

**SERIES: THE APOCALYPSE - THE UNVEILING OF  
JESUS THE KING**

**TITLE: DEMONIC FORCES GOING CRAZY**

**TEXT: REVELATION 9:1-21**

**October 9, 2022**

**I. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FIFTH TRUMPET  
OF JUDGEMENT**

**II. THE ARRANGEMENTS ARE SET FOR THE  
DEMONIC**

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## **REVELATION 9:1-21**

Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key to the shaft of the abyss was given to him. <sup>2</sup> He opened the shaft of the abyss, and smoke ascended out of the shaft like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened from the smoke of the shaft. <sup>3</sup> Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. <sup>4</sup> They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a person. <sup>6</sup> And in those days people will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death will flee from them!<sup>7</sup> The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their

faces were like human faces. <sup>8</sup> They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like *the teeth* of lions. <sup>9</sup> They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle. <sup>10</sup> They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt people for five months. <sup>11</sup> They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon. <sup>12</sup> The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still coming after these things. <sup>13</sup> Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, <sup>14</sup> saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." <sup>15</sup> And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. <sup>16</sup> The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. <sup>17</sup> And this is how I

saw in my vision the horses and those who sat on them: *the riders* had breastplates *the color* of fire, of hyacinth, and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire and smoke and brimstone. <sup>18</sup>A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire, the smoke, and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. <sup>19</sup> For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm. <sup>20</sup>The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands so as not to worship demons and the idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; <sup>21</sup>and they did not repent of their murders, nor of their witchcraft, nor of their sexual immorality, nor of their thefts.

## INTRODUCTION:

The first four trumpets are war trumpets. We saw with the blowing of these trumpets God's judgment of the physical earth: the trees, the seas, the rivers, the sun, the moon and the stars. The last three trumpets are woe trumpets. With the blowing of these trumpets, we see god's judgment not just on the physical earth, but the judgment and the wrath of god on the populated earth: the world of humanity. Mankind itself is now going to feel the full effects of the wrath of God.

In **chapter 8**, we looked at the first four of seven trumpet judgments. According to **vs. 2**, seven angels were given seven trumpets. With each sound, God brings one of His awful judgments.

In **vs. 7**, as the first angel sounded his trumpet, hail and fire mingled with blood, fell to the earth. A third part of the trees and green grass were burned up.

In **vs. 8**, when the second angel sounded, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, with a third part of the sea becoming blood, killing a third of life in the sea, as well as destroying a third part of all ships.

In **vs. 10**, the third judgment was a great star falling from heaven. It fell upon the rivers and fountains, making a third part them unfit to drink. The star was called "Wormwood," meaning, "bitter."

In **vs. 12**, the fourth angel sounded his trumpet, affecting the sun, the moon and the stars--causing a third part of the heavens to be darkened.

Finally, in **vs. 13**, we hear an angel warning the inhabitants of the earth of more judgment to come: "Woe, woe, woe...by reason of the three angels which are yet to sound."

With the blowing of the fifth trumpet the door to hell is opened. Smoke bellows forth from that fiery furnace. Out of that smoke and darkness

come hideous, horrible, heinous, hurtful demons who invade and attack the entire world.

Now that really should not shock you too much. For I believe we are even now being prepared for this age of demonic invasion. There is an increasing interest and awareness of demonism, satanism, witchcraft, magic and the occult, astrologers, fortune tellers and soothsayers have literally tens of millions of people who almost worship at their doorstep. I am convinced that the groundwork is being laid for this demonic invasion that will literally burst upon the world.

This invasion will simply be a preparation for the coming of the anti-Christ when this invasion is over the world will be ready to be plucked like a piece of ripe fruit. Mankind will lay palm branches in the street and cry, hosanna!" as the anti-Christ makes his entrance.

