

Current Affairs #95 – The Bottomless Pit

Sam Soleyn

December 2, 2020

We were talking about the distinction between the realms. The second heavens is where the demonic is located within the created world, within the creations of heaven and earth. When they were removed from their place before the throne of God, these fallen angels, who became the demonic forces, were placed in the second heavens, where they continue to operate to manipulate the affairs of humankind, pursuing the rule they were given through deception and subterfuge in their entrapment of human beings. Then there is, of course, the earth, the dwelling place of man.

In the invisible realms there is the highest heavens, which is the location of the throne of God, and the middle or second heavens, which is the location of the spiritual forces of evil. These realms are invisible. The visible world comprises the earth and the surrounding universe. They are visible. But the creatures of the invisible realm are allowed to sometimes come into the realm of mankind, and when they do, they are invisible. Their activities will often generate certain emotions in human beings, but, by and large, they remain invisible. Angels, similarly, when they come into the realm of mankind, remain invisible as well.

However, there are moments when both angels and demons do become visible. For example, when Jesus was in the wilderness, Satan came and tempted Him, and there was an interaction between Jesus and Satan. On other occasions these spirits are discernible. When Jesus, for example, was addressing Peter, He said, “Get thee behind Me, Satan!”¹ So there are times when these creatures can be visible or invisible. Similarly with the angels, there are times when, typically, they are invisible; but, as in the case of the angel who came to see Mary, the angel Gabriel, he greeted her and saluted her with the greeting that she was blessed amongst women. An angel similarly appeared in that same time frame to Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, and the people also concluded that he had seen an angel.² Angels appeared to Peter and John while they were in prison, and actually led them out of the prison.³ So there are times when these creatures are visible, but mostly they are not. They operate from that position of invisibility.

All Scripture quotations are from the NKJV Bible, unless otherwise noted.

¹ See Matthew 16:23: “But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.’ ”

² See Luke, chapter 1, for the reference to the appearing of Gabriel to Mary and Zacharias.

³ See Acts 12:5-19

When humans die, the ones who are lost, their souls go to a place of waiting for the final judgment. That place is referenced in Hebrew as Gehenna,⁴ which references the valley of Hinnom outside of Jerusalem where the refuse was burned, and the smoke of the burning refuse went up day and night. It is analogous to the torments of the souls of men who are in hell. The Greek equivalent is Hades,⁵ and much is said in Greek mythology of the figures in Greek mythology who were in Hades.

But then there is this other realm that is only referred to once by name in the Scriptures, but multiple times by reference in the Scriptures, and that is the realm that we touched on as we were completing the last message. That is the realm known as Tartarus,⁶ and it is analogous to the bottomless pit. There are demons in it, or at least there are demons who are fearful of being put in it. So in Luke 8:31, when Jesus encounters the demoniac in the country of Gadara, the demons said to Him, “Son of God, leave us alone. Have You come here to torment us before the time?” And they begged Him not to send them into the abyss. Instead, they requested permission to go into the pigs. And, of course, the pigs rushed down the slope and drowned in the Sea of Galilee. Concerning that realm, I ended the last session by citing 2 Peter 2:4, from the NKJV, and it says, “For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell...”—there, the word “hell” is the word Tartarus (it is the only time it appears in that way)—“and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.” So Tartarus is analogous to the abyss, the *abussos*,⁷ which is exactly the Scripture in both Luke 8:31, and here in Revelation 9; it is the reference to that, to the abyss.

The abyss is a term that has multiple meanings. Sometimes it refers to the sea and the depths of the sea as the abyss. Sometimes it refers to, as we are seeing it here, the pit or the unbounded. And then now we see it as Tartarus, a place for the confinement of and the detaining of angelic or fallen

⁴ See *geena*, Strong’s Greek 1067 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/1067.htm>

⁵ See *hadés*, Strong’s Greek 86 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/86.htm>

⁶ See *tartaroó*, Strong’s Greek 5020 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/5020.htm>

⁷ See *abussos*, Strong’s Greek 12 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/12.htm>

angels, or demons, waiting for their judgments. The demons, in the case of the demoniac of Gadara, did not want to be sent here. So it tells us that not all fallen angels are sent here. Now as to who these particular ones are, they certainly do not include Satan, and they do not include demons such as the Prince of Persia, and frankly, they do not include the demon who leads the demonic forces who come out of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon,⁸ which means Destroyer. The equivalent name in Greek is Apollyon,⁹ Destroyer.

