

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: The plan of eternity

Chapter 9

Introduction to Chapter 9



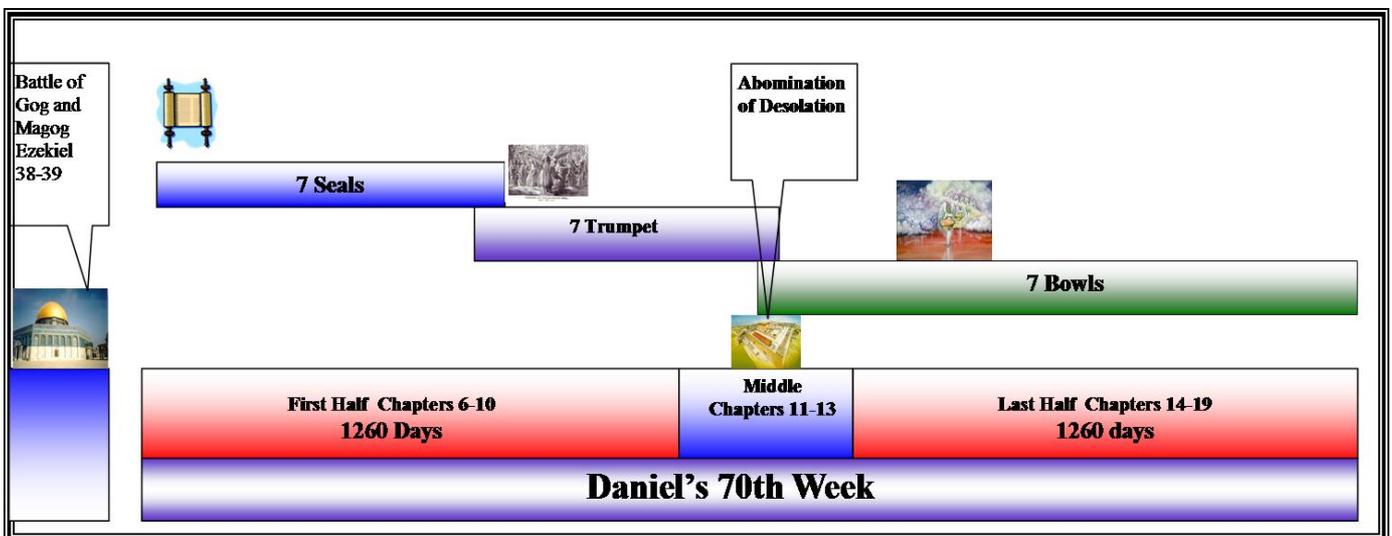
OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL.
Rev. viii. 1-6.

The trumpet judgments in Revelation chapters 8 and 9 take place in the first half of the tribulation. The first four trumpet judgments involve catastrophes to the physical earth. Burning hail, asteroids and smoke devastate the earth in the four trumpet judgments of chapter 8. These plagues strike the earth at the direction of the "Two witnesses" in Jerusalem, calling down God's judgments. Following these physical judgments in chapter 8, spiritual judgments take place in the 5th and 6th trumpets in chapter 9.

In chapter 9, under the 5th trumpet, John describes beings emerging from the Abyss as locusts, who torment the lost for 5 months. Following this, in the 6th trumpet, John describes the release of four bound angels, who then

allow 200 million horsemen to kill 1/3 of those left alive.

John, in the book of Revelation reports what he literally sees. John describes events taking place in Heaven and on earth, both spiritual and physical. Here in the 9th chapter, John describes two groups of beings unlike anything seen on earth, locusts and horses and horsemen. Are these being in the physical world or the spiritual world? This is one of the issues that need to be addressed in understanding this chapter.



The Fifth Trumpet- Locusts

A Star from Heaven

Revelation 9

1 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. **Revelation 9:1**

Star fallen After the fifth angel's sound, John sees a star fallen from heaven to earth. One of the hardest aspects in understanding Revelation is distinguishing between metaphor, literalism, and symbolism. In Revelation 8:10, after the Third Trumpet, John describes a falling star or *ἀστὴρ* *Aster*, that poisons 1/3 of the drinking water. In Revelation 8 the word was used in a literal sense. However,

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here the word "Star" is used in a metaphorical sense like "Sports star", "Movie Star". In Revelation 12:4, angels referred to symbolically as "Stars" being cast to earth.

The star from heaven is given a key to the bottomless pit, meaning "Star" here is a personification of an angel. This angel from Heaven has authority to open the bottomless pit.

Some have argued this angel is a Satan, since we see a star "Fallen", the meaning here is one of descent to accomplish the task assigned to the angel, not a fall in position.

