



**What If Satan is Real?
Getting the Gang Back Together Again
The Fifth Trumpet
Revelation 9:1-12**

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Satan is real, he is alive today, but he is not God.

Satan is both evil and powerful, but he is still under the authority of the sovereign Lord. There is only one sovereign God, and the Devil is not that God. The important truth is this: Ultimately nothing happens apart from the sovereign determination of God. Nothing! (Akin 2016, 178)



I don't know if you have noticed or not, but there are some things that are in the Bible that, at the end of the day, are downright weird.

As believers, we are called to have a Biblical worldview. And for those of us who do and happen to talk about it to others now and then, there is incredulity expressed from time to time about what it is we believe.

"In the biblical worldview, the supernatural unseen realm had its own pecking order. Scripture never says that such intelligent beings always had the same agenda, either. The members of the heavenly host were also created in God's image (the plurality language of Gen 1:26 isn't about the Trinity), so they possess free will, the ability to make decisions. Their acts and attitudes are not programmed and predestined. They believe they can defeat the plans of God, or at least forestall them indefinitely, at great pain to him and great cost to humanity (eternal and otherwise).

Let's face it—we just don't think like that." (Heiser 2017, 17)

Here in the book of Revelation, we have already encountered some things that to a culture used to living in the age of reason and science here in the west, are troublesome to say the least.

The pretribulation rapture of the church is a biggie to begin with.

The beginning of the seal judgements all look like man simply being out of control until we got to the fifth seal, then we are dealing with the unseen realm.

And we have been tipping towards the twilight zone ever since.

There are many creative ways to explain away what the text plainly says in various "weird" passages. But understanding Scripture isn't about making it palatable or comfortable to modern readers. It's about discerning what the biblical writer believed and was seeking to communicate to readers who thought the same way. (Heiser 2017, 17)

We have indeed arrived at weird. If its weird, its important.

Revelation 9:1–12

"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. 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. Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 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. 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. And in those days people will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death will flee from them! 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. They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. 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. They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt people for five months. 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. The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still coming after these things." (NASB 2020)



No, this is not the advance script of a sci fi movie currently in production, this is future history as reported to us by John, it is incredibly weird and yet it is incredibly real. God will use evil to judge evil.

Yes, there are indeed deep roots found in the Old Testament to what we are seeing here. Some of these roots are reflected in the mythology of Greece, Rome and other nations throughout the planet.

I remember watching, while in Bible school, a motion picture about the Tribulation. The movie came to this section of Revelation, and they had someone, dressed up like a giant bug, chasing folks on the screen. I remember the entire audience, and this was at a Calvary Chapel by the way, all laughing at the depiction. They had studied the book and knew what this was about, and the movie maker had missed the reality a bit. In other words, the reaction was not what they were expecting.

Satan is real, and we need to remember what Jesus said.

John 10:10

"The thief comes only in order to steal, kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, life in its fullest measure." (CJB)

That thief Jesus was speaking about is Satan. He is indeed real. But here in this nation, only 27% of adults today even believe that something called sin even exists. But look at the next generation. Seven out of ten young teens (70%) either reject the existence of Satan or don't know if he exists. This is a major shift from the beliefs of their parents, who may not have given much thought to Satan's existence, but at least a majority of them believe Satan is real. (Barna 2023, 32)

I have an announcement to make – Satan is real. Fallen angels are real. Demons are real. We see them in operation all around our planet every single day.

Here in the text, we are seeing them in action during the Great Tribulation thanks to John. Why would it surprise us, in light of what Jesus said, that Satan has taken great lengths to cover up reality in order to make us believe he is only a construct of an earlier generation used to explain the existence of evil. Satan is malevolent intelligent evil. But due to the fall, we aren't that far behind.

