

## THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS, REVELATION 8:7-13

Well let's turn in our Bibles please to the book Revelation, chapter 8. The focus of our study today is going to be on verses 7 to 13; however, we will read the entire chapter together in order to pick up the context. Revelation chapter 8, verses 1 through 13:

“<sup>1</sup> And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

“<sup>2</sup> And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.  
<sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

“<sup>7</sup> 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.

“<sup>8</sup> 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; <sup>9</sup> 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.

“<sup>10</sup> 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; <sup>11</sup> 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.

“<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

As we move into chapter 8 of Revelation, we have now entered into the third parallel section of this book. We said in our introduction to the book of Revelation that it's structured in seven parallel sections, each of which takes us on a journey from the first coming of Christ to the second coming of Christ.

The first parallel section in chapters 1 through 3 told us what the spiritual warfare of the churches would look like between the first and second comings of Christ. And so as we looked

at these seven letters to the seven churches, we saw what spiritual warfare in the churches would consist of between the first and second comings.

The second parallel section that we looked at in chapters 4 through 7 told us how evil men would conduct themselves in this world and toward Christians between the first and the second coming of Christ. We saw as we looked at the seven seals that evil men would pursue conquest and war, and they would cause famine and death, and they would engage in persecution of the Christians.

Today we enter this third parallel section in chapters 8 through 11, in which the seven trumpets of judgment sound. And the point of these seven trumpets is that the work of the wicked against Christ and His people in this present age, will not go unanswered by God in this present age.

During this present age, these trumpet judgments are God's answer to the prayers of His saints for God's vengeance and justice to be executed against their persecutors. We saw that the Christians were praying in chapter 6 and verse 10 for God to exercise vengeance upon their persecutors. We saw that these prayers were offered once again in chapter 8, verses 3 and 4. The saints are crying out to God in this age against their persecutors, and God's response to those prayers in this age is the seven trumpets.

The purpose of the trumpets is to bring temporal physical and spiritual judgments on the wicked as partial retribution for the evil that they are doing to the saints, and have done to the saints. These seven trumpets that bring temporal physical and spiritual judgments on the wicked are not only a partial retribution for the evil they have done to the saints, they are also a powerful incentive for these wicked men to repent of the evil they are doing to the saints, and to turn to God in humility and faith *before* the final wrath of God falls upon them. The trumpets are a little sample in this age, of the final wrath that is going to come at the end of the age.

And so the trumpets, being a sample of God's wrath to come, are a warning to the wicked to flee from the far greater wrath that will be poured out on the final judgment, if they continue in their defiance of God. The point is, the wicked are going to experience much judgment from God in this age for the evil that they do, and the trumpets tell us what those judgments will look like.

These trumpet judgments are not the final and they are not the full expression of God's vengeance against those who have persecuted and martyred His people. They are, instead, a promise of the wrath to come and a sample of the wrath to come if these people do not repent. God is well aware of the work of the wicked in this age, and God is well aware of the pain of His people and the prayers of His people regarding the pain that is happening to them in this age, and God is moving right now in this age in answer to our prayers to bring judgment on the wicked.

So we want to look at these trumpet judgments, and we want to see what these judgments look like, and as we consider together these trumpet judgments, we want to recognize that these are not simply individual judgments that occur one time and then they are over. Rather, these trumpet judgments represent categories of judgments that occur in every generation, categories

of judgments that occur all around the globe, and categories of judgments that occur among all people and in all nations.

Now these first four trumpets which we will be looking at today speak about the calamities of nature that God brings upon the wicked for their evil works, and such calamities in the realm of nature occur in every generation and they occur all around the world. So these calamities in the realm of nature that God brings to pass have been occurring in the first century, in the second century, in the third century, and clear up to our century, and will continue to occur until Jesus returns again. The calamities in the realm of nature that God brings to pass are such that they cannot be escaped. The reason why is because we see that these trumpets and the calamities that they speak of arise out of every realm of nature and they occur in every place in the world.

