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## Revelation

### Chapter 8 - Revealing the Forces of the Heavens

#### The Powers of the Air (7 Trumpets)

#### The 1st Calling Out - The Indictment Against the Seas vs. 6-7

**Revelation 8:6-7:** And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

I must admit that there are Sundays that I'm going into a particular passage and even up to the time that I walk to the pulpit, I'm going, "I wonder what I'm going to say about that one." There's so much about Revelation that has been obscured. It's been distorted, and we know that's true because of man. I mean, Peter tells us that there are some that are untaught and unlearned; some

distort Scripture. We understand that and we understand that people distort Scripture for their own benefit. We understand that as well. I think oftentimes it's just simply that we're unwilling to wrestle with the text. More specifically, we're unwilling to just listen to God. There are times that all of the books in the world are just not going to help you. This has been an interesting passage for me because I oftentimes go into the passage and dissect it and everything first and then start thinking about it and then I usually ask this question over and over again, "What are You trying to tell me, God?" And in His graciousness, He talks to you. I'll from time to time go to commentaries and as I go to commentaries, I go to them to check myself, "Am I way off base here?" Because I don't want to start a new faith or something. So, you go to the commentaries. What's interesting is, oftentimes the commentaries, as many as there are, and there are quite a few, are silent on really talking about certain phrases or passages. This happens to be one of them. However, you come back to the fundamental point of the Book of Revelation and the purpose of it is to reveal. So, it's not like God is trying to hide something from us. Well,

there is always something that God is trying to tell us, and we know that all Scripture is not only inspired, but all Scripture, therefore is profitable for correction, for reproof, for training in righteousness. When we read something like this, and we read about the grass burning up and the trees going down and blood in the water, it's hard to really understand initially, "How in the world can this be for me?" But it is, and instead of me just going through everything, perhaps more methodically, I just kind of want to talk to you about this, because this is a very interesting passage. It comes on the heels of the seventh seal. The seventh seal has been broken. What we see in the seventh seal is that there is something going on in the heavens and the very beginning of this chapter, in Chapter 8, we see the prayers of the saints and how it affects God.

The seals up to this point really have been revealing how the world is in disarray because of the decisions of men. When you look at the first four apocalyptic horses, you realize that was man's fault. But as we come to the end and the seventh seal is open, "seventh," referring of

course to the day and the time of God, we begin to see the heavens opening, and what part do the heavens play in all this? Our first shot is the fact that the saints that God has given the place of the prayers of the saints, the highest place in the heavens, and He listens and He moves in accordance with His love for them, and what a wonderful picture that is. But we also understand that there are other powers of the air. So, as we come to the blowing of the trumpets, in which the seventh seal now begins to open up far more. We're going to see the seven trumpets then part of the seventh seal as well, the seven bowls of wrath. As we begin to see these things open up, what we see is the influence of the spiritual forces of the air. So, what sign would you give to the spiritual forces of the air? Trumpets. Trumpets are air instruments. So, the blowing of the wind.

In fact, if you look, if you go with me in Revelation 7, it starts off by saying this,

(Revelation 7:1) “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth...”

And it goes on and says,

(Revelation 7:3) “... “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants...””

So, you see God protecting His own from the spirit world. There is a spirit world that is influencing the things of the earth, and it is that which is going to be revealed through the trumpets.

If you go back with me in Ephesians 2, it starts off by stating,

(Ephesians 2:1) “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

(Ephesians 2:2) in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power...”

“Commander-in-chief” is actually part of the word for “prince”.

“Of the power” - “*exousia*” is the term that he uses, which means that he has freedom to act. So, there is freedom been given to him to act in the air, and this word is almost always used in accordance with the atmosphere. So,

within our atmospheric influence, there are forces and the powers. Of course, it's interesting when you read the Gospels and you see Jesus, like in Mark 4 and Mark 6, with His disciples in the boat, and it actually says a fierce wind, like an angry wind, begins to blow. It literally says Jesus rebukes the wind, and the same thing happens in Mark 6, but it actually uses in that particular text in which they're paddling, and it says the wind was against them. So, you begin to see that there are forces, one trying to make you afraid and stirring up anxiety, and the other holding you back from doing what you should be doing. So, in both cases, Jesus rebukes the winds.

