' and how fragile that is.

Most of us are like the bubble in a level. We try to keep the bubble in the middle - but it easily floats first this way, then that.

Illness, or bad news tilts it towards despair. We may try to tilt it the other way by thinking of some impending reward. Hope. A vacation, a long weekend away, a check on it's way from the IRS.

Now think about the folks who are on earth, present, in the time frame we're talking about tonight. Rev. 18 says the music - has stopped. These folks will only know 2 emotions. Utter despair - occasionally

displaced by sheer terror. That's it!

Joy has ended. Peace has ended. Any semblance of happiness has ended.

How many times each week, I'll listen in on some trivial little problem that someone thinks is destroying their life and I think to myself, this generation really is like Noah's. They have no clue, as they whine on facebook, that a tidal wave is 1/2 mile out at sea, and closing in on them - FAST!

*When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.*

Silence in heaven. Why? Tell us what that's about Lord? Explain please.

Well, He doesn't, and the ideas from the commentators are all over the place, so I did some cross reference studies of other places in the Bible where silence is mentioned concurrent with judgement;

*Ps. 37:7 Be silent before the LORD and wait expectantly for Him; do not be agitated by one who prospers in his way, by the man who carries out evil plans.*

*Lamentations 3:26 it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.*

Remember the folks in chapter 6:10? *and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"!* When the 7th seal is opened . . . they aren't asking any more. Silence. Shock and Awe!

*Hab 2:20 "But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him."*

*Zephaniah 1:7 Be silent before the Sovereign LORD, for the day of the*

*LORD is near. The LORD has prepared a sacrifice; he has consecrated those he has invited.*

*Zechariah 2:13 Be still before the LORD, all mankind, because he has roused himself from his holy dwelling."*

I think the silence is reverential 'shock and awe' as the folks in heaven look into the things opened to them in this seventh seal.

*2And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.*

Another obscure verse. No where else are seven angels who stand in God's presence mentioned. But they are mentioned one other time, these important angels who always are standing before God.

*Matthew 18:10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.*

Think childrens ministries isn't important? We rarely think of ministering to little children in the same breath as the trumpet judgements. But Jesus did. They're important enough in heaven to rate the same class of angels as will sound out the trumpet judgements.

So the first thing we learn about the 7th seal is that 7 angels, who stand in God's presence in heaven, were given 7 trumpets.

*3Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. 4And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.*

Another angel, separate from those 7 angels. A different angel.

He is given incense. Much incense. We can probably only imagine heavenly incense. Chanel #5 probably smells like the latrine in heaven.

So the prayers of all the saints are on a golden altar before the throne in heaven, and they are combined with this heavenly incense, and the smoke and the sweet aroma went up before God.

Is there value in prayer. Real prayer is hard work. Is it worthwhile?

This verse seems to indicate so. A sweet aroma to God. Maybe that's why there was silence for half an hour. God enjoying the sweetness of the aroma of saints who have been crushed. The more difficult the stress, the sweeter the aroma.

*5Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.*

Whoa! This coin has two sides. This censer is dual use.

What is sweetness in heaven is judgement on earth. *peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake*

This is just the wake up call that precedes the trumpet judgements.

There is no sense of well-being anywhere on earth at this point. Only terror at what is happening on earth. Earthquakes. SKY quakes. It must seem like the universe is coming un-raveled. Fear, Terror, Deep despair. 1/4 of the earth's population . . dead. By the time we're done with the trumpet judgements; 1/2 will be dead.

Talk about despair. At some point there's no way to keep burying the dead. I'm sure they'll try at first, but 1 in 4 people, soon to be 1 in 2. The ravens will just have to eat the corpses. The earth has got to be getting pretty ripe. Then the trumpets begin to blow.

*7a The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth;*

You've been wondering if I would forego a literal interpretation of

whatever this is talking about, haven't you. Almost everybody does.

And there are some good arguments that perhaps lend some credence to that approach, even for a literalist like me.

For one thing, John is seeing heavenly things and only has earthly language at his disposal to use. That's a good argument. Fire and hail and blood don't mix very well. Fire cancels hail, and just turns it into steam. And blood?? That's a lot of blood. Most of the commentators just make stuff up. Substance like blood?? What is that? Really really putrified water??

Since there's no way to know, I'm going to take my usual conservative approach and say; John didn't use words to say it was something 'like' hail and 'like' fire, and 'like' blood. He could have said that, if the Holy Spirit, who is authoring this in conjunction with John, had wanted him to. He doesn't.

He says it's hail first. That makes sense to me. Hail first, depending on the size of the stones, would flatten and kill almost anything alive smaller than a Redwood tree.

So, making stuff up here, fwiw, hail flattens and kills the plants. The sun perhaps scorches the dead plants. Then the fire comes. 1/3 of the trees. You could probably calculate a weight and size of hail that would wipe out trees to a certain size so that that size and smaller equals 1/3. All of the grass. Squashed. Scorched?

Then fire is thrown to the earth. All this scorched fuel goes poof! All the grass, gone. 1/3 of the trees, gone. Then blood. And the blood seems to come with the fire.

Real blood? Why not? God spoke all the water in the sea into existence, and even stored some away in storehouses. He can create real blood to throw at the earth.

It's almost as if He's saying to the inhabitants of the earth, 'My Son's blood wasn't good enough for you? Here, have some blood.'

Unimaginable, really.

