The Revelation Of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER 8

Revelation 8:1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

Revelation 8:2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

Have we heard of seven trumpets in any scriptures other than in Revelation? We have. John draws from the Old Testament events and prophecies to relay New Testament truth. As we have seen, these are called allusions. In our study, they are referred to as allusion quotations. Without knowing that John used Old Testament allusion, one might interpret the Revelation using references from our day and not from John’s day. The allusion to the seven trumpets is from Joshua chapter 6 and the taking of Jericho (Jos 6:4-13).

The Lord gave instructions to Joshua for the destruction of Jericho. The seven trumpets sounded the coming destruction. So is it in the Revelation. The seven trumpets, just as at Jericho, sounded the desolation. As noted before, the word seal (sphragis Greek) means a signet or stamp. The seven seals had the signet or stamp of the Lord upon them. The trumpets were the seventh seal. The trumpets were what the seventh seal was about.

The seventh seal was opened revealing the seven trumpets. As we saw earlier, the seven seals were not the book (biblion). They sealed the book and represented the things which must come to pass (Mat 24:6) prior to the great tribulation. The seals must come to pass before the biblion could be opened. With the opening of the seventh seal came the actual soundings of the judgments.

John said there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. All sorts of interpretations have been rendered for this silence. It is a slightly difficult passage. When faced with a passage that presents interpretation problems, yet seems important to properly understand the message of the passage, we first look at the context. In doing this for Revelation 8:1, we do find help.

The half an hour is conspicuously placed prior to the sounding of the first trumpet. The silence was for half an hour. This was the amount of time it took to burn incense at the actual temple. John, a Jew, had witnessed the burning of incense many times.

Revelation 8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Revelation 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.

Revelation 8:5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

In this passage, we see worship taking place in the heavenlies. John is observing the reality of an event he had witnessed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of times in type at the temple – the burning of the incense.

The burning of incense and the smoke from the incense were visual aids which gave explanation to the prayers of all saints. This incense burning was so important that the Lord commanded that a special altar be built. This altar showed that prayer is a separate part of a child of God’s existence. In the Scriptures, this altar is referred to as the golden altar. It was placed inside the holy place. The tabernacle of Moses had one golden altar of incense. The temple built by Solomon had the golden altar. Its use was commanded by the Lord as a perpetual command throughout their generations. The burning of incense was to take place twice every day (Exo 30:7, 8).

Alfred Edersheim writes about the burning of incense at the temple.

“Slowly the incensing priest and his assistants ascended the steps to the Holy Place, preceded by the two priests who had formerly dressed the altar and the candlestick, and who now removed the vessels they had left behind, and, worshiping, withdrew. Next, one of the assistants reverently spread the coals on the golden altar; the other arranged the incense; and then the
chief officiating priest was left alone within the Holy Place, to await the signal of the president before burning the incense. It was probably while thus expectant that the angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias (Luke 1:8-11). As the president gave the word of command, which marked that 'the time of incense had come,' 'the whole multitude of people without' withdrew from the inner court, and fell down before the Lord, spreading their hands in silent prayer. It is this most solemn period, when throughout the vast Temple buildings deep silence rested on the worshiping multitude, while within the sanctuary itself the priest laid the incense on the golden altar, and the cloud of 'odours' (5:8) rose up before the Lord, which serves as the image of heavenly things in this description.  

Luke chapter one proves the authenticity of the above quote. The father of John the Baptist, Zacharias, functioned as the priest in this situation (Luk 1:8-11).

The visual imagery of burning incense is astounding when associated with prayer. As the people prayed, their prayers arose with the smoke of the incense as the smoke went up before God. This was the way the people of the Lord visualized their prayers (Psa 141:2).

Revelation says the incense was offered with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. John watched, the smoke of the incense ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. The prayers of the saints came with the smoke of the incense and these – prayers and smoke – ASCENDED UP BEFORE GOD. This is the picture of heavenly worship and prayer. As the saints prayed, the incense is burned. The temple was filled with the prayers and smoke which come before God.

