

**Revelation #27****February 12, 2023****Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon****Today's Message: The Sixth Trumpet; Revelation 9:13-21**

In Revelation 9:1-12 the fifth trumpet was the first of three final “woes”. This first woe was terrible but there was certainly a measure of hope to be discovered. First, the 144,000 missionary preachers were immune from the agonizing stings of the demonic locusts. Second, there was a limit to the length of time that the locusts could inflict torment upon the inhabitants of the earth. And third, the people in torment sought death but couldn't find relief in it (9:6).

Mingled in this agony was hope. There was hope that some of those suffering torment would repent at the preaching of the 144,000.

But as we come to the sixth trumpet in Revelation 9:13-21 we quickly understand that the terror of judgment increases and the mercy of God dims. From the horns of the altar John hears a voice calling for the release of a demon army so vast there will be no one who escapes the reaches of this judgment, for this judgment brings death!

It is important to understand that all who suffer this merciless agony of the sixth trumpet (as well as the other judgments that bring death) and die are dying because of their own sin. Romans 6:23 tells us plainly, “The wages of sin is death.” But Romans 6:23 goes on to say, “But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Friend, life and death comes down to this: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved! On the other hand, “Whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's only begotten Son.”

Jesus made it clear: The person who rejects Him as Savior and Lord “loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed (John 3:19-20).” That “love” that Jesus describes of those who reject Him is the *agape* kind of love. And unless God acts mercifully upon that person, the lover of sin will, like these described in Revelation 9, seek death instead of God.

But for you today, if you do not know Jesus Christ I implore you: seek the Lord while He may be found. Do not harden your hearts! Eternal suffering and hell await any who reject Jesus Christ as Savior. But, God and Heaven await all who lay down their enmity toward Him and receive the gift of forgiveness and Life through faith in person and work of Christ. If you have question concerning this great salvation please talk to me or anyone who claims Christ as their only Savior and Lord!

**The Sixth Trumpet of Revelation 9: A Merciless Agony.****I. (9:13-15) The Release of the Four Bound Angels****A. (9:13a) The sixth angel sounded his trumpet**

1. Remember, these trumpet angels are seven angels surrounding the throne of God

2. Remember, that the fifth trumpet provided a reprieve from death for the inhabitants of the earth.
  - a) Isaiah 26:9b-10a says, "When Your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness. Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness."
    - (1) And with the sounding of the sixth trumpet we will see a further hardening of heart among the inhabitants of the earth!
    - (2) Like previous judgments they acknowledge that these are from God (for they see His righteous judgment unfold), yet they stubbornly reject the message of salvation by refusing to repent
      - (a) See Revelation 6:16; 9:6; 9:20-21
- B. (9:13b) A voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God.
  1. In Revelation 8:3-4 we learned that this golden altar was the very altar of incense upon which the prayers of the saints were offered.
    - a) Now, with this sixth trumpet of judgment combined with the mention of this golden altar, we can learn the following:
      - (1) The judgment unleashed by the sixth trumpet is associated with the prayers of the saints, which had been offered upon the altar.
        - (a) See Revelation 6:9-11; 8:3-4
          - (i) Prayers of vengeance upon Satan, sin, and those who are enemies of God.
      - (2) This altar with its horns, has been a signal of God's mercy to all who came to the altar seeking mercy.
        - (a) See 1 Kings 1:50-51 when the rebel brother of Solomon, Adonijah, repented and sought Solomon's mercy for his rebellion against the king.
      - (3) But now, from the altar comes a voice of judgment!
        - (a) **Take note: God is merciful. But His mercy has a limit.**
          - (i) **Genesis 6:3: "Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit will not contend with man forever...'"**
          - (b) **"When the sixth trumpet of judgment sounds, the time of mercy comes to an end; the altar of mercy will become an altar of judgment."**<sup>1</sup>
  2. Whose voice? No doubt, the voice of Him who sits on the throne!
    - a) God alone has the utmost authority to pronounce the commencement of merciless judgment.
    - b) It is the Father who commands that the four angels be unbound.
- C. (9:14) The command of the Father given
  1. Command to release the four angels which are bound
    - a) These are demons, for nowhere do we see God's angels bound

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<sup>1</sup> The thoughts and quotes from point 3 come from MacArthur's Revelation commentary

(1) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;"

(2) Jude 1:6: "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."

b) These angels must be especially "malevolent or powerful angels" (Garland)

c) Bound at the great River Euphrates

(1) Bible history reveals that in this area of the Euphrates River many pivotal, world-changing events have taken place: In this area was located Eden where the first sin occurred; here Satan's empire was formed; here the first murder occurred; here in this area the great king Nimrod rebelled against the knowledge of God; here in this area the world powers of the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Medo-Persians oppressed Israel.

d) MacArthur comments that these must be fallen angels because God's angels have no need to be bound for they willingly do God's will.