So we see in the first trumpet, calamities that occur on the land; in the second trumpet, we see calamities that occur in the sea; in the third trumpet, we see calamities that occur with reference to the inland waters, that is, the fresh waters; and then in the fourth trumpet, we see the calamities that occur in the atmosphere and the heavenly bodies.

There is no place and there are no people that can escape the avenging hand of God as He acts in the realm of nature to execute His wrath upon them, irrespective of the realm of nature they might happen to be in. People might think, Well, there's problems in the land—I'll get in my boat and go out in the sea. Well, there's problems in the sea—I'll go into a lake. Well, there's problems there, too—I'll get my airplane and I'll fly up in the sky. There's no place you can go in nature, in this world, to escape the wrath of God.

People talk about so-called “natural disasters” that occur in this world. When there's a tidal wave, when there's a tornado, when there's a hurricane, people say, Oh, those are “natural disasters.” And when we use this kind of language, this is to assume that nature acts independently of God and that God is not in control of nature—it's just the outcome of impersonal forces and law operating. Listen to me carefully: There are no natural disasters. There are only acts of God in the realm of nature. In fact, if you get out your homeowner's insurance policy, you'll find that phrase “acts of God” contained within it.

Now listen to me: God is either in control of everything, or else God is control of nothing. If, as Ephesians 1:11 says, “He works all things after the counsel of His own will,” then that has to include all of the disasters that occur in the realm of nature. Every disaster in the realm of nature is the judgment of God against the wicked, and it is the voice of God calling the wicked to repentance. “Acts of nature” are acts of God, and they need to be seen and understood as messages from God, either to convey His blessing or to convey His wrath.

Now some acts of God in the realm of nature convey His blessings—the food we enjoy, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the animals that we interact with. All of these things are gifts of God, and they show the goodness of God to us. But in the case of these first four trumpets of judgment, some acts of God in the realm of nature convey His wrath against the wicked, and are

intended as punishment for sin. God makes His wrath known in the disasters of nature, and these first four trumpets tell us what these disasters of nature look like.

Now as we said last week, these trumpet judgments occur during the same time period and in parallel with the opening of the seals. So we saw that the seals began to be opened with the first coming of Christ and they ended with the second coming. In the same way, the trumpets began with the first coming and they end with the second coming.

So while the wicked are riding, while the four horsemen are riding and doing their wicked work of conquest and war and famine and death and persecution, at the same time, the trumpets are sounding—judgments of God’s wrath against them, warning them to stop that behavior and to repent of it lest they experience the greater wrath to come.

The seals show the evil work of evil men and the trials that believers must endure at their hands, but the trumpets show the avenging work of a wrathful God, and the judgments that the wicked must endure at the hands of God. So these two themes are playing out through the time period between the first and the second coming of Christ, and both can be seen operating in parallel during that time.

With that as introduction, let us consider together these four trumpets. In the first place then this morning, let’s consider together the first trumpet. The first trumpet is in verse 7. Notice it says, “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.”

Now as we said last week as we looked at verses 1 through 6, these trumpet judgments are patterned after the plagues of Exodus. And just like the Exodus plagues, they are designed to punish the persecutors of the people of God and to punish the hardness of heart which those persecutors have and the evil that they have done. Just like the plagues of Egypt finally resulted in Israel being liberated from her persecutors and being brought into the promised land, so the trumpets of this age will finally result in God’s new Israel being liberated from her persecutors and being brought into the promised land of the new heavens and the new earth.

So what we have here in these judgments is a parallel to the exodus of Israel out of Egypt. God sent great plagues upon the wicked in Egypt. The result and the outcome was the deliverance of the people of God out of the evil land of Egypt and into the land of promise. And in this age, God is sending great plagues upon evil humanity. The result and the outcome will be the deliverance of believers out of this present evil world, which is our Egypt, and into the promised land of the new heavens and the new earth. And this is where these seven trumpets are leading us.

