

One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. [That is where we want to continue.]

Then the sixth angel sounded: (Revelation 9:12-13a NKJV).

These are the seven trumpets sounding judgments: the first four primarily related to human beings and their circumstances; the last three relate to the activities of the demonic. Now, you must understand that all of the activities of the demonic spoken of in these chapters are permitted by God. These are not just the rampaging of demonic forces without purpose, killing and destroying indiscriminately. They are doing what they are doing by the permission of God, because they are serving God. Why? Because the judgment has come upon certain of mankind, and it is summary judgment. This is judgment like what fell on Egypt. It is judgment like what fell on Sodom and Gomorrah, where it was time for the wickedness of mankind to be arrested because there actually is a living God. We do not get to keep on in any way that pleases us indefinitely.

From the time that creation was established, an end to it was envisioned. The purpose for creation was to permit a man in the image and likeness of God to emerge at the end of the age and to overthrow every opposition to God's righteousness that began in heaven and is being played out on the earth. It began in heaven when Satan rebelled against God. It was Jesus Himself who said, "I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven,"¹ and his falling continues. The Book of Revelation is where we catch up with him.

But let's go back at verse 13 of chapter 9, of the Book of Revelation.

Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates" (Revelation 9:13-14).

¹ See Luke 10:18

Let me comment on those before I go much further. Once again, “I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar.” Often, this is referred to as that which is in the *naos*² of God, the temple of God, if you like, the dwelling place of God. And it is a voice that comes “from the four horns of the golden altar.” Quite often, we get to see that this voice that is directing comes from among the four living creatures, and there is no reason to suppose that it is from anyone else. The Lord Jesus Christ is clearly handing judgment into the hands of the saints. The saints are both judging angels and judging the world.

Keep that in mind, because almost nowhere does anyone seem to recognize that the saints do control these sequences of judgments. We are not the victims of these judgments, as some would suppose, requiring us to have to get out of here and go to heaven. No. We are like Israel was in Egypt. If we are on the earth, we are as Israel was in Egypt in the days of the plagues. These are analogies that reference the plagues in Egypt. But Israel was safe. You do not have to go to heaven to get out of this. That is the principle. And in fact, when we are seeing all of this, we are actually experiencing something of the power of God having been delegated to the saints and the administration of that power upon the earth. That is what we are experiencing here.

This voice says, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” Now these angels would be demonic spirits, because there is no reference to an angel who serves God as being bound. “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” There, the term “bound” is the word *deó*,³ pronounced (deh'-o), and it means to bind, literally or figuratively: bind, be in bonds, to knit, to tie, to wind. All of those relate to the condition of angels who had been released from the abyss. Because, as you will recall, when we looked at it in 2 Peter 2:4, where the word is *tartaroó*⁴— “If God spared not the angels who sinned, but bound them in chains in darkness,”—this is the same kind of language used to describe these four angels. They are bound by the great river Euphrates.

² See *naos*, Strong’s Greek 3485 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/3485.htm>

³ See *deó*, Strong’s Greek 1210 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/1210.htm>

⁴ See *tartaroó*, Strong’s Greek 5020 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/5020.htm>

Everyone, I am sure, would recognize that the great river Euphrates is in Babylon. These four demonic creatures, it would appear to me, given what they do when they are released, are the very spirit that controlled Babylon. When the ancient Babylonian Empire was overthrown, the practices within that empire came under a different demonic sovereign; that different demonic sovereign was called the prince of Persia. When Persia was overthrown, the demonic spirit that ruled instead of the prince of Persia was the prince of Greece. It would appear that, with the change of these administrations, certain of these spirits are bound in location, waiting for the time when they would be useful again.

Now, the nature of these spirits was put on exhibition when the kingdom over which they ruled was at its height. So what was Babylon at its height? It is the very picture of religious enslavement. But beyond that, the Empire of Babylon was actually that which was typified by the lion, and pictures of ancient Babylon show a winged lion. Persia merges into that and goes forward, but ancient Babylonian cryptography features the prominence of the winged lion. What is that? It is a devourer; it is a destroyer. On earth these four angels had prominence before God removed the Kingdom of Babylon. God needed to remove the Kingdom of Babylon in order to permit the unfolding of Scripture, the continuing unfolding of what God had in mind. Because, had they remained in Babylon, the Messiah would not have come. But that was never going to be the case. So as powerful as these four angels were, they were destined to be overthrown for a season—to be chained and bound at the river Euphrates for a season.

