

Handout Revelation Lesson 12

In my vision, I heard an eagle, calling aloud as it flew high overhead, “Disaster, disaster, disaster, on all the people on earth [the land] at the sound of the other three trumpets which the three angels have yet to blow!” Revelation 8:13

At the end of Chapter 8, John heard a flying eagle calling out, “*Disaster, disaster, disaster [Ouai, ouai, ouai], on all the people on earth [the land]...*” The Hebrew word *owy* and the Greek word *ouai* is often translated “woe” (i.e., see Is 3:9, 11; Jer 4:13; Ez 16:23 and Mt 11:21; 18:7). The phrase, “all the people on earth (the land)” appears ten times in the Book of Revelation and always negatively. It is a phrase that refers to people who:

1. will experience the judgment coming on the apostate people of the land of Judea, in contrast to God’s people who will be kept safe (3:10)
2. inflict suffering on Christians because of their witness of Christ (6:9-10)
3. are struck by the three disasters/woes (8:13)
4. are tormented by the testimony of the two witnesses (11:10)
5. and rejoice at their deaths (11:10)
6. worship the Beast (13:8, 12)
7. are followers deceived by the false prophet (13:14)
8. drink the wine of the Great Prostitute’s immorality (17:2)
9. do not have their names written in the Book of Life (17:8)

A review of the Old Testament references and symbolic imagery in the first four Trumpet Judgments:

Trumpet #1:

- Holy fire from God’s altar thrown upon the earth reminiscent of the destruction of the Canaanite cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when *God rained down on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire of His own sending* (Gen. 19:23). For a comparison between the sins of Sodom and Jerusalem in the 6th century BC; see Ezekiel 16:44-63.
- The plague of hail and blood recall Egyptian plagues 7 (hail) and 1 (Nile turns to blood).
- The blowing of the seven trumpets by seven angels also recalls the destruction of Canaanite Jericho when God’s representatives, the seven priests of Israel, blew seven trumpets to bring down the walls of the city (Josh Chapter 6).

Trumpet #2:

- *a great mountain blazing with fire hurled into the sea* (8:9) recalls the Old Testament passages where Israel and the Temple are referred to as “God’s holy mountain (i.e., Ex. 15:17; Ps 43:3; 48:1; Ez. 6:1-3; etc.). God is now speaking of Jerusalem in the same language He once used for Babylon in Jeremiah 51:25 and 42 as a “destroying mountain.”
- *A third of the sea turned to blood, a third of all the living things in the sea were killed* recalls the first Egyptian plague when the waters of the Nile turned to blood, and all the fish died in the river (Ex 7:21).

Trumpet #3:

- *a huge star fell from the sky* recalls Satan’s fall from paradise told in imagery related to the destruction of the city of Babylon (Is 14:12-15).

- *this was the star called wormwood*, is a phrase that recalls a term used in the Old Testament to warn Israel of its destruction as a punishment for apostasy (Dt 29:18; Prov 5:4; Jer 9:15; 23:15; Lam 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7; 6:12).
- The third trumpet is a reverse of the healing of the “bitter waters” of Marah in Exodus 15:22-26 that was a foreshadowing of the healing waters of Baptism. The Jews have now rejected those healing waters, and their punishment is the “bitterness” of judgment. The bitter waters also recall the test for an unfaithful wife in Numbers 5:18-27. Judea is Yahweh’s unfaithful spouse, and she will be forced to endure the bitter waters of her judgment.

Trumpet #4:

- The great darkness recalls the 9th plague on Egypt (Ex 10:21-23).
- The destruction in thirds recalls God’s prophecy of Jerusalem’s destruction by the Babylonians (Ez 5:1-4, 12).
- An eagle-angel calls out “disaster” three times, recalling Ezekiel 7:1-14 in which Yahweh tells Ezekiel, “*Disaster, a unique disaster, is coming. The end is coming, the end is coming ... it is coming now*” (Ez 7:5-6). And in Ezekiel 7:14, Yahweh says, “*The trumpet sounds, all is ready, but no one goes into battle, since my fury rest on all alike.*” The image of the flying eagle is also a reference to Hosea 8:1, which is a prophecy of the destruction of the apostate Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC by the Assyrians: *Put the trumpet to your lips! Like an eagle, disaster is swooping on Yahweh’s home! Because they have violated my covenant and been unfaithful to my Law, in vain will they cry, ‘My God!’*

Scripture tells us the Abyss is the furthest extreme from Heaven. Nine New Testament verses refer to the Abyss. Once each in Luke and Romans and seven verses in Revelations that mention the Abyss nine times; in Scripture nine is the number of judgment:

1. in Luke 8:31, Jesus speaking to a demon-possessed man said, “*What is your name?*” *He said, ‘Legion’ because many devils had gone into him. And these begged him not to order them to depart into the Abyss.*
2. in Romans 10:7, Paul writes, do not ask, “*Who will go up to heaven?*” *that is to bring Christ down, or ‘Who will go down to the depths (Abyss)?’*
3. in Revelation 9:1, 2 (three times), 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1 and 3

Flavius Josephus, who was a witness to the self-destruction of the Jews during the revolt of AD 66 wrote: “Thus were the miserable people beguiled by these charlatans and false messengers of God, while they disregarded and disbelieved the unmistakable portents that foreshadowed the coming desolation; but, as though thunderstruck, blind, senseless, paid no heed to the clear warnings of God” (*The Jewish Wars*, 6.5.3).