

06.07.20

Revelation

Chapter 8 - Revealing the Forces of the Heavens

The Powers of the Air (7 Trumpets)

The 2nd Calling Out - The Indictment Against the Seas vs. 8-9

Revelation 8:8-9: The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Everything in Scripture has a meaning. There's a purpose for everything in there, and it would be a great error for us just to skip over something and not understand why it's there. It's God revealing something to us, and this is the great book of revealing, isn't it? The Book of Revelation. God is unfolding these wonderful truths, and what is He telling us? Well, according to Proverbs 2, it's the one that searches for those treasures that finds them, and it is in that searching. You always want to search

consistently, not only with other Scripture, but consistently with the Spirit of God. So, all of these will be in agreement, and once you hit it, it's very clear and you begin to sense that's the Spirit of God that's telling us this is what it's about.

This passage, as we've been going through, is demonstrating to us that there're spiritual forces in the heavens that are judgmental forces. We understand that the angelic beings, the forces of the air, the powers of the air were basically judges of the law, and as Satan stands before God, when he's accusing Job, he has every right to do that as an attorney against Job. So, as he stands before God, he throws out an accusation as attorneys of the law will do. God allows the accusation to be thrown out. The result will be whether or not this man is guilty or innocent. What is clear is, as you watch the story of Job, you have a man that is proclaiming to be a very righteous man, and Scripture will affirm he is the most righteous man on the face of the earth. However, it is and will be the accusations of Satan that will bring out the one thing that is holding Job back from true salvation, and that is

the realization that no matter how hard Job tries, no matter what he does, he could never be good enough to get into heaven. So, he finally and ultimately stands before the presence of God and closes his mouth and says, "You know what? I have no idea what I was talking about." And it was the graciousness of God that began to reveal. Of course, Peter perceives himself as somebody that is loyal and would never, never abandon his friend, and Jesus says, "Satan has requested permission to sift you." And it is the great accuser that begins to sift, and he had every right to do it because Peter, in his own power, could not sustain his desires, and it will reveal Peter's weakness. So, God was using that great power and that great force to do that, not unlike the Book of Zechariah, which Joshua, the high priest, is standing before the presence of God, and his robe is filthy. Satan begins to accuse him, and he has every right to accuse him because he is guilty. So, the accusations of the heavens are against us. There is an evil that wants to take us to task and wants to destroy us by virtue of us breaking the laws which we have done. We deserve it, and yet the wonderful

declaration of Christ is, “But I will save you.” And what a wonderful thing that is.

So, there are princes and powers of the air, and as Ephesians 2 tells us, we once were in bondage to the wrath that is there, and then as Ephesians 6 begins to convey, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities and powers of the air of this world. We realize that these powers are far greater than we are. It is this that is beginning to be described in Revelation as the trumpets that are blowing and the indictments are being thrown against man for the things that he has done, and they have every right to bring judgment upon us. So, the things that you're seeing are the judgments of the heavens; more specifically, of those wanting to destroy us. What's interesting is, what's mentioned over and over again, is that “third”. Have you notice that? It’s mentioned whether or not it's a third of the earth or third of the trees in verse 7, or whether it's the third of the seas or a third of the creatures or a third of the ships or a third of the rivers in verse 10, or a third of the waters in verse 11, the third keeps coming up. As

we talked about this last week, the emphasis of the third is the limitation that has been given. It's an interesting picture of boundaries that God is saying to those forces, "You can only destroy this." Now, what is He actually saying? Well, third, as we talked about earlier, as you looked specifically in Numbers 15, is that number or that equation that is used to actually measure the amount of blood in man or that which was used as a libation, as an offering to God. So, a third of a hin is the way that it's put, 5.7 liters, 12 pints, 1 1/2 gallons, is how much of blood the human body has. As Paul says, interesting text, in 2 Timothy, "I'm already being poured out as a drink offering," as a libation. And the total pouring out of life is that which really is a picture of what the god of this world controls. What is that? Well, it's like Jesus says in Luke, "Don't be afraid of the one who can kill the body. Be afraid of the one who can kill both body and soul." And of course, we know the spirit. So, you'd have the three that are there that are part of us; one third is limited to the spirit world, or we could put it another way, the spirit world can only destroy what is destroyable. So, he is called literally, Belial, or the god of waste. For his

dominion is lord of waste, or sometimes actually called “lord of flies,” which is an interesting picture that describes him. God tells us that you don't have to be afraid of anything of loss here. I mean, even your treasures, when He talks about treasures, moth and thieves can break in and steal your treasures. But if you would actually invest in something that they can't touch, then it's like eternal and how wonderful that is. So, you see these forces that are coming into play, and the forces are allowed to bring judgment according to what we have done in error against the truth. So, what we're seeing is the judgment of these forces.