So there are demons who are in the second heavens, some of whom have been put out at certain points awaiting for a certain command, a certain day, a certain month, a certain year which we will see, which is a reference with specificity as to how God deals with some of the demons. Then there are fallen angels (demons) who are bound in the abyss. And then there are these demons who operate in and amongst human beings: the prince of Persia, the prince of Greece, etc. We are introduced more directly into a greater understanding of what has happened to those who resisted God, who fell, and who are bound over until judgment. All of those who fell are bound over until judgment, but some are in the second heaven; some are in the atmosphere over nations; some are amongst humankind on the earth, even possessing the bodies of human beings; and some are bound in another realm called the bottomless pit, and similarly referred to as the lowest of the regions.

Here, there is no indication that it is a visible realm, or even perhaps something like a black hole. That would be to domesticate this. It is more a realm that is related to the power, or the strength, or the abilities that the creatures in those realms have vis-à-vis either the realm of man or the realm of God. So for example, we know that the creatures of the second heavens, the fallen demonic hordes in the second heavens, operating from there to manipulate the affairs of humankind as they have opportunity and as they have means, they are in a lower place than the highest heavens. But that realm vis-à-vis the earth is considered a higher realm by extension. Because in the Book of Hebrews, chapters 1 and 2, the reference to that realm is that man was made “a little lower than

⁸ See *abbaddon*, Strong's Hebrew 11 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/11.htm> ; see also *Abaddón*, Strong's Greek 3 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/3.htm>

⁹ See *Apolluón*, Strong's Greek 623 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/623.htm>

the angels,”¹⁰ and it specifically refers to Jesus who, on the earth, was in a position a little lower than the angels.¹¹ Because all angels were created to serve mankind,¹² they are never higher in rank than mankind. But, positionally, when you consider the advantages of invisibility over visibility, creatures who are invisible clearly have a distinct advantage over human beings, who deal with the world as apprehended through the five senses.

Anyway, I am wanting to show you that in these visible and invisible realms—in the heavens, in the earth, and now in the netherworld—there are these distinctions that, in general, we typically gloss over, and we do not really pay any attention to them. We use the word “hell” as a catchword to describe everything that has everybody who has died; and mostly, we talk about the demons in hell, and we somehow assume that the demons in hell are there to torture human beings, when that actually is not biblically based.

The Scripture that speaks of the torment of the departed souls is that which says, “Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.”¹³ I do not want to go too far down this road because I want to stay close to what we are talking about in Revelation 9, but where it speaks of “Where the worm dieth not,” the ancients had the concept of the conscience of man being a good conscience, like meat that is ready to be eaten; but a bad conscience was viewed as like rotten meat. And so, maggots devouring the rotten meat was the word there for “Where the worm dieth not.” And “where the fire is not quenched,” there again, it was not about hell fire; it was more about the fires of desire. So, the condition of people who die outside of Christ is that of a conscience that is devoured because now they know the truth. Like maggots devouring rotten meat, so the conscience of mankind knows no rest, and the fire there is the fire of desire.

¹⁰ See Hebrews 2:6-7: “But one testified in a certain place, saying: ‘What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands.’ ”

¹¹ See Hebrews 2:9: “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.”

¹² See Hebrews 1:13-14: “But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”

¹³ See Isaiah 66:24; Mark 9:44,46,48

There is more to be said about these things, but I am wanting to clear up enough of a path here so we could understand exactly where is this bottomless pit or what is this bottomless pit, because it is important in the understanding of the events that are preceding at the end of the age. One thing we do know is that there is a final judgment and there is a final annihilation. That is referred to as “fire and brimstone,”¹⁴ and it is more of a reference to the Dead Sea in the ancient world, where bituminous pitch oozes out of the ground, and the Dead Sea, in historical times, had been known to catch fire. So it is an analogy to the lake of fire, where the final destruction of both human beings and the angels, including the angels now that we are seeing coming up out of the abyss, are finally annihilated.

But again, we have so conflated all of this by inexact understandings and by the great sentimental use of the visuals of hell being a place of humans chased by demons with pitch forks as they dodge between pits of fire. That is simply not what the Bible says. It is not to suggest hell is a vacation spot, you understand. It is a place to be avoided at all costs; please, understand that. But in our ignorance of these things, we conflate so many things, and the clarity with which we ought otherwise to see the Scriptures escapes us.

Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. [It says this angel, this star, that had already fallen was given a key to Tartarus, the abyss, which is the containment of the demonic.] And he opened the bottomless pit [So he was permitted to open the bottomless pit, a location over which God has and maintains sovereign control, because this is a prison for demonic spirits.], and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit (Revelation 9:1-2 NKJV, comments added in brackets).

The bottomless pit, when it is opened, smoke comes out like the smoke of a great furnace. Again, this is an analogy to a great furnace, and a picture of smoke coming out of what is essentially an

¹⁴ See Revelation 21:8: “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

invisible realm. The sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke out of the pit. Clearly, this is allegorical language. The implication or the meaning is that the sun is that which is typical of the light of the day, so this is more like in the days of mankind, in these days mankind walks around in darkness that has come out of the abyss. This darkness, then, is metaphorical. It is not like a volcano erupts and spews ashes and smoke into the atmosphere. This is about how truth has fallen casualty to lies and deception, and it is like the sun is darkened. There is actually a reference to this in the Book of Amos, the 8th chapter, that speaks of the sun being darkened on a clear day or in the daylight,¹⁵ which means that now mankind is walking in darkness. It means that nothing they believe in is reliable, nothing they have counted on as true is sustainable, that they are deceived again and again and again, to the point where there is no basis for making competent decisions. The air is dark. The sun is dark.

The analogy here is to the plague of darkness in Egypt, analogous to when the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified and there was darkness upon the whole earth. Well, of course, there would be darkness when the demonic momentarily triumphs and the Son of God is executed. Now this was not the end of the story in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, but the darkest days of creation, frankly, since God called light out of darkness and caused that light to shine in the face of Jesus Christ. It is as though creation reverted to the unenlightened state in which it existed prior to the calling for the enlightenment of mankind on the day Jesus was crucified.

This is the analogy here: that the time had come, and God had given permission for the demonic influences. The demonic spirits that were entrapped in a prison by God's design were now released, and they came up in the midst of darkness like smoke out of a great furnace. The point being that mankind now was in a level of darkness unlike anything that they themselves had ever made, conjured up, or envisioned. You see, it is one thing to believe in a lie and to perpetuate a lie; it is another when the strength of that lie, which was always demonically based—based in deception, is now being enforced altogether by the actual demonic spirits who are behind the lies. It is as though the agents that fostered the lie and perpetuated it now are in place on the earth. That is an

¹⁵ See Amos 8:9: “ ‘And it shall come to pass in that day,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;’ ”

order of deception far greater than at any other time in the history of mankind. It is where the darkness is as opaque as things may become.

You will notice that this also sets up a time of deception in the earth that allows for, in chapter 13, the coming forth of this global kingdom. So this is not a one-off event. It is that an environment is being set up and enforced by demonic presences. That explains why human beings are so thoroughly entrapped by the demonic by the time of the rolling out of this great beast spoken of first in Daniel 7, and then confirmed in the Book of Revelation, the 13th chapter, which is just a few chapters ahead of where we are now.

These are precursors, is my point. As horrifying as they are, they are moving matters forward to the place where the judgments of God on unregenerate mankind are taking over in this complete and near hopeless and helpless fashion. You will notice that none of this—none of the seven trumpets, none of the seven bowls of God’s wrath—none of them began to be poured out on the earth until the saints were sealed, particularly those who belong to God who are yet on the earth. I will remind you that the analogy in Scripture to Egypt and the plagues is an applicable analogy. Where was Israel when the plagues were coming upon Egypt? And this is the analogy to plagues. Where was Israel? It was still in Egypt. It was in its own region of Egypt; it was in Goshen, a place of shepherds. And they were behind doors, in houses—all of these things we have talked about before. They were under the rule of fathers who kept them safe, because the fathers, like doors, were connected to Christ; they were hinged to Christ, so they kept them steady in the days of the plagues in Egypt, while the plagues ravaged Egypt.

I want to remind you, again, this is not for the believer. This is not for the sons of God. They are properly ensconced in Goshen, behind doors with the blood on it, over which houses fathers rule. This is the time when God is releasing that shaking upon the earth that now comes in the form of demonic backing, demonic empowerment.

Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power (Revelation 9:3).

That is where I want to pick up and show the connection between scorpions and locusts.

We will talk about that when we continue.