This remarkable story begins in v. L., "then the fifth angel sounded: and I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth." (v. L) this star that is

referred to here is not a literal star, for we read in the second half of this verse that "to him was given the key to the bottomless pit." this star is a personage. Now it is not unusual to refer to a person as a star. We refer today to "movie stars." we talk about stars in the world of sports such as the star on the football team.

7. But this is not just an ordinary star. This is a fallen star. This star has fallen from heaven to earth. Now that immediately gives us a clue as to who this star is. This star is none other than satan himself. One of the names for satan is lucifer which means "brightness." in **Isaiah 14** he is compared to the "morning star." (Isa. 14:1-4) the lord Jesus even said on one occasion to his disciples **"I saw satan fall like lightning from heaven." Luke 10:18**

8. Satan is given the key to the bottomless pit. He puts the key to the door and a hellish Pandora's Box is opened. Hordes of hellish demons are unloosed and unleashed to attack and afflict all of humanity. When that door is opened men will experience hell on earth. There will be an



intensification of fury and a multiplication of foes as the demons from hell take over the earth.

9. Never in the history of mankind have such powerful and pernicious creatures been witnessed. No creature from outer space that Hollywood could conjure up in its elaborate imagination, can compare with these terrible creatures who are belched forth from the bottomless pit. John goes into great detail to describe what these creatures are like.

As we turn our attention to chapter 9, we will soon see why the angel's warning was so ominous.



# **I. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FIFTH TRUMPET OF JUDGMENT**

## **A. A Falling Star (vs. 1)**

1. The question is: "Who is this star?" You will notice that this star is referred to as a person: "...to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." Most likely, this refers to Satan. In Luke 10:18, Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." In Rev. 12:7-9, it says, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, [8] And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. [9] And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

## **B. A Bottomless Pit (vs. 2)**

1. You will notice that Satan was given the key to the bottomless pit; he does not have the authority on his own to open the pit without

God's permission. Remember, Jesus said in Rev. 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." I hope Satan has a good look when he opens the pit; that's going to be his home for a while. In Rev. 20:3, it says, "And [he was] cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and [a] seal was set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more..." Following his thousand years in the pit, God will finally throw him into the lake of fire (a good place for him). Rev. 20:10 says, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

### **C. A Terrifying Experience (vv. 3-6)**

1. Demonic creatures, with the appearance of locusts, are released from the pit. It says they have the power or the sting of a scorpion. (v.3b) these creatures have the power to sting like a

scorpion. I have never been stung by a scorpion, but I understand it is an extremely painful sting. In my study on the scorpion, I discovered that most scorpion stings are not fatal, though they are extremely painful.

They are commanded not to hurt the grass, the earth, the trees, or any green thing, only the men who have not the seal of God in their heads. Remember, God has sealed the 144,000 Jews, that no danger will befall them. However, the unsaved--the Christ rejecters, will be tormented by the stings of these creatures for a period of five months. The pain will be so terrible that men will seek death, but death will flee from them (vs. 6): "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." Jeremiah said, "**And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue rest of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts**".

**Jeremiah 8:3**

a. One cannot possibly imagine the pain and suffering that will take place; however, their torment has only just begun. As soon as they die, they will be cast into hell to be tormented forever. **Rev. 14:11** says, "**And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.**" **Matthew 13:42** says, "**And (they) shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**"

#### **D. A Chilling Description**

One can only imagine what it will be like to look into the face of one of these awful creatures. How hideous must the demons of hell be? The Bible tells us that Satan was the most beautiful of all angels, but when he sinned and was cast out of heaven, he became the ugliest of all. The locusts had the shapes of horses, with faces of men and hair like women. They had teeth like lions and breastplates of iron. The Bible says they have wings that sound like the "**chariots of many**

**horses running to battle."** Pretty scary, I would say. This will be the fate of those who have rebelled against God and have spurned the Son of God. We read in the book of Hebrews about the coming judgment for those who have refused Christ. There will be **"a certain fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. [31] It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God". Hebrews 10:27-31**

### **E. An Interesting Title**

The title of this powerful angel, referred to as "a king," is "Abaddon" in Hebrew and Apollyon in Greek; both meanings are the same--"Destroyer." You will remember the Greeks worshipped a false

deity called "Apollo." Little did they know that their god was a destroyer and that one day they would be greeted by him in hell.

