

COMET HALE-BOPP, CHERNOBYL AND THE DEATHSTAR WORMWOOD

PART 1

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Published On : February 23, 1998

Last Updated : March 8, 2012

Comet Hale-Bopp And The SLO, The Vatican And Wormwood, The Chernobyl Disaster, A Deadly Comet?, Spiritual Beings And Stars, The Fall Of Satan, The Salt Of The Earth, The Lord's Footstool, A Flood Of Lies, Bitter And Sweet Waters, Cup Of The Lord's Wrath, The Destruction Of Babylon And Armageddon

During the first half of 1997, the world witnessed another awe-inspiring astronomical event with the passing of the now-famous comet Hale-Bopp. Although the orbit of this celestial visitor did not bring it nearly as close to the Earth as comet Hayakutake of the previous year, due to its large size, Hale-Bopp nevertheless put on an impressive display of light and color for those who were in a position to observe it. While our location did not afford the best of views, I was still excited and amazed by the dim sword of light which hung in the evening sky for several weeks before returning to the blackness of deep space. I am reminded of the following words written by King David in his nineteenth Psalm:

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."
Psalms 19:1, KJV

The Apostle Paul also reflected upon the Lord's Creation and explained that the natural world is a constant witness to the fact that God does exist; and thus, evil man has no excuse whatsoever for his rebellion and unbelief in what is so obvious to the Believers:

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
Romans 1:20, KJV

As comet Hale-Bopp neared the Earth, wild speculation arose concerning a purported bright object known as the SLO -- or "Saturn-Like Object" -- which certain astronomers and New Agers claimed was hidden in the tail of this astronomical wonder. According to some sources, this object was many times larger than the Earth, and was under intelligent control. Within certain UFO circles, it was believed that this object was actually a large inter-galactic vehicle which housed millions of reptile-like creatures, which were bent on the destruction and/or enslavement of the citizens of planet Earth. At the same time, other New Age advocates claimed that the SLO was under the control of benevolent "Space Brothers" of a higher spiritual order who were

arriving to assist the Earth and her inhabitants as they transcended into a higher level of spiritual awareness and existence. Unfortunately, as I explain in another article, it was this latter belief which led to the tragic death of thirty-nine members of the Heaven's Gate UFO cult.

At the height of the speculation which surrounded Hale-Bopp, I read an article regarding an ex-Vatican priest who claimed to have accidentally broken into a computer terminal located at the Vatican. According to the letter which was said to have been written by this priest, the Vatican had a direct link to the Hubble Space Telescope. This priest further claimed that the HST was pointed directly at the comet Hale-Bopp. Upon doing further investigation into his amazing discovery, this article stated that the priest learned that the Vatican was questioning whether or not Hale-Bopp might be the star known as Wormwood mentioned in the Book of Revelation. For those of you who are not familiar with the Endtime prophecies of the Scriptures, consider the following verses which mention Wormwood, and which describe the affects it will have upon the Earth at the time of its arrival:

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."
Revelation 8:10-11, KJV

The arrival of the great star Wormwood will mark the fulfillment of the third of seven Trumpets predicted in the Book of Revelation. The Seven Trumpets are discussed in more detail in other of my Endtime articles. As I write this, almost a full year has now passed since Hale-Bopp's passage. It should be evident to everyone that the comet did not scourge the Earth as described above by John the Revelator. In fact, in an astronomical sense, it didn't even come close to our planet. Thus, in my view, it is highly unlikely that Hale-Bopp was the fulfillment of the Wormwood prophecy. While the passage of time has caused the wild speculation surrounding Hale-Bopp to vaporize into the air from whence it came, perhaps the previous story with its odd mixture of New Age thought and Prophetic Truth at least made more people aware of the fact that the Bible does indeed predict the arrival of the deadly Wormwood.

