

The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets
Revelation 9.1-21

Sunday February 09, 2025

And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.

- Fallen star: satan
 - **“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!”** Is.14.11
 - **The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”** And he said to them, **“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”** Lk.10.17-18
- Important to note: satan does not take the key, it is given to him
 - He is not God’s opposite equal – he is a created spirit-being who must operate within the confines given him
 - **And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.”** So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Job 1.12

²He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. ³Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. ⁴They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. ⁶And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

- *The bottomless pit (the abyss)* = the place where the demons dwell awaiting judgment
 - **Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?”** And he said, **“Legion,”** for many demons had entered him. And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. Lk.8.30-31
 - **For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment...** 2 Peter 2.4
- *like the smoke of a great furnace...*
 - **And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, ‘where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’** For everyone will be salted with fire. Mk.9.47-49
- *Locusts with the power of scorpions...*
 - Regardless of interpretive view most scholars agree the locusts represent demons or demonic influence shown through the rage and ferocity of their actions

- **Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.** Lk.10.19
- Important to note the limitations:
 - They were given power like the power of scorpions
 - They were told not to harm the grass or any green plant or any tree
 - They were told not to harm the people who have the seal of God on their foreheads.
 - They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them

God alone is sovereign!

- *their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone...*
 - as seductive and alluring as sin may appear, eventually its true nature will be evidenced

⁷In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, ⁸their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; ⁹they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle.

- *John's frequent use of "like"*
 - Trying to find words to describe the creatures he saw:
 - *like horses prepared for battle* - powerful
 - *like crowns of gold* – intent upon conquest
 - *their faces were like human faces* - intelligent
 - *their hair like women's hair* – seductive
 - *their teeth like lions' teeth* – fierce, capable of inflicting intense mental and spiritual torment
 - *they had breastplates like breastplates of iron and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle* – formidable force
 - *They have tails and stings like scorpions* – able to torment

¹⁰They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails.

- *Again note the limitation!*

¹¹They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

- Abaddon means “destruction”, Apollyon means “destroyer”
- This “king” intends no good

¹²The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

¹³Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”

- *I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God...*

- *These are woes that come in answer to the prayers of the saints:*
- **When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. ¹⁰They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”** Rev.6.9-10
- *“Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”*
 - The Euphrates often served as a protective boundary against OT Israel’s enemies
 - Against Roman enemies (Parthians)
 - With this woe there is no protective boundary

¹⁵So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind.

- *prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year...*
 - the day of judgment is no surprise!
 - **But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.** Rom.2.5
 - **I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”** Mt.12.36-37
- *released to kill a third of mankind:*
 - the consequences are more grave

¹⁶The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number.

- = 200,000,000 and to be understood symbolically
 - No place on earth to enable such a number to gather at one time

¹⁷And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions’ heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. ¹⁸By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. ¹⁹For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.

- The ESV Study Bible, Richard Phillips (Reformed Expository Commentary) suggest this description symbolizes the treachery and deceit with which demons and demonic forces influence mankind (*fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths*):
 - Leading men to unbridled greed and depravity
 - These leading to countless wars over the centuries killing countless victims
- *For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.*
 - With their mouths come the deceptions
 - With their tails come the sting of that deception

²⁰ ***The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, ²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.***

What a sad commentary!

- **And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Cor.4.4**

2 Closing Thoughts:

The reality of evil spiritual forces:

- **For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Eph.6.12-13**

The supremacy and sovereignty of God – note the control God exercises throughout the text:

- **...for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose...’ Is.46.9b-10**