In **vs.12**, the angel cries, "**One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter.**"

Ironically, the Bible teaches that someday a worldwide invasion is going to take place, but it will not be an invasion from outer space, but rather; from inner space. There is going to be unleashed an army of 200 million satanic soldiers who will do battle with the forces of the earth. It will truly be "the war of the worlds." this war will be between the physical world of humanity and the spiritual world of hell. It will see more people killed than all of the other wars in all of human history combined. This war will make World War I and World War II look like minor skirmishes.

We are going to read a descriptive picture of this war. But I warn you, it will be both a depressing picture and a demoralizing picture. You are going to see horror, hurt, heartache, and heartbreak on



an unprecedented scale, you are going to see the hardness of the hearts of lost mankind in a new light; God is going to use an army from hell to demonstrate both the sweetness of the savior and the stubbornness of the sinner.

This war is divided up into three stages:

## **II. THE ARRANGEMENTS ARE SET FOR THE DEMONIC**

**And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released; so that they would kill a third of mankind. v.15**, we are told specifically that these hellish hit-men have been, and even now are being prepared to strike the earth at a moment's notice. We are going to see that both these angels and this world is being prepared for the unleashing of a demonic attack upon the earth.

### **They are released at God's command**

**Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, <sup>14</sup> saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." vs. 13-14** at the blowing of the sixth trumpet a voice from the golden altar commands this sixth angel to release these four angels who have heretofore been bound and imprisoned. They will

not be released until God gives the command.

**v.13 “Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,”** now why does the voice come from this particular location? Well, in the bible, horns are a symbol of power and authority. You will also recall that four is the number of the earth. There are four seasons, there are four points to the compass, etc. So this represents god's power over the earth.

3. Now the altar is involved because in the Bible, an altar was the place of salvation. In the Old Testament, an innocent lamb would be slain on the altar for the sins of the people. In the New Testament, the altar was the cross of Calvary, where the innocent Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, was crucified and slain for the sins of his people.

4. The altar reminds us that there are two sides to the coin of salvation. On the one side is mercy, but on the other side is judgment. In the bible, whenever someone receives salvation someone or something else had to receive judgment. In the

Old Testament, the judgment came from the shedding of the blood of an innocent lamb. In the New Testament, judgment came from the shedding of the blood of the innocent Lamb of God. So the altar was a place both of salvation and of judgment. But here, salvation is past. This is not the altar of salvation, this is the altar of judgment.

5. These four angels that are released are angels of judgment, not angels of mercy. Now these are not the same four angels you find in chapter 7, verse 1. These angels are bound and they must be released. That gives us a clue as to what these angels are. In the bible, God's angels are never bound. But as we have seen in **II Peter 2:4** and **Jude v.6**, bound angels are fallen angels. They are what we know as demons. So these angels are actually demonic angels, not divine angels. These are the devil's deputies who are devoted to doing his will.

6. Now I believe we are told even more specifically in the word of god who these four demons are. We are given a clue to the identity

of these "filthy four" in **Daniel 10:12-13** "then he said to me, 'do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your god, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.'" we are told that Daniel's prayer to God was hindered by "the prince of the kingdom of Persia." this was obviously some demonic influence that was hindering the prayer of Daniel.

7. We read of another prince who did spiritual warfare with **Daniel vs. 20-21** "then he said, 'do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is noted in the scripture of truth, (no one upholds me against these except Michael your prince)" now what does all of this mean? Well it is important to notice that these four angels are

bound "**at the great river Euphrates,**" v.14 there have been four worldwide kingdoms in history; all four began at the river Euphrates. They were the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian and the roman empires. Now I believe these angels are four kingly demons, demon princes who ruled and reigned over these various empires.