So we see that this first trumpet, then, corresponds to the plague of hail and fire that fell on Egypt in Exodus chapter 9, verses 22 to 25. Notice it says in verse 7, the trumpet “sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood.” Now this is actually an intensification of the

Egyptian plague. In the Egyptian plague there was hail and fire, but here the additional element of “blood” is mentioned, and the blood is mixed in with the hail and the fire.

Furthermore, this first trumpet plague is not directed at a single nation, but rather, it fell upon the entire earth; that is, upon all the land where trees and grass grow. And clearly, God is causing these disasters, He’s the one causing this hail and this fire and this blood, it says, to be “cast upon the earth.” As a result, a third part of the trees are burned up, and all of the green grass.

Now we said when we introduced the book of Revelation that it uses dramatic visual symbolic imagery, and this of course is symbolic language. Symbolic language is being used here of this first trumpet, and it indicates that God will afflict the persecutors of the Church with various disasters that will take place upon the land. This would include things like earthquakes, and tornados, and forest fires, and epidemic diseases, droughts, crop failures, hurricanes, and other damaging events that affect the land and those that live upon it.

So under this symbolic imagery of the falling of this hail and fire and blood on the earth, which then burns up a third of the trees and all of the green grass, is conveyed the reality of all of the disasters that occur in the realm of nature that affect the land, all of which are acts of God in judgment and wrath upon the wicked of the earth. The hail and the fire and the blood symbolize any kind of destruction which at any time damages the land on which men live, and of course damages the men who live on that land. That it destroys only one third of the trees shows the limited nature of these judgments that God sends upon the earth. That is, the number “one third” is used to indicate that these are partial judgments, not total judgments.

As you recall, when we studied numerology as we introduced the book of Revelation, we saw that the division of primary numbers represented a diminished level of the meaning and the symbolic significance of those numbers. We saw that “three” is the number of perfection; it is the number of completion; it is the number of finality. By employing a division of that number, “one third,” God is telling us that these judgments are imperfect, He’s telling us these judgments are incomplete, and He’s telling us that these judgments are temporal manifestations of the final judgment and justice of God. Though great destructions will afflict the earth, the earth will not be destroyed. Though distresses will afflict mankind, the majority of mankind will survive. These are partial judgments, not perfect judgments. They are incomplete judgments, not final and finished judgments.

Having, then, seen the first trumpet in verse 7, notice in the second place the second trumpet, mentioned to us in verses 8 through 9. Notice it says in verse 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; <sup>9</sup> 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.”

Now we saw that the first trumpet affected the land, where the trees and the grass grow. But this second trumpet affects the sea, that is, the ocean. Here a great object—it doesn’t say it is a

mountain, it says, *as it were* a mountain—burning with fire, is cast into the sea. And the results are dramatic. A third part of the sea becomes blood; in a third part of the sea creatures die; a third part of the ships are destroyed. And once again, this number “one third” speaks of a partial judgment, not a total judgment; an incomplete judgment, not a perfect judgment.

Now this second trumpet corresponds, once again, to one of the Egyptian plagues. It corresponds to the plague of Exodus 7, verses 20 to 21, where the waters were turned to blood and the fish in the waters died. And this blazing object that is cast into the sea symbolizes the terror of God’s judgment upon the sea.

God has brought many disasters upon the seas of this world, and many people have perished on the ocean as a result of them. For example, the great tidal wave of 2004 in the Indian Ocean killed 230,000 people in one day. And do you realize there have been eleven major earthquakes in the sea since 2004, causing great tidal waves, and causing tens of thousands of more people to die in the last 12 years alone? I looked up the history of tidal waves, and the list is just gigantic—clear back as far as human history goes, there’s a record of massive tidal waves destroying massive numbers of people. And then, due to storms and high waves, hundreds of thousands, if not millions of ships have perished on the oceans, with the loss of innumerable lives. The sea affords no refuge from God’s wrath, as Jonah found out to his dismay.

