

WEEK 10: CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 9

- Chapter 9 is a continuation of chapter 8 with regards to the trumpet judgements.
- There is a very noticeable shift between these “sets” of judgments:

Feature	Revelation 8 (Trumpets 1–4)	Revelation 9 (Trumpets 5–6)
Target	The Natural World (land, sea, water, sky)	Humanity (those without the seal of God)
Type	Elemental forces (hail, fire, meteors)	Demonic forces (locusts from the Abyss, a massive army)
Timeframe	Preliminary "warning shots"	Intensive "woes" designed to lead to repentance (though many refuse)
Torment	One-third of nature is affected	Specific torment (5 months) and one-third of mankind killed

- As MacArthur says, this is a move from heavenly to hellish judgment. This is because of the final verse in **chapter Revelation 8:13** “Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”
- God now allows a literal *hell on earth* as a demonic invasion takes place.
- While the first four trumpets in Revelation 8 struck the physical world as a warning, Revelation 9 marks a terrifying shift as God's judgment moves from the environment to the inhabitants of the earth themselves.
- Remember, since we hold to a pretribulation rapture, the church has been removed and is not going to experience these horrors.
- Since the church is no longer on earth; what are those raptured church saints doing?
- There are two things which need to happen in heaven with the church *before* the armies come back with Jesus in **Revelation 19:4**
 - There are the Bema Seat of judgment and the marriage supper of the lamb.
- The Bema Seat is judgment for rewards, not for salvation.
- The marriage supper of the Lamb takes place between the rapture and the 2nd coming.
 - We don't know when or how long the Bema seat is going to take.
 - We'll talk more about the marriage supper of the Lamb in **Revelation 19**.

CHAPTER 9:1-2 ~ THE 5TH TRUMPET: THE FALLEN STAR

Revelation 9:1-2 “Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. {2} He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.”

- A star from heaven *has fallen* to the earth and he was given the key to the bottomless pit.
- “The star here mentioned, however, seems to refer to a person rather than a literal star or meteor. The star is described as “fallen” in more accurate translations rather than falling, as indicated in the Authorized Version. The word *fall* is in the perfect tense which signifies completed action.” (Walvoord)
- There are a couple of reasons to believe that this is a person and not an actual star:
 - This star is called a *him* in verse 1 and *he* in verse 2. The other times a star has been mentioned, there were no pronouns.
 - Also, someone have this star a key...you can't just give a key to an actual star.
 - Finally, a star can't open anything, as this star does in **verse 2**.
- The term *star* was also used in **Job 38:7** “When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”
 - It appears these *stars* or rather angels were singing together during creation as they watched.
- This *star* which had fell from heaven is most likely Satan himself, who is a fallen angel.
- John did not *see the star fall*, but in John's vision, the star had already fallen.
 - This means that Revelation 9 does not refer to Satan's original fall from heaven, but John simply makes the observation that he sees him on earth.
 - Satan's original fall is recorded in **Isaiah 14:12-15** “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! {13} "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. {14} 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' {15} "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.”
- Satan and his followers were originally cast out of heaven when they rebelled against God, they still had access to heaven and God.
 - **Job 1:6** “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.”
 - **Job 2:1** “Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.”

- We know that there is a day coming when Satan will no longer be in or allowed in heaven.
 - **Revelation 12:7-9** “And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, {8} and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. {9} And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”
- He is given the key to the **bottomless pit** (the abyss) so that he can open it up and unleash a literal hell and terror upon the earth’s inhabitants.
 - This has always been Satan’s plan...to attack God’s people and show them no mercy. Satan hates God so much that anyone who follows after God is his enemy.
 - God and Satan are not in a cosmic battle over good and evil. Satan is a created angel who fell from God’s presence because he wanted to be like God. There is not struggle...God is in total and complete control.
 - Satan is our enemy because we are God’s people...**1 Peter 5:8** “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. **Your adversary**, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
 - We know that Satan attacked Adam and Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3)
 - We know that Satan also tormented Job (Job 1-2)
 - We know that Satan was against Israel (1 Chron 21:1)
 - We know that Satan was against Jesus in the temptations (Matt 4)
 - We know that Satan wanted to “sift” Peter like wheat, but Jesus prayed for him (Luke 22:31)
 - We know that Satan filled Judas to betray Jesus (Luke 22:3)
 - We know that Satan uses the unbelievers to come against God’s people (John 8:44)
 - We know that Satan blinds the unbelievers and attacks the church (2 Cor 4:4)
 - Even though all of this, God is in control and moving everything towards the end that He alone intends.
- In **verse 1**, the *star* has the key to the bottomless pit. “The “bottomless pit” (Gr., *abyssos*) is the abode of demons according to Luke 8:31. The Greek word is found seven times in Revelation (9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3).” (Walvoord)
 - When Jesus was talking to the demons who were named “Legion,” Luke records in **Luke 8:31** “They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss.”
- “From these references, it may be concluded that the pit of the abyss is none other than the place of detention of wicked angels. It is here that Satan himself is confined for a thousand years during the reign of

Christ on earth (20:1-3). The opening verse of this chapter, therefore, presents Satan as having the key to the pit of the abyss with power to release those who are confined there.” (Walvoord)

- This bottomless pit or abyss is the place where their lives incarcerated demons.
- The *star* was given a key (therefore, he was given authority) to open this abyss and smoke came out of the pit which darkened the sun and the air itself.
- “It seems to [indicate] the spiritual corruption which will be caused by these demons released from their confinement, and it identifies the character of the judgment involved in the fifth trumpet as that of demonic and satanic oppression.” (Walvoord)

CHAPTER 9:3-6 ~ THE 5TH TRUMPET: DEMONIC TORMENT

Revelation 9:3-6 “Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. {4} They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. {5} 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 man. {6} And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.”