The seven angels were positioned to sound the seven trumpets. However, they could not sound the trumpets until the prayers of the saints ascended up before God. God was awaiting their prayers before he released what must happen.

These saints were not praying “fix Jerusalem.” They were praying that Jerusalem and the age of Moses would be destroyed! They were praying the kingdom of God come. They were praying the will of God be done. Jesus said it must be laid desolate. This is seen in the next verse as heaven’s responded to the prayers given.

The angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunberings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. Once again we come into contact with the cloud of God (see 4:5). If we remember from chapter 4, John is in the cloud. The cloud is the location of the throne (Psa 97:2; Eze 1:4).

Fire from heaven is holy fire. The presence of the Lord was seen in fire from heaven. The Lord sent fire that would be used continually at the Tabernacle of Moses (Lev 9:24). He sent fire from heaven for David verifying where the temple should be constructed (1Ch 21:26). He sent fire from heaven showing he accepted the construction of the temple (2Ch 7:1).

However, holy fire cast into the earth is not always a sign of God’s acceptance as the verses below clearly show.

Gen 19:24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; (emphasis added)  
Exo 9:23 And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. (emphasis added)  
Num 16:35 And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. (emphasis added)  
2Ki 1:10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. (see also 2Ki 1:12, 14) (emphasis added)  
Luk 9:54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? (emphasis added)  
Luk 17:29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. (emphasis added)  
Act 2:19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: (emphasis added)

The fire of the golden altar was prayers from the saints. This “fire prayer” is now cast into the earth. It is not showing the Lamb’s acceptance, but rather his rejection and wrath (Rev 6:16, 17). Once again earth is ge (Greek) meaning “soil or

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1 Alfred Edersheim, The Temple, p. 167, quoted in The Days Of Vengeance, page 230
region.” The translator’s prerogative is to use “earth.” Contextually, it would be better translated “region.” The Lord only once judged the entire earth at one time. That was the flood of Noah’s day. The Lord promised - made covenant - that he would never destroy the entire earth again. We are aware that the Lord said “by the waters of a flood,” he would never destroy the earth. Does this mean he was tricking Noah and man? Does this mean he will use another means to destroy the earth because he cannot use water? One would hardly think so. His covenant with Noah was not only that he would never flood the earth again. It also says that he would never cut off all flesh (Gen 9:11, 12).

Throughout history the Lord has come upon lands and regions (ge) with his fire as seen above (i.e. Sodom and Gomorrah). When Jesus instructed his disciples to pray the kingdom would come in earth as in heaven he meant that exactly. The fire from the altar is cast upon the region. Kingdom prayer brought the fire of heaven upon that earth (ge).

Revelation 8:6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

6 Immediately after the “fire prayers” of the saints bringing fire cast upon the earth the seven angels prepared to sound the seven trumpets. First note these seven angels. They would be none other than the seven angels to which the seven letters were written in chapters 1-3. They played a major role in the Revelation. Those seven angels showed the involvement of the churches throughout the Revelation. They sounded the trumpets in chapters 8-11. They poured out the vials in chapters fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen. The seven angels were the leader(s) of the seven churches. They were responsible for the prayers of the saints bringing kingdom fire.

Think about it. If the Lord sent a letter to your church to whom would he send it if he wanted it read aloud? I suppose that would be determined by the church you attend, but it should be the pastor or messenger. This would be the angel of the church at... This is not to do away with literal, heavenly angels by any means. It is to point out the Biblical perspective of a church leader(s). The point we are making here is the seven angels involved with the churches in chapters 1-3 were also involved with the seven trumpets. The seven angels were involved with the seven vials. This would mean that the church leader, leaders, leadership were to have a great hand in bringing the wrath of the Lamb upon the land, thus bringing in the kingdom. They sounded the trumpets of God. Interestingly, it was seven priests who blew the trumpets as Jericho was destroyed (Jos 6:4).