If the loss of lives and property in all the sea disasters through all the centuries since Christ came could be calculated, it would be seen that God’s wrath has been expressed in a massive way upon those who dwell on, take shipping across, or dwell next to the oceans of the world.

Well that brings us then to the third trumpet. Having seen the first trumpet in verse 7, and the second trumpet in verses 8 and 9, notice the third trumpet in verses 10 to 11. Verse 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; <sup>11</sup> 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.”

So the first trumpet affected the land, and the second trumpet affected the sea, and now the third trumpet of God’s judgment affects the inland waters—that is, the springs and the wells and the rivers and the lakes. All fresh water on land is comprehended by this trumpet.

Here we have the symbolic imagery of a burning star falling from heaven and impacting and affecting all the fresh water supplies on the earth. The star is called “Wormwood.” Wormwood is a plant that grows in the Middle East, and it has a strong and very bitter taste. It’s frequently used in the Scripture as a symbol for bitterness and sorrow and calamity.

The result of this burning Wormwood star falling on the rivers and the springs is dramatic. One third of the inland fresh water supply, so necessary for sustaining human life, is made bitter so

that men die when they drink it. Polluted waters and waterborne diseases have killed millions of people during this age—diseases like malaria and cholera and typhoid and hepatitis A.

I looked up waterborne diseases, and there's about twenty of them that occur because of bad water, or because the water has become polluted or defiled in some fashion or other. So not only malaria and cholera and typhoid fever and hepatitis A, but many other waterborne diseases have resulted in massive numbers of deaths in the last 2,000 years across the world.

Then there are droughts, where the lack of water has caused crop failures and starvation and death by dehydration. And there are of course the great storms and floods that have killed millions more, as flood waters and mudslides have overflowed towns and villages, and massive snow avalanches have taken out many people as well.

The point is, that which is so essential to sustaining life, that which man cannot do without for any more than just a couple of days, can be and has been used by God to bring His judgments upon wicked men. Once again, these are partial judgments, because only a third part of the waters are affected; but even so, many men have died due to God's judgment on the waters on the earth.

But just as God made the fresh water in Egypt undrinkable by turning it into blood, as Psalm 78 and verse 44 says, here God also makes the waters across the earth undrinkable as well. Jeremiah 9 and verse 15 says, "thus saith the ... God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink."

Now it's interesting to note that fire, which symbolizes God's wrath, has been mentioned in all three of these trumpets: the first trumpet, fire; second trumpet, fire; third trumpet, fire. But that wrath has been restrained to only a partial and incomplete expression, and thus the constant repetition of this "one third, one third, one third, one third." And what's being said here is, God has not poured out all that He could. He has graciously only done partial judgments upon humanity in this age for the wickedness they have done to His people and to His name.

That brings us then to the fourth trumpet, found in verses 12 and 13. Notice verse 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. <sup>13</sup> And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

Now the first trumpet affected the land, the second trumpet affected the sea, the third trumpet affected the inland fresh waters, and this fourth trumpet affects the heavens above, all the bodies it contains, and all the effects that it produces. The passage says the third part of the sun, the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars were smitten so that the third part of them

were darkened, and the day and the night were reduced by a third as well. Of course, once again, one third speaks to the issue that these are partial judgments, not perfect judgments.

Now the effect of the stellar heavens upon human life is profound. Any abnormality in the heavens can have a dramatic effect on life on earth. We saw this in the Exodus plagues, in Exodus 10, verses 21 to 23, where thick darkness covered the land for three days. The people couldn't do anything, they had to feel their way around. There was absolutely zero ambient light.

And so the actions that occur in the heavens have a profound effect upon the earth. Things like giant solar flares, falling meteorites, lightening storms, volcanic ash obscuring the sun for days on end, giant asteroid impacts—all of these have produced negative effects on humanity. And while there is not as many of those as, for example, disasters on the land and disasters in the sea and disasters in the inland waters, there have been some, and it may be that there are going to be many more in the future as the age continues to unfold and mature.