Once again, the “third” is brought up again in Chapter 12. If you look with me in Revelation 12, it says,

(Revelation 12:7) “And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war,

(Revelation 12:8) and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

(Revelation 12:9) And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

(Revelation 12:10) Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come..."

What is that picture that is given about this? Well, if you back up to verse 4, it's this,

(Revelation 12:4) "And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman..."

So, the picture, which I'm extremely comforted by this, that the only thing that evil can destroy is what's destroyable and that which is not lasting. This is why Scripture says don't invest your life in in wasteful stuff, because it's all going to go. In the end, it's all going to go. We're going to have a fire sale and it's all going to be gone and all these things are going to burn up. So, he says, "Since we know these things are to be this way, what sort

of people ought we to be?" And the more you and I invest and the things that can be destroyed, the more frustrated we're going to be in our life. I think one of the things that we us older people are figuring out is that youth is fleeting. So, I'm not young anymore. So, if I keep pursuing that, what's going to happen? I'm going to get very frustrated and very angry and very upset, and if this is what my whole life is all about, then I'm going to have a lot of bills trying to get my face rearranged. But happiness cannot come from that, and I'm not going to find fulfillment and I'm not going to win that battle because it's a losing battle. It's one of those losing battles. So, what we're seeing is the judgment of the heavens upon those things that we have pursued, and in particular, as the first trumpet that sounds was thrown down to earth, which is only appropriate because what we're going to see is the misappropriation of what God has given us, and just to remind all of us, where did we come from? The earth. So, we're directly connected to the earth, and our perception is we'll take this earth and we'll make something of ourselves, and God says, "Well, the only thing you really make of yourself is grass." So, the picture

here is a third of the grass burning up. Of course, all the grass burning up and all flesh is like grass and then He shows the trees. Of course, maybe we could do something more substantial, and He goes "Well, they're going to go too." So, it's an interesting picture of the judgment in which man lifts his head. He perceives that he has been given this earth for the purpose of lifting himself up, which is one of the pictures of grass coming up. We talked about it last week. It comes up so fast, but it goes down so fast, and it really reveals our efforts and the things that we pursue and how transient they are. What is He revealing? Well, what He's revealing is that we're going to be judged for the way we misappropriate the things that God has given us on the earth. There are things that God has given us. Why have you been given it? "So, I can lift myself up." God says, "Well, no, that's not the reason." So, the judgment from the heavens is coming in accordance with that. "You've misappropriated why I gave you what I gave you."

So, now, as we come to the second it is going to be not just merely misappropriation, but we're going to see that

man has a kind of determination that he has misused, and his perception is that “I don't need boundaries,” and basically, the sky’s the limit. So, he's going to be the master of his destiny in which he's going to pursue beyond his boundaries, beyond the borders. What's the best description that would actually paint that picture? Well, that would be the seas. Because that's man going beyond his boundaries. When you read about the seas and the oceans and the things that God has placed in the earth, He says He put boundaries here and He put boundaries here and He put boundaries here, and it was for the purpose of God saying, “Well, you stay here. We'll put a sea here.” And man goes, “No, I'm going to go beyond the boundaries.” So, it's an interesting picture of him pursuing these things and we're going to see what that brings as a result.

Now, the passage reads, if you pick up with me, (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 is a very interesting word, “creatures”. “*Ktisma*” is the Greek word that's used here, and probably the best way to describe the word is it's describing something that was founded in its original state. So, creatures, or we put it another way, life.

When you read the beginning of Genesis, it talks about the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and then you begin to read of the teeming of the waters and how life began to teem from it. It was actually one of the first personifications of life, and the source of life.

Peter says something very interesting, and you wouldn't think that Peter would be necessarily that scientific, but I just want to quote it to you, found in 2 Peter 3:5.