Trumpets are used in several ways in Scripture. We here list six. (1) Trumpets were used in ceremonial acts (1Ch 15:24). (2) Trumpets were sounded to proclaim the rule of a new king (1Ki 1:34, 39; Psa 47:5, 6). (3) Trumpets were used as an alarm for approaching armies (Jer 4:5-8). (4) Trumpets were used to call the people to move (Num 10:1-9). (5) Trumpets were sounded the first of every month and feast days (Lev 25:9; Psa 81:3). (6) Trumpets were used to sound a call to war with desolation following (Jos 6:4).

Revelation 8:7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

7 The first trumpet sounded and brought a triple curse - hail and fire mingled with blood. From the list of six uses for trumpets sounding, we can begin to see that heaven had declared war upon someone (#6). A new King was proclaimed (#2). Armies soon approached (#3). The souls of chapter 6 were remembered, and their loud cry for vengeance for their blood was beginning. They were told the time for vengeance would begin shortly. It did begin.

The plagues of Egypt were seen in the trumpets and in the vials. The Lord God had told the people of Israel at the consummation of the covenant that if they walked contrary to him that he would bring seven times more plagues upon them (Lev 26:21). The Lord promised covenantally that he would bring plagues and the diseases of Egypt and all the plagues of the law upon them and destroy them if they rebelled (Deu 28:58-62). He said he would rejoice over the nation to do good, but would also
rejoice to destroy them (Deu 28:63).

Those plagues begun. John uses the allusion of the plagues upon Egypt - fire and hail - to begin the trumpet judgments. This was a judgment upon Egypt. It was associated with thunder which links what happened to Egypt (Exo 9:23-25; 7:17) with what happened to Jerusalem (8:5). John said the fire and hail were mingled with blood. Water turned to blood was also a plague upon Egypt.

It is important to remember that all the trumpets were in response to the prayers of the saints (8:3). No trumpet could sound until the prayers came before God. Thus we are shown what they prayed. To properly interpret the passage and adjust to the Scriptures, we must not lose sight of that truth. Jesus made the statement to the Jewish leaders in the temple that they would be required to answer for all the righteous blood shed upon the earth (ge Greek; soil or region). This was required of them (Mat 23:35).

John mentions the destruction of trees as he says, “The third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.” Josephus comments over and over concerning the desolation of the land and the removal of the trees. Josephus writes,

“He [Titus] ordered that they should bring timber together, and raise banks against the city... So the trees were now cut down immediately, and the suburbs left naked.”

“Titus... began to raise his banks again, although materials for them were hard to be come at; for all the trees that were about the city had been already cut down for the making of the former banks. Yet did the soldiers bring with them other materials from the distance of ninety furlongs, and thereby raised banks in four parts, much greater than the former, though this was done only at the tower of Antonia.”

“...they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety furlongs round about... And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing: for those places which were before adored with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees all cut down.”

Trees in the scriptures often speak of man (Mat 7:16-20). John is not only speaking of the natural trees. He is also speaking of trees spiritual - men.

With knowledge that earth does not mean “planet earth,” but rather ge (Greek) meaning “land or region,” one can better acquire a purer meaning from John. The trees was burnt up that did not bring forth good fruit.

Revelation 8:8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

Revelation 8:9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

8, 9 The obvious allusion to another plague upon Egypt was given by John now. There should be no doubt that John was relaying the fact that the same plagues that came upon Egypt were coming upon a society. What the Lord did to Egypt at the Exodus became a prototype of what he could do to any nation. However, it is clear in the Scriptures that the Lord told Israel specifically that he would come upon them as he did Egypt (Exo 7:20, 21; De 28:27, 60).

We notice that the trumpets are in third parts. The trumpet plagues are riddled with the term third part. This probably never rings a bell with us. Most likely we never noticed that third part was so prevalent in this section.

