

A spiritual cause of environmental degradation?

A third of the trees and all grass burned up, a third of the life in the sea dying and a third of the rivers and waters becoming bitter. I have often wondered why the first three of the trumpets blown by the angels in the book of Revelation usher in environmental catastrophe when the issue in the book seems to be the refusal of mankind to repent (1).

I then noticed some words Jeremiah addressed to the worshippers in Jerusalem in his temple sermon.

“Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground, and it will burn and not be quenched(2).”

This reveals a clear link between human sin and the state of the natural world.

I also noted that in Revelation, the dragon casting down a third of the stars in the sky seemed to prefigure the removal of a third of world Jewry during the second world war, since the descendants of Abraham were to be as the stars of the sky (3).

The problems in the natural world have arisen since the second world war. Setting aside all natural causes for a moment, could there be a spiritual element to respond to here? Mankind chose to kill a third of God's chosen people. Maybe we should do more than regret the holocaust, and formally repent of this heinous act? Does anti-semitism have environmental consequences?

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(1). Revelation 8:7-11

(2). Jeremiah 7:20

(3). Revelation 12:4, see Genesis 15:5, 22:17, Deuteronomy 10:22 etc. World Jewry fell from eighteen million to twelve million because of the holocaust.