The passage says this,

(Ephesians 2:2) “in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”

You'll see a similar definition, of course, if you look with me in Ephesians 6.

It says this,

(Ephesians 6:12) “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces...”

Actually, world “lords” is the word.

“... of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

Of course, 1 John would tell us in 1 John 5:19 that the whole world lies under the power of the evil one. So, we know that there are forces. I mean, man does a good enough job destroying the earth all by himself, but he actually gets help destroying the world, and there are evil forces. So, it is the trumpets that begin to reveal these forces.

If you come with me back to Revelation 8, what you'll see is that these forces are now being released, and the initial declaration of the heavens is that God has a power that He embraces and that He loves, and of course, that's the saints, and we hear the thunder and the moving of their grand voices. We'll ultimately come and see in the conclusion, in Revelation 19, that they are giving praise to God and that's the thunder, the thunderous praise to the

Lord. What we understand is that God has called us to proclaim good news, and so that which God has given us has been for the purpose of blessing.

Matthew 5 tells us that God causes the rain to fall and the sun to shine on the righteous and the unrighteous, and James 1 tells us that every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variance or shadow of shifting. He never does anything wrong for you. It's always for your best. But the blessings are coming, and it is the mark of who He is. His graciousness and His love are always pouring out upon us. But we also know that there are malevolent powers and malevolent forces that seek to destroy, not unlike Isaiah, in which the prophet cries out, "Oh, destroyer, someday you will be destroyed."

So, as we come to verse 6, what we see now are other forces in the heavens that are now being released. Those forces were held back at the beginning of Chapter 7, now are being released in Revelation 8:6, and as we see them released, we see them doing harm to the earth.

So, the passage reads this way,



(Revelation 8:6) “And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.

(Revelation 8:7) The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood...”

And someone was asking me about this the other day. It doesn't say, “like”. So, there is hail, there is fire, and it's mixed with blood. That’s what we’re going to see.

The passage says,

“...and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

It then goes on and says,

(Revelation 8:8) 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,

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

(Revelation 8:10) The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters.

(Revelation 8:11) The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.

(Revelation 8:12) The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.”

Then, as you go into Revelation 9:15,

“... a third of mankind.”

I don't know if you're seeing a particular fraction that's being repeated or not, but it is a third. So, you come to the passage, and you have to ask yourself a number of things. We're probably not going to get past verse 7, just to let you know.

But as you look at verse 7, it says that there's hail and fire, and then it throws in and it's coagulated or mixed with blood. So, what a strange combination. It's kind of a bizarre combination that you see and it's this that's thrown to the earth, and it's this that causes a third of the trees to be burned up, and it's this that causes a third of the earth to be burned up, and it's this that will actually destroy all of the grass of the earth.

Ok, so the question is, what's the significance of the hail and the fire and the blood, the fact that it's mingled?

What's the significance of a third, and what's the significance of the earth and the grass and the trees and that combination with this combination? Well, that's going to put us on an interesting journey.

If you go all the way back with me to Exodus 9, we'll go to a similar happening in the Old Testament, and if you remember in Exodus, we're trying to get the people of God out of Egypt, and it is the stubbornness of the Pharaoh that is keeping them there. If you look with me in Exodus 9, by the time we come to this passage and we know that the water was turned to blood, the frogs, the

lice, the flies, the livestock, the pestilence, the boils. But by the time we come here, we're coming to the end of the signs that are given to the Pharaoh. It is because of his stubbornness. But more than that, there's something particular mentioned in this particular passage that was going wrong with the Pharaoh and why he wasn't letting the people go.

If you drop on down with me to Exodus 9:16,

(Exodus 9:16) “But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.

He’s still talking to the Pharaoh.

(Exodus 9:17) Still you exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go.”