Following the arrival of this celestial visitor which poisons the waters of the world, the very next verse in the Book of Revelation continues by describing other terrifying events which will occur when the fourth angel sounds his mighty Trumpet:

"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise."
Revelation 8:12, KJV

If we interpret this verse strictly in an astronomical

sense, it may possibly be referring to solar and lunar eclipses. However, I have never known an eclipse to last for eight hours, that is, a third part of a day. Of course, literally speaking, a third part of the daylight hours would be only four hours; and a third part of the nighttime hours would also be four hours. This amount of time could more easily be associated with a solar or a lunar eclipse. Looking at it from this perspective, these verses make more sense. However, if there is one thing we know, a solar or lunar eclipse does not make the stars disappear. In fact, it does the exact opposite. When a total solar eclipse occurs, it is quite common for some of the brighter stars to become visible when they would normally be blocked out by the Sun's glare.

While I have cast some doubt upon a possible literal interpretation of Wormwood and the events which follow it, we must remember that we cannot limit God; and that He is free to choose any means of chastisement that He desires. Just because our human minds cannot grasp how the sun, moon and stars can be darkened for a third part of the day or night does not mean that it cannot or will not happen. I am reminded of something the Angel Gabriel said to Mary when he announced that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived John the Baptist in her old age:

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."
Luke 1:37, KJV

In like manner, while comets are known to possess low levels of hydrogen cyanide, a poisonous and bitter chemical compound, this does not mean that the Lord cannot prepare a special comet filled with this deadly toxin which would then slam into, or at least brush by the Earth. Such a strike or near passage could very easily poison our planet's water systems in the process. In fact, if such an object were to collide with the Earth, it might very well throw so much dust and debris into the atmosphere that it would cause a partial blotting out of the heavenly spheres, thus fulfilling the prophecy. If the Lord was able to prepare a great fish to swallow the disobedient Prophet Jonah, certainly He is also able to chastise the world for their rejection of His Son by sending a poison-laden comet. But the question remains: Is this what Wormwood symbolizes?

As I have stated before, one challenge facing all students of eschatology -- that is, the study of Endtime events -- is to know when a literal or a symbolic interpretation should be applied to certain Scriptures. If the previous verses concerning the sun, moon and stars being darkened are to be understood in a more symbolic sense, perhaps the Wormwood prophecy fits this same pattern. If this is the case, then its fulfillment might not be quite as obvious as some are inclined to believe. For example, some time ago I was given some interesting information regarding the Chernobyl nuclear disaster which occurred in the Ukraine in 1986. Within certain circles of prophetic study, there are those who are convinced that the brilliant explosion caused by the accident was the direct fulfillment of the words "a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp" contained in the Wormwood prophecy.

According to one acquaintance of mine, he was told by his father -- who is of Russian descent -- that the Ukrainian word for Wormwood is "Chernobyl". He assured me that he is absolutely certain of this fact. At the same time, another friend who happens to be an educator, provided me with some additional information. According to his message, he had a young lady in one of his classes who was from the Ukraine. This woman was kind enough to provide him with her understanding of the name "Chernobyl". Thus, she said that "Chern" is the root of the word "cherneej" which means "black". She also stated that "Beel" is a variety of grass found in the plains of Russia. Thus, according to her, collectively, "Chern" and "Beel", or "Chernobyl" as it is written in English, refers to the grassy fields which have been burned in order to plow and cultivate the land. This is a common practice in many farming communities of the world.

To add to the complexity of this issue, my research endeavors yielded very different information concerning the meaning of the word "wormwood". According to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, the "Wormwood" of the Book of Revelation is derived from the Greek word "apsinthos". The Hebrew lexicon of the Old Testament states that "wormwood" is derived from the root word "laanah". This Hebrew word is translated seven times as "wormwood", and once as "hemlock". I will share some of these verses later on in this article. Easton's Bible Dictionary agrees with these definitions and provides this additional information:

----- Begin Quote -----

"The *Artemisia absinthium* of botanists. It is noted for its intense bitterness. In the symbolical language of the Apocalypse, a star is represented as falling on the waters of the earth, causing the third part of the water to turn wormwood. The name by which the Greeks designated it, "absinthion", means "undrinkable". The absinthe of France is distilled from a species of this plant. The "southernwood" or "old man", cultivated in cottage gardens on account of its fragrance, is another species of it."