All evils that are due to the abnormal functioning of the heavenly bodies throughout this entire age are comprehended in this trumpet. We will not be able to get into a spaceship and go to Mars or go to some other planet and escape the temporal judgments of God. This intermittent disorder in the heavens is but a sample of the ultimate destruction of the universe on the final day of judgment. You recall back when we looked at the sixth seal in Revelation chapter 6? Let's just reread that again. Revelation 6, verses 12 to 14:

“<sup>12</sup> And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; <sup>13</sup> and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. <sup>14</sup> And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.”

We spent a good deal of time talking about how at the end, God is going to destroy this present heavens and earth and they are going to be melted with a fervent heat. And any abnormalities in the stellar heavens are but foretastes and foreshadowings of the cataclysmic destruction that is going to take place in the end.

Turn with me for a moment to Isaiah chapter 13. The Lord is threatening His wrath and judgment, and in verse 6 He says, “Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. <sup>7</sup> Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt: <sup>8</sup> and they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.”

Now notice verse 9: “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. <sup>10</sup> For”—here it is—“the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be



darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. <sup>11</sup> And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.”

So that is how it will be at the end. The heavens will be shaken to their very foundations.

There are historical records of such anomalies in the heavens happening. Back in the 1800s, there was a tremendous solar flare that struck the earth in the eastern United States, and it actually lit the telegraph lines on fire. It was called the “Carrington” event, and occurred in 1859. There was the Tunguska event in 1908, in which a tremendous asteroid struck in the Siberian wilderness in Russia, and they found evidence of its having devastated hundreds of square miles of forest.

So while these events don’t occur often, they are nevertheless very devastating when they do occur. One commentator said, “God can turn even the benign influences of the sun and the planets into means for the destruction of man. In the countless evils which have their origin in the excesses or the defect of the power of the sun, we may see the fulfillment of this judgment.” So sometimes there’s too much sun, and people die from excessive heat, and sometimes there’s too little, and people die from freezing in excessive cold.

Well, these four judgments symbolically portray the partial retribution of God against the wicked in the physical realm and in the physical world that has been literally been taking place for the last 2,000 years, and will continue to take place until Jesus returns again. God uses every part of the natural world to bring His judgments on unsaved humanity. There is no part of the world, there is no part of the universe, to which men may go to escape the retribution of God. So when men experience so-called “natural disasters” of any kind, in any realm of nature, they need to understand that these are *not* “natural disasters.” They need to understand that these are acts of God in which He is speaking to rebellious humanity, in which He is punishing them for their sins, and in which He is calling them to repentance.

To say that God has nothing to do with disasters in the realm of nature is to deny the sovereignty of God over all things, and it is to deny that He is managing the very world which He Himself created. And this, people, is nothing less than practical atheism. Yet this is what the godless world would have us believe and it’s what they want to believe, and that is that God does not act in nature, because really, there is no God at all. It’s all just the laws of nature at work, it’s all just happenstance and chance, and it doesn’t mean a thing.

So when Hurricane Katrina wiped out New Orleans, that was just a natural event and didn’t mean a thing!, right? No, that was the wrath of God against a wicked city and against a wicked nation. And the people of God understood what it was, and the wicked needed to understand what it was—that this is just a partial outpouring of God’s wrath.

And if God has the power to generate the kind of destruction a hurricane produces, how much more does He have the power to destroy the entire earth? Here is a sample. Flee from the wrath to come, because as bad as these judgments in the realm of nature brought to pass by God against the wicked are, they are nothing compared with what is to come when the next three trumpets sound. Remember verse 13 of chapter 8? It says, “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, *Woe, woe, woe*, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the *other* voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound.”

