

Will a Star or Comet Crash into the Earth?

"Wormwood"

What the Bible says About It is Truly Amazing!
By Ed Szalankiewicz

In the Revelation of Christ given to John we find a most intriguing prophecy often used to suggest that some kind of heavenly body will crash into the earth and do great damage. The prophecy describes this as a "great star" named Wormwood. Lets examine this concept in light of biblical support.

Rev 8:10-11 "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 many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

In this article, we primarily use scripture and strict adherence to the Biblical admonition that the Bible should interpret itself.

Isa 28:9-10 "Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk - those just drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept. Line upon line, line upon line. Here a little, there a little"

Now our challenge in understanding John's vision is in defining what these images mean. If we ascribe a purely "literal physical" meaning to these things then we accept that a huge star burning brightly will crash into our planet but somehow the earth will not be destroyed. It will mysteriously manage to fall only on the rivers and aquifers - fully one third of them - which are scattered widely across the globe. No one will die from what would be a cataclysmic impact but rather from the water, which is poisoned (made bitter) from this star. Now when we consider a physical - literal interpretation of these things, we are confronted with events, which violate the laws our Creator God has set in motion in the universe. If we, on the other hand, cling to a strictly literal interpretation -but then "justify" our position by suggesting that God will violate His own laws to miraculously bring this to fulfillment then - aren't we departing from a literal-physical understanding anyway in taking that position? It is clear that would violate the principle of biblical integrity and the consistency upon which the soundness of scripture is based.

This is an important and powerful message Christ is giving to John. Lets search the scriptures and see if the scripture itself (in perfect harmony with the laws of GOD's creation) defines these images in John's vision. What does the bible say? Is this a physical event yet to occur or symbolism of a spiritual event, which has or is about to happen? In other words, how does the bible itself define these images? They are:

- * A Great Star
- * Named "Wormwood"
- * Falling from Heaven
- * Burning as a lamp
- * Falls Only on the Rivers and Fountains of Water,
- * These fresh water sources are Made Bitter by this great star.
- * It Causes Death of men because of these waters

Lets take these two verses in sections and see what we can find in the bible to support the meaning and context of these verses.

" . . . There fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp . . ."

We should emphasize that we are dealing with something (a "great star") that is large and big or well known. Now we know that most of the population of the Earth lives along the banks of the thousands of rivers that exist. BUT NOTICE that no one dies from the cataclysmic impact of the star with the Earth in these places! They only die from the bitter waters, which were affected by the star. This fact is a major clue about what is being portrayed in this prophecy.

At this juncture, lets ask of our bible knowledge, "do we know of anything that was described as a star that fell and was somehow connected with "bitterness". Lets look at a couple of scriptures now in our investigation.

Rev 12:3-4 "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a GREAT 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"

In these verses we plainly see angels depicted as stars and we also see them "cast to the Earth"

Luke 10:18 "And he said unto them,

I beheld Satan as lightning FALL from heaven"

Ok - We see angels described as stars and we see Satan also a mighty or "great" angel. If angels are described symbolically as stars he then is a "great star" who falls from heaven!

You will notice also that Satan fell "as lightning". When lightning strikes we know that it "lights up the sky". This also matches perfectly with the description we see in

Rev 8:10 "burning as it were a lamp"

Now lets go to verse 11: "And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

Can we find any other discussion in the bible about these things?

Jeremiah 9:14 à 15 "But (they) have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them; Therefore thus saith the Lord of host, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them even this people, with WORMWOOD, and give them WATER of gall to DRINK"

Jeremiah 23:15 "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."

Let's review some definitions from Strong's

Wormwood = H3939 laʔan ah lah-an-aw'

From an unused root supposed to mean to curse; wormwood (regarded as poisonous, and therefore accursed): - hemlock, wormwood.

Gall = H7219

ro'sh rosh roshe, roshe

Apparently the same as H7218; a poisonous plant, probably the poppy (from its conspicuous head); generally poison (even of serpents): - gall, hemlock, posion, venom.