Jeremiah 17:9–10

"The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable—who can understand it? I, the LORD, examine the mind, I test the heart to give to each according to his way, according to what his actions deserve." (CSB)

So, the first point we must cross is our tendency to discount Satan. Yes, intelligent evil does indeed exist in the unseen realm, and it resides in members of the unseen realm who are in rebellion against their creator. Of course, that includes the original rebel of Genesis 3, all of those members of the divine council who have rebelled, as well as the spirits of the offspring of the product of their attempts to destroy mankind.

1 Peter 5:8

"Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour." (CSB)

Peter is conveying the active intent of the enemy looking at each of us every day and trying to find that point where we do not avail ourselves of God's armor but decide we can do life without it. They attack, they always will.



What we see here at the beginning verse one is John hearing the trumpet blast and then seeing a star from heaven which had, past tense, fallen to earth, or descended to earth.

John only says he saw this individual after, in the past tense, they had fallen to earth. Unlike the previous events which were real asteroids and comets hitting the planet, this is different. The context points to the supernatural. We know, from Job 38:7 that at creation, the entirety of the heavenly host, referred to as morning stars, all at that time still faithful, sang together and shouted as they watched God create.

Job 38:7

“when the **morning stars** sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (CJB)

It becomes obvious to us from the rest of the context of this section of scripture, we are talking about a supernatural being. But is this a fallen one? Is this Satan? Is this one of his minions with a single use passcode ready to open up the Abyss and let some of their colleagues out on work release? No, it is not.

We are not told who this is, but they have been given the key to the Abyss. There are all kinds of conjecture as to who it is.

One thing we must also remember, Satan is a defeated foe and Jesus, per what we read in Revelation 1:19, now has all the keys in His possession. In fact, we have the usage of some of them delegated to us as the church. Jesus told Peter:

Matthew 16:19

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.” (CSB)

Is Jesus trusting the worst mass murderer in history, Satan with the key to the Abyss? Is He trusting some other fallen angel or is this someone who is faithful. Like the warden who oversees the Abyss? Why not let scripture give us the solution to this?

Revelation 20:1

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.” (NASB 2020)

What I am not suggesting is that the “angel of Revelation 9:1–2 is an unholy being armed with the key to the bottomless pit (that) contradicts Revelation 20:1, where a clearly good angel has the same status or job. It is far simpler to have the angel of Revelation 9:1 sent from heaven to release Abaddon/Apollyon in obedience to carrying out a woe decreed by God.” (Heiser, *Angels: What the Bible Really Says about God's Heavenly Host* 2018, 168-169)

This faithful angel has the key to the Abyss and instructions to open it per the sound of the fifth trumpet. What is the Abyss?

The Greek word used here is ἀβύσσου (abusso) transliterated from the Greek, the abyss. It means “literally ‘deep hole’, hence: ‘immense depth.’ An immensely deep space, depth, abyss, unfathomable to the human eye, and discernible only by God. A transcendent place associated with the dead and hostile powers, netherworld, abyss, especially the abode of the dead and of demons; dungeon where the devil is kept Revelation 20:3; abode of the θηρίον, the Antichrist 11:7; 17:8; of Ἀβαδδών (q.v.), the angel of the underworld 9:11.” (Arndt, et al. 2000, 2)

Not anyplace that you would want to go and vacation at any time soon.



This is not Sheol, it is not Hell, it is not Tartarus. It is the Abyss, the bottomless pit, a place even the demons are fearful of being held in. We learn that due to the interactions a couple thousand of them had with Jesus in Luke 8:28.

Luke 8:28

“When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? **I beg you, do not torment me.**” (ESV)

They knew it was too soon for the end of the age, they knew who they were talking to, and they knew where some of their colleagues had been dispatched to and since they were not returning to torment others, they did not want to go there.

It is a prison. The ability of demons and fallen angels to cause harm to mankind is limited, unless they are released from the prison.