----- End Of Quote -----

To further expand my understanding of the word "wormwood", I then consulted The American Heritage Desktop Dictionary. As you can see, it further confirms the information already provided by the Greek and Hebrew lexicons, as well as by Easton's Bible Dictionary:

----- Begin Quote -----

"Any of several aromatic plants of the genus *Artemisia*, especially *Artemisia Absinthium*, native to Europe, that yields a bitter extract used in making absinthe and in flavoring certain wines. Also called Absinthe. Something harsh or bitter."

----- End Of Quote -----

After studying these different definitions, it became obvious to me that if the name "Chernobyl" is correctly translated into English as "Wormwood", then it must in some

way be associated with the plant described above. If this plant is indeed native to the Chernobyl area of the Ukraine, then I would be more inclined to accept "Wormwood" as a valid English translation. If this is the case, and I don't know that it is, then one can only wonder if it is simply a matter of coincidence that the site of the Russian nuclear reactor bears the same name as this apocalyptic star.

Considering how national governments tightly control their mass media, could it be that there was actually more longterm damage in the Chernobyl area than what has been officially reported by the Soviet government? Could it be that many more people have died, and that the water sources of Russia and Europe have been contaminated with a much higher level of radiation than anyone has been willing to admit? Depending upon the degree of exposure, be it from direct radiation, or from poisonous fallout or isotopes contained in the drinking water, it could take literally years for everyone to die who has been affected by it. Outside of a trained medical eye, it might go by completely unnoticed by less-informed people. As frightening as this may sound, today, twelve years later, people might still be dying in Russia and Europe due to the "invisible" longterm affects of the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

Not only might the water sources continue to be contaminated, but the intake of beef, dairy products and grain crops from the affected areas might also continue to pose serious health risks. If there is any truth to this, the governments selling these products are probably aware of it. If so, one might ask why they continue to do this. One answer might be that the people simply must be fed. It is my understanding that the Ukraine is the bread basket of Russia. As history will clearly prove, a starving people makes a country ripe for revolution. Thus, poisoned food might be better than no food at all. Aside from this, countries are constantly under economic pressure to fulfill their international trade agreements. In short, as sad as it may be, maintaining a robust national economy and a strong international image may take precedence over the health status of a nation's people. Thus, some countries are willing to generate revenue by any means available to them, regardless of the effects it may be having upon its own citizens! If you doubt that world governments are capable of doing such things, allow me to remind you of the true nature of the heart of man:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
Jeremiah 17:9, KJV

While my previous comments are indeed alarming, it is important that you realize that I do have some problems with fully accepting the Wormwood/Chernobyl interpretation. Aside from the proper English translation of the name "Chernobyl" being in question, this is also due to the timing of the event. As I stated earlier, according to the Book of Revelation, Wormwood is the third of seven Endtime Trumpets. It is the final Seventh Trumpet which will herald the Lord's glorious Second Coming and the long-awaited Rapture of the Saints.

Simply put, while I believe that we may be near the end of this current worldly system, based on my understanding of Endtime Scriptures, it is difficult for me to accept that we have advanced that far along the prophetic timeline. Considering that the Chernobyl accident occurred twelve years ago as I write this, and accepting for the sake of argument that it was the Third Trumpet mentioned by John, where does that place us today in the fulfillment of the remaining four Trumpets? It seems to me that if we are indeed that close to the End of man's rule of the Earth, then by now we should have witnessed such things as the Seven-Year Middle East peace treaty, the Antichrist, the Beast and the False Prophet, the Mark of the Beast, and the invasion of Jerusalem. Accepting Chernobyl as Wormwood simply leaves me with too many unanswered questions; thus, I am hesitant to accept it.

