

THE 5TH AND 6TH TRUMPETS: THE 1ST AND 2ND WOES—REV.9:1-21

1. Introduction—Rev. 9:1-2

- The rising crescendo of judgments on the earth now introduces the 1st woe described in verses 1-12

“Earlier in the book of Revelation, in connection with the sixth seal (6:12-17) and the fourth trumpet (8:12-13) record is made of unusual disturbances in the starry heavens. In chapter 6, the stars of heaven fall even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, and heaven itself departs as a scroll when it is rolled together. In chapter 8, a great star from heaven described as “burning as it were a lamp” falls upon rivers and fountains of waters. In these instances it is probable that reference is made to material stars or fragments of them, and their falling on the earth is a form of divine judgment upon a wicked world.”

(taken from A Revelation of Jesus Christ by John F. Walvoord)

- The star is “fallen”; he is given the key to the abyss

“No explanation is offered in the passage itself concerning the identity of this person, but the occasion may be the aftermath of warfare in heaven mentioned in Revelation 12:7-9, where the devil is cast out into the earth. This act of God, probably at the beginning of the great tribulation, terminates the ability of Satan to accuse the brethren in heaven as he has been doing through previous ages. The first verse of chapter 9 does not record the fall itself, but rather the star is seen as already fallen from heaven to the earth. It would seem likely, therefore, that the person referred to as the star is none other than Satan himself.”...

(taken from A Revelation of Jesus Christ by John F. Walvoord)

- The abyss is the place of detention of wicked angels
- Here Satan will be imprisoned for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3)
- The pit of the abyss is opened—smoke, poisonous air, spiritual corruption as the demons are released from confinement showing 5th trumpet involves judgment of demonic and satanic oppression

2. The 5th Trumpet: Demonic Torment loosed on Earth—Rev. 9:3-6

- Reminds us of the 8th plague of Egypt (Ex. 10:12-15)

“The chief difference between these locusts and those of Egypt is that these were possessed by demonic spirits and so they were possessed of intelligence. This is plainly implied by the opening clause, “And it was ... [said to] them.”

(taken from A Revelation of Jesus Christ by J.D. Smith)

- These demons given authority to torment not kill; fearful sting
- 5 months is the lifespan of a scorpion—their sting lasts 5 months not days
- so bad people will seek but not find death

- those in the grip of demons cannot exercise free will

3. The Locusts Described—Rev. 9:7-11

- compared to horses; crowns a headdress
- utterly fearful character, armour
- wings—implies speed
- a king—“destroyer”—Satan and his demons are destroyers of men’s souls

4. Announcement of 2 more woes—Rev. 9:12

“The last three trumpet judgments are called the three woes because of the terrible calamities and suffering they inflict. The period covered by the fifth trumpet or first woe will be at least five months and probably considerably longer, for it is not to be supposed that the infliction imposed continued only a single day.

Hereafter. The word *hereafter* means literally *after these things*. The words show there is progression in time in these judgments. The woes are not simultaneous; the first is *past* before the second begins.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

5. The 6th Trumpet: Loosing of the 4 angels—Rev. 9:13-15

- Voice from horns of golden altar before God

“...The four angels in chapter 9, however, are obviously of different character, for they are described as bound at the great river Euphrates. There is no instance in Scripture where holy angels are bound. Some of the wicked angels, however, are bound according to Judge 6. Likewise, later Satan is bound for one thousand years and cast into the pit of the abyss.

From these parallels, it may be concluded that the four angels bound in the Euphrates River are evil angels, who are loosed on the occasion of the sound of the sixth trumpet in order to execute this judgment. It is another instance of the loosing of wicked angels similar to the release of the demonic locusts earlier in the fifth trumpet. They all are prepared for their hour of activity much as the whale was prepared to swallow Jonah and effect divine discipline upon the prophet. These are wicked angels designated to execute the great judgment of the sixth trumpet but prevented from doing so until the proper moment. It is declared that the angels’ function is to slay the third part of men and that they had been prepared to fulfill this purpose at the given hour.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

“The Euphrates had its source in the Garden of Eden which was the cradle of the human race. Satan, however, is not given the authority to release the demonic forces held in reserve at the Euphrates. It is at the command of the voice from the golden altar to the sixth angel that the infernal spirits get a temporary release. Four of the infernal angels, themselves bound, have been holding the myriads in ward, there being principalities and powers among evil spirits as well as among the good. With the release of

the four, all are released for the dread purpose indicated in the following verses.

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

- They are to kill 1/3 of mankind
- Exactly at the hour of God's appointment
- With 4th seal = 1/2 of earths' population killed and those slain in other judgments—Terrible!

6. **The Army of 200,000,000**—Rev. 9:16-19

- Literal interpretation possible-consider the Orient
- This army from the East
- Compare Rev. 16:12
- This is modern warfare

“Some have interpreted the description of John’s understanding of a scene in which modern warfare is under way. Further, the heads of the horses are compared the heads of lions out of whose mouths fire, smoke, and brimstone issue. This again is a description that might be comparable to modern mechanical warfare. In verse 19 additional details are given in that the power is declared to be in their mouths and tails. Their tails are compared to serpents, and even the tails have heads with which they can hurt men. Whether these are symbols or the best description John can give of modern warfare, this is an awesome picture of an almost irresistible military force destroying all that opposes it. The terms “horse,” “lions,” and “serpents” all speak of deadly warfare. The mention of lions can be compared to that in Revelation 10:3 where lions roar, and to the description of the locusts in 9:8 as having teeth of lions, and to the beast of Revelation 13:2, which has the mouth of a lion. As king of beasts the lion speaks of victorious conquest.

Further light is cast on the character of the warfare in verse 18, where it is repeated that the third part of men are killed by the invading force; special mention is made of the means, namely, “by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.” This again seems to be a picture of modern warfare rather than of ancient weapons. This indicates that though there may be a disarmament in the early phases of the time period between the rapture and the second coming, by this time, namely toward the close of the tribulation, modern means of war are once again being fully used. The world that longs for peace and seeks to attain it by the worship of the beast of Revelation 13 will learn the sad lesson that there can be no peace until the Prince of Peace rules.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

7. **Man Still Unrepentant**—Rev. 9:20-21

- The residue of men are so hardened in their way, they will not repent (change their minds)
- Man’s chief malady—to be independent of God

“Neither repented they of their murders. This would clearly indicate that the perversion of one’s religious life must lead to the perversion of one’s social life. The acts mentioned in this series are regarded today in every society as vices of the lowest sort. It would appear that when the time comes for the sixth trumpet judgment, men will have become so completely perverted that vices will reign in the place of virtues. Indeed, one finds this an intensification over Paul’s description of the pagan world in Romans 1:18-32, where it is said, “God gave them over to a reprobate mind...” (verse 28).”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

- Daymond Duck sums it up:

“Depraved men and women will kill God’s children without fear of punishment. Abortion, euthanasia, gang warfare, and terrorism will probably go unabated. This will contribute to the slaughter of believers seen in the fifth seal (Revelation 6:9-11). Drug abuse, astrology, fortune telling, signs and omens, and theft will be worldwide. The world will move from an over-tolerance of perversion and sexual immorality to a blatant promotion of these sins. “Evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse” (2 Timothy 3:13 NKJV)”

(taken from *The Book of Revelation* from the Smart Guide to the Bible Series by Daymond R. Duck)