Now, take a minute and underline the little phrase, “exalt yourself” because this phrase is used specifically with foliage, more specifically with grass. The picture is not unlike Psalm 37:2, which says the wicked wither quickly like grass. It also says in Psalm 92:7, how quickly the wicked sprout like grass. Well, that is that which pertains

to this particular phrase. In other words, God is turning to Pharaoh and He says, “How quickly you exalt yourself or sprout up.” And why would He give this particular picture? Well, because what you're seeing is something insignificant, and as Scripture will say, how quickly the grass withers, and yet how quickly it exalts itself.

Psalms 102:11 reads,

“My days are like a lengthened shadow,  
And I wither away like grass.”

(Psalm 103:15) “As for man, his days are like grass...”

The things that he does is the flower of the grass, that really fades just as quickly. So, you'll see this repeated throughout Scripture, not only in James 1, but you'll also see it in 1 Peter 1, and Isaiah will say the same thing. We'll actually go to the Isaiah passage. But the passage is telling us that he is exalting himself, and it's an interesting picture of lifting your head high and God saying, “You have no idea how insignificant you are.” So, it's an interesting picture, and so how is God going to deal with grass that lifts itself up? Hail. That's what He's going to do. He's going to use hail.

So, if you look with me in Exodus 9:22,

(Exodus 9:22) “Now the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that hail may fall on all the land of Egypt, on man and on beast and on every plant of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”

(Exodus 9:23) Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt.

(Exodus 9:24) So there was hail, and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very severe, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

(Exodus 9:25) The hail struck all that was in the field through all the land of Egypt, both man and beast...”

So, now you’re getting the blood mingled with it.

“... the hail also struck every plant of the field and shattered every tree of the field.”

So, you have the tree and the foliage that is going down. Only the land of the Israelites was protected. Here again,

you see the sealing of God's people throughout this. God is really revealing within the passage that there's a retribution going on for the arrogance of man. I don't know if you've ever been in hailstorm or not, but when you walk outside and the hail is coming down, you have a tendency to do this, and there's like an immediate bowing of the head. You may not have willingly wanted to do that, but it's hard to have your nose in the air when the hail's coming down.

If you look with me in Isaiah 40, it is the declaration to grass that it's transient and this is one of the things that God is revealing through this.

(Isaiah 40:3) “A voice is calling,  
“Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;  
Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

(Isaiah 40:4) “Let every valley be lifted up,  
And every mountain and hill be made low;  
And let the rough ground become a plain,  
And the rugged terrain a broad valley;

(Isaiah 40:5) Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,  
And all flesh will see it together;  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

(Isaiah 40:6) A voice says, “Call out.”

Then he answered, “What shall I call out?”

All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of  
the field.”

Once again, James will quote the same thing. Why is he quoting this? Why will Peter quote the same thing? Because man seems to think according to Psalm 49, that everything that he does is going to last forever and that he's not only significant, but that he goes on being a significant entity in this world, and God says, “You’re just grass.” And as quickly as the grass comes up and the sun rises, and the scorching wind comes, as it reads in James 1, the grass withers and fades, and even the flower. The flower, here again, is the picture of all of the things that you've done. “Well, I built a big empire.” Well, it's a flower, and how long is the flower going to last? Well, it's pretty, but it's not going to last too long because the



flower of the field is going to fade and going to be mowed down.

(Isaiah 40:7) “The grass withers, the flower fades,  
When the breath of the LORD blows upon it;  
Surely the people are grass.

(Isaiah 40:8) The grass withers, the flower fades,  
But the word of our God stands forever.”

If you back up in Isaiah 28, you see something similar within the passage. Once again, the tendency of man to put his trust in a glory that is fading. God is writing to His people, Israel. He refers to them as Ephraim in this text because they perceive themselves as double blessed. So, He addresses them, and He says, “You've become arrogant because you've been so successful in your prosperity.”

His statement is,

(Isaiah 28:1) “Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards  
of Ephraim,  
And to the fading flower of its glorious beauty,

Which is at the head of the fertile valley

Of those who are overcome with wine!

(Isaiah 28:2) Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty agent...

That's an interesting word that he uses, isn't it?

“... As a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction...”

Which of course, in verse 4, will ultimately lay low the fading flower of the glorious beauty.