Another possibility is that the Wormwood prophecy is to be understood in an even more symbolic or spiritual sense. One school of thought meets this idea halfway. It proposes that the great star falling from Heaven is not actually referring to the Chernobyl explosion itself, but rather to an angel or demon which caused the disaster. In other articles I have clearly shown that there is indeed Scriptural support for interpreting stars in the Bible as spiritual beings. For example, in the Book of Job where the Patriarch is discussing how the Lord created the world, he mentions how the sons of God, referred to as "the morning stars", were present at the time of Creation:

"Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"
Job 38:6-7, KJV

In the Book of Isaiah, we find a rather mysterious prophecy concerning the fall of the king of Babylon. In this ancient prophecy, the fall of the Babylonian king appears to be synonymous with the fall of Satan himself. In the following verse, the name "Lucifer" is derived from the Hebrew word "heylel" which means "light-bearer". It is also translated as "shining one" and "morning star":

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"
Isaiah 14:12, KJV

Following this same idea of comparing spiritual beings to sources of light, be it physical or spiritual light, the Apostle Paul also made mention of how Satan can deceptively appear as an angel of light to the unwary:

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."
2 Corinthians 11:14, KJV

As I pointed out in the article "The Children of Light: Are You One of Us?", there are quite a few Scriptures found throughout the Bible which also compare God and His children to celestial lights. In these next verses, the Apostle Paul uses astronomical bodies to explain the coming rewards of

the Righteous following the First Resurrection:

"All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

1 Corinthians 15:39-44, KJV

In the Old Testament, King David and the Prophet Daniel both used astronomical symbolism to describe the Lord and His Children. In the New Testament, besides Paul, the Apostle James also followed this same pattern. Here are some additional examples for your consideration:

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Psalms 84:11, KJV

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Daniel 12:3, KJV

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

James 1:17, KJV

In Revelation chapter twelve we find the great battle in the heavens in which Michael the Archangel and the Heavenly Host cast Satan and the rebellious angels down to the Earth. In this symbolic picture, Satan is represented by a great Red Dragon; but notice too that the demonic horde which follows him is represented by a third of the stars of Heaven:

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born . . . And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Revelation 12:3-4, 7-9, KJV

It's possible that the above scenario is synonymous with a third part of the stars being darkened during the Fourth

Trumpet following the prophecy concerning Wormwood. In other words, because of their falling from God's favor due to their rebellious hearts, perhaps these angels-turned-demons are stripped of their spiritual power or authority. They are stripped of their spiritual light, and thus become darkened stars. To add weight to this argument, consider the interesting comparison Jude made when he wrote in his short epistle concerning the false disciples which had crept into the Early Church during the First Century:

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day . . . Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."
Jude 1:6, 13, KJV

I discuss the fate of these rebellious demons in more detail in such articles as "Hell, the Lake of Fire and Universalism". When the Seventy Disciples returned to Jesus following their first "faith trip", marveling at the things which they were able to do in His name, the Lord also made an interesting comment in which He described the fall of Satan:

"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you."
Luke 10:17-19, KJV

In the above verses, the word "lightning" is derived from the Greek word "astrape" which has the secondary meaning "of the gleam of a lamp". This is extremely interesting because in the prophecy concerning Wormwood, you will recall that one of the key phrases was ". . . a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp . . ." This phrase makes a direct connection between Jesus' words and the prophecy concerning Wormwood! While I formerly believed that Jesus was referring to actual lightning, I am now wondering if perhaps He wasn't comparing Satan's spiritual fall from Heaven to a streak of light created in the night sky by a falling meteor, also known as a "shooting star". Remember, the Lord had the custom of spending the early morning hours, before the break of day, in deep meditation; so such a comparison to the bright trail left by a meteor is quite appropriate:

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."
Mark 1:35, KJV

Based on what I have discovered thus far in the Scriptures, I am beginning to wonder if the star Wormwood might not only represent a fallen spiritual being, but that it might also specifically symbolize Satan himself. If you consider the compelling evidence I have presented, perhaps you will agree:

1. In His own words, Jesus describes Satan's fall as

"lightning" or "the gleam of a lamp" according to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon.

2. John describes the Third Trumpet, the star Wormwood, in the same manner with the phrase "burning as it were a lamp".

3. In the very next Trumpet following Wormwood, we witness a third of the stars being darkened.

4. In Revelation chapter twelve, Satan is described as a Red Dragon which uses its tail to cast a third part of the stars/angels to the ground/Earth.