The Abyss pertains only to demonic forces in Scripture while Hades and Gehenna are used in relation to humans. And while the Abyss is seen as a place currently in existence, Gehenna is a reference to the punishment of the Day of Judgment. (Papaioannou 2013, 169)

Questions

- Who are the current inmates of this prison? We answered that, demons and fallen angels.
- Why would God let them out at all?
- What is this all about...really?

To sort this out, in other words to make sure we have the same mindset and contextual viewpoint as do John's 1st century readers, we have some background to cover

In Genesis 3:1 – 15, we have the rebellion fomented by Helel Ben Sahar, that is his name in Hebrew, we see it in Isaiah 14:12, but we know him by his Latin name, Lucifer, light bearer.

Isaiah 14:12

“How did you come to fall from the heavens, morning star, son of the dawn? How did you come to be cut to the ground, conqueror of nations?” (CJB)

The Hebrew expression *hêlêl ben-šāḥar* means ‘Shining one, son of dawn’. Heb *hêlêl* comes from the root HLL, ‘to shine’, and means ‘the Shining, Brilliant One’, here evidently an epithet of the Morning-star, Venus. (Watson 1999, 392)

He also had another name in one of the nations north of Israel, Ugarit. There he was referred to as the Lord of the Crescent Moon, which puts a whole new perspective on another religion we know about. From KTU 1.24:40-42

Let me sing of the Katharat-goddesses.
The radiant daughters of the new moon,
The lord of the sickle, (Smith and Parker 1997, 218)

Helel has also been identified with the Babylonian underworld god Nergal or with Jupiter. Yet another identification is with Phaethon, of Greek mythology. (Watson 1999, 393)

Because of his sin, which we read about in Genesis 3 as well as Isaiah 14:12-15. We know he wanted to be like the most high, so becoming entangled up into mythology as Jupiter makes sense. Lucifer is the original rebel of Genesis 3.



He is a liar, thief and murderer, it is in his very nature to deceive, lie and kill. Historically, he has appeared under the name of many different gods. The current fascination with mythology, thought to be harmless, is part of his lie and design to make all of this more attractive to the younger generation. What better way to introduce the idea of a pantheon of gods to be placated and worshiped than making it all sound like someone's imagination.

Here is the bad news, these old gods, the ones of mythology, they're the ones being held in the prison of the Abyss, God's Supermax.

Satan has lied to us for centuries and is a mass murderer. He was cast down to the realm of the dead, the underworld (Isaiah 14:15). He was removed from divine service and cast out. "The "ground" to which this haughty divine being is cast and where he is disgraced is also of interest. The Hebrew word translated "ground" is 'erets. It is a common term for the earth under our feet. But it is also a word that is used to refer to the underworld, the realm of the dead (e.g., Jonah 2:6), where ancient warrior-kings await their comrades in death (Ezek 32:21, 24–30, 32; Isa 14:9)." (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 80-81)

There was a group of divine beings, their job title is watcher, who rebelled against the Lord and did so as we see in Genesis 6. They cohabited with women here on earth creating a race of giants which the Bible refers to as Nephilim. The Jews of John's time knew what this meant, they had familiarity with the book of Enoch and were very familiar with the story.

"In the Book of Enoch, however, the action of the Watchers is clearly rebellious. They swear an oath and bind each other with curses not to alter the plan. They conspire to take human wives, and two hundred of them come down on Mt. Hermon. They have intercourse with the women and beget giants, who cause havoc on earth. The Watchers also impart illicit revelation, about astrology, roots and spells and the making of weapons. When the earth cries out to the LORD, the archangels are sent to imprison the Watchers under the earth to await the final judgment. The Watchers subsequently appeal to Enoch to intercede on their behalf, but he is instructed to tell them that they should intercede for men, not men for them (1 Enoch 15:2). The spirits of the giants are to remain on earth as evil spirits to disturb humanity (15:8–16:1)." (Collins 1999, 893) Yes, that is where demons come from.

This story of giants shows up worldwide and is dismissed as mythology. But the physical evidence shows otherwise. Satan is happy to have you believe they are ancient aliens.