Rev 8:7 The first angel sounded ... the third part of trees was burnt up

Rev 8:8 And the second angel sounded ... the third part of the sea became blood;

Rev 8:9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

Rev 8:10 And the third angel sounded ... the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

Rev 8:11 ... the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters,

Rev 8:12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. (emphasis added)

Rev 9:15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. (emphasis added)

Rev 9:18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. (emphasis added)

Rev 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth (emphasis added)

Why does John emphasize the third part so?
What is the meaning and allusion that the Spirit of the Lord wanted people to see? The third part is not new or futuristic. The third part is an allusion link to Ezekiel. Ezekiel was instructed of the Lord to shave his head and beard. Then Ezekiel was to weigh the hair and divide the hair into a “third part.” It is important to know this third part in Ezekiel is concerning Jerusalem, not the planet earth (Eze 5:1-17).

It is vital to know who this third part prophecy concerned. It concerned all the house of Israel (Eze 5:4) and especially Jerusalem (5:5). It was to this John made allusion in this passage. I know of no other nation a third part prophecy was given. John repeats third part over and over so it will not be missed.

John said a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea. Mountains probably have several imageries in scriptures. Many want to associate a mountain with a kingdom. This is workable, but there is a better imagery. One imagery is without dispute and will be readily accepted. That is the imagery of worship. Mountains were used for worship of the Lord God and worship of idols in the scriptures. The first use of the word mountain in scripture is Abram in worship as he calls upon the name of the Lord (Gen 12:8).

First use is very important. It is the seed for the word throughout the remainder of the scriptures. Just as the very first corn seed determined what all corn seeds would produce, so it is with first use of a word. The first use of the word mountain has to do with worship. Mountains are important in Israel’s worship. Among those mentioned concerning worship are Mount Sinai; Mount Ebal; Mount Gerizim; Mount Ephraim; Mount Bethel; Mount Carmel; Mount Horeb; Mount Zion; and Mount Moriah.

Also the mountain was the place of idolatrous worship (Deu 12:2; 1Ki 14:23). When the nation of Israel went after idols, she was declared the harlot as she went to do her whoredoms on the mountains (Jer 3:6; Hos 4:12-13).

Here in Revelation a great mountain would be cast into the sea. What does that mean scripturally? Will a literal great mountain be thrown into the sea? Or, will a religious great worship be brought down?

Revelation itself interpreted sea or waters for us as peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (Rev 17:15). Following the thought of John, we see the nation of Israel had become no more in its worship to God than the sea of nations worshipping their idols. Israel rejected the Christ. What they did in worship was simply false worship. So, Israel, the harlot, was cast into the sea. Her idolatry influenced the nations with the spirit of antichrist. The judgment of God came upon all who rejected the fact that the Christ had come (1Jo 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2Jo 1:7).

The mountain of Israel’s worship did not only come down. It was dispersed into the sea. The entire nation would be cast into the sea. Jerusalem, which had been the hub of worship to the one true God, became desolate.

When the land of Philistia fell to the Romans (A.D. 66-73), those not killed were taken into slavery and dispersed into all the world. Josephus writes,

“He [Vespasian] also set fire not only to the city itself, but to all the villas and small cities that were round about it; some of them were quite destitute of inhabitants, and out of some of them he carried the inhabitants as slaves into captivity.”

Titus also sent a great number into the provinces, as a present to them, that they might be destroyed upon their theaters, by the sword and by the wild beasts; but those that were under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves.”

Thomas A. Idinopulos in his book Jerusalem Blessed, Jerusalem Cursed, writes,

“What happened in 70 A.D. represented an unprecedented humiliation of the Jewish nation. The Temple, the national symbol of freedom and faith, was gone. The Jew who survived the carnage lived to envy the dead. Able-bodied men were sent to work in the mines of Egypt and Sardinia; many were sent to Rome to work on the construction of the Coliseum, or to Corinth where Nero had ordered excavation of a great canal. Some who showed special strength were sent to cruel deaths in gladiator shows. Women and children were sold into slavery. We do not know how many perished, but the magnitude of the disaster for Jews is suggested by Josephus’s report that one million

The thought of the mountain and worship is

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5 Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book III, vii, 1
6 Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book VI, ix, 2
seen and will shake us when we truly know what Jesus meant as he spoke with the woman at the well. She said, *Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship* (John 4:19, 20). The temple was on Mount Moriah. What Jesus said to her will shake us if we understand Jerusalem is about to be destroyed. Jesus said to her, *Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.* A great mountain was cast into the sea.

