

A Pathetic Insanity

Revelation 9

Just when the people going through the Tribulation think it can't get any worse, it will. It looks like the first four trumpet warnings come one upon the heels of another, but the next three bring with them an entirely new dimension of trouble.

Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. The fifth trumpet warning from God begins a series of three "woes". They are separated out possibly because they seem to represent a change from physical catastrophes to spiritually, even demonically driven ones. In this instance, a star which here is referred to as "him" is clearly a symbol for a spiritual being. He is given a key to open the abussos, the bottomless pit. Note that the star is a fallen one – the Greek tense is called the "perfect" and reflects an action that happened and was completed in the past. Now, Jesus said He saw Satan fall

from heaven. Without going into too much detail, it is evident that at some time in the past Satan was cast down from his exalted position in heaven and wound up on earth. Some attribute the desolation they say is evident in Genesis 1:2 to this event. It also seems that since he presented himself before God in the book of Job, that he still has access to heaven. That, however, we know will change when, after a conflict with Michael and the holy angels of heaven (see Rev 12:7-9), he and his horde will be banished altogether from the heavenly scene. So, this fallen star could be Satan or it could be another chief demon who was cast out with him.

The bottomless pit is thought to be the deepest, darkest pit of hell. Jude writes that the demonic angels who crossed over from the spiritual realm to the physical to pollute the human race genetically in the days of Noah before the flood are imprisoned in chains of darkness. This could be them. As they emerge, the smoke of their darkness precedes them.

David Guzik notes, "[Their] offence was connected with some kind of *sexual* sin, such as the sexual union between rebellious angelic beings (the *sons of God* in Genesis 6:2) and the human beings (the *daughters of men* in Genesis 6:2). We know that there was some sexual aspect to this sin because

Jude tells us in the following verse, Jude 1:7: *as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh.* The words *in a similar manner to these* refers back to the angels of Jude 1:6, and the words *gone after strange flesh* refers to their unnatural sexual union."

"We know some things about this unnatural sexual union from Genesis 6. We know that this unnatural union produced unnatural offspring. The unnatural union corrupted the genetic pool of mankind, so God had to find Noah, a man *perfect in his generations* (Genesis 6:9) - that is, "pure in his genetics." This unnatural union prompted an incredibly drastic judgment of God - a global flood, wiping out all of mankind except for eight people."

Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days

men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. These demonic creatures are apparently given physical bodies like locusts and the power to inflict a seriously painful suffering upon men. They are restricted in their power such that they cannot touch anyone who is saved, i.e. sealed with the seal of God. However, their torturous ways will drive other men insane wherein they will seek to die but will not yet be able to. You may remember from the book of Exodus that the plague of locusts there did not come upon God's people either, only on the Egyptians.

The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. Notice the word "like" before each description. What

we're seeing is not that these creatures have literal gold crowns or men's faces and such, but that they have a resemblance to these things. They have crowns but not of real gold. Their faces resemble men, but their hair is apparently long like a woman's and their teeth appear like lions' fangs. I'm personally persuaded that this gruesome imagery, whether symbolic or literal, can only be demonic.

They are given power for a period of five months which is the same length of time that the judgment flood in Noah's day covered the earth – 150 days – that's no accident. In addition, their leader is named in both Hebrew and Greek as "Destroyer" or "Destruction". I think we're given his name in both languages to indicate that he will lead this terrible woe upon both Hebrews and gentiles alike. Only the saved will be spared.

One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." The golden altar

would be the altar of incense if the typology is consistent with the tabernacle and the temple. Each of the four horns on those altars were 'anointed' with the blood of the sacrifice. As such, we may have represented here the prayers of God's people that have been 'covered by the blood' of Christ so to speak. Horns, in the Bible, represent power and so we see that indeed, such prayers are enormously powerful in heaven. How often have we all prayed, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Little may we have known that this series of cataclysms is part of what it would take to fulfill those prayers.

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. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. Now, both the US Census Bureau and the UN estimates of world population for the time at which John was writing were at or below this number of 200,000,000. Can you imagine John's eyes blinking in amazement – so much so that he clarifies and confirms, "I **heard** the number of them." That would be like one of us saying that we foresaw an army of some seven to eight billion.

This event alone will result in two to three billion deaths on planet earth. The four angels who are released to do this unimaginable damage were prepared for the specific time. In other words, this is not a reaction to the antichrist's persecution or some last minute decision to punish mankind. God has known from before the beginning of our creation what would happen to our relationship with Him and what would be necessary to finish His universal reconciliation. It is not 'sweetness and light' so to speak; it is unfathomable catastrophe and destruction.

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. 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. 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. Now, if the colors on the breastplates of these soldiers are representative of national colors, they may be from Ecuador or Romania (I'm kidding) or we may think of

China (Red flag), the UN, NATO, EU or WEU (Blue flags) and the Vatican (Yellow and White flag). Clearly, that is speculation but each of these entities does seem to have a part to play in the final days. We should note that their means of transportation is also their means of destruction and to John they appeared hideous.

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. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. This boggles the mind, doesn't it. Nevertheless, it reveals the nature of evil. The demons knew who Christ was when He came to save us and yet they only sought to expose Him, retreat from His presence or to incite the people to kill Him. In like manner, rebellious mankind is, at this point, unable to repent. They cannot think rationally or see clearly. The disease of sin has fully engulfed them. God is demonstrating this powerful lesson to the whole universe of concerned beings. Evil is not even a 'valid alternative' to Good; it is a pathetic insanity.