8. The Babylonian empire began at the Euphrates River. On the heels of the Babylonian empire came the Persian Empire, then the Greek empire, then the mighty Roman Empire.

9. The Euphrates river is fraught with importance for other reasons. It was in the region of the Euphrates that man first saw the light of day. This river was one of the four rivers that flowed out of the Garden of Eden, it was here that man began. It was here that satan first alighted on this planet and caused the fall of the human race. It was here that the first murder was committed, it was here that man's first organized rebellion against god took place. The tower of babel was built and

with that tower secularism and humanism made its grand entrance into the mind of man.

10. It is here that satan resumes his kingdom only to seal his doom. The river Euphrates is going to be both the cradle and the grave of the kingdom of satan. It is the dividing line today between east and west, between what we call the near east and the Far East. One day it will be again the eastern boundary of the Promised Land. But notice particularly that these angels are not released until god gives the command.

### **b. They are released under God's control**

1. These "hellish hit-men" are released at exactly the time and the day and the hour and the year appointed unto them. "so the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year," (v.15a) the new American standard rendering which is correct suggests that these angels are released "for the hour and the day and the year." in other words, at the exact

moment that god says, a moment that is known only to god and appointed by god, are these angels to be released.

2. These angels are not released by chance. They are released by choice. This cataclysmic event is going to take place right on schedule - god's schedule. God's timing is imperceptible, but it is also impeccable.

3. God is never late. God is never early. God is right on time. Now we sometimes find that hard to understand. We sometimes look at the condition of this earth and say, "why doesn't God do something and why doesn't God do something now." you see, we are concerned about time, but god is concerned about timing, timing for god is far more important than time. God is never early and god is never late. Now sometimes we are.

But God is never either one. He is always on time. But what this verse is telling us is that everything and all things are under god's sovereign control.



Nothing happens without his approval, not a speck of dust moves, not a blade of grass stirs, not a shot can be fired without god knowing all about it and granting his permission.

If you will study the bible carefully, you will find that god is totally in control of this world. He is in control of the natural world. He is in control of the financial world. He is in control of the political world. He is in control of the spiritual world.

Because there is evil and suffering in this world there have been some who have tried to argue against the existence of god. The question is "how can a sovereign and a gracious god allow evil to be in this world?" different people have expressed it in different ways, but this is the way the Greek philosopher, Epicurus, stated it:

God either wishes to take away evil and is unable; or he is able and unwilling; or, he is neither willing nor able; or he is both willing and able.

If he is willing but unable, he is feeble, which is not in accordance with the character of God.

If he is able and unwilling, he is envious, which is equally at variance with God.

If he is neither willing nor able he is both envious and feeble, and therefore, not God.

If he is both willing and able, which alone is suitable for god, from what source then are evils? Or why does he not remove them?

Now at first, that seems to be a formidable argument. The argument goes "if there is evil in the world, it is proof that either god does not exist or he cannot do anything about it. But if he cannot do anything about it then he is not god. Therefore god does not exist,"

But I believe it is the very presence of evil that tells us there is a God, and that god is great enough to allow it to exist, not be hindered by its

working and in fact use it to accomplish his purpose.

What you are going to see in this passage, and indeed even in the book of Revelation, is that God is even greater than evil in the universe. He is in control even of the demonic world and will one day triumph over it; even this demonic army is released only at God's command; but is also released under god's control.

### **III. THE ABILITY OF THE DEMONIC ARMY.**

1. This army is released "to kill a third of mankind." (v. 15) now they have only one purpose and that is to kill, but they can only kill one-third of mankind because remember they are under god's control, they are limited by the lord. These are the devil's assassins, blood-thirsty spirit beings who have only one desire and that is to spread the stench of death and spill the blood of men from one end of the earth to the other.

