

What Saith the Scripture?

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Tribulation Timeline: When Shall These Things Be? (Part 3)

"And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"
(Matthew 24:3).

by Tom Stewart
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The Seven Trumpet Judgments

1. The 1st Trumpet judgment is hailstones, fire, and blood cast down upon the earth. The result is 1/3 of all trees and all green grass are destroyed by fire. Moses and Elijah already have been given by God the ability to stop rain on the planet during the last half of the Tribulation Week (Revelation 11:6). Very possibly, these two prophets will be the visible connection between God, "The Judge of All the Earth" (Genesis 18:25), and the people affected by these cataclysmic world judgments. The effect of this particular judgment will devastate the planet, and will only worsen as the Week progresses. "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" (Revelation 8:7).

a. Again, the 1st Trumpet judgment follows on the heels of the 7th Seal judgment. As the 7th Seal judgment and its 1/2 hour of silence (Revelation 8:1) precede and prepare for the Antichrist's abomination of desolation at the middle of the Tribulation Week, the 1st Trumpet judgment seems to be the LORD's response to the obvious question: 'Who really is the true God?'

b. Five of the Trumpet judgments affect 1/3 of something. Possibly because a complete affecting of those things would cause the end of the Week to come too soon. The Trumpet judgments stretch from immediately after the middle of the Week to 8 days before the last day of Daniel's 70th Week.

c. Comets are the dirty snowballs which orbit the sun. Some could be interstellar travelers. The "hail and fire" of this Trumpet judgment could come from such a comet. Because a comet has an elliptical path that can be difficult to predict, like that of Hale Bopp, one can come seemingly out of nowhere with little warning to do great damage. Of course, the Creator providentially directs the when, where, and who of what is affected.

2. The 2nd Trumpet judgment is another instance of God casting a heavenly body to earth. This time it is described as a "great mountain burning with fire" (Revelation 8:8). An asteroid impact in the sea could have the effect of wiping out 1/3 of all of life in the sea as well as ships in the area of contact. This would probably be larger than the type of meteorite that impacted Arizona or Siberia. An asteroid of the Ceres type (470 miles in diameter) could be chosen by God, as well as any of the myriads in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, as an instrument of Divine judgment. "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; 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" (Revelation 8:8-9).

a. This Trumpet judgment sounds on approximately day 1,438 of the Tribulation Week. This is about 4 prophetic years into the Week. The time is about 178 days or 6 months after the 1st Trumpet judgment-- if the first four Trumpets are spaced evenly between the 1st and 5th Trumpets. The 5th Trumpet (by calculation) occurs about 549 days before the end of the Week.

b. The effect of an asteroid striking the sea could produce a tsunami or tidal wave that could wipe out a large city such as Sydney, Australia or Tokyo, Japan. Secular scientists have been developing the statistical odds of such an event, without any attempt to tie it to Biblical prophecy.

3. The 3rd Trumpet judgment is the star called Wormwood crashing down upon the rivers and the springs or sources of the fresh water. The water becomes bitter and causes many to die. "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; 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" (Revelation 8:10-11).

a. The Greek word for "star" is aster. From this we get the word asteroid. Wormwood is the name of an asteroid that God sends against man's drinking water supply. He destroys 1/3 of the fresh water with bitterness-- only enough to cause man to be judged without totally annihilating mankind. Again, repentance is still held out to man as an option.

b. This Trumpet sounds on approximately day 1,616 of the Week, which is 4 1/2 prophetic years into the Week. All of this occurs about 178 days or 6 months after the 2nd Trumpet judgment-- if the first four Trumpets are spaced evenly between the 1st and 5th Trumpets.

4. The 4th Trumpet judgment causes the light of the sun, moon, and stars to be lessened by 1/3. In keeping with the concept of the LORD casting asteroids down upon the planet Earth, smoke in some way might be generated to block out the light. Marilyn J. Agee's book, *The End of the Age* (pp. 186-187), suggested the 1st four Trumpet judgments would be associated with the impact of asteroids. "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" (Revelation 8:12).

a. Isn't it interesting that we are still having a hard time imagining the horror of the judgments of the Living God against the wicked, this close to the end? It seems that few commentators want to sensationalize their writings with guesses as to the nature of these judgments. And you, the reader, will probably determine firsthand what others have not even guessed.

b. The 1st four Trumpets are directed against the creation that man inhabits; while the next three Trumpets will be pointed directly at wicked men.

c. Man's problem is sin. Sin is walking contrary to what man knows of God. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).

