



## A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

### Week 53: The Trumpet Judgements, Part 5

June 11, 2023

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#### Review:

- A. We've studied the first four Trumpet Judgments, and last week we began to study the fifth, which is the 'first woe' (**based on Revelation 9:12**).
- B. The first four trumpets impacted the 'earth as we know it' (land, water, sky, vegetation, etc.), while this 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Judgment impacts man's physical being.
- C. REMINDER: *"If you have difficulty accepting God's supernatural intervention on the affairs of man, you will have many problems accepting what the Scriptures state."*
- D. The points we covered for the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Judgment last week were effectively The Angel and The Abyss. This week we will look at The Agents and The Agony.
- E. Last week, we saw that the 'star' that was given a key to open the bottomless pit is probably a fallen angel. This is the best interpretation from Scripture.
  1. It is likely a fallen angel, perhaps even Satan himself, (The Bible is not 100% clear on this possibility) who has great power and authority.
  2. In any event, he is used by God. He is subject to God's sovereign control, and he is given this responsibility to open the abyss and release this judgment on earth.
- F. The abyss itself, as we noted, seems to be a location on earth (and within the earth) from which these agents are released.
  1. The abyss, as we noted, is a place of torment. It is where the Gerasene demons feared where Jesus was going to send them.
  2. The dark supernatural world is afraid of this place called the Abyss. They know its purpose.
- G. **QUESTION:** Why is the notion that the Abyss is located somewhere within this earth a legitimate suggestion? There are several reasons to think this way:
  3. First, the 'smoke' which emanates from this bottomless pit obscures our physical sky and sun. So, the smoke becomes a barrier to the physical issue of light itself.
  4. Second, the fallen angel who has the authority to open the abyss is located as being on "earth" in **Revelation 9:1**. This suggests that the bottomless pit is not some location within the universe out there, but on this planet instead.
  5. Third, when a powerful righteous angel locks Satan into the bottomless pit for a thousand years during the Millennial Kingdom (**Cf. Revelation 20:1+**), that angel comes down "out of heaven" to do that job. Again, the suggestion is the abyss is down here somewhere....
  6. Lastly, we should not be surprised that God may have incarcerated fallen angels here on earth somewhere "for the judgement of the great day" as **Jude 1:6** says.
  7. We already know that OTHER fallen angels are incarcerated in other places here on earth, and God is also intending to release them at a particular future point, also FOR judgment.

8. In the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Judgment (the next one), we will learn that God releases four angels *“who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”* That is a physical location here on planet earth.
9. Like these entities which are released from the bottomless pit here in the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Judgment, we will learn that these other four angels have been incarcerated *“for this very hour and day and month and year.”*
10. So whatever these other four fallen angels were imprisoned for, they too will be released by God FOR judgment at a future prescribed time.

**NOTE:** That more or less brings us to where we left off. There will be some overlap of the issues now as we transition into this week’s lesson and pick up from that point.

- I. The Agents (Those entities which are released from the bottomless pit). Let’s look at three “C’s” which describe these “locusts” or these agents of God’s judgment:
  - A. First, they Are Contained:
    1. As we glanced at last week, these agents are most likely imprisoned fallen angels (as opposed to being non-incarcerated fallen angels)
      - a. As I’ve shared, it is my opinion, based on a thorough study of **Genesis 6:1-7, II Peter 2:4-5,** and **Jude 6** is that these are fallen angels that cohabited physically with ancient people (pre-flood) and produced a hybrid, unredeemable race known as the Nephilim.
      - b. I respect that others may have different opinions (NOTE: ‘Bereans’ of **Acts 17:11**) (Problem: “Why were these particular fallen angels imprisoned while others were not?”)
      - c. We must all agree that God has chosen to imprison some for heinous deeds they committed, and not others.
    2. **Now, let’s wrestle with some basics. These are supernatural agents (fallen angels) and not natural locusts. (How do we know?)**
      - a. First, why some people think they ARE locusts:
        - The five months are typical of locust plagues: May>Sept.
        - They are told not to harm grass, plants, and trees.
        - John refers to them as locusts.
      - b. Second, why I believe they are NOT locusts:
        - In describing them, John often uses the word ‘like’ as he describes various attributes (they remind him of locusts, but it is clear from his descriptions they are not).
        - Why would he call them ‘locusts?’ (swarm, plague, overwhelming, destructive, formidable, etc.)
        - Details include specific names, status, attributes, intellect, ability to receive and conform to instructions, etc.