More insight is received when we associate worship with what Jesus meant when he used the word *mountain*. For example:

**Matthew 21:21** Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. (emphasis added)

In the context of Matthew 21:21 (previous), the Lord had cursed a fig tree. Jesus was in his last week before the crucifixion. He was in a time of confrontation, friction, and disputes with the Pharisees. He, in that context of Scripture, gave the Olivet Discourse which prophesied the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem upon that generation. In that setting Jesus said, *... if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.*

We have attempted to remain aware that the trumpets were sounding because the prayers of the saints had ascended before the Lord. The fire had been thrown upon the *ge* – land, region. The *mountain* (Israel’s idolatrous worship) was cast into the sea. Jesus told the disciple to speak to the *mountain* to be removed and it was! The false religion was cast down and the people were scattered into the *sea* of nations.

**Revelation 8:10** And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

**Revelation 8:11** And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

10, 11 We are actually given sufficient teaching in the scriptures about *wormwood* to know what these verses mean. The word is found in eight verses of Scripture. When we study those eight passages, we easily understand this passage. With a little study, we see that *wormwood* is a judgment of the Lord promised to come upon the nation of Israel. *Wormwood* also comes from the lips of the harlot wife which Israel had become to the Lord (Pro 5:4). *Wormwood* is associated in the Scriptures with gall which is a poisonous root.

Deuteronomy chapter 29 records the warning from Moses to Israel including every man, woman, family, and tribe (Deu 29:18). The warning was concerning those that would *turn away* from the Lord our God. Those that turned away were compared to being poisonous *wormwood*. Those *wormwood* people were cursed. Moses said, *The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven* (Deu 29:20). Such a destruction would come because of these people would say it was as *brimstone, and salt, and burning*. It would be as Sodom and Gomorrah (Deu 29:21-23). All nations would know that the Lord did that to Israel (Deu 29:24). The Pharisees and the religious system had become *wormwood*. They poisoned those that listened to them. Jesus said to beware of the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mat 16:6-12).

Israel, who was supposed to be the wife of the Lord, had become a harlot. Out of her mouth proceeded *wormwood* (Pro 5:4).

Jeremiah said that because his people did not obey his law and did not walk therein, the Lord would *feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink* (Jer 9:15). He then said, *I will scatter them also among the heathen,* whom neither they nor their...
fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them (Jer 9:16).

Later in Jeremiah chapter twenty-three, the Lord said those of Jerusalem had become as the inhabitants of Gomorrah. Because of this the Lord said, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land (Jer 23:14-15).

John said when the third angel sounded the trumpet that a bright star came from heaven. The star was as it were burning. It was like a lamp. The imagery is this wormwood would be attractive and lead people. However it was poison wormwood.

This poison given from wormwood teachers was like pouring poison into the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters. No less than one-third of the people was poisoned by drinking the teaching of the wormwood teachers. John recorded many men died of the waters because they were made bitter.

Revelation 8:12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

12 The sun, moon, and stars are heavenly lights in varying degrees of illumination. The sun produces more light for the earth than does the moon or the stars. We can relate this trumpet judgment to the darkness that came upon Egypt (Exo 10:22). As we have seen (Rev 6:12-14), references to the sun being darkened, moon becoming blood, stars falling etc. is called “collapsing universe terminology.” In chapter six, we saw that many references are given throughout Scriptures concerning the sun, moon, and stars terminating their light or even falling. This was a reference to the termination of a society or a nation. In no documented historic account of the termination of the nations did a literal star fall. The moon did not literally turn to blood or stop giving light. The heavens were not literally dissolved. However, in each and every case, the nation collapsed and the existing society crumbled. It was “lights out” for the society and the system of the day for that nation (Isa 13:9-10). This is also the imagery given in the Revelation.