He says this,

(2 Peter 3:5) “... the earth was formed out of water and by water.”

That's quite a statement, isn't it? Of course, a fisherman naturally would say that, but his point is, out of water came life and the formation of all the things that God has created. Of course, the wonderful thing about the earth

and the one thing that's so unique about it is we have water. I mean, I know we've tried to go to the moon and I guess they're going to try to drill a well someday, I don't know, but I don't think they're going to find water. I don't think they'll find water on Mars. The one thing that makes us so unique is water. Of course, the scientists actually say that the whole molecule thing should not exist. H_2O is not supposed to work, but somehow it does and it's the wisdom of God and the graciousness of God, the gift that God has given us. What we're going to see within the passage is that somehow man has distorted that which God had given as a source of life, and once again, distorted it to perceive it as something that would be a venue by which he would get even more; a trip for greed, so to speak. So, we're going to look at a number of passages in Scripture that make reference to this, but there are certain pictures that He's placing within this. The first is some great mountain is thrown into the sea, something looks like a great mountain. So, kind of log that in the back of your mind because the one thing we know about a mountain is that it's a picture of an obstacle. It is used continually in Scripture as a picture of an obstacle.

The prophet Zechariah, the Spirit of God comes before him, and says, “What is this great mountain before you? We can take this down.” And Christ will even say to His disciples, “Look, I tell you, if you have enough faith, you'll say to that mountain, ‘Be cast to the sea.’” Now, in each case, what’s being conveyed is a mountain is anything that is an obstacle for you to not be able to get what you want; the things that you're pursuing. There are a lot of obstacles in our lives that come in, but a mountain is sure a good one to keep us from doing that. So, we're going to see that this obstacle, interestingly enough, is thrown into the sea and is actually that which produces blood in the sea and then begins to kill the life. So, there's an interesting tie there as we're going to look.

It goes on and says,

(Revelation 8:9) “and a third of the creatures which were in the sea...”

Once again, showing the limitations of the authorities of the heavens.

“... and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.”

Now, that tie of the ships with the life of the sea is also very significant within the passage.

If you go all the way back to Ezekiel, it's a good place to turn when you're dealing with the sea and once again, just a reminder, Isaiah gives reference to the fact that the sea is really a restless place. It's the definition for a restless place. Isaiah 57:20 talks about the wicked are like the tossing sea. They don't know how to rest. It's like refuse of mud. It keeps stirring up. There is no rest for the wicked. I oftentimes hear quoted, "There's no rest for the weary." "No rest for the wicked" is what it says. So, of course, nobody wants to call themselves wicked. So, they say, "There's no rest for the weary."

But if you look with me in Ezekiel 26, it begins with a city that is known for its maritime ventures, and if there was ever a city throughout history that was grand and great because of this, it was the city of Tyre. It is this city that begins to get described in chapters 26-28 of Ezekiel, and if you look, it talks about it being the gateway; an interesting description of verse 2.

In verse 3, a place where the sea brings up its waves.

Then, as you go on down, there's a greater description of why man is pursuing and why the city has become such a great city.

(Ezekiel 26:12) “Also they will make a spoil of your riches and a prey of your merchandise, break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses...”

In other words, a lot of money has been made.

It says,

(Ezekiel 26:16) “Then all the princes of the sea will go down from their thrones...”

I'm not reading these verses in the context of what they're saying, but I just want you to see the description of the city of Tyre.

Then, if you look, of course, it's talking about the demise of Tyre in this text, but if you look at the lament in verse 17,

(Ezekiel 26:17) “... ‘How you have perished, O inhabited one,

From the seas, O renowned city,

Which was mighty on the sea,

She and her inhabitants,
Who imposed her terror
On all her inhabitants!

(Ezekiel 26:18) 'Now the coastlands will tremble
On the day of your fall;
Yes, the coastlands which are by the sea
Will be terrified at your passing.'

(Ezekiel 26:19) For thus says the Lord GOD, "When I make
you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited,
when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters
cover you..."

And then if you look in chapter 27,

(Ezekiel 27:3) "and say to Tyre, who dwells at the
entrance..."