The watchers are currently doing time in Tartarus, per 2 Peter 2:4-11 and Jude. They may or may not be part of this release. We are not told. But Enoch was told 70 generations before release, this could be part of that.

The Watchers who came down to Mount Hermon and from there, corrupted the earth, all had names. It is these names that show up in "mythology."

In answer to the question as to why would God let them out, simple. Since we are moderns and for the most part have accepted much of what science throws at us, we no longer believe in the supernatural, one more scheme of the devil. We do not believe that there are fallen divine beings behind earth governments, and we cannot accept that you are either on one side or the other in the battle. Satan wants us blind to the reality that will manifest all over the world once the Holy Spirit, the restrainer is removed.

Why would God let them out, to deal with all of the lies we have believed over the years about the supernatural.



At this point in the Tribulation, there are those who have not worshipped God, and they are worshipping themselves or are involved in the Tribulation religion responsible for the deaths of millions by this time. God is, by releasing some of the more egregious offenders from the Abyss, letting them know just what the object of their affections really thinks about them. God's goal is repentance and salvation.

The pit is opened and the first evidence the world will have is a darkening of the sky due to smoke that comes up from this open facility.

Finally, in I Enoch 18:12–16, 19:1–2 (cf. 21:1–6), tehom (Hebrew abyss) signified the temporary residence of fallen angels; it was a waterless, birdless, fiery place beyond the confines of earth and heaven, where the angels are in utter darkness and covered by rocks (I Enoch 10:5–12). In Rev 9 “the pit of the abyss” may connote an especially deep part of the abyss, the shaft or the well. (Ford 2008, 147)

Smoke from there makes sense. This is different than the darkening before, now the haze sets in. Or the smoke could speak to how many emerge.

Revelation 9:3–4

“Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 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.” (NASB 2020)

These are supernatural beings manifesting in the physical world and John tells us what they appear as.

This is a literal phenomenon that will occur and it has spiritual significance. In Scripture locusts are associated with divine wrath (Ex. 10:12–20). This is why they are called locusts. But unlike the locusts of history who attack vegetation, these are commanded not to hurt the grass, etc.; their purpose will be to hurt men. (Keathley III 2002, Re 9:3)

In the book of Joel, we are introduced to an invasion of locusts that destroyed Judah. They were sent to judge the nation of their sin and to drive them to repentance, which they indeed did do. Joel expands beyond the local locust plague to the day of the Lord.

The picture Joel sees is one we have not arrived at yet, that is dealing with the conditions of the planet at the time of the return of Jesus Christ to the planet. But the picture Joel makes clear to us in Joel 1, is how that locusts are a type of judgment that will be used by the Lord in the Day of the Lord. We are there.

These are not literal locusts; they are demons as well as fallen angels. They have been released to torture mankind. Physically, spiritually, emotionally, every way that would be conceivable.

Let me also shatter some other preconceived notions we all may have. Consider this, the text here in the Bible tells us explicitly that the abyss is located here on earth. If that doesn't seriously affect our understanding of the universe and what reality is, then we were not listening.

The one with the key came to earth, opened up the shaft to the abyss here on earth, and out come the imprisoned fallen ones onto the earth. No, I do not have any idea where this location is.

Just a little bit more about the abyss. It shows up nine times in the scriptures, and seven of those are here in Revelation.

From these nine references to the Abyss, three deductions can be made. First: the direction is always downward. Second: it is never associated with human beings; it is always associated with fallen angels with the exception of the Antichrist. Since the Antichrist will be conceived by the power of Satan, he is



connected with angelic beings and therefore also with the Abyss. Third: the Abyss is that section of Sheol or Hades which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. When demons are cast out of people, they sometimes spend a temporary period of time in the Abyss and then they are released.

