

1. Last week I taught Rev 9:1-12. When time expired we were about to begin the exegesis of Rev 9:13-15.
2. Before continuing, I want to provide “1Jo 1:9 time” as may be necessary.
3. Let me first give you an expanded translation of Rev 9:1-12.

Rev 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded his trumpet and I saw Satan fall to earth from heaven; Jesus the Christ authorized one of His angels to give him the key to the bottomless pit.

Rev 9:2 And Satan opened the pit and there arose out of it a great smoke, like the smoke from a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke.

Rev 9:3 Earth's atmosphere was darkened by reason of the smoke from the shaft; even the light from the sun could not be seen. And out of the smoke there came grass-hopper like creatures into the earth. And there was given to them power like the power of a scorpion.

Rev 9:4 And they were told that they should not injure the grass of the earth nor any green thing nor any tree, for they were only to injure those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

Rev 9:5 And they were given a charge; they were not to kill these unbelievers but instead they were to torture them for five months.

Rev 9:6 Their torture was similar to the sting of a scorpion. And in those days men shall seek death but they shall by no means find it. They shall long to die, but death is not an option; they can only suffer.

Rev 9:7 And the resemblances of the grasshoppers were similar to those of horses prepared for war. And upon their heads they wore a victor's crown; they had wreaths of gold like those provided at the Bema. And their faces were like the faces possessed by men.

Rev 9:8 but they had long hair like the hair of a woman. And their teeth were like those of lions. And each wore a breastplate of iron.

Rev 9:9 And the sound of their wings was like the sound of thousands of moving chariots and horses running into battle.

Rev 9:10 And they had tails like those of scorpions, and in their tails there resided stingers sufficient to inflict terrible pain upon the unbelievers living in the Great Tribulation. They were given this power for five months.

Rev 9:11 And these creatures had a leader over them, it was Satan himself, but here he is also called the angel of the bottomless pit, his name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue it is called Apollyon.

Rev 9:12 The first great calamity is now past; two other calamities are about to fall upon the earth.

4. I want to review some of that learned last week before beginning new material.

The Creatures of the Abyss

1. Last week I attempted to identify the creatures that ascend out of the pit. Their purpose would seem to be to punish unbelievers of the Tribulation and to motivate others to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I guess you might see this as the ultimate in “tough love.”
2. John writes of the locust judgment as a visual presentation of a panoply of demons running amok on planet earth. It has been written "they are uncanny denizens of the abyss, locust of a hellish species, animated by devilish instincts and equipped with infernal powers." Another has written ..." the locust army is a symbolical representation of judgment of a superhuman kind ..."
3. The locust are commanded not to do what locust do, i.e., not to hurt the grass of the earth or any green thing, or any tree, but are instead to sting those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
4. All except the sealed of God are subject to their torment. It is impossible then for any believer in that day to be subject to the torment of the locust; the torment is rather a judgment upon those who reject Christ.
5. This is a horrible picture of a pervasive supremacy by a divine plague to such an extent that men are dominated in agony of body. The natural plagues of the first four trumpets are now joined by a torment of demons.
6. God provides suffering to the unbeliever to get them to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Since more than one question has been asked “are there any believers during this time of great suffering?” I will answer emphatically Yes! I also want to review several points from the *Doctrine of Suffering*.

Doctrine of Suffering--Review

1. Suffering is physical or mental pain. Suffering might manifest itself in a loss of health, wealth, friends, family or guilt reaction, psychosis, etc. Suffering is temporary or permanent loss of happiness or mental tranquility.
 - 1.1 There are two general reasons for suffering:
 - 1.1.1 to get an unbeliever to believe on the Lord Jesus and be saved, and
 - 1.1.2 to get a believer to move to the next level of spiritual maturity.
 - 1.1.3 Both the unbeliever and the believer suffer in time but only the unbeliever suffers in eternity.

