

Day 247, Revelation 9

by David Servant

The fifth and sixth trumpet judgments will bring great misery to the earth's inhabitants, but God will differentiate between the righteous and the wicked, and His mercy will be spurned by the survivors.

Topics: "End Time Judgment", "Gods Mercy"

Description

David Servant discusses the mysterious fifth and sixth trumpet judgments in Revelation, highlighting the clear theme of God's end-time judgments resulting in misery for the earth's inhabitants. Despite the devastation, many will not repent of their sins, showcasing the hardness of their hearts. The stinging locusts and demonic spirits released during these judgments bring intense torment, emphasizing the severity of God's judgment. However, God's mercy is evident as He differentiates between the righteous and the wicked, offering comfort to those who belong to Him.

Transcript

I have more questions than answers regarding the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments. But rather than be frustrated over what is a mystery, let us be glad that the general themes are crystal clear. No one who reads this chapter debates the fact that God's ever-increasing end-time judgments will result in much misery for the earth's inhabitants, and when the sixth trumpet judgment is completed, the world's population will have decreased by a third. Still, those who survive will not fear God, as evidenced by the fact that they don't repent of their idolatry, murder, sorcery, immorality and thievery (9:20-21).

Regarding the stinging locusts who are released to torment earth's inhabitants for five months, it seems reasonable to believe that they are demonic spirits rather than a new species of physical insects. They are released by an angel from the "bottomless pit," and their leader is a fallen angel named Abaddon/Apollyon. The fact that John describes them as resembling war horses with crowned human faces that have women's hair, lions' teeth, locusts' wings, and the tail of a scorpion, seems to also support the idea that they are demonic spirits. I suppose that if they are invisible that will make their stinging torment all the worse. John writes that people will wish for death then. Pharmaceutical companies will be working overtime to come up with a pill for those afflicted with "sudden sting syndrome."

Take note that the stinging locusts are not permitted to harm those "who have the seal of God on their foreheads" (9:4), a reference to those in chapter seven who were specially marked, which included 144,000 descendants of Israel (and perhaps others). So God will differentiate between the righteous and the wicked, a comforting thought. And if only 144,000 descendants of Israel do possess the seal of God on

their foreheads, then this passage seems to strongly suggest that all other believers will have been martyred or raptured by the time of the fifth trumpet judgment.

The sixth trumpet judgment also seems to be a release of demonic spirits---200 million of them---by means of the release of four fallen angels who for some unexplained reason are bound "at the great river Euphrates" (9:14). The Euphrates begins in Turkey, and flows across Syria and through Iraq, emptying into the Persian Gulf, so it is not too difficult to imagine a few demons in that region of the world!

Some commentators suggest that John was not describing demons, but an army of 200 million men accompanied by tanks and artillery, something John had never seen in his day, and thus he described as having "mouths" from which "proceed fire and smoke and brimstone" (9:17). I wonder, however, why John would describe tanks and artillery as having horses with heads like lions, and why he would refer to gun barrels as the mouths of those "horses," which, incidentally, had riders whose breastplates were "the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone" (9:17). I also wonder about those horses' tails which "are like serpents and have heads" and which also do harm (9:19). That hardly sounds like a description of army tanks to me. I am more inclined to think that John witnessed yet another release of tormenting demonic spirits.

Obviously, God will hope that the two-thirds of the earth's inhabitants who survived the sixth trumpet judgment will be motivated to repent; otherwise He would have had no mercy on them and killed them all. His mercy will be spurned, however. Take note that God foreknows that His mercy will be spurned by the survivors, but He only foreknows it because He allows them to survive and He observes their reaction, a reaction which can then be known as well as foreknown! God cannot foreknow the reactions of free moral agents unless those free moral agents are tested in the realm of time. So foreknowledge is not quite all it is cracked up to be!

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