

# Perspective

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## The Wormwood Star, What Is It?

ELE is an acronym meaning an Extinction Level Event, or a catastrophic occurrence that could lead to the extinction of a species or civilization. Astronomers are constantly scanning the heavens searching for rogue asteroids careening through space with the possibility of striking the earth. Scientists say it was an asteroid about six miles in diameter which struck the Yucatan Peninsula around sixty-five million years ago and wiped out all the dinosaurs. They are fearful such a thing could happen again and humankind will be wiped out. NASA is now tracking over 18,000 near-Earth asteroids, with an average discovery rate of about 40 per week.

Revelation prophesies about what is called the “Wormwood star” striking the earth and causing billions to die. Wormwood is a word used in the Old Testament a number of times (Deuteronomy 29:18; Amos 5:6-7; Proverbs 5:3-4; Jeremiah 9:15). It is a plant that grows commonly in the Middle East. It has a strong bitter taste and is used in the Bible as an analogy for bitterness, punishment, and sorrow. Although wormwood itself is not poisonous, it has an extremely disgusting rancid taste which evokes death and grief.

## Queen of Heaven

Wormwood plants belong to the genus *Artemisia*, named after the Greek goddess Artemis. Artemis is the latinized Diana of the temple at Ephesus which was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. She was called the of “Queen of Heaven”; she was a deity of fertility, and she is mentioned in Jeremiah 7:18. While several wormwood varieties exist in the Middle East, white wormwood (*Artemisia herba-alba*) is the most likely type mentioned in the Bible.

The Greek word for wormwood is *apsinthos*. A bottled drink was sold to the public called Absinthe. It was banned in the United States and in much of Europe, including France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria-Hungary by 1915. The ban was based on a belief that the green liquid inside the bottle was hallucinogenic and dangerous.

One of the major themes of the book of Revelation is the end-time period known as “The Day of the Lord.” This period, which in Revelation 6:17 is called the great day of His wrath, is kicked off when the prophetic seventh seal is opened (Revelation 8:1), signifying God's punishment and events leading up to the fall of the entire Babylonish system and those who follow it (Revelation 18:1-3).

“Wormwood” is the name of a star mentioned in Revelation 8:10-11: *“Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.”*

## Incoming asteroids

It is called a star; the Greek word used is *astēr* and is the root word from which we get the word, *asteroid*. Asteroids come from the many small planetoids orbiting the sun, found mostly between Mars and Jupiter. The term comes from the Greek word “asteroeides,” which means “star-like”—hence Wormwood star. Wormwood will be an incoming asteroid of considerable size. We know this because of its prophesied impact on the earth.

This is the third of the “trumpet judgments” upon the unrepentant earth described in Revelation which emanates from space. The seven trumpets are the judgments of the seventh seal (Revelation 8:1-5). The first trumpet causes hail and fire to destroy much of the plant life in the world (Revelation 8:7). The second trumpet prophesies a great burning mountain which seems to mean a meteor or comet striking the oceans and causing the death of one-third of the world's sea life (Revelation 8:8-9). The third trumpet is

similar to the second, except it has a composition which affects the world's water resources---its lakes and rivers instead of the oceans (Revelation 8:10-11). It will cause a third part of all fresh water on earth to turn bitter and many people drinking from it will die.

The term "Wormwood" is mentioned only here in the New Testament, twice in the same verse, but it appears eight times in the Old Testament; each time it is associated with bitterness, poison and death. The Revelation passage may not be saying that the star falling to the earth will actually be called Wormwood by the inhabitants by the world's astronomers. Rather, wormwood was a well-known bitter herb during Biblical times. By naming the star "Wormwood," we are told that its effect will be to embitter the waters of the earth, so much so as to make the water undrinkable. It won't be a matter of simply a bitter taste to the water; it will literally be poisonous. If drinking water is unavailable to one third of the earth's population, it's easy to see how chaos and terror will result. Humans can only survive about three days without water. The inhabitants of the affected areas will be so desperate they will actually drink the poisoned water, causing the death of thousands, if not millions of people.

### **God is our only protector**

This is a prophecy yet to come in the end of this age. Since one-third of the earth is destroyed by these trumpet judgments, this is only a partial judgment from God. His full wrath is yet to be unleashed.

Humanity will be terrified when they see the signs of heaven Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24:29-30 and at the opening of the sixth seal of the book of Revelation: *"I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?'"* (Revelation 6:12-16)

The wealthy of the world are already preparing places to weather out the terrible times they see coming. Some have constructed livable places for their families in deep natural caves, old missile silos, or other manmade places, which they have stocked with food and water, laid up in preparation for the fall of civilization. Experience has shown through the ages that preparing in such extreme manners end up failing.

Astronomers have had their eyes on a celestial body called *Apophis* for some time. It is an asteroid which is of considerable size, 1,100 feet or 340 meters across. It is a giant space rock, which if it struck the earth, would carry such a major wallop it could flatten a major city. Apophis is a Romanized name for the ancient Egyptian deity who embodied darkness and disorder, and thus, was the opponent of light.

On April 13, 2029, the asteroid, Apophis, will pass less than 20,000 miles (32,000 kilometers) from our planet's surface – closer than the distance of geosynchronous satellites. Scientists are confident that Apophis has a trajectory which will allow it to safely glide past Earth in both 2029 and 2036. During the 2029 close approach, it will likely take out some of our satellites. Apophis will be visible to observers on the ground in the Eastern Hemisphere without the aid of a telescope or binoculars.

There is a takeaway lesson for everyone. The word of God is sure. One day in the future Wormwood will come and wreak havoc on the earth. There will be no place to hide from its destruction. Ultimately, we always must place our trust in God as our great Protector. Psalms 91:1-2 instructs to remember: *"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.'"*

Let us pray always we can escape and abide in God's "secret place."

This is my Perspective!