

980712 PM DTS # 23
THE JUDGMENT OF JESUS
REV. 9:1-21
JESUS AND THE ANGELS OF DOOM

The history of planet earth may well be traced by the wars our fellow humans have so often fought. It was Babylon that first conquered in a global way. How many peace loving boys and their dads perished to fill the coffers of their king? Then Assyrian and Persian and Greek armies sowed blood, broken bodies and death across the face of the earth. In cold, calculated and cruel efficiency the Romans fought and won the world we know.

In more modern times the 13th century inhabitants of Asia were mesmerized by the Khans and the Mongol Empire was carved across the continents leaving an estimated 40 million dead in its path. Five hundred years pass and Napoleon ravages Europe for 20 years with a death toll of 5 million as blindly his armies follow him. Most vivid is the strange little man who hypnotized some of the most sophisticated and civilized cultures on the planet into becoming barbaric butchers of humanity. Hitler caused upwards of 50 million deaths with 6 million of them being the gasses and murdered people of promise the Jews.

Those pages are dark ones in history but far worse are those to come. Armies that dwarf all which ever marched are poised even as we speak and at a moment known only to God the ultimate weapon, angels of doom by the hundreds of millions will be unleashed. Needing no weapons, no food, no vehicles, no rest these cosmic warriors are unstoppable and deadly. In their wake will fall more than all wars have ever killed and all in just a brief moment in time. All that and yet the earth dwellers miss the message, turn their backs on God and worship themselves and the demons that enslave them in cruel hatred and lust. Join me in Revelation 9 as we Discover the JUDGMENT OF JESUS as He opens the Abyss of Horrors and judges the hardened and unrepentant sinners.

THE 5TH TRUMPET
A PREVIEW OF HELL:
ENDLESS DARKNESS
(9: 1-2)

As the chapter 9 opens we find John introduces us to the dreadful realm of the fallen spirits and their abode: the abyss. This bottomless pit is often mentioned in God's Word (9: 1-2, 11; 11: 7; 20: 1,3) as the holding tank of punishment for the fallen angels, demons, the beast, the false prophet and Satan. Everytime the Bible describes it the location is at the center of the earth. If all of these are taken literally

then God has designed an impregnable fortress holding the most fearsome creatures existing anywhere in the universe. These spirit beings of the highest magnitude of evil are leftover from Satan's rebellion. Jude tells us some were trying to corrupt the human race so the promised seed of the woman (Jesus Gen. 3:15) could never come. Others seem to be key leaders of Satan's forces and they are held back until now. This abyss or bottomless pit is only an intermediate step before the final abode of the Prince of Darkness and all his followers. In chapter 20 the final place of terror is the Lake of Fire of Gehenna Jesus spoke of so often in His warnings scattered throughout the Gospels. The fallen Lucifer is given permission to open the dungeon of demons and loose the legions of terrors.

A PREVIEW OF HELL: RELENTLESS TERROR (9:3-12)

As the shaft leading downward is unlocked the infernal smoke of the pit billows out of the darkness unleashing the pent up fury of hell. With the most destructive imagery known to man John describes them as locusts. No plague was more fearsome in the ancient world.

Truly the Day of the Lord, portrayed in this short prophetic oracle's revelation through God's Spirit, is a day that is to be heeded. God clearly demonstrates the need of repentance and the physical disaster that must follow moral disintegration.

Three times God uses Locusts as a vehicle of judgment. Each is a plague of horrible proportions.

1. In Exodus 10:4, 12-14 and 19, Moses unleashes an 8th plague -locusts that HORRIBLY DEVOUR.
2. In Joel 1 and 2 God sends a plague of locusts that HORRIBLY DESTROY.
3. In Revelation 9:3 and 7, the 5th trumpet sounds the release of HORRIBLE DEMONIC HORDES like locusts from the Abyss

Today, few readers of the Book of Joel are likely to experience a locust plague, because with current eradication methods, a locust swarm in modern Israel is indeed a rare phenomenon. In ancient times, however, the land of Israel was frequently subject to invasions by the desert locust, *Schistocerca gregaria*. In 1915 a journalist¹ in Jerusalem, John D. Whiting, standing in almost the same place Joel stood more than 2,000 years before, witnessed a similar event:

"Sudden darkening of the bright sunshine ... clouds... so dense as to appear quite black.... In an inconceivably short time every leaf is consumed, leaving bare and barked twigs only ... It seemed as if the entire surface of the ground moved, producing a most curious effect upon one's vision and causing dizziness.... Up and up the city walls and the castle they climbed to their very heights"

Exodus 10:1-20 describes the locust as perhaps nature's most awesome example of the collective destructive power of a species. An adult locust weighs a maximum of two grams, and yet its combined destructive force can leave thousands of people in famine for years. The locust plagues were very much feared in ancient Egypt. So much so that the peasants were in the habit of praying to the locust god. [Satan

¹ National Geographic, December, 1915, pp. 511-550.

likes to keep superstitious peoples enslaved to his demonic hordes evil powers.] No one who has ever seen the locust at work accuses the Bible of hyperbole. In 1926 and 1927, small swarms of the African migratory locusts were spotted in an area 50 by 120 miles on the plains of the river Niger near Timbuktu. The next year swarms invaded Senegal and Sierra Leone. By 1930 the whole of west Africa was flailing away at the pests with everything movable. But the locusts didn't seem to notice; swarms reached Khartoum, more than 2,000 miles to the east of Timbuktu, then turned south, spreading across Ethiopia, Kenya, the Belgian Congo, and in 1932, striking into the lush farm land of Angola and Rhodesia. Before the plague finally sputtered out fourteen years after it began, it affected five-million square miles of Africa, an area nearly double the size of the United States². A locust is capable of eating its own weight daily. One square mile of a swarm will normally contain from 100,000,000 to 200,000,000 of the creatures. It is unusual, however, for such plagues to occupy an area of only one square mile. Swarms covering more than 400 square miles have been recorded.

A swarm can contain over a billion creatures that, all together, can weigh more than three million pounds. One locust with his colleagues form gregarious marching bands up to ten miles wide and ten miles long. The marching bands move forward at a slow cadence, perhaps no more than 250 feet per hour, and may travel no farther than 15 miles from their staging area. But within their path the hoppers may consume virtually every tender blade of grass or legume. The extraordinary appearance of this marching band with its mass of tiny pullulating bodies can be unnerving, to say the least. In the words of Joel, "Before them earth trembles, Heaven shakes . . ." (Joel 2: 10). The marching bands are oblivious to obstacles: "They rush up the wall, they dash about in the city; They climb into the houses, They enter like thieves by way of the windows" (Joel 2: 9).

Even the Hebrew vocabulary used to describe locusts is fearsome. There are six different Hebrew words for locust, each is sobering. These words are:

- ✓ Gazam or SHEARERS which portrays the machine like destructive path or sheared off living plants in the wake of these monsters.
- ✓ Arbel or SWARMER is a reference to the innumerable hordes that darken the sky as a black cloud.
- ✓ Hasil or FINISHER which is the devastating aftermath or all green plants finished off by the army that passes.
- ✓ Solam or ANNIHILATOR is another glimpse of how those who saw these hordes described their work.
- ✓ Hargol or GALLOPER notes the incredible speed of the destruction as they pour out unstoppable destruction across the face of the earth.
- ✓ Tzelatzel or CREAKER which reminds us that locusts are ominously heard creaking toward you long before they are seen.

(9:5-6) The time limit God gives these creatures is the same as the normal life cycle of a physical locust, 5 months. It is also interesting that this plague flooding the earth with these horrible creatures lasts the same duration as the flood waters of Genesis 8: 1. Then they are swept back, presumably where they came from, the Pit. Do any of earth's tormented inhabitants turn in sorrow to their Creator? It is not clear, but God awaits any to join the white robed multitude.

² Davis, Moses and the Gods of Egypt, pp. 128-130.

(9: 7-10) John is grasping for any words to describe demon monsters. They can fly like locusts, they gallop around like horses, they carry a venomous sting like scorpions, they look somewhat human with hair, they bite with sharpness like a lion. Horrible and ghastly they do great damage to humanity.