If you go a little bit further in Chapter 28, it says in verse 16, which is talking about Christ coming,

(Isa 28:16) “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,

A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed.

He who believes in it will not be disturbed.

(Isaiah 28:17) “I will make justice the measuring line

And righteousness the level;

Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies...”

In other words, what is the purpose of the hail? It's going to wash away or get rid of all of the proud ones. Think of the grass, lifting its head up, “I'm special.” Hail says, “No,

you're not." So, all of those things are going to be revealed, and that's kind of the theme that is used throughout Chapter 30. He makes reference again to the fact that they go to Egypt and the perception is that they're going to be strong and that they're going to profit. He says, "Why do you go down to the safety of Egypt? They're not going to save you."

And then it reads this way in Isaiah 30:30,

"And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard,

And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger,

And in the flame of a consuming fire

In cloudburst, downpour and hailstones."

What is clear within this is that God is revealing the transientness of man, and you see in Isaiah 10:33,

"Behold, the Lord, the GOD of hosts, will lop off the boughs with a terrible crash;

Those also who are tall in stature will be cut down

And those who are lofty will be abased.

(Isaiah 10:34) He will cut down the thickets of the forest  
with an iron axe,  
And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty One.”

It's an interesting picture of the trees crashing down.

Of course, the very next chapter starts off,

(Isaiah 11:1) “Then a shoot will spring from the stem...”

And that's the Christ, because everything else has died.

If you go all the way back to Isaiah 2, it describes why the trees are going down, and it reads this way,

(Isaiah 2:10) “Enter the rock and hide in the dust  
From the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His  
majesty.

(Isaiah 2:11) The proud look of man will be abased  
And the loftiness of man will be humbled,  
And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

(Isaiah 2:12) For the LORD of hosts will have a day of  
reckoning

Against everyone who is proud and lofty  
And against everyone who is lifted up,  
That he may be abased.

(Isaiah 2:13) And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and lifted up, Against all the oaks of Bashan..."

So, what you're going to see is the destruction of the pride of man. Now, what's interesting in this is that it's not God that is laying them low, but it's the very spirits that they have worshipped that are laying them low. In other words, it's one of the reasons why God says be careful what you trust in, because what you trust in is actually going to be your demise. So, the god of the heavens that man has worshipped is the very thing that's going to come back at them. The perception is that these are wonderful, benevolent gods of the heavens, and God says, "No, they're malevolent gods and they're going to destroy you." And what you also see is a picture of Matthew 7, in which, look, whatever the standard of measure that you go by is what's going to be coming back at you. So, the interesting picture is the hailstone, and really, the things that man has created in his false worship, as well as the fire and the mingling of the blood and we'll see that as we go on.

If you look with me in Ephesians 4, it tells us that Christ has come to get us out of living in a way that's destructive. In Ephesians 4:17, he starts off by saying, “I affirm to you that we should no longer walk the way we used to because it was a destructive way of life.”

In fact, the statement that he makes in Chapter 5, (Ephesians 5:10) “trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

(Ephesians 5:11) Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.”

And if you drop down a little bit further, it goes on and says,

(Ephesians 5:17) “So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

(Ephesians 5:18) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation...”

Now, we understand that the god of the prince of the power of the air is the god of waste; more specifically, of futility or vanity. In other words, he's been made lord over the prince of the power of this earth or this world.

What does that mean? It means that he's been put in charge of everything that's transient. If you understand this, then you'll understand when God says, "I need you to walk in the Spirit, because that's where the victory is." Because everything that's transient, the god of this air owns. He's in charge of it. He's the prince of the power of this air. So, the things that are here, in just a blink of an eye and soon to be burned up is like grass. It's in his power. This is one of the reasons why Jesus says, "Don't fear the one that can kill the body." What does He mean by that? Because he's lord over the body. Now, when we give ourselves to the Lord, He's Lord. But the fact is, as we were under the course of this world and anything transient, anything transient is his. He's the ruler. God has "*exousia*", given him authority over these things. This is why when Satan comes to God, to Christ, and he says, "I'd like to sift Peter." He goes, "Sift him." But it's a fleshly body, and that's why you and I don't want to put our hope in the things of this world, because of the god of this world that is over these things.

