

TRIBULATION: The Tribulation Period 12

FOCAL PASSAGE: Revelation 9:1-11 ...¹ *The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss.* ² *When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss.* ³ *And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth.* ⁴ *They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.* ⁵ *They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes.* ⁶ *During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.* ⁷ *The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces.* ⁸ *Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.* ⁹ *They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle.* ¹⁰ *They had tails with stingers, like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months.* ¹¹ *They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).*

THE TRUMPET JUDGMENTS: FROM BAD TO WORSE

1. THE FIRST TRUMPET: HAIL, FIRE, and BLOOD

Revelation 8:7 ...⁷ *The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down on the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.*

2. THE SECOND TRUMPET: A MOUNTAIN OF FIRE

Revelation 8:8-9 ...⁸ *The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood,⁹ a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.*

3. THE THIRD TRUMPET: A STAR CALLED WORMWOOD

Revelation 8:10-11 ...¹⁰ *The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water—¹¹ the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.*

4. THE FOURTH TRUMPET: DARKNESS DESCENDS

Revelation 8:12 ...¹² *The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.*

DEMONS, WAR, DEATH AND REBELLION

Revelation 9:1-11 ...¹ *The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss.* ² *When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss.* ³ *And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth.* ⁴ *They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.* ⁵ *They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes.* ⁶ *During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.* ⁷ *The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces.* ⁸ *Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.* ⁹ *They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle.* ¹⁰ *They had tails with stingers, like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months.* ¹¹ *They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).*

1. THE FIFTH TRUMPET: THE LOCUST OF APOLLYON ATTACK

- Whenever possible, we seek to interpret words in Revelation literally.
- However the use of the word "star" in the book of **Revelation 9:1** is obviously intended figuratively rather

than literally, for the “star” is referred to as “him,” thus clearly possessing personality.

- When the Bible mentions stars, it often refers to angels.
- For example: **Revelation 22:16** ...¹⁶ “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”
- In the Word of God, angels are called “stars.”
- The word abyss means “having no bottom at all.”

2. DEMONS RELEASED

Revelation 9:2 ...² *When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss.*

A. HELL, A REAL PLACE

B. JESUS DESCRIPTION OF HELL

Luke 16:19-31 ...¹⁹ *“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ ²⁵ “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ ²⁷ “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ ²⁹ “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ³⁰ “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ ³¹ “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”*

3. DEMONS PURPOSE

Revelation 9:3-5 ...³ *And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. ⁴ They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵ They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes.*

- The appearance of these locust is both frightening and repulsive.
- Obviously these are not normal locust (**PICTURE OF LOCUST**)
- Most likely are **DEMONS** and their purpose is to afflict unbelievers (God’s wrath).
- These demons are able to torture those who have not yet accepted the Lord for the duration of 5 months.
- The sting is never fatal—as stated in **Revelation 9:5-11** ...⁵ *They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes. ⁶ During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them. ⁷ The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. ⁸ Their hair was like women’s hair, and their teeth were like lions’ teeth. ⁹ They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. ¹⁰ They had tails with stingers, like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. ¹¹ They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).*
- Death escapes them / they seemingly cannot die at least for this moment.

4. BELIEVERS EXEMPT FROM THIS JUDGMENT

Revelation 9:4 ...⁴ *They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.*

- Just as we will learn during the Great Tribulation of the Mark of the Beast, we discover that God also places on His, a mark reserving believers.

- So we see the unleashing of demonic attack against those who continue to rebel against God.
- We also see some similarities of the way that God dealt with Egypt in Exodus.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET

Revelation 9:13-19 ...¹³ *The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar that is before God.* ¹⁴ *It said 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 kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind.* ¹⁶ *The number of the mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand. I heard their number.* ¹⁷ *The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur.* ¹⁸ *A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths.* ¹⁹ *The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury.*

1. RELEASING OF TERROR

- At the blowing of the sixth trumpet, the second "Woe" is unleashed: the release of "the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates" (verse 14).
- These four angels apparently lead an army of 200 million "horsemen" who kill a third of mankind through the plagues of fire and smoke and brimstone.

2. ARMY OF DEMONS

- Many wonder if this army of 200 million is the same as the army mentioned in **Revelations 19** that is amassed for the last great war, the Battle of Armageddon.
- The answer is no.
- These horsemen are not humans but **demons** unleashed on the world.
- Note their description: **Revelation 9:17b** ...^{17b} *Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur.* ¹⁸ *A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths.* ¹⁹ *The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury.*
- By the power of their tail and the "brimstone, fire, and smoke" which proceeds out of their mouth they will kill another third of the population of the world.
- When you add this third to the 25% killed during the seals we now have over half of the population that has been killed since the beginning of the Tribulation.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET: LOUD VOICES IN HEAVEN

Revelation 11:15-19 ...¹⁵ *The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."* ¹⁶ *And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,* ¹⁷ *saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign."* ¹⁸ *The nations were angry, and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small—and for destroying those who destroy the earth."*

- The Seventh Trumpet is much like the Seventh Seal in that it introduces the next series of divine judgments – The Bowls.

LIVE IT OUT

- How do you know that you will not go through the Tribulation?
- What steps do you need to take today to strengthen your testimony?
- Who needs to hear your testimony?