So it is always a temporary place of confinement. Satan will be confined in the Abyss, but even for him it is temporary, for one thousand years' duration (Rev. 20:3). (Fruchtenbaum 2003, 741)

Continuing our deductions, this would also mean that Sheol, is here on earth as well. The abyss is real, Sheol is real, heaven is real. And all of those divine beings, faithful and fallen, their real too.

John tells us that out of the smoke come locusts, he does not say they were like locusts. Yes, John wants us to recall the plague of locusts in Egypt as well as what happened in Joel. The ones John sees, are here are demonic and reflect the nature of the enemy. They want to kill and have to be told that they cannot do so.

We see they are unable to touch those who know the Lord. The 144,000, nope, and it also appears Tribulation believers as well. "It would seem improbable that any true believer in that day would be subject to the torment of the locusts; the torment is rather a judgment upon Christ-rejecting men." (Walvoord 2008, 161)

Revelation 9:5–6

"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. And in those days people will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death will flee from them!" (NASB 2020)

For five solid months they will torment the earth dwellers. How bad will this be? There will be those who will want to kill themselves during this time and will be unable to do so. The death rate will be zero.

I remember, when playing football, that our coach wanted those of us on the kickoff team to knock down our opponent, and then literally stand there and when they try to get up, knock them down again. When we did that, we scored on the return, every time. But it was a difficult thing to do especially when folks run from you screaming since they figured out that was how we had been coached.

What we see here is for five solid months, the demons and fallen ones combine forces and continue to put pressure and torment on earth dwellers.

Revelation 9:7–11

"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. They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. 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. They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt people for five months. 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." (NASB 2020)

For thousands of years, they have been held prisoners and now they are released. But first, a uniform. John describes this for us as best he can. "The bizarre description of the beings released from the abyss as "locusts" (Rev 9:3) that were "like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth" (Rev 9:7–8) does not undermine their identification as the fallen Watchers...the mixture of human and animal features is "widely known" in demonic depictions in Judaism, classical Greek literature, and



the ancient Near East.” (Heiser, Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness 2020, 189)

And we also are given the name of their leader who is released along with them, in Hebrew it is Abaddon, in the Greek, Apollyon. In the Bible, Abaddon is usually a place, not a person. But when you add in Apollyon, who is a person, you have someone who is a personification of Abaddon. Not a real good thing since Abaddon means place of destruction. “The name of an angel of the underworld, of the king of the scorpion centaurs who will plague men in the last days.” (Jeremias 1964-, 4)

Apollyon, we know about.

Ἀπολλύων (Apollyon) - It means the Exterminator or Destroyer...The name of the god of pestilence is often linked with Apollo...Apollo was especially regarded as the god of the empire. The locust is his creature. (Oepke 1964-, 397)

Apollo was considered the author of evil and its averter as well (a), the god of purification, law and order (b) and the god of prophecy (c). (van den Broek 1999, 75)

Here, we see Satan and his minions for who they really are. No longer portrayed as an angel of light, they are in reality, the destroyers of people.

For five straight months, the demonic hordes of Apollyon are given license to run all over earth, just like scorpions, literally showing up everywhere at any time to torture only those who do not have the seal of God, they will only be attacking unbelievers.

These are the same entities who have been worshipped over the centuries as gods, but with this attack, we see their true character in the first round of a true alien invasion.

Revelation 9:12

“The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.” (NASB 2020)

You may think what we have discussing today is nothing more than fairy tales. It isn't. Intelligent evil in the world is real and those of the unseen realm who are fallen want nothing more than your death and preferably without Christ.

What we see here in the 5th Trumpet judgment is their true character revealed. No longer can the world deny the existence of the supernatural, it just invaded them and tortured all who do not know the Lord for five straight months.

We think things are strange today. Not hardly. The beauty though is you do not have to be here for any of this. As of this moment, Jesus has not yet returned for His church, but that can happen at any moment. Today is your opportunity to ensure you won't be here for what we just discussed. It is so simple, just say yes to Jesus today.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)



Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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