2. This holocaust will be so great that one-third of all of mankind will be killed. Based on the present population of the earth today that would be over 1 1/2 billion people. Now you remember that earlier in the tribulation 1/4 of the earth's population was eliminated by the fourth seal judgment. (6:7-8) now the population is reduced by 1/3. That means that before we have even reached the middle of the great tribulation, over 1/2 of the world's population has died. Imagine an army so powerful that it can kill in one fell swoop 1 1/2 billion people. We are told in detail

just what a great army this is. **"Now the number of the army of horsemen was two hundred million."** v.16a this army is 200 million strong. To give you an idea of the size of this army it would fill up a Calvary one mile wide and 87 miles long.

3. Now, had people in that day known the population of the earth, they would have laughed at this part of the Bible, it would have been ludicrous in that day because when this was written there were not even 200 million people on the earth. We are talking about an army that is just slightly less than the population of the United States of America. To put it into perspective, at the height of World War II the United States only had 12 million people in its armed forces.

4. But a magazine article stated in 1964, which is 25 years ago, that china boasted a standing militia of 200 million people. Who knows but what this army could be the big red machine from the east who one day will come and do battle with the forces of the west. So it would be

no problem to conceive of an army this size today.

### **a. The sound of this army**

1. "And I heard the number of them." **v.16b**  
notice john did not say he saw their number, but rather he heard their number. There were too many to count, so john just listened to them.

2. Can you just imagine the sound that john heard? Think of rank after endless rank of 200 million soldiers, their feet beating out time like the rhythmic rolling of drums; the cadence of their March sounds like thunder in his ears. Each step means death, destruction, desolation, and depression.

### **b. The strength of this army**

1. "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. 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." vs. 17-18 We are told the breastplates have colors of red, blue and yellow. These colors correspond to the fire, smoke and brimstone that is coming out of the mouths of the horses. Fire often has the appearance of being red. Smoke often takes on a bluish-black color. Brimstone is what we call sulfur today, which of course, is yellowish in nature and appearance.

2. The horses have heads like lions and out of their mouths come this fire, smoke and brimstone. These are weapons of hell and also symbols of god's judgment. God used fire and brimstone to destroy the city of Sodom and Gomorrah. In chapter 1:4-10 we are told that God will use fire and brimstone to destroy the humanistic city of Babylon. He is also going to use these same elements to judge the beast and the false prophet, Rev. 19:20 satan, Rev. 20:10, and

eventually all unbelievers who reject the lord Jesus Christ **Rev. 21:8**.

### **c. The savagery of this army**

**1. "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," v. 19**

These satanic soldiers are not simply satisfied with murdering and killing one-third of the world, they also want to hurt the remaining two-thirds that are alive, and their tails will be used like poisonous.

2. There are snakes today, such as the cobra that can blind men by spitting into their eyes. There are other snakes whose bites paralyze, and others whose bites destroy tissue and muscle permanently. So we see that that part of mankind that is not hurt is going to be maimed, paralyzed, blinded, crippled and deformed by this horrible army.





## **IV. THE ADVANTAGE OF THE DEMONIC ATTACK.**

1. After this war of the worlds has ended, we are told that while one-third of the world is killed, two-thirds of the world is spared. Now God could have allowed this invincible demonic army to destroy all of mankind but he did not.

2. But we are also told something else. We are told that two-thirds of this world that was spared refused to repent and get right with god. Their response was not humble repentance, but haughty rebellion. These two facts, the fact that two-thirds of the world was spared, but this two-thirds refused to repent, explain the purpose of this demonic attack.

### **a. To reveal the willingness of God**

1. Why does it seem like god is prolonging the agony? Why does it seem as if god is dragging his feet? Why all of the woes? Why all of the trumpets? Why all of the seals? Why all of the bowls? Why doesn't god just get it all over with

and wipe out the rebellious man from the face of the earth? Why didn't God allow this demonic army to finish the job?

