

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 29TH, 2024 // REVELATION

FIFTH TRUMPET (REVELATION 9:1-6) THE WARNING WAS TRUE

In Chapter 8, an angel warned humanity they must repent for their sins because the 3 remaining trumpets will be severe. The 5th and 6th trumpets are supernatural invasions during the Great Tribulation.

- The first four trumpets indirectly affected humanity, but the 5th and 6th will be direct curses (woes) on humanity.

"... A STAR THAT HAD FALLEN FROM HEAVEN"

The star that comes down from heaven is an angel who is given the key to unlock the abyss and unleash demonic forces. We will see this angel again in Chapter 20 when Satan is locked up in the same abyss.

- The angel is given direction from God to unleash "smoke" like from "a great furnace so that the sun and the air were darkened."

LITERAL AND FIGURATIVE

The smoke from the abyss below can be both literal (the chaos taking place) and figurative (a cloud of demonic forces coming from Hell).

- Also, Heaven and Hell are not literally above and below us. The positions of these places are spiritual, not literal. This is called the *theological geography of the universe*.

"THEN LOCUSTS CAME OUT OF THE SMOKE"

Locusts move in giant columns and rapidly destroy all green vegetation as they swarm through crops, but they do not harm people.

- These locusts are **demons. They are not to harm the crops but are to directly hurt people**, like a scorpion that stings **but doesn't kill. This is demonic oppression and spiritual torture.**

THIS ONLY AFFECTS THE UNSAVED

The only people that this special class of demon (Jude 1:6) can harm are those who "do not have God's seal on their foreheads."

- **Demons cannot hurt people who are full of the Holy Spirit without God's permission (Job), but people who are demonically possessed can hurt others and themselves.**
- **Matthew 8:28 (CSB)**

FIVE MONTHS OF PURE HELL

Maybe John uses the analogy of locusts because, just like real locusts, the torture span of these demons is five months. During this time, people will be in such agony that they will beg to die, but death will elude them.

- Is it possible that God will make suicide impossible so that the agony will cause some to repent?

UNFORTUNATELY, IT LOOKS BLEAK

Later, we will see that these people will not repent, and death only eludes them because they are too afraid to take their own lives.

- The opening of Chapter 9 is similar to the plagues inflicted on Egypt when the Pharaoh would not repent.

FIFTH TRUMPET (CONT.) (REVELATION 9:7-12) WHAT DO DEMONS LOOK LIKE?

Again, we see John pan in to give us details about what is taking place.

- Vs. 7-12 are the most descriptive account of demons in the Bible. Though the description is figurative, we can get **an idea of how terrifying the forces of evil can be if we're not sealed with God's Spirit.**

PAINTING A PICTURE OF EVIL

- **"like horses prepared for battle"** shows strength and endurance
- **"golden crowns"** indicates victory
- **"faces were like human faces"** shows deception and intelligence
- **"hair like women's hair"** may be antennae—John saw it as unique and notable
- **"teeth... like lion's teeth"** shows aggression
- **"chests like iron"** indicates it is almost impossible to penetrate them
- **"wings... like the sound of many chariots"** gives us an image of war
- **"stingers like scorpions"** shows that they will torture but will not kill

RANKS OF ANGELS AND DEMONS (PROVERBS 30:27)

We have seen different ranks of angels; now, as John looks towards the leader of these demons, we also see their ranks.

- The leader is a demon named Abaddon in Hebrew and Apollyon in Greek. This name simply means **destruction. The only way to avoid destruction is salvation through Christ.**

SIXTH TRUMPET (REVELATION 9:13-19) THE GOLDEN ALTAR BEFORE GOD

The same altar from Chapters 6 and 8 is now personified, and John hears it speak for God from its four horns, "Release the four angels bound at the great river Euphrates."

- The four angels of the Euphrates are high-ranking demons who will lead a large group of lower-ranking demons across the Euphrates.

THE EUPHRATES IS AN IMPORTANT RIVER

The Euphrates was the place of the Garden of Eden and Babylon and was a strategic landmark for the Roman and Persian Empires. The river also stopped military advancement from hostile forces from the East toward Israel.

THE 4 ANGELS (DEMONS) UNLEASH AN ARMY

The infamous 200,000,000-person army has been a huge source of debate. John says these "mounted troops" will kill **1/3 of the "human race."** Is this army literal or metaphorical?

- More than likely, this is a literal army that is demonically possessed and led by evil to kill many people.

IS THIS POSSIBLE?

This could be demons unleashed to not only torture but also kill people. Or, this could be a godless nation that does the will of Satan. But, is such a large army possible?

- As of now, the largest military on earth is China's (2-4 million), but we will see that many countries will unite in the future.

AGAIN, JOHN ZOOMS IN

John describes these horse-like demons that he saw in a vision. His description is metaphorical and symbolic.

- **"Breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow"** is not about a nation but the literal colors of fire, smoke, and sulfur.
- **"heads of...horses were like...heads of lions"** shows strength and brutality.
- **"from their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur"** could refer to modern weaponry or some supernatural plague (Job 41).
- **"tails, which resemble snakes"** shows they don't just hurt, they kill.

THE MAIN POINT SO FAR

The demonic "locusts" have the power to oppress and torture, but not to kill. The second group of demons will possibly possess an army of 200 million that will cross from east of the Euphrates and begin to kill a third of humanity.

- This attack will be against **nominal Christian nations** and Jews and possibly affect Believers as well.

TRUST ISSUES (REVELATION 9:20-21) WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

Though 1/3 of humanity had been killed by the end of the 6th trumpet, the "people, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent."

- **Many times, people have become so hardened by sin or they have fallen in love with the darkness that they refuse to repent and turn to God.**

USELESS GODS

Throughout history, people have worshiped artificial gods made from human hands. Today, these often come in the form of materialism, sex, entertainment, and success.

- John mentions that **these gods cannot see or hear, meaning they really have no power to help, let alone save humanity.**

THE SINS OF MAN FALL INTO TWO CATEGORIES

The first four of the 10 Commandments focus on our relationship to God. The last six of the 10 focus on our relationship with other people.

- Vs. 20-21 basically hit all ten. The people unwilling to repent have worshiped other gods (commands 1-4) and have practiced evils that hurt others (commands 5-10).

WITCHCRAFT AND DRUG USE

Vs. 20-21 hit the 10 Cs, but John also threw in *sorceries*. This comes from the Greek *pharmakeus*, where we get the word *pharmacy*.

- John is alluding to **a time when drug use will be an epidemic that society refuses to repent of.**

THE INSANITY OF SIN

- When we are distant from God, our choices are **irrational.**
- The very things we worship are actually destroying us! **The "freedom" we think we have has enslaved us!**
- Are we gravitating towards things that may kill our ability to hear the truth and repent? **What do we place our trust in?**
- **Romans 1:28 (CSB)**