D. These angels are the commanders of the vast demon army mentioned in 9:16.

1. These four angels which have been bound, "kept ready for **this very hour and day and month and year**" are now released.

a) These angels have been prepared to kill  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the inhabitants of the earth.

(1) Probably hundreds of millions, if not numbering in the billions.

## II. (9:16-19) A Vast Demon Army numbering 200 million are released into the earth

A. (9:16) John heard the number of the mounted troops was 200 million.

B. (9:17) John saw horses and riders

1. The riders: "looked **like** this"

a) They had breastplates that were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur

(1) Describing fire, smoke, suffocating gasses.

(a) MacArthur and others see this as the very colors and features of hell.

(i) See Revelation 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8

2. The horses had heads **resembling** the heads of lions

a) Did they actually look like lions, or did they possess the ferocious nature of a lion? Hard to say. However, they are unlike any warhorse mankind has ever known!

3. Out of the horses mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur

a) Again, these descriptors make clear that they are exceedingly violent and produce the devastating fury of hell.

b) Remember, these supernatural creatures are carrying out God's judgment upon the earth. Wherever they go they incinerate the earth and every living thing.

- (1) God's decisive judgments are described as fire and brimstone in the following verses: Genesis 19:24; Deut. 29:23; Psalm 11:6; Is. 30:33, 34:9; Eze. 38:22; Luke 17:29; Rev. 14:10, 19:20, 20:10, 21:8

- C. (9:18) 1/3 of mankind killed by the three plagues: fire, smoke, and sulfur.
- D. (9:19) Horses with heads like lions and tails like that of deadly venomous snakes
1. Power to kill in their mouths, like ferocious lions
  2. And power to harm in their tails like snakes, having heads
    - a) This harm is presumably deadly snake bites
    - b) They kill coming and going

### III. (9:20-21) The Survivors did not repent

- A. They refused to bow their knees before the God of heaven. Instead,
1. Did not stop worshiping demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood
  2. They did not repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.
    - a) Jesus said that the unrepentant "loved darkness instead of the light because their deeds were evil. (Jn. 3:19)."
    - b) Paul writes that because sinners refuse to repent, "Their condemnation is deserved. (Romans 3:8c)

### IV. Summary: There is merciless agony awaiting all who refuse God's gracious mercy.

- A. The very reason God left 1/3 of the inhabitants of the earth alive was to provide a witness and opportunity for them to repent and turn to God!
1. They are like the woman *Jezebel* of the church of Thyatira
    - a) "I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways." (2:21-22)
  2. God gives additional time to repent to all the surviving inhabitants of the earth, but like the unrepentant down through time, they harden their hearts.
    - a) He is patient!
      - (1) Joel 2:12-13 says, "'Even now,' declares the Lord, 'return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.' Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity."
  3. Like Pharaoh, who hardened his heart even with the increasing intensity of the plagues, sinful men will in likewise harden their hearts.
    - a) Proverbs 27:22 captures the essence of the spirit of the unrepentant: "Though you grind a fool in a mortar, grinding him like grain with a pestle, you will not remove his folly from him."

4. If you are unrepentant, or know someone who is unrepentant, know this, you have enough information to come to faith in Jesus Christ. Seeking more information is often a smokescreen for rebelliousness and unrepentance.
  - a) I'm reminded of the story Jesus told of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man refused to repent. And while suffering in hell, he begged Abraham to send Lazarus, who was in the bosom of Abraham after death. He begged him to send Lazarus to his brothers to warn them to repent. He said, "I beg you, father (Abraham), send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment. Abraham replied, They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them. The rich man said, No, father Abraham! But if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent. Abraham 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." (Luke 16:27-31)
5. The problem with sinful man is not so much in what they do. But it is not what they do that is the source of the problem, it is their **will**. It is the **will** of man that energizes the mind, which moves the hands to do that which God detests!
  - a) See Romans 3:10-18
6. The call of the Gospel is that sinners would repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - a) "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved!" (Rom. 10:13)
7. As believers, we have an obligation to our unsaved family and friends. We can learn from the Apostle Peter as he preached in Acts 2:40. It says, "With many words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.'"
8. Evangelism is part of our service of love toward our fellowman. Don't lose your nerve. Pray for courage to tell of our wonderful Savior!
  - a) **Jude 1:23: "Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear— hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh."**