

Worship Guide - Lake Mary  
WORSHIP SERVICE -  
10.31.2021

## THE DEMONIC HORDE

### I. INTRODUCTION

**MAIN POINT:** God has granted spiritual forces of darkness permission to torment and deceive hardened unbelievers who remain unrepentant in their idolatry and sin.

#### Revelation 9:1-12

And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. **2** He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. **3** Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. **4** They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. **5** They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. **6** And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

**7** In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, **8** their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; **9** they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. **10** They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. **11** They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

**12** The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

### II. FROM THE ABYSS

#### 1. FALLEN FROM HEAVEN

1b and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth,

- **Who is this star that fell from heaven**, notice it is **past tense**, this is not something that will happen in the future.
- This can be a reference to **none other than Satan**.
- We have an **OT and NT reference** to this occurrence.
- This **event** and the **person** it represents is **what is behind** so much of the **chaos** and **destruction** in human history.
- The reference is a **glimpse into the origin of evil in the world, to what lies behind the affairs in the world**.
- **Isaiah 14:12-15** "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! **13** You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; **14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' **15** But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.
- **Ezekiel** likewise sees this same behind the scenes reality as reflected in his **lament** over the **King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28**.
- **Luke 10:17-18** The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" **18** And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

- Other names are given to Satan in the blast of this 5th trumpet:
- 11 They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.
- He is the angel of the Abyss, king over this demonic horde.
- He is called in Hebrew (אַבְדֹּדֹן) and in Greek (Ἀπολλύων), a name that means 'Destroyer'.
- The Destroyer is a fitting name for what Satan and his minions accomplish in the world—destruction.
- **John 10:10a** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.
- John sees rightly in this vision the spiritual forces of darkness that are behind the persecution of God's people. The Roman Empire is a tool used by the Destroyer and the principalities and powers of evil.

## 2. THE KEY TO THE ABYSS

- v1c and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit; also translated as **abyss**.
- The activity that ensues at the blast of this trumpet results from what this fallen star does.
- He has been given a key that means that he does not possess the key.
- Key is a symbol for authority, rulership and power.
- **Who has given him the key to open the shaft of the abyss?**
- **Revelation 1:17-18** When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.
- The Destroyer, Satan, does not have any power except that which has been granted him by the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.
- The extent of his authority and power is limited by the one who has granted him authority and power.
- Our enemy, the enemy of this world, wields no power outside of what has been permitted him by the resurrected Christ.
- Some Christians over-estimate the authority and power of the Devil. They think his power is much greater than it actually is — some Christians under-estimate his authority and power, they do think he has much power at all.
- But this we do know — God and Satan are NOT equal opposite forces in the universe.
- Satan can only do that which he has been given power to do and nothing more.
- Satan does not have absolute autonomy to do whatever he wills to do.
- There is only ONE Sovereign—the risen and ascended Christ!
- What did he do with the key given to him? 2a He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit,

## 3. SMOKE AND DARKNESS

2b and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft.

- The imagery here is striking, such thick smoke that the sun and the atmosphere are darkened.
- Darkness in Scripture is symbolic of evil, deception, blindness, delusion.
- The Reformed Expository Commentary on Revelation quotes Hendriksen, "*It is the smoke of deception and delusion, of sin and sorrow, of moral darkness and degradation that is constantly belching up out of hell.*"
- In the NT, darkness is symbolic of spiritual blindness.
- **2 Cor. 4:4** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- That is the condition of all unbelievers—darkness, spiritually blinded by the enemy whose forces work continually to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel.

## III. THE TORMENTING DEMONIC HORDE

3 Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth.

- We already have the key to understanding the pictures in Revelation by using the same resource that was available to John and every 1st century believer—the Old Testament.
- The only way to truly understand this vision and its symbols is to see it as speaking of wicked supernatural spiritual forces of darkness—the devil and demons.
- It is a glimpse into the supernatural realm and the unseen forces of darkness that operate behind the scenes to torment unbelievers and influence the affairs of this world.
- Like the previous trumpet blasts, John models this trumpet judgment after the Exodus plagues to convey the severity of the judgments—specifically the 8th plague.
- **Exodus 10:14-15** 14 The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. 15 They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt.
- He also borrows imagery from the prophet Joel and compares this demonic locust horde to a mighty invading army who have been released to devour everything in their path.

## 1. LIMIT ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone.

- These agents of darkness, this demonic horde that is released, have an assignment—to harm and to torment.
- Their attack is directed at people. The target is humanity.
- But is all humanity targeted?
- NO—the people of God are not the ones being targeted by this demon horde.
- It is those who DO NOT have the seal of God (Rev. 7:3) that are NOT safe!
- Those sealed by God as we have already seen are spiritually protected by God.
- They are kept from spiritual harm throughout the tribulation.
- We may suffer physical harm, we are not immune to the effects of the physical devastation of the four horsemen, we may be killed for our faith, but we will not lose that which we have already obtained, our eternal inheritance.
- Again we must point out that this demonic horde, like their king, the angel of the bottomless pit, has to be given authority.
- Just like the Exodus plague, it is God who has absolute sovereignty over the instruments of the plagues
- It is a limited judgment which God allows Satan to inflict on his followers.
- Their torment is like a scorpion's sting—it's painful, it can be crippling, but not deadly.

## 2. SPIRITUAL TORMENT

- The harm and torment cannot be something that both believers and unbelievers experience in this world.
- This torment then has to be spiritual in nature.
- The seal of God spiritually protects believers so to NOT be sealed by God leaves one open and vulnerable to the spiritual attacks and stings of this demonic horde.
- Spiritual and psychological torment upon unbelievers is what these spiritual forces of darkness employ.
- We see that in what those who undergo this torment experience because they are not sealed by God—a desire to die.
- 6 And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.
- They will long for death to escape the torment they are under.
- What happens to someone when everything that they have placed their trust in, everything they have staked their security on, now fails them, betrays them, lets them down!
- How do people respond when they realize their idols have failed them?
- This act of judgment by God has a divine purpose.
- It is not a capricious act; God does not delight in tormenting people.

- The judgment unbelievers are under serves to remind the ungodly that their idolatry is in vain—what they falsely trust in cannot save them.
- And ultimately, it is to lead people to repentance, which sadly as we see in 9:20, people do not repent of their idolatry and their sin.
- For believers, however, there is nothing to fear.
- It's not that we won't face spiritual attacks—no, Scripture is clear regarding the spiritual warfare we are engaged in.
- **1 Peter 5:8** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
- **Rev. 12:10** And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.
- We have nothing to fear because we have been sealed. We belong to the Lord.
- Whether we live or die, we are Christ's and we know that God is sovereignly working all things according to his will and his purposes for us are loving and good.
- We also are emboldened to continue proclaiming the good news. To advance the kingdom of light as it invades the darkness through the spread of the gospel.
- Where the gospel is preached and sinners are saved, sealed by God and turn to Christ, the destructive power of the enemy is expelled by the power of Christ and Satan is cast out.
- The story of the man in Luke 8 who was tormented by demons is a beautiful picture of this.
- If you are Christ's you are safe.
- If you are not, you are prey to all of the demonic influences and effects that fill this world with darkness and deception.