

# Why Does God Send the Second Greatest Ecological Disaster of History in Revelation 8?

In Genesis 6-8, God sent the first ecological disaster of human history in the catastrophic Global Flood of Noah. It was less than 5,000 years ago, when God completely devastated the surface of the entire planet. Through 40 days of rain, plus most likely the fountains of the deep (volcanic eruptions), God drowned or buried every land animal, and every human except the eight in the Ark. That was :

## The First Catastrophic Ecological Event

God flooded and uprooted, floated, rotted, or buried every plant and tree on the surface of the earth. He muddied every drop of water, and probably kept the sunshine from being seen for the entire 40-day period.

There has never been anything like the Flood of Noah that buried, flooded, and changed every square inch of the Earth, just under 5,000 years ago.

That is until the events of Revelation 8. In this chapter we find an ecological disaster, the magnitude of which we will examine this morning.

As we open to Revelation 8 again today, we have already seen the first three of the seven great doctrines or teachings about our All Powerful and Almighty God.

## Doctrines from a Loving God

Here is what we see taught in Revelation 8:

1. Doctrine of Inspiration: God Designed Revelation to Connect the Rest of the Bible (8:1a)
2. Doctrine of Prayer: God Designed Prayer As our Vital Connection to Him (8:1b-4)
3. Doctrine of Sovereignty: God Connects Our Prayers to His Plan (8:5-6)
4. The Doctrine that: God is the ONLY Giver & Sustainer of Life (8:7)

5. The Doctrine that: God ALONE Holds the Breath of Life in His Hands (8:8-9)

6. The Doctrine that: God EXCLUSIVELY Controls the Water of Life (8:10-11)

7. The Doctrine that: God is THE Source of the Light of Life (8:12)

So we are hearing in Revelation 8 from God who has as one of His unchanging attributes the motivation and essential character that:

## God is Love

God is eternally and forever revealed as possessing the attribute of love (1 Jn. 4:8). Yet, the same God of love, that created the world, flooded the world. His love never wanes, and neither does another of His attributes: His justice.

The same Just God that flooded the world is also the God of love, who sent Noah as a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5) to warn the world of the coming wrath of the God who waited during the ark's construction (1 Pet. 3:20). So, to really comprehend the events of Revelation 8 we need to also understand that:

## God is a Savior

In the Old Testament God first reveals Himself as a Savior when He went looking for fallen Adam & Eve (Gen. 3:9), then as a Savior made a way for their sins to be covered through shed blood (Gen. 3:21), after He had promised them that there was a coming One who would be crushed for sinners (Gen. 3:15).

God is further revealed all the way through the Old Testament as a Savior:

Isaiah 43:11(NKJV) I, even I, am the Lord, and **besides Me there is no savior.**

Isaiah 45:21 (NKJV) Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, **A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me.**

Then in the New Testament we see God our Savior in action: sending Christ, allowing Christ to die as a substitute on the Cross, raising Him, and seating Him at His right hand. Then, Christ's apostles proclaimed the loving gospel of God the Savior:

1 Timothy 2:3-4 (NKJV) For this is good and acceptable **in the sight of God our Savior**, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Titus 3:4 (NKJV) But when the kindness and **the love of God our Savior** toward man appeared,

## Revelation Portrays our God of Love

That God of love who is a Savior is the One we see behind every scene of Revelation.

- **God the Savior** sends the 144,000 evangelist servants sealed and sent in Rev. 7:1-8 with such astounding results.
- **God the Savior** saves the countless multitude in Rev. 7:9 from out of the Holocaust of the Tribulation.
- **God the Savior** sends the two witnesses in Revelation 11.
- **God the Savior** sends the angel preaching the everlasting gospel in Rev. 14:6, after He recalls His 144,000 evangelists in Rev. 14:1. They stand with Christ and watch as He deploys the next evangelistic tool in the form of the preaching angel.
- **God the Savior** also saves the ones who resisted the Beast and his mark (Rev. 15:2-4).
- **God the Savior** Himself sends a message from Heaven to the Earth in Revelation 18:4-8, with one last warning and plea for humans to come to Him instead of being destroyed.

## God Wants Humans to Repent

To best understand all of the seals, trumpets, and bowls of judgment in Revelation, look at the reason that God sends them. He tells us in Revelation 9:20-21 (NKJV):

But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 **And they did not repent** of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (see also Rev. 16:9, 11).

Why does God send us that insight that only He could know? Because our God is a Savior who has already told us that He is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9). God wants humans to repent.

Now, watch with me as the God of Love & Justice, perfectly balanced and changeless, justly loves the inhabitants of Earth. As the Just God He sends them loud trumpet blasts of warning, as the Loving God, He stands with His arms wide open and stretched out to them.