- “As John continues to observe the unfolding of the fifth trumpet, he sees locusts coming out of the smoke which are likened to scorpions. As is borne out by the description given later, these are not natural locusts, but a visual representation of the hordes of demons loosed upon the earth.” (Walvoord)
- John sees the massive number of demons coming out of the abyss.
 - “...And similarly the scorpion locusts are quite literally intended; they are not heretics, or Goths, or Mohammedans, or the mendicant orders, or the Jesuits, or Protestants, or Saracens or Turks, but they are uncanny denizens of the abyss, locusts of a hellish species, animated by devilish instincts and equipped with infernal powers.” (A. S. Peake, *The Revelation of John*, p. 181. In Walvoord)
- These demons take on the physical form similar to locusts and warm all over the earth.
- “These creatures are described as being very real, so we must not consider them as merely ‘symbolic representations of judgment.’ They are animal creatures, like locusts, though not ordinary locusts, for they are demonic in nature.” (Charles Ryrie, *Revelation*, 84)
- Their “power was given to them” to do what they were released to do upon the earth in judgment.
- While these locusts are not *actual real locusts*, they are a demonic force that will bring devastation upon the earth similar to how real locusts bring utter destruction.
- These locusts, again, are demonic in nature and controlled for a very specific time and purpose.

- They are not allowed to “hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree...”
 - This shows that they are not real locusts.
 - They were not released to do any harm to the environment, but they were specifically released to bring God’s righteous judgment upon wicked mankind.
 - The prohibition of not destroying the grass also shows that sometime passes after the first trumpet judgment in which all of the grass is destroyed.
 - They will not be able to harm those who have the seal of God – this protection certainly includes all of the 144,000 but also likely extends to all those who know the Lord in that day since believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13-14) and cannot be possessed by demons.
 - They will not be able to kill anyone or persecute indefinitely, only for five months (cf. v. 10) – five months is the normal lifespan of locusts (from May to Sept).
 - “This is important as it refutes clearly the notion that all these judgments will occur in a brief span of time immediately before the second coming of Christ.” (Walvoord)
- “The graphic description of the torment is compared to that when a scorpion strikes a man. Scorpions in all climates are fearful and painful scourges. In warm climates, they grow to such size as to make their sting not only painful but dangerous. Frequently small children die from the sting of a scorpion in tropical countries. Though the affliction here described is not actually a sting of a scorpion, it is compared to the pain and suffering caused by such a sting.” (Walvoord)
- The pain that is going to be caused is not going to go away. It is not like a normal scorpion bite that lasts for a while and then dissipates.
- This pain is going to be so great that as John says in **verse 6**...men are going to want to die but simply can’t.
- “Literal death is meant here. This is a horrible picture of domination by demons to such an extent that men lose their ability of free choice and are in agony of body and soul. What the Scriptures here convey is that in addition to the natural plagues of the first four trumpets, now wicked men are afflicted by torment of demons.”
- “Bodies will not sink and drown; poison and pills will have no effect; and somehow even bullets and knives will not do their intended job.” (Charles Ryrie, *Revelation*, 88)
- This is real despair and life without hope. Not only have several judgments been pour out or released already, now man is being tormented by demons.
- As is common in demonic affliction as recorded in the Gospels, those in the grip of demons are not free to exercise their own will and therefore are not free to take their own lives. Even the hope of death to deliver them from their present troubles is taken away from them in that dark hour. They are left to face then-trial and affliction without any way of escape. (Walvoord)

CHAPTER 9:7-12 ~ THE 5TH TRUMPET: THE LOCUSTS DESCRIBED

Revelation 9:7-12 “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 the faces of men. {8} They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. {9} 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. {10} They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. {11} 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. {12} The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.”

- Remember the ancillary effects of this judgment:
 - Crops destroyed, animals die because of lack of food, no wood for construction, etc.
 - There will be a large loss of land vegetation which can compromise oxygen levels which can have an effect on people and animals.

CHAPTER 9:13-15 ~ THE 6TH TRUMPET: DEMONS RELEASED

Revelation 9:13-15 “Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, {14} one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." {15} 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.”

- the land that is originally gathered up by evaporation from the oceans. But people have repaid God’s gracious provision with ingratitude and idolatry, revering the sea as the supposed source of their remotest evolutionary ancestors. As He had devastated the land environment, the true God judges the sea.”¹

CHAPTER 9:16-19 ~ THE 6TH TRUMPET: 200 MILLION MAN ARMY

Revelation 9:16-19 “The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. {17} 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 and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. {18} A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. {19} 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.”

- scale of what is going to take place.

¹ MacArthur, *Revelation 1-11*, Rev. 8:8.

CHAPTER 8:12-13 ~ THE 6TH TRUMPET: MAN'S RESPONSE

Revelation 9:20-21 “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 and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; {21} and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.”

Mark 3:5-6 NASB95 - {5} After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. {6} The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.