2. The answer, I believe, is found in **II Peter 3:9**, **"the lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance,"** you see, even in the midst of god's judgment you see god's goodness. God wants men to repent, and we are told in **Romans 2:4**, **"it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance."**

3. God specifically says in **Ezekiel 33:11**, **"say to them: 'as I live,' says the lord god, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.'" there is one thing throughout all of Revelation that never changes and that is the heart and the will of God. Even in the midst of this terrible time of rebellion and blasphemy, it is not the will of god that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.**

4. Dr. Joe Henry Hankins was a great southern Baptist preacher who lived a generation or two ago. He once preached a message entitled, "who cares if a sinner goes to hell!" Well God cares. The only reason we have not yet felt the burning heat of the fire of god's wrath is because of love and the patience of a God.

5. An infidel was standing out on the street corner trying to prove god did not exist. He screamed out "God, if you exist I'll give you three minutes to kill me." at the end of that three minutes, he began to laugh and scoff and say, "I told you there was no God." A crowd had gathered and in that crowd was a preacher. He saw what had taken place, and then replied, "you fool, and you cannot exhaust the patience of God in three minutes." Quite frankly, if I were God, I would have destroyed man from the face of this Earth centuries and centuries ago. But thank God, he is a God of forbearance and patience who loves us and wants us to be saved.

## **b. To reveal the wickedness of man**

1. Now you would have expected that those who were spared during this terrible time would fall on their face and repent and get right with god, but notice the word "but" in v.20, a phrase is repeated twice in vs. 20 and 21. It is the phrase "did not repent." that is incredible. At the end of the first series of judgments, those under the seals, men were horrified. But at the end of these series of judgments, under the trumpets, men are just hardened.

2. As I thought about that at first, I could not believe it. But then, as I thought about it further, i can believe it. That really should not surprise us. If people will not repent now, they will not repent then.

3. I used to think that people in hell wanted to be saved. I used to think that people in hell would cry out for mercy for all eternity. But did you know the bible teaches that if a man does not

want to be saved here on earth, he will not want to be saved later in hell? If a man does not love god in this life, he will hate god in the life to come.

4. Luke 13:28 tells us that "hell will be a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth." the gnashing of teeth is the sound that a mad dog or a wild animal makes when he is under attack, in the bible it is an act of rage and anger. We are told in acts 7:54 that when Stephen preached to those Pharisees about the lord Jesus Christ, they "gnashed at him with their teeth.

5. Do you know what people in hell are doing right now? They are cursing god. They are shaking their fists in the face of god. These people left on earth, we are told, will steadfastly choose sin over salvation. Notice the kinds of sin that will be prevalent and prominent in the last days of the tribulation. The three kinds of sin that men will refuse to give up.

6. There is the sin of spiritual idolatry. "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." (v.20) three false religions will consume the hearts and minds of men: humanism ("the works of their hands.") satanism ("that they should not worship demons;) materialism (idols of gold, silver, brass, stone and wood."

7. We are seeing the resurgence and emergence of these three religions today, humanism has taken over our public and higher educational system, satanism is on the rise. One of the top selling paperbacks of the past twenty years is the satanic bible, which has sold over 600,000 copies. We see an increasing interest in the occult, horoscopes and astrology, colleges today are teaching occult phenomenon under the term para- psychology, which is just a glorified word for the study of occult practices, mental telepathy, esp., etc. Materialism is no stranger in

this yuppie age of Rolex watches, Gucci shoes, Mercedes, BMW's and condos at the beach.

8. But there is also the sin of social indecency. **"And they did not repent of their murders." v. 21** men will become like blood-thirsty sharks devouring one another. Even today we see the prices of things going up while the value of life is going down.

9. **"Or their sorceries" v.21** the word for sorceries is the Greek word pharmekia from which we get the word pharmacy. It literally means "the use of drugs." drugs in that day will be sold at bargain basement prices. Drugs will be sold like coca cola at a soda fountain. Our president recently declared a war on drugs, this is a battle that must be fought, but I must warn you it is a battle that will not be won until Jesus comes again.