So, the passage in Ephesians 4 says,

(Ephesians 4:18) “being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.”

Now, what's interesting is that God and His grace has given us the rain. In fact, you read this continually, that God and His grace has given us the rain, for what purpose? Well, to grow things, to bring refreshment to man, and to give him all sorts of wonderful, good things. The interesting thing is that man always takes the things that God gives him and molds them into something destructive.

In Genesis 12, God calls Abraham and He says, “I called you for this reason. I called you so I could bless you, and then I called you that you would be a blessing to the nations. That's why I called you.” Scripture says if we give a glass of water in the name of Christ, we never lose that reward. I remember as a kid, we would have snowball fights up in Illinois, and if you were particularly not nice, you would maybe squash the ball a little bit harder and just keep working it until it kind of formed ice. Then when that thing hit, it didn't break up, it broke your head. That's



what it did. But it didn't break up. It's interesting how we'll take things and abuse them. God gives every good and perfect gift. We have money and oftentimes use it to be condescending or as Proverbs says, we speak harshly. The rich man speaks harshly to the poor man, which is telling us that we misuse the things that God gives us. Hail is an interesting picture of a misuse, and it's almost as if the heavens are throwing back what we have offered up. In other words, we are reaping, according to Galatians 6, what we have sown. I think, once again, you first start off and you go, "Why is God throwing this hail at me?" He's not. You formed the hail by worshipping the other gods and by going with what they're telling you, which oftentimes is greed or whatever thing that you worship, and they're throwing it back at you because they're malevolent forces. They want you out of the picture just as much as you want other people out of the picture.

So, it says,

(Ephesians 4:18) "being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

(Ephesians 4:19) and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness."

He'll go on, and of course, the whole emphasis of sensuality is, well, he talks about it in verse 22,

(Ephesians 4:22) "that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit."

Which almost in every case where He's talking about the lust of the flesh... Well, I'll give you an example. He'll describe it in Romans 1:27 as a burning desire; a burning desire of the flesh, and you'll see that as well in 1 Corinthians 7:9. So, the emphasis, of course, is that there's a burning or there's a fire as well as there's a hardness and it's two things that man has a way of conjuring up. Now, God has given us light that we might have hope, but man takes anything and everything, he distorts them, and before long it's a tool of destruction. Well, the prince of the power of the air is using it. You've given him permission to use it, and he's throwing it at

you, and he's beginning to destroy the world. So, the picture is very clear.

Now, if you look with me in Psalm 105, it will kind of mirror the Exodus passage of the destruction that came down during the time of the Pharaoh. But there's just a couple of words that I want you to look at in particular. Of course, He goes through, and He sent darkness, He turned the waters in the blood; He sends swarms of frogs, flies, gnats.

Then it says this,

(Psalm 105:32) “He gave them hail for rain...”

Did you catch that? Instead of rain.

So, throughout Scripture, hail is always the sign of judgment, but more specifically, it is given as a substitute for rain in this particular text, which is telling us rain would be better; rain would be beneficial.

“... And flaming fire in their land.

(Psalm 105:33) He struck down their vines also and their fig trees,

And shattered the trees of their territory.”

I mean, interestingly enough, in Jeremiah 7, it's a picture of man taking wood, he takes wheat, and he takes fruit, and it says, "And you offered it to the queen of heaven." So, here you have these things that you boast in, and you say, "I'm a pretty good person." And God says, "You're just grass that withers." And the destruction comes.

Of course, in Matthew 5:45, as we always refer to, that God and His grace gives the sun and the rain and His goodness to us, and yet, man takes everything that God gives him and somehow misuses it. The mingling seems to be an unholy joining. So, you have the hail that doesn't seem to mix with fire, and the blood doesn't seem to go in with any of that. The passage seems to convey that you've messed everything up. God has everything for a purpose, and every purpose is for a blessing, but man somehow mingles these things up, and it actually uses the word "mingles", and causes them to bring harm. It's not necessarily the things that are in the earth that are bad. It's the way you mix them up that makes them bad.