Fascinating isn't it - now lets look at the "venom" from serpents (demons and devils) spoken of regarding the commission of the church found in Mark 16:18 "They shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them . . ."

Take up = G142 airo ah'ee-ro

A primary verb; to lift; by implication to take up or away; figuratively to raise (the voice), keep in suspense (the mind); specifically to sail away (that is, weigh anchor); by Hebraism (compare [H5375]) to expiate sin: - away with, bear (up), carry, lift up, loose, make to doubt, put away, remove, take (away, up).

Serpent = G3789 Ophis of'-is

Probably from G3700 (through the idea of sharpness of vision); a snake, figuratively (as a type of sly cunning) an artful malicious person, especially Satan: - serpent.

Deadly thing = G2286

Thanasimos than-as'-ee-mos

From G2288; fatal, that is, poisonous: - deadly.

So we see in Mark 16 that there are these demon or devil spirits who spew out this venom or poison, which is given as something to "drink" or imbibe. "Connecting the dots" we see that demons spew out poisonous venom and also see that "gall of wormwood" is described in scripture as poisonous and deadly - it kills men.

Matt 23:27 " But woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness"

1 Peter 4:6 "For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

Finally - we need to deal with the second half of verse ten. " . . . and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters . . ." There is a clear distinction made here in that these are "fresh water" sources - not the "sea" or oceans which are not fresh (drinkable) water sources.

In these "end times" - arguably the very time time-setting of John's message - the demographics now show that the Christian religion makes up exactly ONE THIRD of the religions of the Earth. Attached to this article is a chart showing the breakdown of the religions as a percentage of the population of the entire earth - and - oddly, (perhaps not so oddly) exactly ONE THIRD of the world claims to be "Christian". This amazing information supports our understanding that Satan has indeed infiltrated the Christian community ("the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.") setting up deception from within its gates. He has been changing and conscripting the message. He has effectively "camouflaged" the THRUTH OF GOD and HIS Kingdom? Now notice these verses:

Isa 14:13 "For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of GOD:

But notice reading further that he has a second part to this malicious agenda:

"I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north"

Now notice further: 2 Thes 2:4 "Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"

Notice also this part of John's vision:

Rev 13:7 "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

But we know that GOD wins! He is not intimidated by any of these tactics and simply moves HIS plan forward. Christ said HE will come again with HIS First Fruits and will establish HIS Kingdom.

Isaiah 60:3-5 " And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising, Lift up thine eyes round about, and see all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shall see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; be enlarged; because the abundance of the SEA shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. Notice it - a large multitude of people are referred to as "the sea" and they will be "converted to" the saints who "rise" when Christ returns. Here we clearly have water "the sea" used as a symbol of a multitude of mankind.

God is a loving GOD certainly not "bent on the destruction of HIS creation" Luke 9:56 "For the Son of man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them". God will soon bring to fruition HIS powerful plan that calls for the atoning blood of Christ to cover the sins of the repentant.

Notice also Revelation 8:8 "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;"

What is interesting here is the definition of the word used for blood.

Blood = G129 Aima hah'ee-mah

Of uncertain derivation; blood, literally (of men or animals), figuratively (the juice of grapes) or specifically (the atoning blood of Christ); by implication bloodshed, also kindred: - blood.

Rev 16: 4-5 "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous O lord which are and was and shalt be because thou has judged thus." (Notice that the angels are not mourning but rather they are praising GOD for this act. This seems to indicate there is a very positive aspect to this pouring forth of this blood.) Again "blood" here is the same word as "the atoning blood of Christ" Strong's Greek 129. So a question now arises - is this a literal event where water turns into blood as in the plagues of Egypt or in this vision of John is he seeing an event which is symbolic of Christs blood covering not just all of the "rivers and fountains" (Rev 16:4-5) but also a "third part of the sea"(Rev 8:8) which have been poisoned by the gall of this "wormwood bitterness" which is the deception and hateful venom emanating from Satan? Of this - we can not be certain - but it certainly beckons further consideration and fits with what we have uncovered in the biblically supported understanding of the symbols shown in the wormwood star.

