

The First Trumpet: Hail and Fire Mixed with Blood Were Hurlled Down Upon the Earth 8: 6-7

DIG: What parallels or repeated patterns do you see between the opening of the seals and sounding of the trumpets? How will mankind react to this natural disaster?

REFLECT: How does God get your attention today? Does He have to go to drastic measures to tap you on the shoulder? Or are you eagerly waiting for His direction?

With the blowing of **the first trumpet**, the second major series of judgments begins. The first four seals dealt with the natural consequences of human sin; however, the first four trumpets reveal the active involvement of **the Lord** in bringing **wrath** upon a wicked world, determined in its opposition to **YHVH**. As the intensity of the judgments increase, so does their refusal to repent (**9:20-21, 16:9, 11 and 21**). As a result, the Church, made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers (**Ephesians 2:14**), is not in view here **for God did not appoint us to suffer wrath (First Thessalonians 5:9)**.

The angels had apparently been waiting in readiness with **their trumpets** for about half an hour, as **John** watched. But suddenly there was activity. **Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them**. They were obedient and had probably waited a long time to perform **their service for ADONAI (Psalm 103:19-21)**. When **their trumpets** blow it will signal a great angelic military assault **upon the earth**. It will be shock and awe, the greatest physical upheaval experienced by **the earth** since the Great Flood.

Back down on **the earth**, after the half-hour of silence, **the inhabitants of the earth (11:10)** start to think that maybe things were returning to normal. But just as **they** start to crawl out of **their** caves and from under rocks where **they** foolishly tried to hide from **God's** wrath during the sixth seal (**6:15-17**), **they** will be hit with the **first trumpet** judgment.

The first angel sounded his shofar, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurlled down upon the earth. Accompanying the pelting of hailstones will be balls of **fire** and drops of **blood**. **The inhabitants of the earth** will be terrified. Once before in human history a similar calamity overtook Egypt during the seventh plague (see my

commentary on **Exodus Bq - The Seventh Plague of Hail**). The difference being that the Egyptian calamity was local, but this judgment will be worldwide. It will most certainly be so unusual that mankind will be forced to recognize that it is a divine judgment. As with all the seal, trumpet and bowl judgments, since the results are literal, it is reasonable to take the judgments as being literal also.²⁴⁸

Many have attempted to explain the plagues of Egypt and the judgments of the Great Tribulation as totally natural phenomena. Their intent is to eliminate **ADONAI** from the equation, hence the need for repentance. However, it is important to understand that the miracles **the LORD** performs are both **providential** and **creative**.²⁴⁹ Sometimes **the Lord** uses things that **He** has already created, like blood, frogs, gnats, flies, livestock, boils, thunder, hail, fire or rain in such a way (or combination, like a burning bush or **hail mixed with blood**) to make it a **providential** miracle (through the wisdom, care and guidance of **God**). In other miracles **He** creates something out of nothing, like matter (**Genesis 1:1**), wine (**John 2:1-11**), life (**Matthew 9:18-19, 23-25; Luke 7:11-15; John 11:1-44**), eyesight (**Matthew 9:27-31; John 9:1-32**), speech and hearing (**Mark 7:31-37**), or fish and bread (**John 6:5-13**). Those are **creative** miracles. But whether a **providential** miracle or a **creative** miracle, they are both miracles of **ADONAI**.

Great devastation will follow in the wake of **God's** wrath; **a third of the earth** will be **burned up**, making the soil in which the crops are grown unusable. The fact that two-thirds of **the earth** was *not burned up* will show that although **the Lord** will bring His wrath upon **the earth**, it was not completed and time remained for mankind to repent.

A third of the trees will also be **burned up**, destroying fruit all over **the earth**. And finally **all the green grass was burned up**. The fires will ignite **the trees** and **the grass** around the world, already parched from the prolonged drought, and will leave the ground scorched, with fully **a third** of the world's forest will be **burned** to the ground. Fire, the great enemy, is the instrument **God** will use. The Flood was used in the first global judgment (see my commentary on **Genesis Cj - The Flood**), but in the end times it will be fire.²⁵⁰ **The earth** will be purified by fire. The effects of such catastrophic fires will be widespread and devastating, including the destruction of crops, death of animals on a massive scale, loss of wood for construction, and the destruction of watersheds.²⁵¹

This will be a literal judgment upon the ecosystem in the same way the seventh plague of Egypt was literal (see above). When hail came down in Egypt we are told that **hail struck everything growing in the fields and stripped every tree (Exodus 9:25)**. **ADONAI** destroyed all of Egypt in the days of the exodus, but **He** will destroy **one-third of the earth** during **the first trumpet** judgment.

Earth Day will be a gloomy and dismal affair that year, and Mother Nature or the Green Party won't be any help at all. In fact, just as the Egyptians looked to their gods for relief from the ten plagues but got none, **the peoples of the earth (1:7)** will look to **their** unholy trinity of Satan, the antichrist and the false prophet for relief from **their** seal, **trumpet** and bowl judgments, but just as before, **they** will find none.