



**Date:** 5-03-2026

**Sermon:** The Kingdom Behind the Chaos

**Text:** Revelation 9

### **Interpretive Framework for Revelation**

#### **1. Start with Jesus, not charts.**

Revelation is first “the revelation of Jesus Christ.” It reveals His authority, victory, judgment, kingdom, and faithfulness to His people. Before asking, “When will this happen?” we should ask, “What does this show us about Christ?”

#### **2. Read Revelation as a letter to real churches.**

Revelation was written to real churches in Asia Minor facing pressure, compromise, idolatry, persecution, and temptation. A faithful interpretation should first ask, “How would the original churches have understood this?”

### **3. Let Scripture interpret the symbols.**

Revelation uses vivid apocalyptic imagery: beasts, dragons, numbers, trumpets, bowls, cities, and cosmic signs. These symbols are not less real because they are symbolic. They reveal deeper spiritual realities. Since much of Revelation echoes the Old Testament, we should ask, “Where have we seen this image before in Scripture?”

### **4. Avoid unnecessary speculation.**

Revelation points to real future events, including Christ’s return, judgment, reign, and final victory. But we should be careful about identifying every symbol with modern nations, technologies, politicians, or headlines. Be clear where Scripture is clear, careful where Scripture is symbolic, and humble where Scripture does not give certainty.

### **5. Apply Revelation toward faithfulness.**

The goal of Revelation is not curiosity, fear, or debate. It calls the church to worship Christ, reject idolatry, repent of compromise, endure suffering, resist evil, and hope in Christ’s final victory.

### **Summary:**

We are reading Revelation as a Christ-centered, prophetic, apocalyptic letter written to real first-century churches, still speaking to the church today, and pointing forward to the future return, reign, judgment, and victory of Christ. Our goal is to interpret Revelation through Scripture, avoid unnecessary speculation, and apply it by calling people to worship, repentance, endurance, and faithful allegiance to Jesus.

## **The Fifth Trumpet & the First Woe - Revelation 9.1-12**

### **Revelation 9:1-2 NLT**

1 Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. 2 When he opened it, smoke poured out as though from a huge furnace, and the sunlight and air turned dark from the smoke.

Notes:

### **Revelation 9:3-6 NLT**

3 Then locusts came from the smoke and descended on the earth, and they were given power to sting like scorpions. 4 They were told not to harm the grass or plants or trees, but only the people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 They were told not to kill them but to torture them for five months with pain like the pain of a scorpion sting. 6 In those days people will seek death but will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them!

Notes:

### **Revelation 9:7-12 NLT**

7 The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. They had what looked like gold crowns on their heads, and their faces looked like human faces. 8 They had hair like women's hair and teeth like the teeth of a lion. 9 They wore armor made of iron, and their wings roared like an army of chariots rushing into battle. 10 They had tails that stung like scorpions, and for five months they had the power to torment people. 11 Their king is the angel from the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is [Abaddon,] and in Greek, [Apollyon]--the Destroyer. 12 The first terror is past, but look, two more terrors are coming!

Notes:

**God permits terrifying judgment to fall on \_\_\_\_\_  
humanity, but even demonic chaos remains under His  
sovereign limits.**

## **The Sixth Trumpet & the Second Woe - Revelation 9.13-19**

### **Revelation 9:13-16 NLT**

13 Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice speaking from the four horns of the gold altar that stands in the presence of God. 14 And the voice said to the sixth angel who held the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great Euphrates River." 15 Then the four angels who had been prepared for this hour and day and month and year were turned loose to kill one-third of all the people on earth. 16 I heard the size of their army, which was 200 million mounted troops.

Notes:

### **Revelation 9:17-19 NLT**

17 And in my vision, I saw the horses and the riders sitting on them. The riders wore armor that was fiery red and dark blue and yellow. The horses had heads like lions, and fire and smoke and burning sulfur billowed from their mouths. 18 One-third of all the people on earth were killed by these three plagues--by the fire and smoke and burning sulfur that came from the mouths of the horses. 19 Their power was in their mouths and in their tails. For their tails had heads like snakes, with the power to injure people.

Notes:

**Idolatry and evil eventually bring \_\_\_\_\_, not life.**

**The Response from those who are Lost.**

**Revelation 9:20-21 NLT**

20 But the people who did not die in these plagues still refused to repent of their evil deeds and turn to God. They continued to worship demons and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood--idols that can neither see nor hear nor walk! 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their witchcraft or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Notes:

**Ephesians 6:12 NLT**

12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

**Your choices and behaviors reveal which kingdom claims your \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Application:**

\_\_\_\_\_ the idols that promise life but lead to death.

\_\_\_\_\_ quickly instead of hardening your heart.

\_\_\_\_\_ Christ's kingdom with clear loyalty.

## **1. Get to Know You**

What is something that scared you as a kid that seems funny or harmless to you now?

## **2. Dig Deeper**

Read Exodus 10:1–20 and Ephesians 6:10–18. How do these passages help us better understand the locust imagery and the spiritual battle described in Revelation 9?

In Exodus, locusts are a plague of judgment against Egypt. In Revelation 9, the locusts do not attack plants but people, which points to something demonic and spiritual rather than ordinary insects. Ephesians 6 reminds us that our ultimate battle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual powers.

## **3. Application**

Revelation 9 ends with people refusing to repent even after experiencing judgment. Where might God be calling you to repent quickly instead of hardening your heart?

Consider one area where you may be tempted to justify sin, delay obedience, or cling to something that promises life but leads you away from Christ.