10. **"Or their thefts." v.21** you will not be able to trust anybody in that day, your private property will be everyone's public property. If you've got it and they want it, they will take it, and there will



be no one to defend you. People will steal you blind. Robbery and burglary will become everyday hobbies.

11. All of these things are inter-related, David Wilkerson said, "I have yet to see a person worshipping devils who did not first open their minds to mystical experiences through the use of drugs." many murders are drug related. You read almost every day in the paper of a murder over a drug deal gone wrong. Many today are stealing and killing to pay for their drug habit.

12. But then there will be the sin of sexual immorality. "**Or their sexual immorality.**" v.23 the Greek word for immorality is the word perinea from which we get the word pornography. This refers to any and all kinds of sexual perversion: homosexuality, bestiality, sex orgies, wife swapping, child molestation, rape will be seen on an unprecedented scale.

13. Now what all of this tells us is simply this. God is going to show through this demonic attack that

the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. Man does not need reformation. Man does not need rehabilitation. Man does not need re-education. Man does not need re-orientation. What man needs is regeneration. He needs to be saved. The real message of this sermon is, if you need to be saved you can be saved if you want to be saved. I hope you will be saved before the war of the worlds breaks loose.

**Conclusion:** The sixth trumpet judgment commences in 9:13: "Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God." Someone near the four horns (symbolic of power) of the golden altar in heaven, probably the angel identified with it in 8:3, gave a command after the sixth angel blew the sixth trumpet (cf. 8:2, 6). This angel says to the sixth angel who had the trumpet: "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates" (9:14). These are evidently four angels that John hadn't seen before. They must be fallen angels since good

angels aren't bound. These angels are bound "at the great river Euphrates," which was the region where ancient Israel's most oppressive enemies came from (e.g., the Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians). Much later it also became a boundary between Rome and its enemies (e.g., the Parthians). As a result, the Euphrates became a symbol of enemy invasion and anticipates the sixth bowl of judgment of 16:12-16. This war at Megiddo will be one of the greatest human battles imaginable!

Verse 15 states that these "four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind." These angels being prepared for precisely this moment-stressed by the four references to time ("hour," "day," "month," and "year")-points to God's meticulous sovereignty. God has left nothing to chance. These events are depicted as taking place exactly when God has appointed them to take place. Here though, the task of these angels was to put one-third of those who dwell on the earth to death. Bear in mind,

one-fourth have already perished by this point (6:7-8), and many more died as martyrs or for other reasons (cf. Dan 12:1; Matt 24:21-22). This judgment falls upon the remaining three-fourths, leaving only half of the original population. Although this is terribly severe, it also showcases God's severe mercy. God should have wiped out everyone at once. But instead He started with one-fourth and then moved to one-third. He is a merciful God who typically judges humankind slowly and mercifully. Nonetheless, the death toll here demonstrates that God is not to be reckoned with. As the author of Hebrews says: **"It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God" Heb 10:31.**

So how does a slaughter of billions occur? John writes: "The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth [blue] and of brimstone [yellow]; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of

lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone" (9:16-19). This massive army of 200 million likely consists of demons. John envisions these hellish horsemen riding satanic steeds much like the creatures that ride into battle in Tolkien's, *The Lord of the Rings*. Several arguments support the demonic view:

(1) The fifth and sixth trumpet judgments go together since they are called the first two of three "woes." Since the fifth trumpet is clearly demonic, it's fairly certain the sixth trumpet is as well. (2) Fallen angels, like those of the fifth trumpet judgment, lead this army (9:15). Since the leaders are four fallen angels, it makes sense that the troops they are leading are also demons. (3) There are other examples in Scripture of supernatural armies (e.g., 2 Kgs 2:11; 6:13-17; Rev 19:11, 14). (4) The weapons mentioned—fire, sulfur, and smoke—are always supernatural weapons in the Bible, and are associated with hell four times in Revelation (14:10-11; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8). Yet, I see no real objection to demons possessing large armies made up of human beings. In fact, as early as 1965 China claimed to have an army of 200 million. It is also

possible that the descriptions in 9:17-19 are symbolical of modern mechanical warfare. John has never seen tanks or armored vehicles, so he was given a vision of horsemen, as in his day-yet the vision went beyond his day and portrayed modern warfare. The fire, smoke, and brimstone could refer to any number of devices of modern warfare.

One thing I find rather fascinating is: Satan's army is 200 million while God's is 144,000. In ch. 11 we'll learn that the Lord uses Two Witnesses to accomplish His purposes. Obviously, God doesn't need our help. He also isn't big on numbers. Rather, it seems that the Lord always does His most powerful work through human weakness. Since this is the case, why should we be intimidated as a local church or as a Christian movement? God is more than able to use our church and churches across the world to bring about His plan.

In spite of all the cataclysmic wonders and bloodshed, hearts are not softened-they are hardened. These last two verses are two of the

saddest in the entire Bible. It kills me to even read these words! John concludes by observing: "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues [i.e., the fire, smoke, and brimstone], did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts" (9:20-21). Those who survived this sixth trumpet judgment refused to repent "of the works of their hands." This was a refusal to change their minds about their worship and works. The sins of humanity are generally of two sorts: Verse 20 focuses on sins directed against God-they don't love God supremely (the first four of the Ten Commandments, **Exod 20:1-11**). Verse 21 directs our attention to sins directed against other human beings-they don't love their neighbors as themselves (the last six of the Ten Commandments, **Exod 20:12-17**).

One of the most amazing things about these two verses is that demons are worshipped. Yet, demons are the very instruments of man's destruction in the fifth and sixth trumpets. Men worship the very things that destroy them. Hardcore unbelief and stubborn, willful rebellion is the result of these plagues. Just as Pharaoh's heart was hardened by the Egyptian plagues, so the hearts of these men and women are hardened by the plagues of the last days. This is what Paul calls a "**deluding influence**" **2 Thess 2:11**-a lie from the devil.

We, too, are prone to believe satanic lies. So we need to be careful not to point the finger at earth-dwellers who will be living during the tribulation period. Instead, we should examine our own hearts. What idols do you have in your own life? Are there material possessions, important people, worldly positions, uncontrolled passions, or selfish pursuits that have a hold on you? Remember, these people, possessions, pleasures, and pursuits, may not be sinful in and of themselves. However, when they trump your



affection for God, they're harmful. What do you need to release to God? Humble yourself before Him today. You might as well come clean because He already knows, right? The simple message of this chapter is: Choose repentance over idolatry and immorality. Will you repent today? Will you change your mind about what you think makes you happy and turn to the Lord? Choose repentance over idolatry and immorality.

Perhaps you can relate to the struggle to eat healthier food. I find this discipline incredibly difficult . . . and even painful. I have never liked fruits and veggies. I like carbs! For years I've known that I need to eat more fruits and veggies, yet I've refused. Consequently, for decades, I've been addicted to certain foods that are terrible for me. Yet, three weeks ago, I made a Spirit-led decision to begin eating right. I even went two weeks without any carbs! This was personal revival! Now, I'm slowly but surely becoming healthier, and even learning to enjoy (okay, tolerate) veggies. One day I believe I will enjoy fruits and veggies even more than my carbs.

While diet is important, personal purity and integrity is even more critical. Today, will you choose repentance over idolatry and immorality? Why not make a commitment today to finish each day with a simple prayer: "Lord, please show me what kind of idol I bowed down to today." As the Lord reveals your idolatry, immediately repent! He will begin to change your desires, and He will align your behavior with your nature. Choose repentance over idolatry and immorality.