2. Believers can receive suffering for either discipline or suffering for blessing; we often refer to the former as deserved suffering and the latter as undeserved suffering; although certainly from God's divine viewpoint, both are deserved.

3. Discipline-type suffering is designed to get believers, to either rebound or get hot for the Word, i.e., to name a sin or give up a false concept.

4. Let's look at ten reasons a believer suffers:

4.1 to glorify God in the Angelic Conflict - Book of Job,

4.2 to learn self-discipline,

Heb 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

4.3 to demonstrate the sufficiency of God and to control certain types of personalities,

2Co 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

4.4 to help us empathize with others who are suffering,

2Co 1:4 The Lord comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

4.5 to learn the value of doctrine,

Psa 119:71 It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.

Psa 119:72 The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

4.6 to illustrate God's message to God's people,

Hos 1:2 When the LORD began to speak through Hosea, the LORD said to him, "Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the LORD."

Hos 1:3 So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son....

Hos 3:1 The LORD said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes."

Hos 3:2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and about a homer and a lethek of barley.

Hos 3:3 Then I told her, "You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will live with you."

Hos 3:4 For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol.

Hos 3:5 Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings in the last days.

4.7 to develop patience,

Rom 5:3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

4.8 to eliminate pride and to relate all things instead to God's grace,

2Co 11:24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.

2Co 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

2Co 11:26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers.

2Co 11:27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

2Co 11:28 Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

2Co 11:29 Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?

2Co 11:30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

4.9 to eliminate a believer's arrogance and bad decisions, and

Mat 7:1 Judge not lest you be judged.

Mat 7:2 For with what judgment ye judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.

4.10. to witness for the Lord.

2Co 4:8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;

2Co 4:9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

2Co 4:10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

2Co 4:11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

5. Now let's see what we can learn about the second woe:

KJV

Rev 9:13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

Rev 9:14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

Rev 9:15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

NIV

Rev 9:13 The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns (**Keration**-symbol of power) of the golden altar that is before God.

Rev 9:14 It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

Rev 9:15 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.

1. With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, John hears a voice described as coming from the four horns of the golden altar before God. In Rev 8:3, this altar is the scene of the offering of incense with the prayers of saints.

Rev 8:3 And then I saw the Lord Jesus Christ come and stand over the altar; He was holding a golden censer. And there was given to Him a large packet of incense in order that he might mix it with the prayers of all the saints; He mixed the two and set them ablaze over the altar of incense which had been placed before the central throne.

2. Here in its final mention in the book of the Revelation, the altar is related to the judgment of the sixth trumpet.

3. The inference is that this judgment like those preceding is partially an answer to the prayers of the saints and a token of divine response and preparation for their deliverance.

3.1 The four horns seem to indicate that this altar is similar to the design of the altar of incense used in the Tabernacle and in the Temple.

4. Wycliffe has written of the horns:

“Horns of the altar: Altars made of stone and wood have long since disintegrated, but brass altars have been found by archaeologists ... The "horn" on the altar was a horn like protrusion on each corner.”

Exo 38:2 And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it; the horns thereof were of the same: and he overlaid it with brass.

5. Since the altar stood for justice, taking hold of the horns of the altar was a sign that a fugitive could claim sanctuary from his enemies until his case could be properly adjudicated.

1Ki 1:50 And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

1Ki 2:28 Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar."

6. The voice instructed the sixth angel to release the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates.

7. Verse 13 begins with the second woe (the sixth trumpet). It's a terrifying judgment. Four of the most wicked and powerful of all fallen angels are released to destroy a third of all remaining mankind!

Rev 9:13 The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God.

7.1 Remember that one-fourth of the world population will be destroyed by the judgments of the sixth seal described in Rev 6:8.

Rev 6:8 I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

7.2 The poisoning of the fresh water sources will kill many more. Now the remaining population is reduced by still another one-third!

7.3 These four angels at the River Euphrates are very significant. They were bound by God as future tools of Satan. Their confinement at the River Euphrates is especially momentous and not without significance.

