

THE REVELATION

JUNE 9, 2024

Chapter 9

5. Trump Five – Woe One - Star Falls to Earth (9:1-12)

a) Key to Bottomless Pit (9:1)

Rev 9:1 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.

The permission for the fifth trumpet to blow was given and John saw a star being given “the key of the bottomless pit.” We must notice that John did not see this star fall with the sound of the trumpet; the star was one that “had fallen.” The only other stars that John had seen falling from heaven to this point in the story were those in Seal Six (6:3) and the one called Wormwood (8:10). This star most likely was one from the group found in Seal Six. Physical stars are balls of flaming gas; this star was not that; it was a heavenly creature, an angel. We know of only two classes of angels found in the Bible, cherubs and seraphs. The stars mentioned here and in the sixth seal were most likely seraphs because they were the flaming angels.

Here, we have a mistranslation in the text. The “bottomless pit” in the original Greek should have been rendered here as *the key of the pit of the abyss*. The same original words are correctly translated in the context of this same subject line below in Revelation 9:11 as “the angel of the abyss.” Therefore, the term “bottomless pit” should be translated as an “abyss pit” in all uses in the REVELATION.

b) Key to the Great Furnace (9:2)

Rev 9:2 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.

The heavenly creature with the key to the *abyss pit* used it to open its door. Upon its opening, “smoke” belched forth from its bowels, passed through the water and saturated the breathable “air,” causing it to turn dark.

c) Key to the Locust (9:3-12)

(1) Power of the Locust (9:3)

Rev 9:3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Out of that cloud of smoky air, John saw locusts pour out from the *abyss pit*. He calls them “locusts” because they look like *locusts* to him. But these *locusts* had power “as the scorpions of the earth have power.” We know *locusts* as grasshoppers. They eat vegetation, which means they can bite, but they do not sting. Scorpions do sting, and John places on these *locusts* that come out of the *abyss pit* the same ability to do what scorpions do – sting! Stings of scorpions can be deadly, and John implies the same results from the stings of these *locusts*. But even if the torment of these *locusts* was

from their biting of humans, as with some of the species found in Africa, the stings could be quite irritating. For that reason, these *locusts* from the *abyss pit* must have had some sort of poisonous stinger like a scorpion.

(2) Warning to the Locust (9:4-5)

Rev 9:4 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.

Locusts were created by God to eat green vegetation. These *locusts* were not instructed to harm vegetation; they were directed to a different target – “men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.” That means these *locusts* did not have the authority to sting any of the 144,000 Israelites that had been sealed with the name of God on their foreheads (7:4-8). That means that these *locusts* had carte blanche freedom to aggravate, but not kill, every Gentile and unsealed Jew alive on earth for five months. This five-month warning begins the countdown of a time clock to a specific event – the release of the four evil angels at the Euphrates River.

(3) Prey of the Locust (9:6)

Rev 9:6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.

The aggravation of the stings of these *locusts* will take their victims to the point of despair, to the point of thinking that death is better than life, but the LORD will not let them die.

(4) Description of the Locust (9:7-8)

Rev 9:7 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.

Finally, John returns to the *locusts* to describe what they looked like to him. First, the “appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle.” John saw them lined up as if by rank and file, row after row, line after line, battalion after battalion, squad after squad, unit after unit. Second, John saw what looked like *gold crowns* on their heads, which, third, drew his attention to their faces, which looked like they had “the faces of men.” Fourth, it seemed to John that they had the flowing “hair of women,” fifth, the “teeth of a lion,” sixth, “breastplates of iron,” and seventh, “wings” that sounded to John like the beating of the horse’s hoofs as they ran into battle. But eighth, John saw their tails, and, in their tails, they had stingers. These were not normal *locusts* ever before seen on earth. Although they seemed armed for destruction, they were limited in their power, for they could “hurt men for five months,” but they were not allowed to kill. To restrict the *locusts* even more, the 144,000 sealed Jews were off-limits to them.