Once again, to show you a parallel, Ezekiel 26:2,
"gateway," and now, in verse Ezekiel 27:3, "entrance". So,
we're seeing something happen here in which it's about
merchandise.

Because then the text reads,

“... to Tyre, who dwells at the entrance to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’”

(Ezekiel 27:4) “... Your builders have perfected your beauty.”

(Ezekiel 27:7) “Your sail was of fine embroidered linen from Egypt...”

(Ezekiel 27:8) “The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers...”

(Ezekiel 27:9) “The elders of Gebal and her wise men were with you repairing your seams;
All the ships of the sea and their sailors were with you in order to deal in your merchandise.”

Merchandise is going to be a big issue as well as, in verse 10, it talks about the mighty army, men of war that go in the boats.

Just keep following me,

(Ezekiel 27:12) “Tarshish was your customer because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth...”

The point is, where are they making their money? In trade. It's about trade.

It goes on, it talks about,

(Ezekiel 27:13) “... they were your traders...”

It goes on and says in verse 15,

(Ezekiel 27:15) “... your traders...”

(Ezekiel 27:16) “... abundance of your goods...”

(Ezekiel 27:17) “... your traders...”

(Ezekiel 27:18) “... the abundance of your goods ...”

(Ezekiel 27:19) “... your merchandise.”

(Ezekiel 27:20) “Dedan traded...”

(Ezekiel 27:22) “... they traded with you... all kinds of spices, and with all kinds of precious stones and gold.”

(Ezekiel 27:23) “... the traders ...”

(Ezekiel 27:25) “The ships of Tarshish...”

(Ezekiel 27:26) “Your rowers have brought you Into great waters ...”

(Ezekiel 27:27) “Your wealth, your wares, your merchandise, Your sailors and your pilots, Your repairers of seams, your dealers in merchandise And all your men of war...”

(Ezekiel 27:28) “At the sound of the cry of your pilots The pasture lands will shake.”

(Ezekiel 27:29) “All who handle the oar, The sailors and all the pilots of the sea...”

I don't know if you're seeing a pattern here or not.

(Ezekiel 27:32) “... in the midst of the sea?”

So, by the time you come to Chapter 28, why is their heart lifted up? Because of what they've accomplished and because they've actually been able to boldly go where no man has gone before, and they've been able to break the borders that were placed before them, and they said, “We've gone beyond.” You know, it's sort of that phrase, “You can do whatever you want to do. So, just keep pushing the borders.” So, the seas was that interesting pursuit.

(Ezekiel 28:2) “... “Because your heart is lifted up
And you have said, ‘I am a god,
I sit in the seat of gods
In the heart of the seas’;
Yet you are a man and not God...”

(Ezekiel 28:4) “By your wisdom and understanding
You have acquired riches for yourself
And have acquired gold and silver for your treasuries.

(Ezekiel 28:5) “By your great wisdom, by your trade
You have increased your riches
And your heart is lifted up because of your riches—”

Of course, this now segues into Satan himself, and as you pick up in verse 11,

(Ezekiel 28:11) “Again the word of the LORD came to me
saying,

(Ezekiel 28:12) “Son of man, take up a lamentation over
the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord
GOD...”

Now, He goes into the description of Satan, who is a description and parallel to the description of the king of

Tyre. So, He puts the two of them together and now begins to describe Satan.

Here's the description:

“... “You had the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

(Ezekiel 28:13) “You were in Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering...”

Well, that sounds like a trader bringing in all kinds of precious stones. But this is literally a picture of Satan in the garden of Eden.

It says,

(Ezekiel 28:14) “You were the anointed cherub who
covers,

And I placed you there.

You were on the holy mountain of God;

You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

(Ezekiel 28:15) “You were blameless in your ways

From the day you were created

Until unrighteousness was found in you.”

Where was the fall of Satan?

Mark it well in your text,

(Ezekiel 28:16) “By the abundance of your trade

You were internally filled with violence,

And you sinned...”

What is He talking about? You went beyond your borders. You said, “I should be able to have more.” And it was in that pursuit to go far beyond, and it was a pursuit that virtually said, “I'm not going to let any obstacle get in my way. No obstacle is going to get in my way.” “Well, you do know that's a pretty big obstacle, the seas.” “Yeah, but we can defeat the seas. Because we defeated the seas, we’ve become rich over it.”