Key The key is the source of authority. This same angel seems to maintain the key of the bottomless pit, during the tribulation period. In Revelation 20:1-2, this same angel takes hold of Satan and binds for 1000 years in the same bottomless pit.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. **Revelation 20:1**

Bottomless pit The Greek word here is, *abussos* *Abussos*, also known as the "abyss" is a separate compartment from Hades. Hades is where the un-saved go after death (Luke 16:23). The "Abyss" seems to be prison for angelic beings. The demons dwelling in the man from Gadarenes, called "Legion" begged Jesus not to send them to the abyss before their time.

29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. 30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him.

31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Luke 8:29-31

Two types of demons

Scripture list two types of demons or fallen angels, one type has the freedom to operate in the physical earthly realms as specified in Ephesians 2:2,6:12 and Matthew 12:43-45. They are over earthly kingdoms and vie for control of men. The second type of demon are imprisoned, demons which are restrained and held back. They are referred to in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6, as being chained in darkness, reserved for the day of judgment. The word used by Peter was *tartarow* *Tartaroo* known as "Tartaros", distinct from Hades.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartaroo) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; **2 Peter 2:4**

According to Jude 6, these angels left their first estate (Genesis 6:2-7) causing them greater judgment than the rest of angels. These imprisoned demons are released in the 5th and 6th trumpet. They plague men, rather than the physical earth.

Although "Tartaros" is not directly called the Abyss (*abussos*), both are clearly identified as a prison for fallen angels. So its very likely the judgments of chapter 9, both the 5th and 6th trumpets are the release of these imprisoned demonic forces on the earth.

The source of demons

When God created the heavens and the earth, he created living spiritual "Freewill" beings known as angels. Amongst the highest order of angels were the Cherubs, which surround the throne of God. One of these Cherubs, known as Lucifer, choose through freewill to rebel against authority and establish himself as God (Ezekiel 28:14-16, Isaiah 14:12-14). Along with Lucifer, 1/3 of the angelic host joined in his rebellion against God (Revelation 12:4). These fallen angels, known today as demons, operate in the world today until judgment.

Satan and his fallen angels test those who dwell on the earth. They oppose God's plan and attempt to keep the world in darkness. Their sole desire is destruction of man's soul in an attempt at revenge against God.

Locusts from the Abyss

2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great

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furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.
3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 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. **Revelation 9:2-4**

Smoke arose John reports what he sees, to the reader. The smoke arising corresponds to the events taking place in the fourth trumpet, when the darkness (Revelation. 8:12-13) blocked a third of the Sun, moon and stars. Joel referred to this day of darkness and gloom. (Joel 2:2a)

A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations.

Joel 2:2

During this period, the volcanic smoke from underneath the earth signals the visible signs of this judgment.

Locusts Next John describes a type of "Locusts" which are unlike any being yet known to man. These beings have one purpose and function to torment humanity. The question is, are these locusts in the physical or spiritual realm? John, in describing what he sees, in Revelation he describes the physical and spiritual realms. His descriptions offer vivid real pictures in both realms.

There are several views according to the literal understanding of scripture just what is taking place in the 5th trumpet.

1. John could very well be describing a physical locusts dwelling in the sub terrain earth, now released for the sole purpose to torment lost humanity for 5 months.

2. John is describing what he sees in the spiritual realm. These locusts are demonic and are literally taking place in the spiritual realm but not seen in the physical.

Power...as scorpions These beings described as locusts were limited in what they could do while they were on the earth. John compares their effect to that of a scorpion. Scorpion stings can cause death, but for the most are more painful than deadly. John is comparing the effect they have to the power of scorpions.

Commanded The fact that these "locusts" are commanded and have a leader over them lends argument to them being spiritual and physical in nature. They are also able to distinguish the saved from the lost, those who have God's seal will not be stung by these creatures.

Seal of God The identity of those sealed would include the 144,000 and those who have come to Christ during this period of the tribulation. The Bible is clear, when someone finds Christ they are "Sealed" until the day of redemption. (Ephesians 1:13 4:30, 2 Corinthians 1:22).

5 months of Torment

5 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.

6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. **Revelation 9:5-6**

Authority The locusts operate under God's authority. They are only permitted to torment the lost. What would be the purpose of this torment? Even in torment, the purpose and plan of the tribulation is evident. The locusts are only permitted to sting and not kill the lost. Here, God extends His mercy to those who are still alive to choose Christ and avoid an eternity of pain.

The lives of the saved will be made evident to the lost, those who know Christ will not be under the torment of the lost. Five months of torment is short when compared to eternity. The whole purpose of the torment is to help the lost make a decision for their eternity.

Seek death Again God in His mercy does not allow people to die and make a quick decision. Their pain and suffering is intense and those suffering think death is their escape. Death removes them from the hope of salvation. Those who seek death will comprehend their own mortality. This will make them more open to the need for salvation.

The description

7 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.

8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.

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9 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.

10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. **Revelation 9:7-10**

Locusts John describes what he sees, the question is if John saw physical being in the physical world or spiritual beings. For example John's description of Heaven and what he sees is spiritual. Our natural senses are limited by the physical limitations of the degree which our eyes detect light.