1 Timothy 6 does not say that money is the root of all evil. It says the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil,

and some by longing for it, have found many a pain. He'll go on to say in 1 Timothy 6, "Tell the rich not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy, and to be generous and ready to share with anybody that has need." In other words, there's a reason why you have it, but it's not to boast and not to brag, but man has a way of mixing stuff. God gives him a gift, and he hits somebody over the head. God gives you wonderful relationships and man so distorts it that it burns everything around it. So, your burning passion begins to destroy relationships all around you. The very thing that God has given you, to enhance a relationship, you've destroyed. So, it's an interesting picture of these things coming back at us, and the problems that it yields because we have misappropriated those things. Now, the strange thing that keeps coming up and popping up in this is a third, and what's also interesting is the contrast. I mean, a third of the trees are going to be destroyed, a third of the earth is going to be destroyed, but all of the grass is going to be destroyed. What an interesting picture that is.

So, why all of the grass? I bet that's the first thing you asked. Why is all the grass destroyed and why just a third? Well, let's talk about a third, first of all. A third is used all the way back in the Book of Numbers, and we won't turn to the passages because we won't have time to go into a lot of detail. But if you were to go in particular in Numbers 15, there is a reference to a drink offering, sometimes translated in the text, "libation," and the drink offering was almost always, and in this particular case it was, wine that was given. It actually says within the text that you put in a third of a hin. So, it's kind of a measuring thing. Now, from what I understand, a third of a hin is 5.7 liters, or more specifically, 12 pints. The picture is, according to Doctor Landau, a hematologist expert, exactly the amount of blood a human body has in it. So, God begins to refer in this particular passage that you have a life, and your life can either be used to destroy or to rescue. But it's an interesting picture that all flesh is like grass. All flesh will be destroyed, and all flesh lies under the power of the evil one. This is why Scripture says don't walk according to the flesh anymore. You're giving him ammunition. Walk according to the Spirit because the

flesh is all going to be destroyed. Paul will say so wonderfully, "I've got to die daily to this thing because the flesh is going to kill me. It's in a realm in which I can't control." It's interesting that he'll use an interesting picture of him fighting, and he says, "Ok, when I fight, though, I'm not like beating the air." That's an interesting analogy because we know the power of the air, and I've never known anybody to win a fight by beating air. It's a force you can't beat, and he works against our flesh. But if you'll walk according to the Spirit, you can win this battle. So, the picture is that blood is being used, life. Go to Leviticus. Why do you offer blood as a sacrifice? It says in Leviticus, because life is in the blood. Therefore, it is a picture of life. So, God is saying, "You're offering your life to Me." That's why the picture of blood. So, here man is, and he takes his life, and what has he brought to the heavens? Well, the heavens are throwing it right back. The only thing you've brought is hardness and pain and sorrow, and the only thing you've done is destroy. Look at the world around you. Look at the earth that you've destroyed. Look at the things that you've destroyed. This is what you've done with your life.

All flesh is like grass. But the wonderful thing is that you and I can take this life, this blood.

In fact, if you look with me in 1 John 5:3,

(1 John 5:3) “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

(1 John 5:4) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

(1 John 5:5) Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(1 John 5:6) This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

(1 John 5:7) For there are three that testify:

(1 John 5:8) the Spirit and the water and the blood...”

That's an interesting combination, a little bit different than the one in Revelation. Because those are really bearing witness to the way lives were spent. Ours bear



witness, and isn't it strange that in many cases you can have some of the same things, but it matters how you use them that changes the combination completely? One could be used in a very destructive way. I mean, everything that God gives you, God has given you not only as a gift, but to do wonderful things and a glass of water in His name will never be forgotten. But how many people have taken that water and have hit people in the head with it, and drowned people in it, been hostile with it? I mean, God gives man this wonderful garden, and what does he do? He just distorts and twists it. It's not that God hasn't given us good things. It's just that we've misused the things that God has given us.