(Ezekiel 28:18) “By the multitude of your iniquities,

In the unrighteousness of your trade...”

And what you begin to see, of course, is all kinds of usury. I mean, even Revelation 18 makes reference to the city of Babylon and their trade, and more specifically, it talks about human trafficking, in which you're selling people. So, that which was this wonderful declaration of God teeming with life and bringing life to us has now become a place of blood and abuse and man has distorted by

virtue of pursuing beyond his boundaries; to put it another way, to eradicate any barrier he'll be willing to go the distance, whatever it takes.

Just to kind of show you how it comes into play; Deuteronomy 30, it's so much a part of man's thinking that when it finally comes to, "Ok, how am I going to get to God?" Because obviously that's a pretty big obstacle there. How are you going to get to God? Here's the wisdom of man, "I know. Let's go the distance. By my sheer determination to go beyond the borders which I live, I'm going to find success in reaching God." So, Paul will quote it in Romans 10, but it says in Deuteronomy 30:11,

(Deuteronomy 30:11) "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach."

(Deuteronomy 30:12) "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'"

(Deuteronomy 30:13) “Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’

(Deuteronomy 30:14) “But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.”

Man perceives obstacles, he perceives himself to be the answer to those obstacles, and he sees that he can pursue this to the extremities of the earth. He'll go far beyond where he was ever meant to go, and he'll perceive that he is fulfilling these things by doing this. But the only thing that he's creating is mayhem, blood, war, and if you just look at the explorers, what did they do? What did they do, really? They go from place to place taking. They go from place to place killing. They go from place to place, demanding, and what does it do? Well, in their minds, they got rid of the obstacles. God's indictment against them is this, “You didn't get rid of the obstacle. The obstacle now just became dangerous.” So, the picture of the obstacle being thrown into the sea and everything turning to blood is God saying, “Your pursuit to destroy

the obstacle has brought the obstacle upon you, to destroy you.” It's an interesting picture.

So, Jesus will say,

(Matthew 18:4) “Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 18:5) “And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me;

(Matthew 18:6) but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”

You know what the millstone is? It's the obstacle to your success and it's your pursuit of getting whatever you're going to get because the millstone is this wonderful picture of riches. It's how you make your money. That's what a millstone is and what He's basically saying is you've sacrificed a life for your pursuit to destroy an obstacle which you wanted to go beyond your borders, and what have you done? This is going to hang you.

So that by the time you come to the end of Revelation, if you look with me in Revelation 18, it begins to talk about all these things. Of course, much of this is really dedicated towards the merchants.

(Revelation 18:11) “And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more—

(Revelation 18:12) cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen...”

(Revelation 18:19) “And they threw dust on their heads...”

How terrible is all of this? What it's really revealing is that man has gone after the things of the world, and it's the very thing that has destroyed his life.

(Revelation 18:19) “And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!’

(Revelation 18:20) “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”

(Revelation 18:21) Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea...”

That would be the great mountain, wouldn't it?

“... “So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence...”

It's an interesting picture of the things that we pursue in man's determination and his perception that he can discover things undiscoverable and that he can go places that he was never meant to go, and that in this pursuit he's going to be better. But the text is revealing the judgment of the heavens, and the heavens are saying, “You didn't make things better. You made things worse.” And because of this, the blood of people and the blood of ships and the blood of life has been destroyed. I mean, what was supposed to be a venue for life is now being become a place of death for all those around.

1 Corinthians 7 gives a great picture to me of this, because 1 Corinthians 7 is a picture of contentment, and one of the signs of immaturity is that you're discontent. You're never satisfied, you're never happy. Hopefully, as you become more mature, you become content because you realize that it's not the things that you have that is really the obstacle to having life, but it's really your lack of faith that's become the obstacle. But if you look with me in 1 Corinthians 7, he's talking to people that say, "Well, now that I'm a Christian, I'm married to somebody that's not a Christian. Can I get rid of them?" And Paul goes, "No, you can't get rid of them." And then, another person says, "Well, I'm a Jew. Can I become a Gentile?" or "I'm a Gentile. Can I become a Jew?" He goes, "No. Stay where you are."

So, the conclusion of the chapter is kind of found in the middle of it, and if you look with me in verse 17, it reads, (Corinthians 7:17) "Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches."