John who was caught up into heaven was shown all these things. What he saw was not limited like our eyes. So John's description of these being could be confined to the spiritual realm and not the physical.

Crowns John's description is unlike anything ever seen in the physical world. John is using terms to best describe what he sees. John language is limited to what he understands his reader will understand..

Apollyon

11 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.

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

King Adding further to the argument the beings described here are spiritual is the spiritual authority of a fallen angel translated as "Destroyer". Even the fallen angels operate under authority. These beings are limited in just what they can do. Other imprisoned angels, exercise authority over these beings. Ephesians 6:12, demonstrates the principle of spiritual authority in the heavenly realms.

The Sixth Trumpet- Horsemen

Four Angels at the Euphrates

13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

15 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.

Voice: The voice commanding the 6th angel is probably God ordering an angel. This is the 6th of the 7 angels who stand before God's throne..

Four horns The golden altar is the altar before the throne of God referred to in Revelation 8:3. The coals from the altar were combined with incense which represented the prayers of the saints.

Four angles bound These four angles are part of the host of angels who rebelled against God following the fall of Satan. These are four commanding angels, who will command a demonic force numbering 200,000,000. These fallen angels are no friend of man. They want to take as many men to Hell as possible. Here, they are given the opportunity to do their work, by killing 1/3 of humanity. Angels work on command structure much like the angelic realms.

Euphrates When these angels first rebelled against God at the creation, they were held for the day of judgment. They are finally to be released to take command of demonic force of fallen creatures.

The Euphrates river has always been a very strategic area both militarily and spiritually. Along the "First" Euphrates river, was the Garden of Eden. After the flood, man as one tribe settled near the river and began construction of the tower of Babel, only to be scattered throughout the earth. On the Euphrates river was the greatest city of the ancient world, the city of Babylon. Babylon was the capital city of the Neo-Babylonian kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar. The Euphrates river was the eastern end of the Roman Empire.

On the Euphrates, in the city of Baghdad, was the was where the Caliphates (Successors) of Islam located the center of their power. And on the Euphrates, the city of Babylon will one day be rebuilt. (Revelation 18).

Third of mankind During the 4 seals ¼ of the Earth population is killed. Many more die before we reach the 6th trumpet. However, the 6th Trumpet judgment alone, kills 1/3 of the earth's remaining population. If the earth's population is 7 billion at the start of the 7 years tribulation then one quarter or

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1.7 billion die in the opening of the first four seals. Here in the 6th trumpet, another 1.7 billion die from the 200 million forces.

These 200 million demonic warriors, must in some way urge humanity toward war. Causing a continuation of hostilities in the first half of the tribulation to continue, leading to 1/3 of humanity death. Daniel indicates the hostility towards the Antichrist will arise from the North and East.

44 "But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. 45 "And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him. **Daniel 11:44-45**

200 million Horsemen

16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

17 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.

18 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.

19 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.

Army ...horsemen Like the question about the Locusts in the 5th trumpet, the question here is the same. Is John describing events in the physical world or spiritual world? The fact these horsemen are headed by four angels bound at the Euphrates river, indicates John is describing events taking place in the spiritual realms.

1. John's description is what will be taking place in the physical realm.
2. John is describing an event taking place in the spiritual realm.
3. John is describing the demonic influence on the physical world where 1/3 of men are killed Resulting from the war destruction released as a result of this force of 200,000,000

I saw John is reporting what he saw in the vision.

Plagues The 1/3 of man is killed by the fire, smoke and brimstone. Indicating the potential of another nuclear war, taking place in the earth. Literally the words used in Daniel 11:44, "Great Fury" גדול *Gadowl* חמה *Chemah* meaning with "Great heat" many will be exterminated.

Power

The rest of mankind

20 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.

21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Rest of mankind If the population of the Earth was 7 billion at the start of the 7 years. At this point the population would range from 3 to 3.5 billion. The people left are given time and opportunity to repent, and turn to Christ. The hardness in the hearts of humanity prevents many from turning from sin to Christ.

Did not repent of ...Five specific sins are given that men refused to give up and repent.

1. Idolatry The who did not die up to this time will be forced to submit, the system the Antichrist will set up to control the world economies.
2. Murder...and violence were the same sins where God judged the Earth in Noah's day
3. Sorceries... (*farmakeia Pharmakeia*) The word for pharmacy is derived from this word. Drugs will play a role in spiritual seduction of mankind.
4. Sexual immorality...(porneia *Porneia*) The pace of sexual sins is increasing and lines being crossed that were unthinkable 10 years ago. Print, Television, Satellite and the Internet have removed any barriers to limits. Homosexual marriage is fast approaching the nations of the world.
5. Thefts With all the dead there will be an a great quantity to steal

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