7.4 The first human sin is believed to have been committed here, in the Garden of Eden. In this area the first murder and the first great revolt against God also took place.

7.5 It was in nearby Babylon that the first world ruler set up his kingdom. The Euphrates region is truly the site of many significant events of human history!

7.6 The Romans, Greeks, and Babylonians always considered the Euphrates River the boundary line between the East and the West.

7.7 Hal Lindsey has written of these forces: "The four angels of our verses will mobilize an army of 200 million soldiers from east of the Euphrates. Revelation 16 will provide more details about this, but in essence I believe these 200 million troops are Red Chinese soldiers accompanied by other Eastern allies."

7.8 The Scriptures referred to by Hal Lindsey are:

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.

Rev 16:13 Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

Rev 16:14 They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

7.8.1 Lindsey goes on to write: "It's possible that the industrial might of Japan will be united with Red China. For the first time in history there will be a full invasion of the West by the Orient."

7.9 Walter Scott observes that the command to "loose" the four angels indicates that "these angelic ministers of judgment are under divine control and cannot act without express command."

8. In attempting to understand the description of this unusual event, a number of questions can be raised about the four angels.

9. There is no instance in Scripture where elect angels are bound. Clearly, fallen angels who were especially nefarious are bound according to Jude 6. Likewise, later Satan is said to be bound for one thousand years and later cast into the pit of the abyss.

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

Rev 20:2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

Rev 20:3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

10. 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 sounding of the sixth trumpet in order to execute judgment.

11. It is another instance of the loosing of wicked angels similar to the release of the demonic locust by the fifth trumpet. They all are prepared for their hour of activity much as the great fish was prepared to swallow Jonah and affect divine discipline upon the prophet.

12. 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 their function is to slay the third part of men. These angels were prepared to fulfill this purpose at this given hour.

13. The expression "an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year" designates not the duration of their activity but the fact that this judgment comes exactly at the hour of appointed by God.

14. On the basis that the article is used only before the word hour in the Greek construction it should be translated "the hour, and day, and month, and year," to be interpreted as Alford does: "the appointed hour occurring in the appointed day, and that in the appointed month, and that in the appointed year."

15. Though the agency of men is used to accomplish the purpose of God, the time schedule is determined by God, not man; even fallen angels execute God's will in God's time.

16. The judgment here depicted, that of slaying the third part of men, is one of the most devastating mentioned anywhere in the book of the Revelation; i.e., prior to the Second Coming of Christ.

17. Earlier in the fourth seal, a fourth of the earth's population is killed. Here an additional third is marked out for slaughter.

18. These two judgments alone account for the destruction of half of the world's population.

19. Never since Noah has such a substantial proportion of the earth's population come under God's righteous judgment. The fact that the third part of the population of the world is killed is repeated in Rev 9:18.

Rev 9:18 By these three plagues there was killed the third part of the men, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceed out of their mouths.

20. Before we leave our study of Rev 9:13-15 I want to provide you with an expanded translation.

Rev 9:13 And the sixth angel sounded his trumpet. And I heard a voice out of the four horns of the golden altar which is before God

Rev 9:14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Set free at once the four angels who have been bound at the river, the great river, the Euphrates.

Rev 9:15 And the four angels were set free who had been kept in readiness for the hour and day and month and year in order that they should kill the third part of the men.

21. Now let's see what we can learn from Rev 9:16-19.

KJV

Rev 9:16 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

Rev 9:17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

Rev 9:18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

Rev 9:19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

NIV

Rev 9:16 The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number.

Rev 9:17 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.

Rev 9:18 A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths.

Rev 9:19 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.

Principles:

1. Having declared the purpose of the army, John now gives details. Most impressive is the astounding number of the invading army, 200 million, (in the Greek **Dismuriades Muriadon**) or literally "twice ten thousand times ten thousand."