Another clear indication that the stars of the Book of Revelation are sometimes symbolic of spiritual beings, can be found in the very next chapter following the prophecy concerning Wormwood. Chapter nine begins in the following manner:

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit."
Revelation 9:1, KJV

Here we witness another angel arriving on the Earth to open the Bottomless Pit. There is no way that a real star can be given a key to open the Bottomless Pit; and this star is described with the pronoun "he". I discuss this event in more detail in my series "The Seven Heads". However, what is important for this discussion is that this so-called "star" is actually a spiritual entity, probably a fallen angel, and not a real star. In thinking about the fact that these stars "fall" or are cast to the ground, that is, to the Earth, I am also reminded of what Jesus said regarding those who become useless to the Lord's service:

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."
Matthew 5:13, KJV

Just as we can become useless to the Lord's service through pride, rebellion, and other sins in our hearts, apparently God's spiritual agents possess the same capacity. In other words, just as there is choice on Earth, there is also choice in Heaven. You will find this topic discussed in more detail in other articles I have written. In the case of Satan and a third of the angels which follow him, we know that they made the wrong choice. It is for this reason that the Book of Revelation tells us that they are cast down to the ground, that is, to the Earth, to be trodden under God's feet, just like useless flavorless salt. If you doubt that this is so, consider the following revelatory verses which indeed tell us that the Earth is God's footstool where He casts His enemies in His hot displeasure:

"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?"
Isaiah 66:1, KJV

[A Psalm of David] The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."
Psalms 110:1, KJV

"How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger!"
Lamentations 2:1, KJV

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."
Romans 16:20, KJV

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."
1 Corinthians 15:24-28, KJV

"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."
Hebrews 2:8, KJV

Thus we see that there is not only ample Scriptural evidence for applying a symbolic interpretation to the fallen star Wormwood, but we also see why the Lord chooses to cast these rebellious beings to the Earth. In the Lord's appointed time, they are all going to be crushed or defeated under His feet, and under ours as well if we remain faithful!

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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COMET HALE-BOPP, CHERNOBYL AND THE DEATHSTAR WORMWOOD

PART 2

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : February 23, 1998

Last Updated : March 8, 2012

Comet Hale-Bopp And The SLO, The Vatican And Wormwood, The Chernobyl Disaster, A Deadly Comet?, Spiritual Beings And

Stars, The Fall Of Satan, The Salt Of The Earth, The Lord's Footstool, A Flood Of Lies, Bitter And Sweet Waters, Cup Of The Lord's Wrath, The Destruction Of Babylon And Armageddon

If my interpretation is correct, then perhaps we can expand our understanding of the Wormwood prophecy by finding a symbolic meaning for the waters which are poisoned by this deadly "star". Nine chapters later, we find the following verse which clearly reveals one of the meanings of the word "waters" in the Book of Revelation:

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."
Revelation 17:15, KJV

Here we see that "waters" can actually represent the peoples and nations of the world. To refresh your memory, let's take another look at the key verses upon which this current study is based:

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."
Revelation 8:10-11, KJV

At first glance, it does not appear to make sense that the word "waters" represents people in this verse. After all, if "waters" represents the peoples and nations of the world, how can people die from drinking these waters? The answer is quite simple. While the word "waters" represents people in certain places in the Bible, in other verses it is also symbolic of the words which are spoken by people or by spiritual beings. In fact, in his discourse concerning the dangers of the tongue, the Apostle James explained that there are both sweet waters and bitter waters:

"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?"
James 3:8-11, KJV

In this context, "sweet water" can represent the Truth as spoken by God or one of His agents, be they spiritual or human; while "bitter water" can represent the lies, blasphemy and false accusations of Satan and his followers. From Jesus' own words, we know that Satan is indeed the father of lies:

". . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44b, KJV

In the Book of Revelation, the angel also specifically referred to Satan as the Accuser of the Saints:

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."
Revelation 12:10, KJV

We find an example of Satan in action in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelation. In the following verse, he is represented by an evil serpent which is casting out a flood of bitter water, or lies, in order to try to deceive the woman:

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."
Revelation 12:15-16, KJV

Notice exactly what is occurring in these verses. Even though Satan is persecuting the Lord's children, they do not fall victim to his treacherous lies and false accusations. Instead, we are told that the Earth opens her mouth to swallow this flood of evil propaganda. In this particular case, I believe that the Earth represents the unbelieving world which is deceived by the Father of Lies. It is in the very next chapter that we are told that the Earth, or those people who have foolishly swallowed, or drunk, Satan's lies, will produce a second Beast known as the False Prophet. The fact that he is referred to as the False Prophet is a clear indication that whatever this person espouses will be viewed as truth in the eyes of the world, while it is in fact nothing but satanic lies:

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."
Revelation 13:11, KJV

You will recall that James compared uttering blessings to sweet water, and uttering curses to bitter water. Just prior to this description of the Second Beast, John describes the First Beast which arises out of the sea. This vile Beast is filled with bitterness against God and blasphemes, or curses, His name continually:

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."
Revelation 13:5-6, KJV

Once the Lord begins to pour out His judgments against the Beast, the False Prophet and their followers, we are told that, rather than repent of their evil deeds, these wicked people will follow suit and blaspheme and curse God as well, all because they have been filled with and deceived by the

bitter poison of Satan's lies:

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds . . . And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

Revelation 16:10-11, 21, KJV

As we have already seen, in contrast to "bitter water", or the blasphemous lies of Satan which can destroy men both physically and spiritually, the word "waters" can also represent "sweet water", that is, The Truth of God's Word which brings Eternal Life to those who believe it, who receive it, or who drink it and take it into themselves. This is evident by the message Jesus gave to the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter four, as well as by things He said in later discourses:

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water . . . Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."
John 4:10, 13-14, KJV

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."
John 6:63, KJV

In the previous verses, the word "drinketh" is derived from the Greek word "pino", pronounced pee'-no, which means "to drink". Of course, Jesus is not speaking literally here, but rather figuratively. He is speaking of faith and belief in His words. In this regard, this word "drinketh" is actually synonymous with the word "believeth", which is derived from the Greek word "pisteuo". This word means to believe in something, to be committed to it, or to trust in it. We find this Greek word "pisteuo" used in one of the most popular Salvation verses quoted around the world:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
John 3:16, KJV

Through our new understanding of the word "waters" as it is sometimes used in the Scriptures, it is easy to see that the poisoning of the waters by the star Wormwood may possibly be symbolic of the spiritual corruption of humankind during the Endtime by demonic forces. This corruption of the waters -- the people -- by the waters -- the lies of Satan -- is being accomplished through such vehicles as the global commercial system with its sexually-oriented advertising media, through false religious systems which have cast The Truth to the

ground, through ungodly educational systems which teach evolution and other Satanic lies, and through human rights organizations which support abortion, gay rights and other unscriptural beliefs and practices. All of these represent a powerful negative force which is currently poisoning the hearts, minds and spirits of men so that they become bitter against God and reject The Truth of His Word. I am reminded of the words spoken by King David in the second of his Psalms:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."
Psalms 2:1-3, KJV

As I explain in another article, a close reading of this Psalm will reveal that it is actually a Millennial prophecy of the Endtime when the Lord will return to the Earth to subdue His enemies with a rod of iron once and for all. Because of their rejection of The Truth, or the "sweet waters" which give life, these people are currently drinking the bitter poisonous waters of Satan's lies; and thus will suffer spiritual death, the Second Death, in the Lake of Fire, unless they repent of their wickedness and their unbelief:

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
Revelation 20:13-15, KJV

This is the same exact place where the Beast and the False Prophet will end up for having led the world astray through their lies and blasphemous accusations against the Lord:

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."
Revelation 19:20, KJV

The deeper spiritual significance of Wormwood, and the sharp contrast between the bitter and the sweet, is further exemplified in Revelation chapter ten where we are shown that The Truth of God's Word can either bring sweetness to one's mouth if he receives it, or else it can bring bitterness to his belly if he rejects it. Regardless of how people react to the words of the Lord, it is still our obligation as Christians to deliver the message which God has given us through the mouths of His Angelic Messengers and Holy Prophets:

"And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto

him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

Revelation 10:8-11, KJV

While John cherished every prophetic word that he received from the angel, it appears that the Lord was telling him that once he began publishing the apocalyptic message he had been given, it would not be well-received by the world at large; in fact, it would be bitterness in their bellies. In our current times, this is truly the case as anyone who is a faithful witness for the Lord can testify. Each day we are met with more resistance to The Truth as people deny the Precious Promises found in the Scriptures. In the Old Testament, after Moses had led the Children of Israel for forty years, just prior to entering the Promised Land, while still in the land of Moab -- modern Jordan -- he reminded them of all of the wonders the Lord had done to bring them that far on their journey. After that, he appended the Covenant given to them at Horeb by issuing a strong warning concerning the dangers of allowing unbelief and bitterness to take root in their hearts. In that warning, Moses compared these sins to gall and wormwood:

"Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven."