## **The Doctrine of Sovereignty: God Connects Our Prayers to His Plan**

***Revelation 8:5-6 (NKJV) Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. <sup>6</sup> So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.***

The picture of the prayers mixed with coals speaks of God in His perfect timing of His plan answering. One prayer that has perhaps most often been prayed is from the Lord's (or more accurately the Disciple's) Prayer. When saints for the past two thousand years have cried out to God the Father: "Thy Kingdom Come", they have asked for this moment.

The censer, the coals of fire, the incense of prayers, and the hurling to earth all graphically speak of God acting in concert with the prayers saints have offered in the Spirit and according to His plan.

Another amazing parallel is between the plagues that God sent through Moses onto Egypt, and the first four trumpets is another design feature that God uses. In Egypt the plagues matched up with the false claims of false gods, and showed that the Lord God Almighty was just that, the One, True, Living God.

### **Turn to the Only Living & True God**

Taken together, the trumpets of Rev. 8-9 and the bowl judgments of Rev. 16 reflect the plagues of Egypt recorded in Exodus 7-12. The Egyptian plagues Moses orchestrated had two very similar purposes:

1. First, both groups needed to know that there is only One Living & True God, not many. Just One. Because Egyptians worshipped the Nile, God turned it to blood to show His power and their false god's impotence (Ex. 7:14-24). Also, Egyptians worshipped the Sun, so God blacked out their Sun-god for three days to show who was really God (Exod. 10:21-29).
2. Second, both then and now neither humans nor false gods control nature. The Creator alone controls nature. God is Omnipotent & Almighty. Humans are helpless, weak, and merely creatures of their Creator.

Just as the first four seals showed the inevitable consequences that sins always bring, so the first four trumpets show the inescapable judgment that God has always warned about.

To an earth long seduced by mother earth goddess worship. To all the false worship of the nature worshippers to “save the planet” God responds. He strikes with mortal blows the Earth, the Sky, the Sea.

## **Trumpet Number One: Repent, Only God is the Giver & Sustainer of Life**

***Revelation 8:7 (NKJV) 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.***

Green speaks of life. Grass and trees are signs of life, they provide food, shelter, shade, nutrition, and comforts. God says to the world, you don't worship Me, but worship the Earth, your food, your life, your comfort, and your security? Then I will show you that I am the giver of all green flourishing life. I am the only One that can give and sustain life. You have no hope apart from Me.

Note the start of the fractional judgments.

Fractions in Revelation are **a symbol of God's mercy and an invitation to repentance**. The meaning is that the trumpet judgments are not completely devastating; they destroy only part of the vegetation upon which humans depend for their sustenance.<sup>1</sup>

Land areas of the Earth total 30% of the surface. Imagine one-third of the land surfaces being struck by the forest & grass fire plague? Fires that catastrophically burn crops, homes, wildlife, and anything else in their paths. Fires that only leave behind smoldering piles of ashes and clouds of smudge.

History records some grim reminders of what this smoke-filled judgment will be like. One lesson was the Great Smog of London<sup>2</sup> from December 5-9, 1952.

A period of cold weather, combined with windless conditions, collected airborne pollutants mostly from the use of coal to form a thick layer of smog over the city. It lasted five days, and then dispersed quickly after a change of weather. Although it caused major disruption due to the effect on visibility, and even penetrated indoor areas, it was not thought to be a significant event at the time. However, government medical reports in the following weeks estimated that up until 8th December 12,000 people had died prematurely and 100,000 more were made ill because of the smog's effects on the human respiratory tract.

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<sup>1</sup> Yeatts, J. R. (2003). *Revelation*. Believers Church Bible Commentary (pp. 157-163). Scottdale, PA: Herald Press.

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Smog](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Smog)

This trumpet blast is the first warning from the Almighty God to His creatures:

Romans 1:25 (NKJV) who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

What a warning, what a wake up from a Just God. God is also a Savior, His arms of love are open wide and many respond. The multitudes of martyrs out of the Tribulation that we see in chapter 6 and 7, that are saved out of these horrors, show that so many listen and heed God's call to repent.

## **Trumpet Number Two: Repent, Only God Holds the Breath of Life**

***Revelation 8:8-9 (NKJV) Then 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. <sup>9</sup> And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.***

God created the oceans teeming with life, plus overflowing with life-sustaining oxygen production. But how has mankind repaid their gracious Maker? With an idolatrous belief that humanity's earliest evolutionary ancestors, crawled from the seas and onto the land.

So God responds by going for the very breath man so desperately needs to stay alive. The oceans cover 70% of the surface of Earth, and may produce as much as 70%+ of all the oxygen living creature need.

