

God shows His love in **Revelation 9** in ways that are easy to miss if we only look at the surface

A loving Father does not let His children wander toward a cliff without shouting

God shows His love in **Revelation 9** by **restraining** evil, **protecting** His people, **limiting** judgment, **exposing** the cost of sin, rebellion against God produces, torment, despair, restlessness, life without God and His Son

Even in judgment, God is not acting out of hatred, but out of His holy love that refuses to let evil go unchecked and refuses to abandon those who are His

Because God's judgment flows from His holy love and not from hatred, the next trumpet does not sound from chaos or vengeance, but from the altar before God, where justice and mercy meet

Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God Revelation 9:13 (NKJV)

saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." Revelation 9:14 (NKJV)

**They are bound-** In Scripture, holy angels are never described as bound

Binding is consistently associated with judgment and restraint of evil

**They are released for Destruction-** when released, these angels are connected to  
A massive loss of life, warfare, judgment on humanity

saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at **the great river Euphrates.**" Revelation 9:14 (NKJV)

The Euphrates river was the ancient **boundary between East and West**

The northeastern boundary of the land was **promised to Abraham** in **Genesis 15:18**

This is the region from Assyria to Babylon where Israel's great enemies were located, mentioned in **Isaiah 7-8** **Jerimiah 46-50**

In **Revelation 16:12**, its drying up prepares the way for "**the kings from the east**"

For John's readers, "**Euphrates**" meant the **direction of danger**, the **staging ground of invading powers**

**Today**, the Euphrates starts in the mountains of Turkey, runs through the nation of Syria, runs through Iraq, and ends up forming the border between Iraq and Iran when it empties into the Persian Gulf

God is saying: **I have four angels bound, and at My command, they will be released**

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. Revelation 9:15 NKJV

“**Prepared for**” means these angels were sovereignly appointed and restrained until the exact moment God had determined to execute His redemptive plan

Notice the language - They were prepared, prepared for **a specific hour, day, month, and year**

This is not random chaos. This is God **lifting the restraint** He Himself placed on evil beings, for a specific purpose, at a specific time, and it is part of His plan

There was a plan in place, and now it's being executed. “**to kill a third of mankind**”

The world's population today is approximately 8.3 billion people

We're looking at **Revelation 6:8** where one-fourth ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of the population, that is 2.77 billion people die

This means that there is 5.53 billion people left on the Earth

In **Revelation 9:18**, one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of mankind is killed, that is, 1.84 billion people of the 5.53 billion people left on the Earth. That is a **loss of more than 4.6 billion Souls...**

Which leaves us with this: after these two judgments, there are 3.69 billion people left, which is half of what we started with in less than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years

Even when it looks like God's judgment is breaking loose, hell is not in charge; God is!

- Satan is not the ruler of history; God is, **don't forget it**
- Demons do not set the schedule; God does, **don't forget it**
- Evil is great, but it is on a divine leash, **don't forget it**

Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. Revelation 9:16 NKJV

John hears of an army of 200 million. 3.69 billion – 200 million = 3.49 billion

Whether you understand this as a literal human army, a demonic host, or some combination, the emphasis is on **enormous**, overwhelming, destructive force

Clearly, he isn't guessing at the size of this army; he's told how big they are

Historically, it is estimated that there were only about 250,000,000 total people alive in John's day. This number would seem incredible to John

The world's population didn't reach 1 billion until 1870

Today, the world's population is around 8.3 billion, but... if you total up the world's armies of today (active and reserve), you come up with 38,000,000

How could we get to 200 million?

Some see this as another demonic horde, like the strange locusts

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. Revelation 9:17 NKJV

The verse describes **three main elements**: The riders' breastplates, the horses' heads, and what comes from their mouths

Each detail communicates something about character, nature, and effect

The **Breastplates** are **Fiery red** - Represents bloodshed, war, violence

**Hyacinth blue** (deep smoky blue), likely associated with smoke or a dark atmosphere

**Sulfur yellow** (brimstone), In Scripture, brimstone is connected to divine judgment **Genesis 19; Revelation 14; 20**

Please note: Together, **these colors correspond to what comes from the horses' mouths**: fire, smoke, and brimstone

You see, the armor matches the outcome. What they wear symbolizes what they bring

This is massive destruction and divine wrath

**Heads Like Lions**

Lions in Scripture symbolize: ferocity, strength, devouring power (**1 Peter 5:8**)

These are not gentle animals; they are predators, and the lion imagery communicates unstoppable aggression

## Fire, Smoke, and Brimstone from Their Mouths

This imagery echoes: Sodom and Gomorrah [Genesis 19](#), Sinai's smoke and fire [Exodus 19](#)

Fire consumes, Smoke obscures, Brimstone destroys

This is not chaotic violence; it is fierce, deliberate judgment

The language communicates that divine judgment being executed

Here is what this verse is not doing: giving modern military technology predictions, describing literal anatomical creatures for speculation, inviting curiosity about weaponry

This verse confronts us with a sobering truth

When God removes restraint, the consequences of rejecting His Son and sin are catastrophic

Yet even here, the goal of Revelation is not terror; it is warning

God reveals the outcome so people can turn before it arrives

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. [Revelation 9:18 NKJV](#)

The “**one-third**” fraction is a repeated motif in the trumpet judgments

- [8:7](#) – a third of the earth, trees, and grass
- [8:8–9](#) – a third of the sea, sea creatures, and ships
- [8:10–12](#) – a third of rivers, sun, moon, stars, and daylight
- [9:15](#), [9:18](#) – a third of humankind

This is a severe but partial judgment—devastating, yes, yet not total annihilation

This is **a warning and a call to repentance**, not final destruction, as validated by [9:20–21](#), where the response of the survivors is noted

“**Fire, smoke, and sulfur**” are common images of divine judgment

Strong OT resonance

- [Genesis 19:24–28](#) – Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed with sulfur and fire from Yahweh
- [Isaiah 30:27–33](#); [34:8–10](#) – imagery of burning, sulfur, and smoke in judgment.

Revelation reuses this imagery several times

- [14:10–11](#) – torment in fire and sulfur
- [19:20](#) – the lake of fire that burns with sulfur

- 20:10; 21:8 – lake of fire and sulfur as final punishment

“Coming out of their mouths”

The “mouth” in Revelation often signifies speech, proclamation, or destructive power e.g.,  
Revelation 1:16; 2:16; 16:13

Here, emphasizes the offensive capability of this cavalry: their very mouths are lethal

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. Revelation 9:19 NKJV

This verse reveals two dimensions of destruction

1. Front-facing devastation (fire from the mouth)
2. Rear-facing deception and continued harm (tails are like serpents)

The image suggests: overt destruction, ongoing damage

Revelation 9:19 teaches that destruction often has two faces

- the obvious
- the hidden

**God reveals this so we will not underestimate what rebellion produces**

God remains sovereign, faithful, and fully in control

Grace, we were not created for fear, despair, or spiritual defeat

We were made for hope. We were made for freedom, Church, we do not leave here afraid

As we sing **Lord I Need You, we do not admit defeat; we are declaring truth**

We were never created to navigate darkness on our own. We were made for hope

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 Revelation 9:20 NKJV

And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts Revelation 9:21 NKJV