(5) King of the Locust (9:11-12)

Rev 9:11 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.

These *locusts* had a leader; their king was an angel. He was “the angel of the abyss.” To be absolutely sure that we would know exactly who this angel was, John gave his name in the Old Testament language and the New. The first was “Abaddon,” and the second was “Apollyon.” The Old Testament mentions “Abaddon” six times (Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Psalm 88:11; Proverbs 15:11; 27:20). The name means *destruction*. In the Old Testament passages, “Abaddon” is coupled with *the grave, death and Sheol*. The name “Abaddon” implies the destruction of this life that leads to *the grave, death and Sheol*. The same name in the New Testament is “Apollyon,” which is mentioned only here. The name means *destruction* or *destroyer*. Because John makes the two names synonymous, there is no reason to interpret the New Testament word differently from the Old. Therefore, *Abaddon/Apollyon* is the name of the angel who rules over *the grave, death, and Sheol*. With the unlocking of the *abyss pit*, the restrictions hereto on the destroyer have been partially removed. Trump Six – Woe Two – (9:13-11:14)

6. Trump Six – Woe Two

a) Announcement from the Golden Altar (9:13-14)

Rev 9:13 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."

John heard a “voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God.” We need to be reminded that the sounding of the first trumpet occurred after the fire was taken from this golden altar, placed in a fire-pan, covered with incense, which were the prayers of the saints, and then, the fire-pan was hurled to the ground. With the sound of the sixth trumpet, John heard a voice from the same altar say, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” Both Peter and Jude tell us about these angels.

2Pe 2:4-11 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (~~for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds~~), then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord.

Jude 1:6-7 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

These four angels were godless rebels against the Almighty. These angels were so sinful that the LORD had not allowed them to roam the earth since they had committed their horrible sins. Even before Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan, these angels were bound and kept away from the ability to tempt humanity.

It was in the area of the Euphrates that Adam and Eve first saw the light of day. It is one of the four rivers that formed a boundary line around the Garden of Eden. On one side of this boundary line, man committed his first sin; on the other side, he killed his first man. The first martyr who loved the LORD was dead – Abel was his name. Besides this same river, men rebelled against the LORD and refused to scatter to populate the world, and the LORD had to bring upon them the judgment of separation by language. Back to this same river, the Israelites were dragged into exile, some to Assyria, some to Babylon. All were within range of these four evil angels who could not break their bonds to be set free to torment people until this point in the story. Thank God John was seeing only the rehearsal of what was to come. Thank God the Church will not experience their torment.

b) Reason for the Four Angels (9:15)

Rev 9:15 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.

When the LORD had the four evil angels bound, the time clock for their release began its countdown. We know it as seven thousand years thanks to the writings of Barnabas. If you will remember, it was this Barnabas who retrieved Paul from Tarsus. The two were commissioned by the Church in Antioch and set out on their first missionary journey. Others were with them, including John Mark (Acts 9-15). In Chapter 15 of the *“Letter of Barnabas,”* he says,

^{15:3-5} Of the Sabbath He speaketh in the beginning of the creation; And God made the works of His hands in six days, and He ended on the seventh day, and rested on it, and He hallowed it. Give heed, children, what this meaneth; He ended in six days. He meaneth this, that in six thousand years the Lord shall bring all things to an end; for the day with Him signifyeth a thousand years; and this He himself beareth me witness, saying; Behold, the day of the Lord shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, everything shall come to an end. And He rested on the seventh day. this He meaneth; when His Son shall come, and shall abolish the time of the Lawless One, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall he truly rest on the seventh day.

These angels had a target: the death of one-third of humanity. If this happened in 2018, the death toll worldwide would be 2.53 billion out of 7.6 billion people. If, by chance, only the Western nations were considered here, the death toll would be 225 million people out of the European population of 742 million people in 2024.

The five months were over, the time allotted to the locusts to sting but not kill. It was now time to kill, and these four angels would set out to do the job. They would not be alone. They have an army.