

THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS

1st Trumpet, Judgment on Jerusalem

"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. Rev. 8:7"

Fulfilled: God's chosen nation, rejected Christ, their King.
Their destructive religious delusion was in failing to see CHRIST in all their religious ceremonies which pointed to Christ. They believed a lie and rejected truth. This is where the first judgment falls. Jesus cried in agonizing voice, "Your house is left to you desolate" Matt. 23:38 Jerusalem fell in a terrible siege and destruction in 70 A.D.

Biblical Symbolism used: Ezek. 5:1-4

"Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city...
a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind....
sword after them..."

The above text described the destruction of Jerusalem at the time of the exile to Babylon, yet we can see parallel symbolism.

Israel was often likened to Trees (Num. 24.5,6)

How goodly are thy tents, ... O Israel! ... As the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.

Isaiah 10.17-19 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard bearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.

Jer. 6.6 For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her.

Jer. 22:6,7,9,29 For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah... I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast them into the fire...Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods,...O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.

The trees appear to represent the proud and lofty people.

(Is. 2:11- 13) The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down...For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan."

The grass seems to represent the common inhabitants (2 Kings 19.26 Is. 37:27)

2 Kings 19:26 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.

Isaiah 40.7,8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Hail has the general meaning of a weapon God uses to meet out judgment against false religion.

(Isa 28:17) "Hail will sweep away your refuge of lies."

(Ezekiel 13:10-16) "They have seduced my people saying, Peace and there was no peace...they built up a wall...hailstones shall fall and a storm wind shall rend it...great hailstones will consume it...the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem of peace for her, and there is no peace."

Haggai 2:17 "I smote you with...hail...yet you turned not to me says the Lord.

Not only were the trees and grass symbolic, but in a literal sense we find "All trees within fifteen kilometres of the city were cut down" by the Roman armies and used for crosses, attack equipment etc. The grass didn't fare much better as the Romans dug a trench all around the city and built a dirt wall all around the city as high as the actual walls of the city.

In scripture we read that Christ had brought Israel as a goodly vine out of Egypt (Ps. 80:8) He had planted it in a fruitful hill; pruning and tending it. But they did not bring forth fruit-- they had despised and rejected God's calls-- now the destroying angel with sword uplifted stood over Jerusalem.

"Unhappy Jerusalem rent by internal dissensions, the blood of her children slain by one another's hands crimsoning her streets, while alien armies beat down her fortifications and slew her men of war...."(GC 29)

"It was the sight of Jerusalem that pierced the heart of Jesus; Jerusalem that had rejected the Son of God and scorned His love. He saw...what she might have been had she accepted Him who alone could heal her wound.....How can I give thee up? How can I see thee devoted to destruction." (DA 575-578)

The first trumpet sounds the warning of judgment on those who trust in legalism-in themselves-- for salvation.

The destruction of Jerusalem was a type of the destruction that will befall the whole earth. We see this in Matthew 24 where Jesus mingles the two events.

Christ saw in Jerusalem a symbol of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God. "The visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law."(See GC p. 36)

The first trumpet sounded its warning.

"We found there that [the Jewish Church] turned its back upon God, and joined itself to Caesar, in order to put Christ out of the way, and to execute their mind concerning Him. Then the LORD called out of that church and nation all who would obey Him, and who would serve Him, before the nation was destroyed, and He did that work by those few disciples that believed in Jesus when He ascended to heaven." A. T. Jones, 1893 General Conference Bulletin, page 51.

Its history stands as evidence that judgment will come.

It also clearly shows that SALVATION is not to be found in Jerusalem.

Do not look to Jerusalem or any temple there for salvation. Look to Jesus, Who is our High Priest in the heavenly temple for salvation.

2nd Trumpet, And the Fall of Rome

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 and a third of the living creatures in the sea died and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Fulfilled:

Announces the fall of Rome, that great empire that persecuted the Christians and later helped combine paganism with Christianity. In the first centuries of the Christian era, the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and his people, was the Roman Empire. But then Rome makes a league with the Christians, and the emperors stand in very close connection with the church, calling church councils and making church decrees, as well as elevating the bishop of Rome as the leading bishop (pope) of the church. So now imperial Rome and the church are mingled in "spiritual adultery".

Mystic Babylon of Revelation is a harlot because she is "committing fornication with the kings of the earth". (See Rev. 17) This connection always results in the "persecution of the saints", and the corruption and fall of the church. Righteousness declines.

Once again judgment against this false spiritual establishment comes. Thus it is the Roman Empire which receives the next judgment.

Like a great burning mountain the mighty Roman empire fell as the barbaric tribes came in waves leaving blood shed and confusion in their wake.

Note that the century of disasters upon Rome (378-476) happened after Rome had professed to accept Christianity. Constantine, in 312, converted. He and his successors turned Rome into a Christian empire.

Yet, for the most part it was an illusion; the pagan worship styles being converted to Christianity as destructive religious delusions that simply brought paganism into the church. Again the judgment fell on professors who had the knowledge of Christ, but refused the life changing truths of the gospel. They were not authentic Christians. Indeed, history shows that the standards of public morality did not improve with the Christianizing of the empire.

