

The 5th & 6th Trumpets

Revelation 9

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Review: Rev 8, The Seventh Seal

- Judgment is coming so repent before it is too late
- John 9:4 – Work while it is day, the night is coming when no one can work
- Don't put your trust in things of the world... only God can deliver us.

Fifth Trumpet: The Locusts from the Bottomless Pit Revelation 9:1-12

Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. ² And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. ³ Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴ They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵ And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. ⁶ In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. ⁷ The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. ⁸ They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. ⁹ And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. ¹⁰ They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. ¹¹ And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. ¹² One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

What is the bottomless pit, aka the Abyss?

The Abyss is a place that is best described as a place of detention for the wicked angels of the demon world.

- The demons in the demon-possessed man begged Jesus to not order them to the "Abyss" - they went into a herd of swine (Luke 8:31)

- Jesus confirmed the existence of this place by saying He had the "key" to the "Abyss" (Rev 1:18; 20:3)
- Satan will spend 1,000 years in the Abyss during the millennial kingdom (Rev 20:3)

What is the star fallen from heaven to earth?

The "star" is probably Satan or another high-ranking fallen angel.

- The text clearly shows us that this star is a person (*to him*), not a literal star.
- The verb tense (*fallen*) indicates that he already had fallen.

What is the significance of the key given him?

- A high-ranking fallen angel is given the key to the Bottomless Pit (Abyss)
- Since Christ provides this "key", it is His will for the action!

Why do we think the angel given the key was probably not Satan?

The idea that Satan is the master of hell is foreign to the rest of Scripture. He will be hell's victim, not ruler.

What does 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 tell us about the beings in the Abyss?

2 Peter 2:4 - *God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment*

Jude 6 - *And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day*

These are demons, fallen angels, who have been "locked-up" because of their absolute destructive nature to mankind

Is there a distinction between demons and fallen angels, or are they the same?

- Some think that demons are the spirits of the Nephilim, hybrid human-angels of Genesis 6. There is no support for this idea in Scripture, proponents of this distinction cite extrabiblical sources.

- Either way, demons and/or fallen angels have no physical bodies but they possess physical creatures
 - So, these demons from the abyss are given "Locusts" to possess and they have the ability to inflict pain on mankind!

What happened when Satan opened the bottomless pit?

John sees smoke pouring from the Abyss, darkening the sky (v2)

What clue does this give us to the location of the Abyss?

To darken the "sky" infers the Abyss is located within the earth!

- It may be in the center of the earth, because there is "top" and nothing is the "bottom."
- However, it may also be a certain place in the spiritual realm or even another dimension.

What are the demons from the Abyss permitted to do?

To afflict all people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads... unbelievers.

Who are the sealed?

Those who have the seal of God on their foreheads (the 144,000 and perhaps more) are protected, but none other are. This is an inescapable judgment of God.

What are the abyss demons restricted from doing?

- Harming believers or any vegetation (grass, green things, trees)
- These are not your common locusts!
- Inflict pain but not death
- Also limited to 5 months of torment

Why was the pain of the locusts limited?

Their purpose and period is expressly governed by God, and the purpose of all this is to bring repentance (Revelation 9:20-21).

What kind of torment did the demon locusts inflict?

Pain like what scorpions inflict

v5-6 How bad was the pain?

- Bad enough that people would rather die than suffer the pain
- Bad enough that many apparently try to commit suicide but are unable to die

v7-10 - What does the description of the locusts tell us about them?

- Like horses prepared for battle - Speed, Organized
- Crown on head - Authority

- Face resembled humans - Intelligence
- Hair of a woman - Beauty
- Teeth like lions teeth - Strength/Vicious
- Breastplates of iron - Armor/Invincible
- Sounds in their wings - Calamity/strikes terror
- Tails like Scorpions with stingers - Inflict Pain

How else do we know these are no ordinary locusts?

The Bible tells us that literal locusts have no king: *The locusts have no king, yet they all advance in ranks* (Proverbs 30:27).

- Yet these particular locusts do have a king.

v11 - What do we learn about the leader of the demon-possessed locusts?

His name is ABADDON (Hebrew)...