Deuteronomy 29:18-20, KJV

Thus we see that allowing Satan to plant a root of bitterness and unbelief in our hearts is indeed dangerous business. Up to this point, I have emphasized that Satan and his evil minions are responsible for the Apostasy, or the falling away from The Truth, and for the bitterness against God which currently characterizes this present generation; however, we need to remember that these things are happening as a result of personal choice. Furthermore, we need to realize that, as I have shown in other articles, even Satan and the rebellious angels are ultimately under God's control, and are simply being used as His instruments of wrath to punish a wicked world. This not only ties in directly with our discussion of Wormwood, but it also blends in perfectly with another topic discussed in the Book of Revelation.

In the beginning of this study, I explained that wormwood is actually an aromatic plant of the genus *Artemisia*. The bitter extract from this plant is used in the making of

absinthe, as well as in flavoring certain wines. It just so happens that wine is also used as a form of symbolism in the Book of Revelation. In one example, it is used to represent the sins of the mysterious Babylon the Great Whore:

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."
Revelation 14:8, KJV

"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."
Revelation 18:3, KJV

As I explain in the article "Revelation's Babylon The Great", I believe that Babylon represents the spiritual and physical center of the world from where Satan has expanded his evil control over the Earth. Thus, those nations and people who have knowingly or unknowingly become a part of his Dark Kingdom by partaking of the Earthly pleasures he offers, have symbolically drunk of the wine of Babylon's fornication. However, in the Lord's time, He is going to mete out His righteous judgments; and as He did in the Old Testament, those judgments will be equal to the sin. Just as the nations have become drunk with the "sweet" wine of Babylon the Great, He is going to force them to drink of the bitter wine of His wrath:

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:"
Revelation 14:9-10, KJV

"And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."
Revelation 16:19, KJV

In the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, we also find some interesting verses which show how the Lord was going to force the rebellious people and false prophets of ancient Israel to partake of bitter wormwood:

"Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink."
Jeremiah 9:15, KJV

"Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land."
Jeremiah 23:15, KJV

In the very next book, Jeremiah again uses the symbolism of

wormwood to describe the bitter suffering brought on by the chastisements of the Lord meted out through the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar:

"He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes. And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity. And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall."

Lamentations 3:15-19, KJV

Returning to Babylon the Great Whore, in the Book of Proverbs, I discovered some very interesting verses which may be a cryptic link to the destruction of the mysterious queen which reigns over the kings and merchants of the Earth in the final pages of the Bible. The following verses not only prophesy her bitter destruction, but they also make a direct link to wormwood:

"For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword."

Proverbs 5:3-4, KJV

Notice that the strange woman's bitter destruction also comes by a two-edged sword. In the Book of Revelation, we discover that the culmination of God's Wrath will be felt when He causes the wicked armies of the kings of the world who fornicate with Babylon, to be drawn together for the Battle of Armageddon. This great war will be fought in the plains of northern Israel. As I explain in "From Armageddon to the New Earth", this battle is going to be so great, that when the Lord pours out the final cup of the wine of His indignation, a river of blood may possibly flow southward from Megiddo along the full two hundred miles of the Jordan River Valley!:

"And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

Revelation 14:18-20, KJV

Just as Babylon, the strange woman of Proverbs, will meet her bitter end by a two-edged sword, the Book of Revelation also tells us that the Hosts of Heaven who fight at the Battle of Armageddon, will be led by One who has a sword proceeding out of His Mouth. That Sword, of course, is the Word of Truth which will destroy the bitter lying words of Satan, the spiritual "star" Wormwood which fell from Heaven:

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and

wrath of Almighty God."
Revelation 19:15, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

This prophecy from the Book of Revelation concerning the Battle of Armageddon appears to be a mirror image of a similar prophecy uttered by the Prophet Isaiah some eight hundred years before. The fact that it uses the same symbolism of a winepress and the grapes of wrath should not be dismissed as a mere coincidence:

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

Isaiah 63:1-6, KJV

As I stated at the beginning of this article, trying to separate that which should be interpreted symbolically from that which should be understood in a literal sense is no easy task. In this article I have presented both sides of the issue for your consideration. While the possibility of an actual meteor, asteroid or cometary tail wreaking havoc on the Earth's water supply sometime in the near future still exists, given the many amazing Scriptural connections I have made between wormwood, stars, spiritual beings, sweet and bitter water and wine, Babylon the Great, Armageddon, etc., I tend to believe that a spiritual interpretation may be more appropriate in this case. However, I must also candidly and humbly admit that I honestly do not know with one hundred per cent certainty. Time will certainly tell which is the proper interpretation.

To add a final degree of balance to this article, allow me to add the following: While a large part of the Book of Revelation is written in a symbolic context, it is also a reflection of actual events which will transpire on the Earth prior to the Lord's Arrival. It is my belief that some of these events will be political and/or military in nature, others will be of an economic nature, and still others will be of a religious nature. However, some of these events may also affect the Earth physically such as through unusual changes in our weather patterns, through astronomical occurrences, etc. Thus we should not rule out a physical

fulfillment of Wormwood. While some may consider such movies as "Asteroid", "Meteor", etc., as mere money-makers for Hollywood and the American cinematographic industry, perhaps they are also a warning of things to come. As the Patriarch Job said during the time he was tested by Satan:

"For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me."
Job 3:25, KJV

Considering that the Bible has been amazingly accurate in its prediction of certain world events, we should not doubt for a moment that Wormwood will also occur in one form or another in God's chosen time. If it turns out to be an actual astronomical body which threatens the Earth, the question arises as to whether or not we will be warned of the impending disaster. While in the movie "Asteroid", F.E.M.A. -- Federal Emergency Management Agency -- was depicted as the heroes of the United States Government, the truth of the matter is that we probably won't receive any kind of a warning. As proof of this, consider the final message which flashed on the television screen as the movie came to its conclusion:

In March of 1996, an asteroid did in fact come within hundreds of thousands of miles of the Earth. In astronomical terms, that was extremely close; yet we were not informed until after the fact! It's possible that it was so small that it didn't present a major threat to populated areas. It is also possible that the government didn't want to cause undue panic by announcing something which they were not sure was going to be a direct hit. However, another possibility is that they realized that issuing a warning would have made no difference in the world. While the city in the "Asteroid" movie was evacuated in a forty-eight-hour period, in reality, it would be virtually impossible to evacuate any large American city, or any large city around the world in that same time frame; if a warning was even given! Some people might not even receive the warning until it was too late. The unprecedented panic would also quickly result in sprawling traffic jams which would bring things to a virtual standstill.

In conclusion, it seems to me that regardless of what the right interpretation might be concerning the Wormwood prophecy, the safest place to be is in the Will of God. As I have explained in other articles, God's highest will for all of us is that we accept the Sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. If you have become one of the Lord's children through spiritual rebirth, then He will certainly take care of you no matter where you are if you are pleasing Him. There are many wonderful promises in the Bible regarding God's protection of His Children. One of my favorites is the following:

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."
Psalm 34:7, KJV

Truly, the Lord is our best defense and protection against any disaster, whether it be manmade, natural or otherwise; so please stay close to Him and to His Word, and don't

listen to the sweet lies of Satan which turn bitter in your stomach and cause you to turn away from the Lord! Whether Wormwood manifests itself or not as a physical visitor from the stars, the truth of the matter is that the spiritual affects of Wormwood have already been occurring for years as the spiritual crisis on our planet deepens! What will you do to help fight against this wave of unbelief? The choice is up to you. I trust that this article has been instructive, and an inspiration and a blessing to many.

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