Biblical symbolism used:

The "sea" in Biblical symbolism represents large centers of people -- nations.

Isaiah 17:13 "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them and they shall flee and be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind.

The "mountain" in symbolism represents a great nation.

Jeremiah 51:24,25

"I am against thee, O destroying mountain says the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out my hand upon you and roll you down from the rocks and will make you a burnt mountain."

In Jeremiah 51, the immediate reference is to the oppressive kingdom of ancient Babylon which is compared to a "destroying mountain";, and which will be thrown down. Yet, in the New Testament times the term "Babylon" was used for Rome.

Jeremiah 51:42 "The sea is come up upon Babylon; she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof, her cities are desolation".

Jeremiah 51:49 As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain.

* Jeremiah 51:55 "Because the Lord spoiled Babylon and destroyed out of her the great voice; when her waves do roar like great waters, the spoiler came upon her."

* Jeremiah 51:64 "Thus shall Babylon sink."

The parallels to the second trumpet are striking.
A great mountain referring to a great empire (this time Rome)
burning
sinking into the sea.

Imperial Rome destroyed Jerusalem.
Rome persecuted the Christians.
Rome combined their paganism with Christianity
Rome enforced the Roman Catholic religion on all her subjects.
Rome elevated the Roman Bishop as the Pontifex Maximus
But Imperial Rome received her judgment.

The "fish" of the sea, are individual people, the living "schools" of fish in the sea of humanity."

* Ezekiel 29 4,5 "I will put hooks in your jaw and cause the fish of your rivers to stick to your scales....and I will leave thee and all the fish of your rivers , thou shalt fall upon the open field.

*Jer. 16.16 "Behold, I will send for many fishers, says the LORD, and they shall fish them;"

The ships of the sea are a symbol of merchandize and wealth, trade and commerce.

* Ez. 27:25-27 "Thy riches and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners and thy pilots....shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of they ruin.
Thus it is the Roman Empire which receives the second trumpet judgment.

Just like in Jeremiah 51 the one who destroyed Jerusalem is now facing her own judgment of destruction.

Like a great burning mountain the mighty Roman Empire fell as the barbaric tribes came in waves, like the waves of the sea, leaving bloodshed and confusion in their wake.

Remember that the century of disasters (378-476) happened after Rome had professed to accept Christianity. Again the judgment fell on professors who had the knowledge of Christ, but refused the life changing truths of the gospel. They were not authentic Christians. Indeed, history shows that the standards of public morality did not improve with the Christianizing of the empire.

Future issues:

Do not look to any great nation for your salvation.

Interesting parallels of Jeremiah 51's symbolic connections to the second trumpet now draw ones attention to Rev. 18-- for the similarities are rather striking.

The merchants

The mighty city Babylon,

Sea trade

A Mighty angel taking a huge stone and casting it into the sea, saying, thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more.

Rome too foreshadows a time when government will pass religious laws and "those who honor God's law are accused of bringing judgments upon the world, ...and Satan will excite to still greater intensity the spirit of hatred and persecution." (GC 614) But God will pour out judgment upon those who oppress His people.

THIRD TRUMPET, The Rise of Papacy

The vast empire of Rome crumbled to pieces, and from its ruins rose that mighty power, the Roman Catholic Church. This church boasts of her infallibility and her hereditary religion, yet she received her seat from Rome and changed the living waters of the gospel into wormwood.

We are faced with another destructive religious delusion.

A great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the fountains of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the water, because it was made bitter.

A great star fell The fallen star is the power behind all these destructive religious delusions. There came a time when paganism in the Roman Empire fell before the advancing form of Christianity. As more and more power was transferred upon the pope we see that "the dragon had given to the beast 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.'" that is, Satan elevated to power and then began to work through the papal system, just as he had formerly worked through the Roman Empire.

Fulfillment: The rise of Papal Rome.

The rivers and fountains of water are symbolic of the "waters" of life which Christ offers to all who come to Him, if they partake of this "living water" they will never thirst, they will have eternal life. But the Papal system filled those waters with "**wormwood**" and made them bitter. Polluting the sweet waters of the gospel of truth and life, with wormwood doctrines that lead only to death. And many died of the poisoned doctrines. It is the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

The warning here is not so much for immediate physical destruction, but a warning against spiritual and eternal destruction. It's a warning that people need to seek out truth as for a priceless treasure and not simply follow the "accepted" modes of Christianity. For Satan, clothed in garments of Christianity and working through a Christian system, is offering poisoned water.

Biblical symbolism used:

The name of the star is **WORMWOOD**:

Deut 29:17-19,24-26 "We came through the nations which you passed by; and you have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them: Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turns away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that bears gall and wormwood;... when he hears the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart..."

"Why has the LORD done thus unto this land? what is the meaning of the heat of this great anger?"

Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:"

Jeremiah 9.13-16 And the LORD said, Because they have forsaken my which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;

But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them:

Therefore this said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

Jer. 23.14-17 I have also seen in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

Therefore is what the LORD of hosts says concerning the prophets; Behold, 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.

This says the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD has said, You shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walks after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

Amos 5.7 "Ye who turn judgment to wormwood and leave off righteousness in the earth, "

Wormwood is false doctrines and beliefs, Wormwood is turning away from truth and following other gods.

Compare with 2 Thess. 2:3-12 " comes a falling away...mystery of iniquity...exalts himself above all that is called God...because they receive not the love of truth God sends delusion, that they should believe a lie, damned who believe not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

The star from heaven burning as it were a lamp.

This is the false "religious system" of the false prophets and teachers we saw in the above verses, teaching the false doctrines; a religious leaders representing a Christian system, acting as "lamps" to guide the people.

Jude 1.4,13 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ....Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

Daniel shows the true stars.

Dan. 12.3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

The Lamp

Pr. 6.23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light;

Ps. 119.105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

The star falling from heaven pretends to be THE LAMP, but it is a counterfeit religious system teaching false doctrines containing counterfeit commandments and counterfeit "light".

Fallen FROM HEAVEN

Rev. 14:8 "Fallen, Fallen, Babylon is fallen that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (False doctrines)

The third trumpet— revealed Christianity's poisoned truth during the rise of the Papal system.

It parallels with the 3rd seal: the black horse, the weigh scales, the high prices for wheat, barley, depicting that people need to carefully weigh the evidence in order to find truth -- truth is hard to find, there is a famine for the "bread of life".

What a warning this message contains— the papal system poisoned the truth of the covenants, the streams of living water. God calls us to "worship HIM that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters." The Sabbath has a large part to play in this — the truths were brought forth, but most chose to continue to drink the wormwood water of bitter poison. "Babylon made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."(Rev. 14:8) And she and her followers will end up "drinking the wine of the wrath of God, poured out without mixture. (Rev. 14:8)

We must study the warnings of the trumpets past if we would know what the issues of the future are. If we do not understand the trumpet warnings of the past, we will BE SWEEP AWAY by the delusions that will sweep the religious world.

This foreshadows the woman of Revelation 17 with her cup of wine, drunk with the blood of saints; she too, will receive her judgment.

Do not look for SALVATION in the Papal System.

The Fourth Trumpet, Papacy continued

The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night. Rev. 8:12

The obscuring of truth.

The third trumpet warned that the Christian church is taken over by the "fallen star". The living waters of salvation's truths were being turned into bitter, poisonous "wormwood".

The fourth trumpet warns of more destructive religious delusions. It parallels the fourth seal where we see the pale horse, death, hell -- The pale horse was an indication of still greater departure from the spirit of truth than the black one. Thousands put to death by the sword, by starvation, and by wild beasts; and worse than killing the body, many more suffered spiritual death because of the great darkness that hid the Word of Life.

Christ's heavenly ministry is obscured from the sight of the inhabitants of a large section of the earth. This parallels Daniel 8 where the little horn reaches up to heaven and casts down stars and exalts himself as high as the Prince of the host and casts down the place of His sanctuary.

The key issue in both Daniel and Revelation is the sanctuary in heaven where Christ is ministering for our redemption. This sanctuary truth was obscured from the people and an earthly system put in its place.

The light of truth, the light of heaven, was darkened -- causing great darkness in a large area of the world. This is a graphic depiction of the "dark ages".

This time period is fully entered into with the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire in which the Pope fully disconnected with the eastern Emperor and crowned Charlemagne, Pepin's son, as the head of the whole Roman Empire. It meant the union of church and state; the union of the papacy with the empire for more than a thousand years. It meant that Charlemagne (and his successors) would wield his military might throughout Europe to spread the papal church.

"The Saxon wars of Charlemagne, which added almost the whole of Germany to his dominions (Remember Pepin and Charlemagne were originally rulers of the Franks) were avowedly religious wars... The declared object of his invasions, according to his biographer, was the extinction of heathenism; subjection to the Christian faith or extermination. Throughout the war Charlemagne endeavored to subdue the tribes as he went on by the terror of his arms and terrible indeed were those arms!" (Milman, History of Latin Christianity, Vol. 2 pp. 216, 220)

Europe was being brought more firmly under fist of the Catholic Union.

What is the symbolic meaning of LIGHT in scripture?

What is the symbolic meaning of DARKNESS in scripture?

The sun, moon and stars were created to give light to the earth. Thus they also become symbolic of the source of spiritual light.

Malachi 4.2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;

2 Cor. 4.6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Matt. 4.16 "The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and to those who were sitting in the land and in the shadow of death, upon them a light dawned".

John 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

It is through Christ that people are rescued from the realms of darkness and brought into God's marvelous light. (Col.1:13-14, 1 Peter 2:9)

It's also interesting to note that the end of this period was marked with signs in the sun, moon and stars. (Matt. 24.29)

This too, foreshadows the day when people will search for truth, but will not find it. The plague of darkness. The next two trumpets I believe are judgments on the "apostate church".