*7b 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.*

Let's stop right here. Let me ask you a question? Are you on any of Al Gore's mailing lists? Are you concerned about your carbon footprint? Have you stopped buying hair spray in aerosol cans in order to not further deplete the ozone? Did you not buy Newt Gingrich's book, Drill Here Drill Now, because it's politically incorrect?

Here's a reality check. This world is disposable. There is no mother earth, it belongs to God Almighty. We may well be months away from these trumpet judgements. God, in judgement, is going to mess this place up . . . BIG TIME!

Anything combustible on 1/3 of the earth's surface has just burned up. You wanta talk about carbon footprint or ozone depletion. That's the first trumpet.

*8The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea;*

Notice the language here. Something like a great mountain.

This is a green light to say, no, it wasn't a literal mountain, but that gives us a size reference. A great mountain.

OK, so just for a reference, I went to google earth and drew a path around the base of Mt. Shasta. 25 miles around. If you drilled a tunnel through it, it's 7 miles or so.

Not sure if that qualifies as a "great mountain", but it gives us a starting point. This is probably an asteroid. A meteor. A mountain sized meteor strikes the earth. It's on fire because that's what happens when meteor's hit our atmosphere.

I also looked at global maps to see if any of the ocean masses look like a

rough 1/3 of the total mass of water. Guess what. You can do this easily. When you get home, look at the ocean between our continent, the America's and Europe. The Atlantic Ocean if you will. Sure looks like 1/3 to me.

So I typed in Google, "What would happen if a 25 mile circumference asteroid collided with earth?" and a Wikipedia page about an asteroid discovered in 1898 named 433 Eros popped up. 433 Eros is a near earth asteroid, and it's 24.4X7X7 miles width height length. Just about the size of Mt. Shasta, except it's sort of kidney shaped and longer than it is wide. It just looks like a mountain tumbling through space.

Scientists say if it collided with earth, the impact would have about the same effect as the one that collided in the yucatan peninsula that is credited with making the dinosaurs extinct.

*and a third of the sea became blood, 9and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.*

Here we are talking in 3rds again. I have no ideas about the blood. Other than that God in judgement turns the Atlantic Ocean into blood.. That's what it says.

The rest is easy. If something the size of 433 Eros struck the Atlantic Ocean, it's easy to get to this level of destruction. 1/3rd of the creatures that had life and were in the sea, died. 1/3rd of the ships were destroyed.

If a meteor the size of Mt. Shasta struck the Atlantic Ocean, that's what would happen. Not so hard to consider this literally. Even science agrees . . for once.

*10The 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. 11The 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.*



Again, I believe this is probably another asteroid or meteor. It's easy to look at a map of the land masses of the earth and think in terms of 3rds. I ruled out north america. It's really 2 masses connected by a narrow bridge.

Hard to see how one impact could affect both, and it's still only about 1/4. Africa alone isn't big enough. Asia. An easy 3rd.

I'm just imagineering here. Take everything I'm guessing and add a couple bucks and it's worth a cup of coffee at Starbucks. But I'm trying to make you think about what's happening in literal terms.

A meteor crashes into Asia, and what is it that turns the waters poisonous? I don't know. Wormwood. It doesn't mean anything to us. Maybe it's a highly radioactive meteor. We don't know. What we do know is that 1/3 of the drinking water on the planet becomes deadly.

That's huge. We can live without a lot of stuff, but we can count the days men can live with no water.

3 angels. 3 trumpets. An oceanic area the size of the atlantic ocean is turned to blood and all of the ships are destroyed, and all life in the waters is dead. A land mass the size of China and Russia loses all fresh water. All of the green grass is burnt up. 1/3 of the trees are burnt up. There's no one to bury the dead.

*12The 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.*

We started talking about sense of wellbeing. Do you have any idea of the terror and sorrow and depression when some looming object is rotating out in orbit and it's big enough to block the sun and the moon and the stars for 8 out of 24 hours.

We take light and warmth that the sun brings for granted. This angel

alters this most basic of facts. The universe is breaking apart. Something as basic as some of the first words in Genesis, the evening and the morning were the first day, etc. etc. etc.

After this trumpet it's evening, then 8 hours of lights out, then you finally see the sun or the moon or whatever is there in the normal cycle. 1/3 of the lights in heaven are blocked.

Maybe that thing that's blocking them is careening towards earth and the scientists (I hope someone saved a slide rule because the computers have been gone already for quite a while) are calculating the day it's going to impact earth, and poof, it's over.

We have no baseline to imagine the terror. We have little setbacks like the transmission going out or a burst water pipe, and we think the world is unnecessarily harsh.

We're the generation of Noah. We're just living our lives and nobody's paying any attention to what this book says. It's like some psychedelic thing that the mad hatter wrote during a bad acid trip. That's what the world thinks about this book.

*13Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, 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!"*

Here's an angel to help us put it all in perspective.

Everything we've seen so far, is like a sunday school picnic compared to what's still coming.

*II Cor. 5:10,11a For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men . . .*

Could we not change that last line of Pauls to say, *Therefore, knowing*

*the **terror** of the Lord, we persuade men . .*

Apparently, we don't believe this stuff. We're not persuading anybody. I haven't been going door to door on my block, letting my neighbors know these things that are about to take place.

Noah preached for 120 years, warning of the doom that had been promised.

Me, not so much. I preach to 10 or 12 people in the safety of these 4 walls.

From my actions, one can only surmise that I neither believe Revelation or Paul's warning in Corinthians. Lord, have mercy on us.