So what shall we conclude about this prophecy? Is it foretelling that an actual "great star" will crash into the earth? Lets look at Gods laws in His universe next.

In 1994 astronomers observed the Shoemaker-Levy Comet crashing into Jupiter. They were able to observe that enormous damage was done to the planet by a small comet, which fragmented into many smaller pieces. Now consider that Jupiter is the largest of all the planets and is eleven times larger than the Earth. A "comet" is a relatively small heavenly body compared to a star. Yet the description in Revelation 8 is that of a "GREAT STAR". If we are going to hold to seeing this prophecy in a purely physical way then we can't rationalize away the meaning of "great star" to "force it to fit" what we believe is being described here. If an actual star collided with the Earth - let alone a "great star" - scientists assure us that the Earth could not survive such an event. God is the creator and has set in motion the laws that govern HIS universe. To believe and teach that such a thing could occur is to set aside the laws God has set in motion and revealed to us. We have seen significant evidence of what happens when heavenly bodies collide and know for certain that nothing described as a "great star" could literally collide with earth and fully two thirds of humanity survive the event. So using the bible itself and the laws of God's creation WE MUST ASK - is this prophecy described for us by John in Revelation 8 a physical or spiritual event?

Many of the lessons we learn from scripture are based on actual physical occurrences. But we also know that God teaches us "spiritual lessons" as well thru these events.

Often, we can see how these spiritual lessons would be virtually impossible to understand if we did not have a physical lesson to foreshadow what they are meant to teach us. Consider how we learn from the physical aspects of the Holy Days.

But God also uses many "symbols" in parables, visions, and dreams given to His servants (John in this case) to help us understand spiritual concepts. If a star really did crash into the Earth - there would be no Earth! Our GOD

(who loves us) knows how to get our attention and how to safely teach us - HE knows what HE is doing!

We can see a clear reference where physical things foreshadow spiritual concepts in 1 Cor 15:46 "Howbeit that was NOT first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; (Physical) and afterward that which is spiritual"

We see many spiritual things portrayed in physical symbols. At the end of this article you will find a short list of some of these physical symbols portraying spiritual things found in scripture. It is very clear that God uses these symbols prolifically to teach us.

Certainly, one can argue that GOD can do anything including changing his laws of nature any time HE chooses to do so. But we don't find where GOD has specifically given a physical prophecy with great detail and then caused it to happen while ignoring those same details. We clearly do see HIS purposeful intervention and we often see a prophecy fulfilled in a spiritual way in strict compliance with physical symbols GOD used to explain the event. The awesome physical image of Daniel's vision portraying many empires is an excellent example of this. It is very clear that GOD is concerned about the integrity of HIS word. We see this reinforced in scripture in many verses. Here are three places all spoken directly by Christ Himself which show this - John 17:12, John 19:24, & John 19:28 - "that the scripture might be fulfilled". The biblical support for the explanation of what is happening in the prophecy of the wormwood star conforms perfectly with the integrity of all of scripture. Certainly God could set aside HIS laws to cause this prophecy to be fulfilled - but isn't that departing from a strict physical fulfillment that so many cling to.

In my view, HE has already explained this vital passage in HIS word with perfect integrity and clarity. I further believe that HE has given us this understanding as a "key" to unlock many of the mysteries of these end-time prophecies and see things more from HIS vantage point than from our own natural, human, and carnal perspective.

In many of the prophecies of the end times, GOD cautions - "he that has an ear - listen to what the spirit says to the churches" or "He that has an ear -- let him understand." He calls for us to "anoint our eyes with eye-salve (at the end-time) so that we may see" Apparently, there is a lack of spiritual vision at this time. It seems that understanding these things requires a special spiritual vision GOD gives to those who are in "sync" with HIS plan, purpose, and inspiration.