Now as we’ve read about these four trumpets, we realize that these are terrible things, and yet it’s going to get worse, because when the fifth and the sixth and the seventh trumpets open, it will make the first four seem like child’s play. We’re going to look at these three woes in the weeks to come. But the point is, we need to listen to the voice of God as He speaks through nature. We need to listen to the voice of God when He speaks through nature, both when He brings the blessings of the things that sustain us and comfort us and uplift us, and also when He brings to pass things that harm and injure and kill people.

God speaks in His management of nature, and we need to listen. When God so manages nature that we wind up having food on our plates, we thank God. And when God manages nature in such a way as to bring tremendous destruction and loss, we fear God. So we need to respond to God as He acts in nature, both by way of bringing blessing, and by way of bringing His partial judgments.

Now for us Christians, God’s disastrous events that He sends on the earth should deepen our faith and increase our thankfulness that these things are not meant for us, they are not meant to punish us, but rather, God will use them to refine us, to increase our maturity, and ultimately, to bring us to heaven.

You see, for the wicked, when these natural disasters occur, they go, O, no! Let’s hide in the caves. Mountains and rocks, fall on us! Hide us from the wrath to come! Who can stand? But how do Christians respond when those things happen? Well, turn to Psalm 46. In Psalm 46, verses 1 to 3, notice what David says about natural disasters:

“<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. <sup>2</sup> Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; <sup>3</sup> though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”

So what David is saying is that when God brings natural disasters upon the world, which he describes here in symbolic language, he says, I’m not going to be afraid, because in those natural disasters, God is my refuge and God is my strength. God is present to help me; therefore, I will not fear.

The wicked have every reason to fear. But while God's working all these things together for their bad, the believer recognizes that God is working all these things together for his good. For the wicked, these disasters are meant to increase their fear and dread of the hand of God being against them, and to move them to repentance before the final judgment falls. But when they deny that God has any part in the disasters of nature, then they rob themselves of the very lesson they are meant to learn. They harden themselves against the warnings of the wrath to come and insure their entrance into the greatest of all disasters of nature, which is the lake of fire.

Remember trumpet one—fire falling; trumpet two—fire falling; trumpet three—fire falling; and trumpet four, though it didn't say it explicitly, anomalies of the sun—more fire falling. Why? To warn the ungodly against the ultimate *place* of fire.

When these natural disasters occur, as Christians, we recognize that they may cause us suffering, but they will never cause us harm. They may cause us pain, but that will be worked together for our good, for our godliness, for our preservation, for our growth, for our testimony and witness, and ultimately for our deliverance into heaven. And therefore, the same judgments that are meant to hurt the wicked are meant to help and bless the righteous. We have no reason to be afraid when these things happen. But when they happen, we need to say to the ungodly, This is a sample of the wrath of God. Flee from the wrath to come.

So what these first four trumpets do is they teach us how to understand and interpret and react to the disasters of nature that have been occurring for the last 2,000 years, and will continue to occur for the foreseeable future, until Jesus returns again. May we understand that disasters of nature, are acts of God. Shall we pray together.

Our Father, we thank you so much for the fact that you give warnings, and multitudes of warnings, before you finally lower the hammer on the wicked and on this age. Father, I pray that we would have spiritual eyes to see that there are no acts of nature, there are just acts of God, and while God uses instruments to achieve His acts, nevertheless, they are His. When the tornado took out Job's children by destroying the house they were in, that was no act of nature. Job looked on that and said, "The Lord gave and the Lord took away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." And while Satan was the instrument, he certainly was not the cause. So Lord, we just pray that you would help us to rejoice in how much goodness you show us in your works of nature. And Father, may we use the judgments you bring in nature, to be a point of evangelism. May you open the ears and eyes of men and women to see your hand and heart at work in the natural realm, and may they tremble before your work in bringing judgments in the realm of nature, and be moved to flee from the wrath to come, by fleeing to Christ for forgiveness. In Jesus' Name, amen.