The fourth angel sounded. The third part of the nation will die because they have drunk of poisonous teachings. Also the third part of the religious leaders (lights and teachers) of Israel will be smitten as the third part of the people are killed. Jesus said, “Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites” (Mat 23:14-15). There was no way they could miss the damnation of hell (Mat 23:33).

The wormwood teachers of Israel had poisoned the people. They had made the people twofold more the child of hell than they were. They had become lamps that poisoned.

Revelation 8:13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

13 As always earth is ge (Greek) and means soil or region. As we studied in 7:1, we learned the word ge is translated “land,” “earth,” “ground,” etc. It is the translator’s prerogative as to which word was used. It can be extremely misleading. Our thinking of earth is the planet because Earth is the name of our planet. However, correct Biblical thinking of earth (ge) is a region.

Perhaps this one word (ge) has caused as much problem with interpreting the Revelation as any other problem. If John means Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the land (ge) of Israel, we have a totally different projection than if he means these woes to the inhabiters of the earth. We do make mention here that the whole earth was affected by what happened to Israel in A.D. 70. However, the word ge translated earth actually means “soil and region.” The angel is proclaiming Woe, woe, woe to the inhabiters of the region of Philistia.

We need to hold to the thought John gave us concerning the angel. This was obviously a prophetic voice and was probably a reference to John himself. Why some translations translate angel as eagle in this verse is not known. The word is aggelos (Greek) which is nearly always...
translated angel. At any rate, the angel would refer to John as the writer of this book which was going out to the seven churches. John was saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe ...

These woes would be an echo of what Jesus had already told the disciples, the religious leaders, and the people of Jerusalem in Matthew chapter 23.

John did exactly what he was instructed to do and that was to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Woe to every other mountain! There are yet other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! Please notice that these trumpets are actually voices!

Contemporary Theological View(s)

1. Revelation 8:4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

All Dispensationalists agree that this definitely refers to prayer and that great judgment comes after the prayers ascend up. Not many comment on the location of the saints who are praying. Perhaps it has not “dawned” on them that the prayers ascend up. It seems the prayers of raptured saints would not be depicted as ascending. However, the prayer of the saints upon earth would obviously ascend. Perhaps it is the 144,000 and those they are converting praying.

Phillips says,

*In a coming age, the imprecatory psalms (e.g. 354-6; 59:13-15; 83:14-17; and 109:6-10) will come into their own. Such prayers as these, wholly unfit for an age of grace, will be most fitting for the persecuted martyrs of the Tribulation age. So then, God waits while his tormented and terrified people on earth pray.”

As we studied in chapter 6, imprecatory prayers are not only in the Old Testament. We do find them in what Phillips calls the “age of grace” to which he says they are “unfit.” It does not seem “unfit” when we find that Paul and John prayed imprecatory type prayers (Act 13:8-11; 1Co 5:4, 5; Gal 1:8, 9; 1Ti 1:20; 2Ti 4:14-15; 3Jo 1:9, 10).

2. Revelation 8:6 ...the seven trumpets

It was extremely interesting to read the comments of Pentecost on the trumpets sounding and their effect upon the earth.

“It is suggested that the earth here may represent the land of Palestine, as it often does in this book, and the sea represents the nations.”

I have never heard a dispensationalist admit that the word ge, translated earth in Revelation, often does refer to the land of Palestine. Naturally Pentecost follows it up with the sea and brings the entire planet into the judgment.

The entire planet was affected by the desolation of Israel. Every nation became polluted by its terrible doctrine that Jesus was not the Christ. “…a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died…” (Rev 8:8, 9). What a horrible affect that false doctrine of the Jews has had upon the sea of humanity.