Conclusion: This prophecy appears to describe the eviction of Satan from heaven. He is thrown to the Earth with one third of the angels, which had rebelled and are now his demons. They actively attack the Christian community, which comprises one third of the people on Earth by spewing out their poisonous venom using a false message designed to pervert and counterfeit the true gospel and the true message of the Kingdom of GOD.

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Some Signs & Symbols Used In Scripture

Anointing = Receiving Holy Spirit

Bad figs = Bad people

Bad tree = Bad leader

Baptism = Death, burial, and resurrection

Beam in your own eye = Great sin in yourself blinding you

Branches = True Brethren

Candle upon a Lamp-stand = Godly example

Captain of Salvation = CHRIST

CHRIST knocking = Encouraging repentance of the Church

Chief cornerstone = CHRIST

Clay = Teachable people

Crowns = Authority - Rulership

Daniels image = Ruling empires

Drink deadly things = Saints able to see thru false doctrine

Eye salve = Healing our spiritual vision

Early rain = Gods word to 1st ecclesia (Physical Israel)

Fiery cloven tongues = Holy Spirit descending on men

Fire coming down from heaven = Holy Spirit entering men

First fruits = Elect

Fertile ground = Person who is teachable

Good figs = Good people

Good fruit = Evidence of Holy Spirit in individuals

Gold tried in the fire = Character built in sincere repentance

Good tree = Good leader

Hills = Small nations

Holy temple = Spiritual church

Lamb = CHRIST

Lambs blood on door-posts = CHRIST'S blood protecting us

Lamp oil = Holy Spirit in sufficient supply

Lamp unto my feet = God's word and Law are like this

Latter rain = Gods word to 2nd ecclesia (Spiritual Israel)

Leavening = Sin that "puffs-up"  
Leavened bread = Sin in mankind  
Light unto my path-way = God's word and Law is like this  
Luke warm = Lacking zeal  
Mountains = Larger nations  
Noachian flood = Baptism  
Open door no man can shut = Gods work unhindered  
Olive oil = Holy Spirit  
Pearl of Great Price = Kingdom of God  
Pearls before swine = Explaining godliness to the ungodly  
Poor, blind, & naked = Unaware of your own faults  
Potter = Creator God  
Pure drinkable water = Holy Spirit  
Rainbow = Symbol of Gods promise not to repeat the flood  
Refiners fire = Purifying our character  
Rich & increased with goods = Arrogance of self assurance  
Rivers & fountains of water = Global Christian community  
Rivers of Living Water = Spirit led truth  
Roaring lion = Satan  
Rock = CHRIST  
Rocky ground = Person who is not teachable  
Sand = Uncertain foundation  
Salt of the Earth = Godly people  
Scorpions = Demons  
Sealed = Sanctified by God  
Serpents = Demons or devils  
Seven-lamp-stands = 7 Churches  
Seven-stars = 7 Angles

Sheep = Brethren

Shew bread = First fruits from the 12 tribes of Israel

Smoke ascending from incense = Prayers of the saints

Sowing seeds = Teaching people GOD's word

Spews out of CHRIST'S mouth = Separated from CHRIST Splinter in someone's eye  
= Small sin you see in others

Stones of temple = Saints

Take up serpents = Saints able to withstand demons

Talents = Special abilities

Tares = False brethren

Thorny ground = Person preoccupied with worldliness

Two edged sword = Word of God

Two-olive trees = 2 witnesses

Unleavened bread = CHRIST'S flesh

Unleavened bread = Man without sin

Using fullers soap = Repentance

Vessels of Honor = Righteous person

Vine = CHRIST

Vinedresser = CHRIST

Virgins = Church

Wave sheaf offering = CHRIST'S sacrifice

Wheat = Brethren

White fields to harvest = Conversion of men

White robes = Righteousness

Wine = CHRIST'S blood

Wolves clothed as sheep = False ministers

Wormwood = False preaching