Let me just say this in regard to this, Jesus is very clear in Matthew, "He who is not with Me is against Me." And the perception, I think, of a lot of people is, "I'm a pretty good person. I do pretty good stuff." And that's not the question, because you could actually do good stuff that is very damaging to people. You're good, as Scripture says, could be evil spoken of. You could somehow, as Proverbs says, think that you're doing the right thing and then bring

about death in doing it. So, the question is, are you really using what God has given you, and are you aligning those things with the life of Christ? In other words, are you taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ or are you pointing to yourself? I think some of the greatest damage is when man lifts up his head as a blade of grass, and says, "Come to me. I'll rescue you." And they see themselves as a source of help and rescue. "I'm going to do this. I'm going to help you." And what have you done? You've pulled away from the glory of God, the only One that can help them, and you've caused them to trust in a bogus hope. I mean, Pharaoh was a hope to his people. They worshiped Pharaoh, but it just caused him to lift himself up, and by so doing, they were trusting in grass. God says, "The grass has to go. It has to be destroyed." Now, if you look at the passage, God's not doing the destroying. It's man's own deeds and he has worked hand in hand within the spirit realm that have said, as Satan says, "I am the god of waste." So, the god of waste wants you to waste your time. He wants you to take your blood and use it to destroy. He wants you to take the things that you have and use it to burn up. That's what he wants you

to do, "Burn with passion. That's a good thing." Spend your whole life burning with passion, and not one benefit has happened, but God has given us these three witnesses within us.

The spirit of water, which is the spirit of God's cleansing power in our lives. When you come before Christ and you confess your sins, you become cleansed. When you tell God, "I can't do this. It has to be on You. May the Spirit of Your Son work in me." You begin to get washed; not only are you washed, but Jesus says a well of water begins to freshen up within you and you refresh people. Actually, your speech becomes refreshing to the people that you're with. It purges, it cleanses, it helps, it refreshes. It's a benefit. It's not hitting people in the head with a snowball. It's doing good with the things that God has given us, and this is a witness that we have. Watch the people that have received Christ, the water bears witness. People walk away, and they go, "I feel refreshed." How did that happen? The water is bearing witness. The cleansing of the life, the person is walking with a clear conscious. Paul says, "I do everything with a clear

conscience.” There's a power in the clear conscience. The blood? Well, you're right along with Jesus on that one, aren't you? You're willing to sacrifice. In other words, the difference between us and the world, same blood, but the only difference is they take yours, and we give ours. It's the only difference. Same blood. But our blood becomes refreshing. It becomes something of benefit, not something that's destroying and mingled with other things that destroy. And the Spirit, that is a wonderful thing, isn't it? The Spirit of God, which is oftentimes defined as the spirit of love. What's the fruit of the Spirit? Love, joy, peace. Well, if you go through the list, they all seem to fall under love, and really, are descriptive of love, which is the heart of God and how wonderfully that begins to free people. In fact, 1 John says that love casts out fear, and we're freeing people from fear and anxiety; whereas the other ways, I mean, can you see that flame and those balls of hail? That's just bringing anxiety and fear, and most people live their life creating those things. So, what you have within the passage is a picture of judgment against the misuse of the things that God has given, and how they will ultimately destroy in that last

day. God is literally telling the church, "You don't want to misuse these wonderful things that I've given you."

So, we're going to be going through this and watching these spirits of the world or the powers of the air literally in their malevolent spirits begin to push back the very things that we have embraced and why it's so dangerous to for us to embrace the things of this world. It's going to come back at us, and the picture is there.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today and we ask You to move within our hearts. Lord, we just want to ask Your forgiveness of the misuse of this life within us, this blood that You've given us. Unfortunate to say that many go around taking, but we have an opportunity to give our blood as a sacrifice, or as Paul would say, "I am already being poured out as a drink offering." It's very clear that Paul decided to spend his life to give benefit, to save, to rescue, to give life, to give refreshment, to demonstrate the love of God. We have these three that bear witness, and it's not an unholy union.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, you have to examine where you are. The bottom line is whatever you sow, you're going to reap, and the picture is very clear that grass has a very short-lived life. To lift up your head only to exalt yourself and to make yourself an easy target for all of the bitterness and hate that is a part of this world. But if you'll bow your knee to Jesus Christ, how wonderful the union He gives.