It is good that Pentecost acknowledges that earth is actually the land of Palestine. We will remind him of this later in some of his references. However, the normal contemporary interpretation for the trumpets upon the earth is “planet.” J. Dwight Pentecost says,

“This is a direct judgment from God. Judgment falls upon plant life, from the grass to the great trees. Every form of botanical life is affected first. Notice, however that it is only one-third, but it makes a tremendous impact upon the earth. Fire, the great enemy, is the instrument God uses. The Flood was used in the first global

8 John Phillips, Exploring Revelation, page 118

9 J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come, page 361
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judgment; now it is going to be fire. This earth is to be purified by fire. The forests and the prairies covered with grass are partially destroyed by fire.... it was 100 percent destruction in Egypt; it will be one-third of the earth.\textsuperscript{10}

3. Revelation 8:8 ....and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood

Revelation 8:10 ....And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp

Dake says,
“This mountain is evidently a large meteor ablaze with fire which falls into the sea. To John, it looked ‘as it were’ a mountain.”\textsuperscript{11}

But Van Impe says,
“This judgment is undoubtedly a giant meteor falling into the sea. Notice the phrase, as it were a mountain. This again, is a symbolic description. Always take every word of the Bible literally unless God tells you to take it figuratively. This passage is an example of the latter. Something gigantic, as or like a mountain, is cast into the sea and causes a third part of the sea to become blood.”\textsuperscript{12}

The contemporary dispensationalist make an issue about literal interpretation. They declare that any other form is spiritualizing and making the Scriptures say what one desires. Then they say something similar to the quote previous. Just before the quote previous, Van Impe said concerning verse 7,
“We have difficulty understanding this verse literally.”\textsuperscript{13}

It is probably necessary to briefly explain about the size of a star. The \textit{World Book Encyclopedia} says,
“Astronomers divide stars into four main groups by size: (1) supergiants, (2) giants, (3) medium-sized stars, and (4) dwarfs. Supergiants... The largest supergiants have diameters about a thousand times as large as the sun’s. Giants have diameters about 10 to 100 times as large as the sun’s.... Medium-Sized Stars are about as large as the sun.... Dwarfs are the smallest stars. The smallest dwarf.... has a diameter of only 5,200 miles (8,370 kilometers) - less than the distance across the continent of Asia.”\textsuperscript{14}

The smallest of stars would be the size of the continent of Asia. The largest star is a thousand times larger than our sun. There is no need to discuss what the largest star striking the earth would do. The smallest star striking the earth is inconceivable. It would knock the earth out of its orbit if there was an earth left. Perhaps a reminder of what John writes will now help.

\textit{Revelation 8:10} And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; (emphasis added)

This was not a small star. It was a \textbf{great star from heaven}. What would a great star do to earth? Knowing this, the dispensationalist writers still write,
“The third trumpet brought about the fall from heaven of a great star, blazing like a torch.”\textsuperscript{15}

We will observe some more of this literal interpretation later. We do need to note here that in the next chapter (9:1) the star is a \textit{he} star. That is correct. The star is of the male gender. Naturally Dake changes his interpretation there. We will note this shortly.

The Revelation was not and is not to be interpreted literally (see comments 1:1). To do so is a misinterpretation of the Revelation.

4. Revelation 8:11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

According to Dake, this wormwood is “another meteor.” Dake says,
“This is no doubt another meteor whose gaseous vapors will be absorbed by one-third of the waters of the rivers and fountains. They will become bitter as wormwood, and cause many men to die.”\textsuperscript{16}

Why doesn’t Dake run references to find an

\textsuperscript{10} J. Vernon McGee, \textit{Revelation Chapters 6-13}, page 90


\textsuperscript{12} Dr. Jack Van Impe, \textit{Revelation Revealed}, page 112

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid. page 111

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{World Book}, Star, 1978 edition


allusion to wormwood? The allusion is obviously to natural Israel being given the poison water by their own spiritual leaders.