2. Because the number "ten thousand times ten thousand" is often used of an innumerable company (compare Rev 5:11) some have held that this should not be understood as a literal number.

Rev 5:11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

2.1 Scott does not believe that the army of 200 million should be taken literally.

3. H. B. Swete comments, "These vast numbers forbid us to seek a literal fulfillment, and the description which follows supports this conclusion."

3.1 If considered a literal enumeration of the army, it would represent the largest armed force ever known to man. Considering the millions of people in the Orient, the literal interpretation is not impossible.

4. There is no direct statement as to the origin of this army, but the implication is that the angels of verse 14 were bound "in" or at the Euphrates, therefore the army will certainly come from the East.

Rev 9:14 It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

4.1 A similar and later development mentioned in Rev 16:12 following the outpouring of the sixth vial also depicts an invasion from the East.

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.

4.2 Unless the vials and the trumpets coincide as some believe, these are two different events, possibly two different phases of the same operation.

5. Chronologically the judgments seem to fall like trip hammer blows; the timing seems to occur just as the great tribulation comes to a close.

6. Whether the army is held to be the literal number mentioned or not, it is clear that this is a massive force of tremendous military power; this is evident given they slay a third part of the human race.

7. It may be that the army here described continues to fight as they move westward toward to Valley of Megiddo to await the Second Coming of Christ. The number slain is the total number involved in their march inland.

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Rev 9:14 It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

8.1 A similar and later development mentioned in Rev 16:12 following the outpouring of the sixth vial also depicts an invasion from the East.

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.

8.2 There is certainly "no reason not" to believe that the vials and the trumpets coincide although the two descriptions could be two different events or even two different phases of the same operation.

8.2.1 It is my view the two coincide.

9. Chronologically the judgments seem to fall like trip hammer blows; the timing seems to occur just as the great tribulation comes to a close and both the chapter nine event and the chapter sixteen event describe the same oriental invasion. Remember our outline: chapters six through eleven cover a series of events with emphasis on the event and chapter twelve through nineteen cover the same events with emphasis on characters.

Summary

1. Whether the army is held to be the literal number mentioned or not, it is clear that this is a massive force of tremendous military power.

2. It may be that the army here described continues to fight until the time of the Second Coming of Christ, and the number slain is the total number involved in the conflict.

2.1 The vast oriental army could fight their way across the Middle East arriving at Jerusalem just in time for the final battle of Armageddon.

3. John also gives a graphic description of the horses as well as of the warriors who sit upon them. They are declared to have breastplates of fire and of jacinth and brimstone.

3.1 Some have interpreted the description as John's understanding of a scene in which modern warfare is under way.

3.2 Further, the heads of the horses are compared to heads of lions out from whose mouths fire, smoke, and brimstone issue. This again is a description that might be comparable to modern mechanical warfare.

4. In verse 19 additional details are given in that the power is declared to be in their mouths and in their tails. Their tails are compared to serpents, and even the tails have heads with which they can hurt men.

Rev 9:19 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.

5. 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 whom oppose it. The terms "horses," "lions," and "serpents" all speak of deadly warfare.

6. The mention of lions can be compared to that in Revelation 10:3 where lions roar, and to the description of the locust in Rev 9:8 as having the teeth of lions, and to the beast of Rev 13:2, which has the mouth of a lion.

6.1 As the king of beasts the lion speaks of a series of victorious conquests.

Rev 10:2 He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land,

Rev 10:3 and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke.

Rev 9:8 Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.

Rev 13:2 The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.

7. 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."

Rev 9:18 By these three plagues there was killed the third part of the men, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceed out of their mouths.

8. This could certainly be a picture of modern warfare. When Genghis Khan swept across the plains of Russia and ultimately eastern Europe I am sure many recalled John's ominous message.

9. In a world that longs for peace and seeks to attain it by the worship of the Antichrist, they soon learn the sad lesson that there can be no peace until the Prince of Peace rules.

End Lesson Taught 2-8-2017

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