- c. These are not the qualities of locusts, but perhaps their invasion upon humanity reminded John of the way locust swarms act (*Cf. Prov. 30:27*) “locusts have no king, yet they advance together in ranks;”
- d. It is in these agents, these fallen angels, advance upon humanity that we can clearly see the text describes them as supernatural entities.
  - They have intellect. They can distinguish between unbelievers and believers (spiritual insight). They hurt the first group and not the second group.
  - They come from a location that is supernaturally significant. They have come out of the depths of the earth (Abyss), from within the heavy smoke.
  - They have features which do not conform to anything that we know of on planet earth.
  - They harm with their tails and stingers which are like scorpions (**vs. 10**)
  - They wear something like ‘crowns of gold’ (Noting power and authority; **vs. 7**)
  - Their ‘faces resembled human faces’ (Angelic manifestations are frequently humanlike **vs. 7**) and they have hair like “women” (**vs. 8**) which presumably means long and lush.
  - They also have “teeth like lions” (**vs. 8**) and they appear to be wearing armor of sorts (**vs. 9**)
  - All considered, what we see is a composite description similar to diverse description of ‘four living creatures’ (**Cf. Revelation 4:6-8**), as well as the references to other evil spirits that were ‘like frogs’ (**Cf. Revelation 16:13**)

**NOTE:** Interesting Facts, Food for Thought): Some scholars obsess over the description of ‘locusts,’ but the word locust is mentioned only 2X. ‘Scorpions,’ conversely, are mentioned 3X in describing these entities.

Moreover – the five-month time is similar to the span of time that locust plagues are typical; May>Sept. It is also similar to the 150 days that the earth was covered with water (**Cf. Gen. 7:24**).

- e. These fallen angels described thusly emerge with a passion. (We know they have emotion.)
- f. Again, they fear the Abyss – **Cf. Luke 8:30 & Matthew 8:29** (it is a place of torment for them)
- g. Naturally, as some criminals become more hardened by incarceration and do more damage when they get out than before they were imprisoned, so these fallen angels can be understood the same way.
- h. QUESTION: HOW MAY WE UNDERSTAND THIS? These fallen angels want to torment as they have been tormented, and they direct their fury at their followers (Why would they do that?)
  - Satan and his minions hate humans who are ‘made in the image of God’ (**Cf. Genesis 1:27**).

- Personally, I believe this is why we see those who have rejected God and His laws and values begin to destroy themselves.
  - They are controlled by ‘the dark side,’ and so they become angry and self-rejecting. Many of them become freaks in how they abuse their bodies and do things to their appearance to become FAR less attractive.
  - They reject their gender and all forms of reasonable personal reference. They are acting in spiritual rebellion against being made in the image of God.
- Further, fallen angels have no capacity for empathy, love, loyalty – recall their leader’s name (Apollyon in **vs. 11**) means ‘destroyer’ or ‘he who destroys’ (this is their mission)

**NOTE: They are not helicopters, soldiers with jetpacks, etc.**

- These types of suggestions are foolish - and within the context here, such fanciful ideas do not conform to a responsible approach to God’s Word.

#### B. They Are Constrained

1. God remains firmly in control (As previously, only 1/3 of things were destroyed, so God dictates the parameters of activity for these demons).
2. God is the authority behind the language “...it was given” (**Cf. Revelation 9:1, 3, 4, 5**).
3. This is a reminder that while things seem out of hand, they are all taking place entirely within the intentions of God.