(9:11) At the front of the army stands Apollyon (in Greek Destroyer) and in Hebrew Abaddon or Destruction. Thus leading the most horrible assault on mankind ever launched is the destroyer himself, who defected from the very holy presence of God to decay into the murderous liar and hater of truth the chief officer of the Devil or perhaps even the old Dragon, Satan himself. Most likely this is one of the arch-fallen angels. As Jesus said Satan only wants to steal God's blessings. The absolute contrast is seen between Jesus and the devil John 10:10 "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

THE 6TH TRUMPET A PREVIEW OF HELL: THE HOPELESSNESS OF ETERNAL DEATH (9:12-21)

(9:12-16) With the piercing blast of the 6th trumpet the horror of chapter 9 intensifies. Now the four angels of punishment as the Jews were often describing them, are released. Behind them come the mounted calvary of hell. Jesus suffered at mankind's hands on a hill called calvary. Now all of mankind who will not look to Him are slaughtered by Satan's calvary of death. The commanders of destruction are unshackled. With all the thousands of years of malignancy they cultivated as they were chained the death wave pours out on planet earth. In their wake 1 in 3 humans will die. The planet becomes one vast graveyard as people succumb to these monsters and their consuming flames, suffocated by the clinging smoke and poisoned by the caustic sulphuric emissions.

Why Euphrates? It was near here in Genesis 3 Satan began insidious assault on God's creatures. It is also here that the 1st murder was committed as Abel fell at Cain's hand (4:8) and the first rebellion organized against God was also near here at Babel (Genesis 11). So this is the historic place of Satan's evil.

(9:17-19) Armored by the fires of hell, blazing red like a fiery furnace, cloudy blue like the smoke of a blaze, bright yellow like the color of burning sulphur they charge from the pit. Not relentlessly plodding across the planet like their predecessors did for 5 months, these 200 million scream out galloping their deadly pestilence to the far corners of the globe. With heads like roaring lions, tails like venomous serpents and breathing fire like their leader the dragon himself they quickly plunge countless humans made in God's image into a godless, hopeless, eternal death.

(9:20-21) What is the lesson mankind learns? What changes are made in response to all this judgment from God? Horribly the people of earth change nothing!

Jesus in mercy spares two-thirds of humanity but they respond no better than those in Hell who will "gnash their teeth" as Jesus said seven times as He described the horrible place the hard hearted would go (Mt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28). This gnashing implies the hatred of an unrepentant heart poured out at God's judgment.

Murder

Revelation 9:20-21 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of:

- ✓ GODLESSNESS: Still they willfully push the Creator out of their minds. And still these terrified earthdwellers worship: *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.*²¹ And they did not repent of their
- ✓ CALLOUSNESS: *murders or their*
- ✓ MINDLESSNESS (this word is actually pharmakeia 'druggings': *sorceries or their*
- ✓ LICENTIOUSNESS: *sexual immorality*(all the evil of perversion unchecked by righteous influences) *or their*
- ✓ LAWLESSNESS: *thefts.*

2 Peter 3:10-18

1. KEEP ALERT: This should Encourage a Godly Life; Live Christly v. 10-11
2. BUILD FIREPROOF: This should Discourage Materialism and encourage us to Live expectantly v. 12-13
3. LOOK UP: This should Develop an Expectant Life; Live Purely v. 14
4. STUDY THE BOOK: This should help us to Guard our heart and encourage us to Live maturely v. 17
5. OBEY JESUS: This should encourage us to Grow Spiritually and to Live Growingly v. 18

1. MATERIALISM CLOUDS OUR MINDS - KEEP ALERT: This should Encourage a Godly Life; Live Christly v. 10-11 2 Peter 3:10-18 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up 11 [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness
2. MATERIALISM CLUTTERS OUR LIVES - BUILD FIREPROOF: This should Discourage Materialism and encourage us to Live expectantly 2 Peter 3:12-13 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (KJV)
3. MATERIALISM CLOUDS OUR EYES - LOOK UP: This should Develop an Expectant Life; Live Purely 2 Peter 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. (KJV)
4. MATERIALISM CLOUDS OUR BIBLES - STUDY THE BOOK: This should help us to Guard our heart and encourage us to Live maturely 2 Peter 3:17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. (KJV)
5. MATERIALISM CLOUDS OUR WILLS - OBEY JESUS: This should encourage us to Grow Spiritually and to Live Growingly 2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. (KJV)

Sing: # 26 A Mighty Fortress