As much fear, pain, suffering, and death as will be inflicted by Antichrist, the LORD God Almighty is still THE power to be reckoned with! "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28).

d. This 4th Trumpet sounds on approximately day 1,794 of the Week, which is about 5 prophetic years into the Week. Again, if the first four Trumpets are spaced evenly between the 1st and 5th Trumpets, this Trumpet will sound about 178 days or 6 months after the 3rd Trumpet.

5. The 5th Trumpet judgment is the plague of demonic locusts that the LORD releases upon wicked men for 5 months. The apocalyptic locusts are ruled by Satan. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon" (Revelation 9:1-11).

a. This shows us that demons-- the enemies of God and righteous mankind-- take the form that conforms to the times. That form is whatever the True God allows. Legends of leprechauns, fairies, wizards, shaman, witches, etc. have been scoffed at by the secular and Christian communities, but it has been unknown or forgotten that these have their source in the manifestation of demons (fallen angels) as angels of light. Satan now appeals to the intellectual pride of modern, scientific man-- who rejects all that he cannot see and measure with his 'scientific method'-- by transforming himself and his demons into a more culturally acceptable form-- extraterrestrials, aliens, UFO's, or 'space brothers'. These ET's are believable to the scientific culture because they are physically manifested. They can be recorded by radar, photography, etc. They can be tracked by radar moving at unbelievable speeds, while turning at right angles. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).

b. It is this very conceit of man that disqualifies him from pleasing God, while opening him to the deception of the Devil. Scripture describes faith: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). When faith in God is rejected, only deception remains:

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11). The ultimate lie is that Antichrist is the true God: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

c. This 5th Trumpet sounds on approximately day 1,972 of the Week, which is about 5 1/2 prophetic years into the Week, or 178 days (6 months) after the 4th Trumpet. The locusts' ability is to hurt men for 5 months or 150 days.

6. The 6th Trumpet judgment is the slaughter of 1/3 of all remaining men by wicked angels as they are assisted by an army of 200,000,000 demonic horsemen. The 4th Seal judgment has already slain 1/4 of all mankind. By official biblical count, this would amount to 1/2 of all mankind being killed by these two judgments. "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 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. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. 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. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts" (Revelation 9:13-21).

a. Because man was created on the 6th day of creation, six is the number of man. Accordingly, the Sabbath-Millennium gives man six 1,000 year days for a total of 6,000 years before the last 1,000 years or Sabbath-Millennial day takes place-- for a total of seven days or 7,000 years. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the WORD of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same WORD are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the LORD as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:3-8).

b. Now you can see how important it was for the enemies of God to establish scientifically an age to the material world that would extend inestimably into long periods of time. Evolution has

lent itself to this cause greatly. Thus, modern, scientific man has been blinded to the true closeness we are to standing face to face with our Creator and Judge. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

c. Archbishop Usher (1650), of the Church of England, assembled what was once recorded in the King James Version of the Bible (1611) as the 'Received Chronology'. Usher placed the Creation of Genesis 1 at 4004 BC. That would give approximately 2,000 years from the end of the year 1 BC until the Millennium would begin about 2000 AD. Even Satan's New Age movement is heralding a Millennium-like event at this time. Of course this will be the counterfeit introduction of their Maitreya as Christ.

d. Why has the Church forgotten what the early Christians understood about the approaching Millennial reign of Jesus Christ on planet Earth? We forgot because we wanted more to be accepted by the world than we wanted the pleasure of our LORD. Sight versus faith. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

e. The non-canonical Epistle of Barnabas written in the formative years of the early Church taught the Sabbath-Millennium position, that 6,000 years of man on this planet would be followed by Christ's Millennial reign. The Rationalism that arose in Germany during the 1800's translated into the Liberalism of the 1900's. As the scientific method and industrialism gained ground, faith in the Word of God diminished. Why? Because true science must be opposed to true Christianity? No, but because we have been overcome by pride in what we deem is our success and accomplishment, rather than humbly thanking God for allowing, guiding, and helping us to accomplish what He commanded us to do from the beginning. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:27-28).

