



THE COMING END OF THE EARTH'S WATER WORLD – PART 1



From outer space, the most differentiable feature of planet earth is its blue color. No other planet has such wonderful hues of blue and green.

By Wilfred Hahn

Water. It covers 75% of the surface of the earth. No other planet has ever been discovered to date that has liquid surface water. Earth has just the right amount of water ... not too much; not too little. Too much, and the mountains would be covered; too little, and the earth would be an equally uninhabitable desert.

Yes, water is essential for life. However, there are probably trillions of other essential conditions required for life on earth. God has created an earth that has water ... and, spectacularly, life. The fact that water molecules might be found on other planetary bodies, is no more significant than finding iron or carbon or any other element or compound.

Crucially, not only did God create water as a necessity for life, but also that it might play a very significant role in the cosmological story of mankind. He has used this unique feature of His earth—water—to carry out His plan for mankind. How so?

The Bible tells us that God will intercede in the geological structures of the world

with respect to water at least four times (if not more). To begin, as already intimated, He created the seas on the second day ... this after having separated the water to below and above the “expanse” (atmosphere).

Then, when mankind became utterly godless (only some 1,650 years after Creation)—when “the Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time” Genesis 6:5)—He intervened again, allowing a great worldwide flood that extinguished all mankind save for eight.

The next and third time that the Lord will intervene with a global impact (with respect to water) is the Tribulation period. God, in wrath, destroys seas and rivers, decimating the marine networks of mankind ... these being the proud, smug achievements of mankind's rich elites.

The tribulational decimation happens in several steps. First, Revelation tells us that “a third of the living creatures in the

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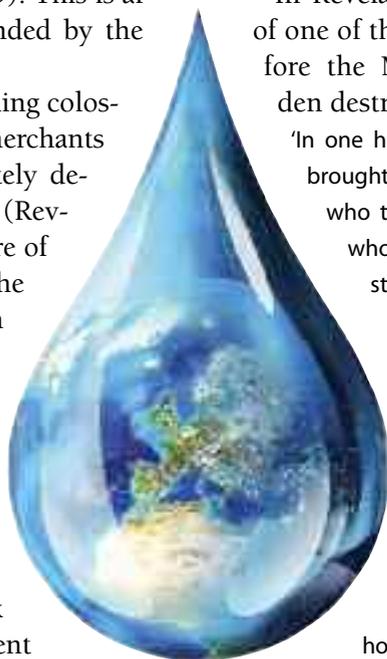
sea died [...]” (Revelation 8:9). This is after the second trumpet sounded by the angels.

Then, finally, the great trading colossus, whose great men were merchants and sea captains, is completely destroyed, never to be restored (Revelation 18). And, to make sure of that, God wipes out all of the world's seas. This is the 4th intervention. Says the Bible, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea” (Revelation 21:1).

This is where we will pick up the thread from our recent series, which focused on the end-time resurgence of the spirit of Tyre ... this being the same spirit that inhabits Babylon, the Great City. These are both shown to be seafaring entities that amass great wealth. And, in each case God intervenes, Tyre being the foreshadowing of the annihilation of Babylon the Great City.

Ship-shape for the End-times

Ship-shape is an old saying originating in the 1600s, meaning orderly or organized. To be ship-shape was to be ready and fitted for a journey. In this sense, the world is rapidly becoming “ship-shape” for the last days. But, you may be surprised to learn that the shape of the times also has to do with ships ... yes, seafaring vessels. It is an interesting development of our day that is prophetically significant.



In Revelation 18, we read the account of one of the last epic events on earth before the Millennium begins—the sudden destruction of Babylon the Great:

‘In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin!’ Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’ They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: ‘Woe! Woe, O great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin’ (verses 17-19).

This account is somewhat puzzling. It is the end of days—supposedly a modern time—and a world-impacting destruction is taking place, where seemingly only people engaged in seafaring trade are weeping and mourning. We envision sea captains, and those who make their living from trade, standing afar off throwing dust on their heads. This is strange. What about the rest of the people of the world? Why is it that ships are mentioned so prominently?

Ships are referred to one additional time in the book of Revelation, this at the time after the second trumpet, as mentioned. “The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of



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the ships were destroyed” (Revelation 8:8-9).

To conclude, both references to the prominence of ships mentioned in Revelation concern the time of the Great Tribulation. While that time is yet future, it is already possible to see the shadows of that time reflected in worldwide trends. So it is with ships. In fact, reviewing the developments within the world’s marine industry over the past half-century, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that future events spoken of in Revelation are fast approaching.

Shipping in Biblical Times

Shipping developments in the world today are unprecedented and fascinating. But before we investigate this global industry, let’s first examine what the Bible has to say about ships. We find that several types are mentioned in the Bible—for example, smaller boats of the size that might ply the Sea of Galilee, or papyrus boats.

In the Old Testament, we find another type mentioned, which in Hebrew roughly means “transporter of Tarshish.” Many Bible versions simply translate this phrase as the word ship. However, in doing so, something is lost in the translation.

The ships of Tarshish were the transport ships of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea area, and possibly the Indian oceans. One could consider this term as a class of ship such as we today use the classification of Panamax (ocean-going vessels sized to pass through the Panama Canal)¹ or Great Lakes freighter (the ship size that can navigate the North American Great Lakes, the Welland Canal and the St.

Lawrence River). There are numerous other classes.

The ships of Tarshish were the trading ships of ancient times. For example, King Solomon had “a fleet of trading ships [navy of Tarshish] at sea along with the ships of Hiram. Once every three years it returned, carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons” (1 Kings 10:22).

In the New Testament, however, Tarshish is never associated with the word ship. Of course, by this time, the world trading empire of Tyre (which was associated with Tarshish) had disappeared many centuries before. Besides, the Greeks themselves were a seafaring nation. Therefore, a trading ship would not be referred to as a “ship of Tarshish.”

To the Greeks, a ship was a trading ship. The key to see is that ships are generally associated with the notion of goods trade—in other words, the import and export of merchandise. The two times that ships are mentioned in Revelation, we should consider that the text is referring to this type of sea vessel—the trading ship. Clearly, trade is a big preoccupation of the world at that future time. Is that time near?

In Part II, we will lay out the evidence for the answer to that question. Global shipping has been completely transformed over the last six decades. In our view, its trend represents another one of those fast-moving, exponential time pieces of the last days that mark the “season” of our times. (MC)

ENDNOTE

- 1 Ships classified as **Panamax** are of the maximum dimensions that will fit through the locks of the Panama Canal, each of which is 1000 ft long by 110 ft wide and 85 ft deep.