(1 Corinthians 7:18) Was any man called when he was already circumcised? He is not to become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised.

(1 Corinthians 7:19) Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

(1 Corinthians 7:20) Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called.

(1 Corinthians 7:21) Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that."

But it's not about you're changing your surroundings. Here again, man has always been one to perceive that "If I could just change my surroundings, if I could just push the limits of my boundaries that somehow, I'm going to be fulfilled." And God says, "That's just you perceiving that your self-determinations what's going to bring you greater happiness." But the indictment of the heavens is saying the only thing that you're doing is creating more misery, and if you look around, you can see the carnage

and you can see the collateral damage. You can see all the misery that your decision to pursue and to fight against that obstacle that is placed.

You want an obstacle removed? Turn with me to Matthew 21. Jesus is with His disciples, of course, it is a time in which He's getting ready to go to the cross. But as He's going, they run into something on the way, and we pick up in the passage in verse 18,

(Matthew 21:18) “Now in the morning, when He was returning to the city, He became hungry.

(Matthew 21:19) Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He said to it, “No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you.” And at once the fig tree withered.

(Matthew 21:20) Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, “How did the fig tree wither all at once?”

(Matthew 21:21) And Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if

you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen.

(Matthew 21:22) "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Now, what Christ is conveying is that faith is very much different than you setting a resolve to accomplish something. Faith is really submitting your will to God's and believing that God's going to take care of all the obstacles in your life and there are things in your life where you feel like, "Maybe I should have more," or "Maybe I should go a greater distance," and "Maybe I need to sacrifice this." Have you tried praying? That's a novel idea. Have you tried bringing it before God and asking Him? Because when God does the moving, there is no destruction involved. When we do the moving, no matter what we do to try to make something happen, it always brings greater pain and greater sorrow and greater regret.

So, an interesting picture as the trumpets began to resound, not only the indictment against the earth and our accomplishments in which we try to elevate ourselves

off of the earth and try to declare ourselves as being great and eternal. But God turns to us and He says, "And by the way, you've also misused the seas." And the perception is that God is punishing. No, what you're seeing is angelic evil forces that are giving us what we deserve. They're allowed to do that. But the wonderful thing is they can only take away what is not eternal, and God has given them these limitations. It is a judgment that is being proclaimed, and things are being revealed and unveiled of how we've mistreated and how we've abused. Literally, we're only getting what we've sowed. Nevertheless, for those that invested in that which was eternal, well, I mean, we believe that they were already taken out. It's one of the reasons why by the time you get into the Great Tribulation, you don't even see the church mentioned. The church is not mentioned at all as we come to this passage. Why? Well, as 1 Corinthians 15 tells us as well as 1 Thessalonians 4, we've been taken out with the sound of the trumpet, and we've been called up in the air and we've gone into the eternal home with the eternal riches which we have actually began to invest in. So, what a wonderful truth that is for us.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You and we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness in revealing things to us. What a waste it is to invest in that which is a waste. Father, You have demonstrated to us that we pursue and go after so many things that are just transient; like grass, it's going to fade away. It's going to burn. It is so temporary. How sad it is that oftentimes in our pursuit to go beyond what our boundaries display to us, we have found ourselves causing far more problems and far more difficulties. We have reaped fire and blood and death. The very ships that we were hoping to bring cargo in have now produced slavery and hurt and pain to others. We have mixed things up. We have matched them terribly, and we have reaped something horrific. In this, You have revealed to us, but even more, You have given us life, and You have told us, "Don't pursue the things of the world and don't follow the things of the world and don't do the things the world does. Stop wasting your time."

So, with your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I'm going to ask you to consider a few things. I'm going to ask you to consider what you're trying to accomplish in your life. Is it anything temporary? Have you found yourself going against obstacles and then trying to find ways to get around them? Have you ever thought about praying? More than that, have you asked yourself why you're really here, what you really should be investing in? For all these things will be burned up. You have a choice. God has given that to you. It's a gift. You can throw it away. You can abuse the things that God gives you. You can distort, you can mangle, you could mingle things that shouldn't be. You can create death out of something that was meant to be life. God says everything you have is not only a gift from Him, but it's to not only be enjoyed, but to share and to help and to build the kingdom. Point to Christ.