Fish, whales, dolphins, crabs, seabirds, and just about everything else that makes a living in or off of the oceans owe their existence to phytoplankton, one-celled plants that live at the ocean surface<sup>3</sup>. Ocean plants called phytoplankton contribute between 50 to 85 percent of the oxygen in Earth's atmosphere.<sup>4</sup>

Can you even conceive of what the loss of the plankton factories that work constantly renewing the air we breath, when suddenly the oxygen supply drops by 33%? The smoke produced when a third of grass and trees are burned up, have already made breathing difficult, but then comes the cessation of the richness of the sea's life.

So our breathable air is cut dramatically by smoke, and then again by a third of production. When our cells lack oxygen they weaken and die. Without oxygen, nothing works very well or at all.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/06/0607\\_040607\\_phytoplankton.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/06/0607_040607_phytoplankton.html)

<sup>4</sup><http://earthsky.org/earth/how-much-do-oceans-add-to-worlds-oxygen>

<sup>5</sup><http://www.breathing.com/articles/oxygen.htm>

Plus God says a third of ships are destroyed. As of this month, Jane's Naval registry claims that in 2013 there are 177,000 ships over 100 GWT plus 12,000 military vessels<sup>6</sup>.

The stench of death, the lifeless pallor of waters that formerly teemed with life. What a horror as the God of the Universe steps forward and through this plague says, I am the True God, the One who has always held your life's breath in My Hands (Daniel 5:23).

So as many lay gasping for air like a fish out of water, they find God is a Savior, and many respond. The multitudes are saved out of this mess, as many heed God's call to repent.

## **Trumpet Number Three: Repent, Only God Controls the Water of Life**

***Revelation 8:10-11 (NKJV) 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. <sup>11</sup> 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.***

Nearly every form of life on Earth is water dependent, since most living things are water-based. Humans are especially so, with a huge percentage of our bodies made up of water. Without water life withers, dries up, crumbles, and returns to dust.

Water connects, communicates, and controls so much of life as we know it. God designed our bodies as well as all other creatures, organisms, and plants to be water-dependent. God controls life and the water that sustains it.

The rivers will run with deadly poison; the wells will become springs of death; the lakes and reservoirs will be filled with toxic waters. People will be able to survive, for a time, the destruction of food supplies caused by the first two trumpet judgments, living off stored provisions. But people cannot long survive without fresh water, and the loss of a significant portion of the world's fresh water supply will cause widespread death.<sup>7</sup>

To an already water-impooverished planet, this trumpet is catastrophic. God sends a comet, meteorite, or an asteroid (the word here, ***lampas***, was used for both meteors and comets in Greek and Roman times). The blazing object poisons a third of the fresh water. So desperate is humanity, and so deadly is the poison, that the God who speaks just truth plus no exaggeration, says "many".

Mankind refuses the One who said that He is the only supplier of the water of life. So God introduces Himself by cutting off the water we so desperately need to live.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ihs.com/products/maritime-information/ships/world-register.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1999). *Revelation 1-11*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Re 8:1-10). Chicago: Moody Press.

So as many lay dying in a dehydration stupor, they cry for God as their Savior, and He responds to their faith. The multitudes saved out of this time, show many heed God's call to repent.

## **Trumpet Number Four: Repent, God is the Only Source of the Light of Life**

***Revelation 8:12 (NKJV) Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.***

Almost everything we know is somehow tied to light. From photosynthesis, meteorology, hydrology, and energy transfer to the Earth, all are tied to the Sun's light. Our atmosphere is warmed, the great engines of weather and wind are all powered in part by the Sun. So God says, if you refuse My Light, I will send darkness.

Think of the violent storms this 4<sup>th</sup> trumpet precipitates. As the earth cools, and storms brew, the weather convulses, and earth slips into a twilight zone. God has already scorched the earth's food chain leading to scarcity and an atmosphere of smoky air. Followed by trumpet two's dead seas, and oxygen loss. Then trumpet three's poison filled space invader's water pollution and death.

God says you refuse Me and you find that earth is nothing apart from its Creator & Sustainer. No creation can satisfy, only the Creator can satisfy. No job, no possession, no person, no experience satisfies; nothing apart from our Creator can last, can continue, or can satisfy us.

The ecology of Earth is struck. Just the thought of there being one-third less: air to breathe, Sun to shine, water to drink, and food to eat is incomprehensible.

Life becomes for the world a bit like being chained onto a sinking ship, or strapped into a crashing plane. But before anyone catches their breath, while trying to make it in the smoke, looking for food, and cautiously searching for water, God says, it is going to get far, far, far worse.

## **Finally, God Designed the Final Trumpet Judgments to Give Humans a Taste of Hell**

***Revelation 8:13 (NKJV) And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels***



***who are about to sound!"***

There are no super heroes to save planet earth. There are no advanced civilizations out there that will be able to share life-extending technology with humans. There is just God Almighty and His servants & the Devil and his mutant rebels. Finally all the movies & videos stop during the trumpet blasts and earth dwellers get confronted with the Real King, the Almighty God the Just & the Savior. Have you repented while you can?