In that sense, no other kingdom has had the same identifying characteristics as Babylon, even though a harlot, a false church, is called Babylon the Great,⁵ and a woman who sits on this is called the mother of harlots.⁶ Now, that tells us something. That although Babylon was overthrown... And by the way, Jezebel and Babylon have a strange relationship in Scripture, because these spirits work to seduce the saints from the clarity of the understanding of the things of God. They work to confuse, to obfuscate, to cause darkness to come and false religion to come to imprison and to blind the minds of the people of God. So much so, that at times, this condition of Babylon is

⁵ See Revelation 14:8, 16:19, 17:1-6, 18:2-3

⁶ See Revelation 17:5: “And on her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

described as what the god of this world, the god of the *kosmos*,⁷ most commonly uses. Scriptures says, “For the god of this world, the god of the *kosmos*, has blinded the minds of men lest they should believe and see the truth.”⁸

It is consistent with smoke coming out of the abyss. It is consistent with the torture of indecision, being unable to make decisions because information is corrupt. It is consistent with deception practiced in the form of religious deception, and the oppression of that, but with the ferocity of a lion. This is nothing benign because, in its day, Babylon was the alpha kingdom. As it moved forward, now we see these four demonic spirits that, in the fashion of being bound, are like the spirits that have now come up out of the abyss, that used to be bound in chains in darkness—again according to 2 Peter 2:4. These were bound not in the abyss, but at the great river Euphrates, because they were the spirits that were in control of ancient Babylon. But because the influence of ancient Babylon, particularly on religious deception, had continued throughout the centuries, when they are released and put under the rule of Abaddon (in Greek, Apollyon), the king over the ones in the abyss, this becomes a frightening horde bent upon the destruction of mankind. And the degree of their success is this: they kill a third of mankind. This is when judgment comes.

How many people died in Sodom and Gomorrah when God brought the fiery judgments on them? I do not know. How many people died in Egypt as a consequence of the plagues? I do not know, but it would be wrong to suggest that the plagues just came through and left people untended or unharmed.

But let’s go on. It says,

So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind (Revelation 9:15).

This, you see, is not accidental. This is a prepared judgment. The four angels are leaders within this army that goes out to kill. They were kept in chains, and notice this: they were prepared. What

⁷ See *kosmos*, Strong’s Greek 2889- <https://biblehub.com/greek/2889.htm>

⁸ See 2 Corinthians 4:4

does that mean? This is very mission specific, to speak in military terms, because they were prepared for—it starts with the smallest unit of time in the advancing sequence—the hour, the day, the month, and the year. This is precise preparation and precise ordination, which means that God had foreordained these judgments to come, and He had given the issuance of these judgements into the hands of the saints, who are typified by the four living creatures and the voice that comes from the golden altar—which, by the way, is where the prayers of the saints are offered before God. This is the time when all the righteous blood shed on the earth is now being vindicated. Their prayers are now being answered, and God is handing judgment over to them.

Part of the agency of judgment are the unfallen angelic who sound the trumpets that permit, empower the demonic to act in bringing vengeance upon the earth. Now notice this, even in their fallen states, the demonic chained in the abyss or chained by the river Euphrates, even in their fallen states they must respond to the command of their Creator when that command is given. The trumpets are the heralds, and they announce the decrees of the living God, the timing of which was ordained by the saints. But the seriousness of it, and all the preparations that go with it, have been foreordained by God. So four angels bound by the great river Euphrates are now loose, having been specifically and exactly prepared in a mission specific way. We know these are not escapable judgments.

I understand very well that a contemporary person hearing ancient prophecy revealed is likely to be very skeptical, because this is not what we see. We do not see demons. We do not see the convergence of these forces. We do not see angels bound by the great river Euphrates. We do not see any of these things. That is why the Scriptures routinely say that, as it was in the days of Noah, it shall be like that in the days of the coming of the Son of Man.⁹ One day was like another for one hundred and twenty years, when divine Presence, divine interruption changed the order of the daily in such a mind-boggling way that there was no point of reference for those who were caught outside of the ark. That is what we are looking at here.

Yes, we may note that Iraq has been the source of conflict recently, in present history. All of a sudden, this ancient nation comes up, as it were, out of the dust of history to become the location

⁹ See Matthew 24:37

for religious based forces, to put not too fine a point on it, and forces from the West have gone there. Now they are being withdrawn, but the hubris that has been stirred in the region is palpable. For us to assume that the withdrawing of Allied troops—British, American, Australian, and the like—from the area is now going to somehow cause there to be a simmering down, and people getting on with the business of building their economies and rebuilding their nations, that is to be completely devoid of the knowledge of Scripture. It is not going to happen.