APOLLYON (Greek),

DESTROYER (English)

These are names for a high-ranking fallen angel, the angel of the bottomless pit who was given the key to open it.

v12 - What is the affliction of the demon-possessed locusts called?

Besides the Fifth Trumpet it is also the first woe

- One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things (the worst is yet to come).

Sixth Trumpet: The Angels from the Euphrates Revelation 9:13-21

¹³ Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵ So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶ Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. ¹⁷ And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. ¹⁸ By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. ²⁰ But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

What does the sixth trumpet bring?

The release of the four fallen angels sets off a chain of events that will culminate in the killing of a third of the world's population

- The pouring of the "Sixth Bowl" judgment (Rev 16:12) will complete the task that this Sixth Trumpet starts
- This along with the Fourth Seal (Rev 6:8) that kills a fourth of the world's population will leave the world's population at fifty percent

v16 - What tool does the four demons that were bound at the Euphrates River use to kill so many people?

A 2M-man army of horsemen

What is the significance of the Euphrates River?

It was the frontier of Israel's land as fully promised by God (Genesis 15:17-21).

- The Euphrates is also associated with the first sin (Genesis 2:10-14), the first murder (Genesis 4:16), the first organized revolt against God (Genesis 11:1-9), the first war confederation (Genesis 14:1), and the first dictatorship (Genesis 10:8-10).

v17 - How, are the horsemen described?

Armored with red, blue, and yellow colors Fire, smoke, and brimstone come out of mouths.

What could the description of the horsemen represent?

Modern weapons...

red: Field Artillery; blue: Infantry; yellow: Armor... the three ground-taking combat branches of the U.S. Army (are these colors a coincidence or clues' that help us interpret this passage)

What is the case for this not being a modern human army?

A human army this size has never been seen.

- The total size of all armies on both sides at the height of WWII was only 70 million.
- In 1965 China claimed to have an army and militia of 200M, but this claim was doubted by many.

Therefore, perhaps the safest interpretation is to see this as a demonic army invading earth.

- This continues the idea of the demonic army like locusts described earlier in the chapter.

v18 – What do the plagues of the 6th Trumpet result in?

A third of the population of earth dying.

What will be the three plagues that kill so many people?

Fire, smoke, & brimstone from the 200M-man army

What is brimstone?

Burning sulfur... FYI, black powder is the earliest known chemical explosive. It consists of a mixture of sulfur, charcoal, and potassium nitrate (saltpeter)

Where is the Euphrates river?

This is the Eastern border of the Holy Land; the Euphrates River is 1,700 miles long; it begins in the Armenian mountains of southern Turkey and empties into the Persian Gulf.

- These four angels (demons) are chained here for a specific reason - they have a "future" job to do!
- They dry up the Euphrates River, permitting the passage of the armies from the East to the Middle East - Israel!
- Their advancement into Israel will be after the Armageddon war has started

v19 - What is the significance of the tails of - the horsemen?

- The tails also do harm
- Just when you think the horsemen is past you, the tail lashes out like a venomous snake
...even the aftermath of the passing army will kill, destruction is left in their wake

v20 - How did those who were not killed by the tribulation plagues respond to God's wrath?

With fully half of the world's population dead of the plagues, and with the disruption of the ecosystem, the economy, and the weather patterns, one would expect that survivors who witness these calamities would come running to God for mercy and salvation

- This will not be the case! The people did not repent
- Instead, they worshiped demons and idols.

What does it mean they will worship demons?

They will accept the lies of Satan and follow his ways rather than God.

What are some lies of Satan that people will likely embrace?

Alternative explanations for origins like extraterrestrials "seeded" life on earth.

How is it they will they worship idols?

They will take created things as their authority over them following them instead of God.

- They see their salvation in the fallen angels who lie to them telling them what they want to hear.
- And they also see their salvation in mankind's capacity to do great things collectively.

v21 - What specific sins are mentioned?

Murder, sorcery, sexual immorality, theft and pharmakeia... drugs

Why did the people not repent?

Despite all that happened, mankind continued with their idol worship in a business as usual sort of way either wittingly or unwittingly.

What applications do we see in the destruction of the trumpet judgments?

You really don't want to be on earth during that time so repent and follow Christ while you can.