#### C. They Are Corrective (We need to think in terms of ‘consequence.’)

1. Unsaved man has made a choice, and unsaved man is reaping the results of that choice.
2. Keep in mind the bigger issue here. The choice has been made here by unsaved mankind to rebel against God – to refuse His offer of salvation.
  - a. If only one judgment was needed to get the point across, then that is what God would do. But, the message needs to be repeated many times.
3. There will be no excuse for any person to say, “How could I have known?”
4. I am reminded of events of the DNC some time back to remove ‘God’ and ‘Jerusalem’ from their platform, obvious the ‘Nays!’ had made the majority point on live national TV, but on such a public forum they could not afford to take this route.
5. It doesn’t take a political science major to see they had chosen to (a.) tie these two issues of ‘God’ and ‘Jerusalem’ together, and (b.) elevate their own decisions over the right one.
6. Bottom line: Unsaved man does not want God in his life nor any representation or reminder of God’s divine power, purpose, and will.

**NOTE:** Unsaved man has some personal choices taken away with this judgment.

7. They will not die though they long to do so (**Cf. vs. 6**) – Note: ‘suicide is impossible’ (We are not told details, but we must accept this simple fact).

- a. Man has wished to die before in the tribulation (**Cf. Revelation 6:16** in the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal Judgment).
- b. Perhaps they can successfully fulfill their wishes there, but they cannot with the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Judgment.
8. It's possible that this inability to find death is limited to this five-month period ('...during those days...' **Cf. vs. 6**)
  - a. This appears to continue the prescriptive elements of God's divine judgment. He remains in control.

II. The Agony – What is the punishment like and what is it about? (Three things to note):

A. Painful

1. Like that of a scorpion (NOTE: I've been bitten by black widow, stung by Portuguese Man-O-War jellyfish, and stung 38 times by bees. How to compare?)
  - a. **(i.e. Bark scorpion)** – “The poison from a single sting can lead to irregular eye movements, involuntary thrashing of limbs, breathing difficulties, numbness, tingling, severe pain to all extremities, and other symptoms. However, it is not fatal.”
  - b. It is possible that the sting is something like a bark scorpion.

B. Prescriptive

1. As there are two categories of fallen angels (free / imprisoned), so there are also two categories of humanity at this future point in time:
  - a. Those that have the seal of God on their foreheads.
  - b. Those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
2. Who qualifies for the 'seal of God on their forehead?' **(Cf. vs. 4)**
3. One clear group that is spared is the 144,000 Jewish evangelists **(Cf. Revelation 7:3-4)**
4. It is clear from the context that a range of judgments spare this group (they appear with Jesus Christ later on Mount Zion in **Ch. 14**, indicating they have been wholly preserved)
5. QUESTION: Are any more than this specific group of 144,000 spared this judgment?
6. My present opinion is that all saints of the tribulation are spared this judgment. Why?
7. The pain of this sting is intended to cause mankind to repent. **(Cf. Revelation 9:20-21 for the purpose of these tribulation judgments).**
8. The Bible is clear, when someone accepts Christ, they are “sealed.” Four references on this:
  - a. **(Cf. Ephesians 1:13):** “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,”
  - b. **(Cf. Ephesians 4:30):** “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

- c. **(Cf. 2 Corinthians 1:22):** *“He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”*
  - d. **(Cf. Revelation 22:4):** *“They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.”* (NOTE: This describes those saints who will dwell in the New Jerusalem – so some sort of mark or seal will be on the foreheads of those who are truly saved).
9. Finally, insofar as these judgments in **Revelation** are concerned, the saints are not the objects / focus of God’s end-time judgments **(Cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:9)**.

*“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

NOTE: (a.) This is not soteriological salvation (when we receive salvation *“by grace through faith,”* but future physical salvation (a rescue from physical judgment; see context), (b.) there is a clear ‘night and day’ distinction provided here.

NOTE: I believe this passage is one of the clear arguments for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, but it likely has principles for consideration inside the tribulation timeframe

- C. Purposeful: What is the purpose of these judgments? (...to warn the lost masses of their need to repent and to receive salvation)
  - 1. **Cf. 2 Peter 3:9** – *“The Lord....is not willing that any should perish”*
  - 2. Allows unbelievers to see how horrible the kingdom of darkness is (they have had a taste of the consequence of their personal choices)