f. To continue with why the Church has forgotten the nearness of the 'all but upon us' Millennial reign of the LORD Jesus Christ... We lost the true Christian offensive when we began to rely upon a mere arm of flesh than upon the Spirit of God and His Almighty Sword of the Spirit. We began to rely more upon our scientific proofs of the efficacy and viability of Christianity than upon the pouring out of the Spirit. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

g. The scientific method, like any other tool, can and has been used to serve the Living God. It can and may prove God to the intellect, but only faith can receive God. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

h. Instead of being able to approximate the sounding of the 6th Trumpet, we haven't thought about it, or we relegated it to 'sometime during the Tribulation'. Well, the 6th Trumpet will sound on approximately day 2,122 of Daniel's 70th Week, which is about one month shy of 6 prophetic years into the Week. It occurs 150 days after the 5th Trumpet, and it lasts for 391 days and 1 hour (a year, a month, a day, and an hour).

i. Who needs to know this? You, my reader, may need to know this. Our LORD has promised that He would tell us when and what He would do before He would do it. "Surely the LORD GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). This information may be used by the Spirit to bring you through this difficult Week to the Rapture, or to help you do as the LORD Jesus did-- Who "witnessed a good confession" (1 Timothy 6:13) through His suffering and death.

7. The 7th Trumpet judgment is the announcement that the kingdoms of this world are now become the kingdom of Christ. This is the prelude to the opening of the Vials of the wrath of God. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O LORD God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy Name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in His temple the Ark of His Testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail" (Revelation 11:15-19).

a. This is the judgment that is identified with the Last Trump, the one the ancient Jews identified with the Day of the Awakening Blast [Yom Teruah] of the shofar (ram's horn) before Jehovah, their King. "With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King" (Psalm 98:6).

b. The Church age also reaches its' conclusion at the sounding of the 7th Trumpet. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" (Revelation 10:7). The Church is a mystery in that it was not understood until after the time of Christ's first coming that the Gentiles had any part of Jehovah. Now both Jew and Gentile would be fellow heirs to Christ by means of the Church, which is the body of Christ. "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church" (Colossians 1:18). "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32). "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:26-27).

c. On Tishri 1 (Rosh HaShanah) of the Jewish calendar, the 7th Trumpet sounds in fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets as declared by the LORD to Moses in Leviticus 23. "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD" (Leviticus 23:23-25).

d. The 7th Trumpet sounds 8 days prior to the last day of the Tribulation Week on day 2,512 of that Week.

e. This can properly be called the Second "Come Up Hither", or the Rapture, because the LORD resurrects His two prophets and gives the command to Moses and Elijah, approximately one hour prior to this 7th Trumpet judgment, to "Come up hither". "And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from Heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to Heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of Heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:11-15).

f. Remember, the First "Come Up Hither" (called the Pre-Tribulational Rapture by most-- I label it the First "Come Up Hither" to distinguish it from the Second "Come Up Hither") takes place before the Tribulation Week begins. "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in Heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter" (Revelation 4:1).

g. Why would the LORD Jesus have two "Come Up Hither"s? First, because His Word plainly declares so in Revelation 4:1 and 11:12. Second, because it is in keeping with His just desire to not punish the righteous with the wicked. "That be far from Thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from Thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25). Third, because it is in keeping with His character as the Good Shepherd to lovingly protect His sheep. "I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine" (John 10:11-14). Fourth, why should our LORD allow even the disobedient and foolish (the backslidden) to participate in this joyous event when sin still is being entertained? Jesus' parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 demonstrates that though we are saved by grace and not works, we must be sober to be allowed to participate in the First "Come Up Hither". "Then shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, LORD, LORD, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:1-13). Fifth, it is entirely like the LORD Jesus to pursue even His backslidden people, who will not be

ready to obey the command before the Tribulation Week begins to "Come Up Hither", until they are ready to obediently come to Him, whether by a martyr's death or by Rapture.

"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28). Finally, it is His solemn promise to deliver His people, who are trusting under the shadow of His wings, from the time of "temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell on the earth" (Revelation 3:10b). "Because thou hast kept the WORD of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation" (Revelation 3:10a). Why wouldn't we accept a promise like this for all we could receive?... "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).