Remember what I said at the very beginning of these discussions: it will be as birth pangs on a pregnant woman.¹⁰ So it keeps on. What we see here, not only in the four trumpets that speak of the cascading of events among human beings, but in the remaining three that speak of terrifying woes, it is taking us further and further away from anything that may be called the return to normalcy. “As it was in the days of Noah,” the Scriptures say, “they knew not until the flood came and took them all away.”¹¹

Look, if these things could be warnings to the world today, if these prophetic Scriptures unveiled, as they are being, could a be warning to the world today, then people would repent. But because they are not going to be received by the world as warnings, then these things will come upon them like the terror of the flood came upon the people in the days of Noah, like the plagues came upon Egypt, like the Romans descended on the city of Jerusalem. All of these things happened because of unbelief. The people did not choose to retain God in their knowledge, and yet they continue in their lawlessness and every man doing what is right in his own eyes. This would all work indefinitely if indeed the earth were eternal and mankind was in charge of his own destiny. This would all work. It is almost like I sound like a voice crying in the wilderness, saying, “These things will come to pass, and we are in the stages of them coming to pass.”

¹⁰ See Matthew 24:6-8 NASB 1995: “You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs.” See also Mark 13:8.

¹¹ See Mathew 24:38-39: “For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

But let me finish this. These four angels were ordained for the hour, the day, the month and the year, and they were released to kill a third of mankind.

Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them (Revelation 9:16).

I have said and pointed out to you before that the number, million, does not exist in the Scriptures, because the ancients could not count to a million; they could count to thousands. So that is what it says: the number of the horsemen was “two hundred”—the two is the word *duo*,¹² which means two; hundred; and then thousand is the word *urias*.¹³ So it is two hundred thousand, thousands. A thousand thousands is a million, so two hundred million. They have summarized it in modern English, but it is that kind of a multitude.

Then it describes their formation as they prepare for battle.

And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone (Revelation 9:17).

Note again that the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. Once again, this is the nature of the war. It is a war of words, a war of sounds, and a time of warfare. In this confused bedlam of warfare, this enormous force of evil kills, and here is how it kills.

By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths (Revelation 9:18).

¹² See *duo*, Strong’s Greek 1417 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/1417.htm>

¹³ See *urias*, Strong’s Greek 3461 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/3461.htm>

It is not by sword, but by these three plagues a third of mankind was killed. What are the three plagues? Fire, smoke, and sulfur. These are the indications of the confusing weaponries that are used, and these—fire, smoke, and brimstone—came out of the mouths of the horses.

For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm (Revelation 9:19).

Now in this confused environment, this army of invisible demonic forces creates conditions in the earth—sounds, words, dictates—that are like fire, smoke, and brimstone. This is analogous to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone. And by these three plagues, a third of mankind is killed. How exactly? It does not seem to say how that happens, but the environment is so poisoned, the environment is so contaminated—and here, I am not talking so much about the ecology. In fact, I am not talking at all about the ecology, but rather human environment that result in a massive dying, in addition to the fact that the people on the earth were stung by the hopelessness, described as tails like serpents. Finally, it breaks through and says, not just scorpions, but like serpents. And so we see the one movement flowing into the other when the angels who are by the great river Euphrates are loosed. Apparently, their presence calls together this army and brings it into formation and into order. It has its marching orders. It goes into the earth, and it has this level of destruction.

Let me just read the last piece because I think it is important to end on this note.

But the rest of mankind [the two thirds], who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons... (Revelation 9:20a)

It is very clear that the demons are the actors behind the scenes. They are being led by powerful forces, powerful demonic princes—the king over the abyss, and now these four primary lieutenants. It reminds me nearly of Alexander the Great and his four generals, who divided his empire after he died. But Alexander's strength was in the speed with which he could move and the closeness with which he coordinated with his four generals. So, these four angels seem to act in

the fashion in which Alexander—a type of this creature, which is why I believe it is referenced to a Greek name, not just the Hebrew name: the Hebrew name Abaddon, the Greek name Apollyon. Alexander is the iconic military figure of the Greeks. And then these four angels are perhaps analogous to the four generals that Alexander used with which to conquer such a swath of mankind, and it happened so rapidly that the ancient world was literally taken by storm. But it does say that the rest of mankind who were not killed, the two thirds who were not killed, did not cease to worship demons. Then it goes on to say,

And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts (Revelation 9:21).

It is quite literally that the wicked had become wicked still, even as the righteous were righteous still.¹⁴ There was no abating, no backing up. This is a time of judgment. Nobody is being saved in this time because the number of those who were sealed has taken place.¹⁵ This is just the judgment that envelopes the world, being led by the demonic that are actually doing the will of God and being commanded to do so.

There is yet another woe to come, and we will look at that one when we continue in this series.

I am Sam Soleyn. We will see you then. Bye-bye.

¹⁴ See Revelation 22:11: “He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”

¹⁵ See Revelation 7:2-3: “Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’ ”