

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 29TH, 2024 // REVELATION

FIFTH TRUMPET (REVELATION 9:1-6) WARNINGS GIVE WAY TO WOES

What took place previously with the first four trumpets were **warnings for humanity**, but the next three trumpets are **curses (woes) against humanity**.

- Ch. 8 ended with an angel high above, crying out for people to repent because **the remaining trumpets will be more severe and directly affect humanity**.

"A STAR THAT HAD FALLEN FROM HEAVEN"

The star that fell from heaven is **an angel who has been given the key to unlock the abyss and release demonic forces onto the earth**. Some scholars believe this "fallen star" is Satan, the leader of all fallen angels.

- It is possible this is **the same angel holding the key to the abyss that seizes Satan and binds him for 1,000 years** (20:1-2).

"THEN LOCUSTS CAME OUT OF THE SMOKE"

When the abyss is unlocked and opened, **smoke rises like that of a great furnace so the sun and sky are darkened**.

- John witnesses a new terror coming from the smoke and filling the sky. **John sees demons taking on a visible form resembling locusts, swarming out of the abyss to plague the earth**.

GOD GIVES POWER AND PERMISSION

It appears that these demons are a special class of **evil spirits that have been under God's lock and key** (Jude 1:6) until this time and will be unleashed to accomplish His will.

- These **demons are "given" the power** to inflict severe pain (**pain like that of a scorpion on earth**) on people **for five months**.

THIS ONLY AFFECTS THE UNSAVED

The demons were not permitted to kill or to harm the earth but were given power and authority to inflict pain only on those **"who do not have God's seal on their foreheads"**.

- This pain will be so severe that those tormented by the demons **"will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them."**

THE TORMENT IS A FORETASTE OF HELL

There will be those who during this torment will seek death and not God. The tormented will long for a way out, but even **death for the unrepentant is not a release from wrath**.

- God is allowing these five months of torment as an opportunity to repent; to **experience five months of Hell on earth to be spared from an eternity in Hell**.

THE FIRST WOE IS COMPLETE (REVELATION 9:7-12)

JOHN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE DEMONIC

- **"...like horses prepared for battle"** shows strength and endurance. This is not a disorganized group, but a well-prepared army.
- **"Something like golden crowns on their heads"** shows they will succeed in their appointed mission.
- **"...their faces were like human faces"** shows intelligence and deceptive cunningness.
- **"...hair like women's hair"** is reminiscent of many ancient warriors who wore long hair as a symbol of fierceness.
- **"...teeth were like lion's teeth"** shows aggression and strength.
- **"... chests like iron breastplates"** shows they were stronger and more invincible than the Romans, whose breastplates were leather and bronze.
- **"wings...like the sound of many chariots"** because they are so numerous and so vast that their wings sound like an army.
- **"...stingers like scorpions"** shows us they will inflict excruciating pain like the sting from a scorpion, and though it is painful, this torture will not kill those who are afflicted.

RANKS OF ANGELS AND DEMONS (PROVERBS 30:27)

The repetition of "like" shows us that a literal description is most likely not intended. V. 11 tells us that they had the angel of the abyss as their king and Proverbs 30:27 tells that literal locusts have no king.

- Their king is given the name **Abaddon in Hebrew** and **Apollyon in Greek**, which simply means **destruction**.

SIXTH TRUMPET (REVELATION 9:13-19)

THE SECOND WOE

The sounding of the fifth trumpet brought torment, but the sixth trumpet will bring death through another demonic attack.

- A voice calls out from the four horns on the corner of the altar for the sixth angel to **release the four angels bound at the Euphrates**. The usage of **the word bound suggests that they are most likely demons**.

A DEMONIC ARMY WAGES WAR

Though their exact identity is not given, **these four fallen angels fulfilled a very specific purpose**.

- At a time chosen by God, these **four powerful, high-ranking demons would lead an innumerable army of lower-ranking demons across the Euphrates to wage war against humanity**.

UNIMAGINABLE LOSS AND DEVASTATION

When this demonic army is released, they will **kill a third of humanity**. If the world's population is six billion, this means two billion people will be killed.

- It has been believed throughout history that this army has been different world powers from the Soviet Union and China, but **it seems most likely this devastation is inflicted by supernatural means and not by a human army**.

MORE DEMONIC DESCRIPTION

With vivid, horrific imagery, John describes this demonic horde.

- The tricolor breastplate seems to symbolize strength and **three plagues of fire, smoke, and sulfur**. Their **horses spew these plagues out of their mouths** and their **tails are like snakes**. This shows that **death is all around as they ride into battle**.

HARDENED HEARTS (REVELATION 9:20-21)

ONE LAST CHANCE TO REPENT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

At the end of time, God will no longer restrain Satan and demons, allowing the demonic to give humanity a **glimpse into what Hell will be like**.

- In general, mankind showed no signs of repentance **despite everything that transpired, and they continued in their ungodly ways**.

IF GIVEN THE CHOICE...

Humanity was unwilling to repent. They were unwilling to give up **idolatry and worship of demons** (*anything that takes the place of worshipping God*), **murders** (*violence & hatred*), **sorceries** (*Gk. pharmakōn; intoxication & drug use for pleasure & comfort*), **immorality** (*general term including sexual sin*) and theft (*dishonesty & selfishness*).

THIS IS THE RESULT OF REJECTING GOD

In the end, we will see the world spiral downward into a place of materialism, murder, drug use, sexual perversion, and crime that is unparalleled in all of human history.

- When humanity rejects God, showing a desire to fulfill the evil desires of our hearts, **God eventually gives us over to what we truly want**.
- **Romans 1:28 (CSB)**

GUARD YOUR HEART (PROVERBS 4:23)

- **Is seeking things other than God a form of escape from our current situation?**
- **Are we choosing things that distance us from God?**
- **Are we gravitating towards things that distort our ability to hear the truth and repent?**
- **Have we normalized sin and fallen in love with darkness so that we refuse to repent?**