Revelation 9 contains the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments. The fifth trumpet, in verses 1–12, describes locust-like creatures coming from the abyss to torment those who do not have the seal of God. The sixth trumpet, in verses 13–19, describes four bound angels being released at the Euphrates, followed by a massive cavalry-like army that kills a third of mankind.

### **1. The Preterist View**

The preterist view understands Revelation 9 primarily in connection with events surrounding the first-century judgment on Jerusalem, especially the Jewish War and the destruction of the temple in AD 70.

In this view, the demonic locusts of the fifth trumpet may represent the terrifying spiritual and social chaos that came upon apostate Israel. Some preterists connect the tormenting locusts with the violent factions, zealots, and internal strife that consumed Jerusalem during the Roman siege. The people were not merely attacked from the outside; they were tormented from within by fear, violence, betrayal, famine, and spiritual darkness.

The sixth trumpet is often connected with the Roman armies or with the larger forces of judgment God used against Jerusalem. The reference to the Euphrates may symbolize the place from which foreign invasion and divine judgment come, echoing Old Testament imagery of enemies coming from the north or east as instruments of God's discipline.

From this perspective, Revelation 9 is not mainly about events still future to us. It is a symbolic portrayal of God's covenant judgment against unbelieving Israel and rebellious Jerusalem.

Emphasis: God judged apostate Jerusalem through terrifying spiritual and military destruction.

### **2. The Historicist View**

The historicist view sees Revelation as a symbolic preview of major events throughout church history.

In Revelation 9, historicists have often connected the fifth trumpet with the rise and spread of Islam, particularly the Saracen armies. The locust imagery is understood as a fitting symbol for swift, destructive armies coming out of Arabia. The "fallen star" has sometimes been associated with Muhammad or with the spiritual darkness believed to accompany the rise of Islam from the historicist Christian perspective.

The sixth trumpet is commonly associated with the rise of the Turkish or Ottoman powers. The reference to the Euphrates is important in this interpretation because it was

geographically connected with eastern powers that threatened the Christian world. The cavalry, fire, smoke, and sulfur are often understood as symbols of terrifying military force, sometimes even associated with the use of gunpowder and artillery.

From this perspective, Revelation 9 describes successive waves of judgment in world and church history, particularly through Islamic and Turkish military expansion.

Emphasis: God used major historical powers, especially Saracen and Ottoman forces, as judgments in the unfolding story of church history.

### **3. The Futurist View**

The futurist view understands Revelation 9 as describing judgments that will take place during a future period of tribulation shortly before the return of Christ.

In this view, the fifth trumpet describes the release of demonic beings from the abyss.

The locusts are often interpreted as literal demonic creatures, though some futurists see them as symbolic descriptions of future military technology. Their mission is to torment unbelieving humanity, but they are not allowed to harm those who have the seal of God.

The sixth trumpet is usually interpreted as a future catastrophic judgment involving either a massive human army, a demonic army, or some combination of both. The number of the army, two hundred million, is often taken either literally or as a way of emphasizing overwhelming destructive power. The fire, smoke, and sulfur may describe supernatural judgment, modern warfare, or symbolic language for terrifying destruction.

From this perspective, Revelation 9 points to future end-time events when God will unleash severe judgments upon a rebellious world.

Emphasis: God will bring terrifying demonic and military judgments during the future tribulation.

### **4. The Spiritual or Idealist View**

The spiritual view, sometimes called the idealist view, understands Revelation 9 as a symbolic picture of recurring spiritual realities throughout the present age.

In this view, the locusts from the abyss represent demonic oppression, deception, and torment. They show what life becomes when people reject God and are given over to the powers of darkness. Sin promises freedom, but it leads to bondage, misery, and spiritual destruction.

The sixth trumpet then intensifies the picture from torment to death. The released angels and vast army symbolize the destructive powers of war, violence, judgment, and demonic influence that repeatedly appear in human history. These forces are terrifying, but they are also limited. They are bound until God permits them to act, and they can only go as far as God allows.

From this perspective, Revelation 9 is not limited to one historical moment. It reveals the spiritual reality behind human rebellion in every generation.

Emphasis: Demonic powers torment and destroy rebellious humanity, but God remains sovereign over them.

### **Summary of the Four Views**

The preterist view sees Revelation 9 as a picture of first-century judgment on Jerusalem.

The historicist view sees Revelation 9 as a prophecy of major historical invasions, especially involving Islamic and Ottoman powers.

The futurist view sees Revelation 9 as a prediction of future tribulation judgments involving demonic and military forces.

The spiritual/idealist view sees Revelation 9 as a symbolic picture of demonic torment, war, and destruction throughout the present age.

While these views differ in their interpretation of the details, they share an important theological theme: the powers of evil are terrifying, but they are not sovereign. God permits, limits, and governs even the darkest judgments.

### **Theological Reflection**

Revelation 9 reminds us that evil is real, organized, destructive, and spiritually terrifying. The abyss is opened, demonic forces are released, and humanity experiences torment and death. Yet the passage also repeatedly emphasizes limitation. The locusts cannot harm those sealed by God. They cannot kill, but only torment. Their time is limited. The four angels are bound until the appointed hour, day, month, and year.

This means Revelation 9 is not showing a universe out of control. It is showing that even judgment, darkness, and demonic power remain under the authority of God.

The passage also exposes the true nature of rebellion against God. Sin does not lead to freedom. Idolatry does not lead to life. The powers humanity trusts apart from God eventually become the powers that torment and destroy humanity.