

Link to Lonnie Woodruff's *Revelation for Christians Today*, online:

<http://www.abiblecommentary.com/howtounderstandthebookofrevelation.htm>

A Study of Revelation 9

I. Outline.

1. The fifth angel sounds (Revelation 9:1-12)
 - 1) Key to the abyss is given to the star/angel (1).
 - 2) Powerful locusts come out of the abyss (2-3).
 - 3) They are restricted (4).
 - 4) Their task and description (5-11).
 - 5) The end of the first WOE is announced (12).
2. The sixth angel sounds (Revelation 9:13-21).
 - 1) Sixth angel is told to loose the four angels in the Euphrates (14).
 - 2) Their task is to slay the third part of men (15).
 - 3) Their number and description (16-19).
 - 4) Those not slain did not repent (20-21).

II. Summary.

Revelation 9:1-12 is one of the most unique and terrifying scenes of the whole book. Robert Mounce described the locusts in the passage as “among the more bizarre creatures in the Apocalypse.”

Pages could be filled with a discussion of the fantastic details of this text: Who is represented by the star that had fallen? What is the abyss [“bottomless pit” in KJV, DRL]? Who is Abaddon/Apollyon? We will struggle with questions like these, but once again it must be emphasized that *the total impact* of the vision is what is most important. As Jim McGuigan said, people often see brush strokes when they ought to see portraits.

It is important to imagine the total scene. Terrible creatures come from the bowels of the earth; their purpose is to torment men (vv. 4-6, 10). They do not harm God’s faithful ones; they only hurt unbelievers (v. 4). This scene is not one of final judgment: The torture is for a limited time (vv. 5, 10) and does not result in death (vv. 5, 6). The picture is not literal: Real locusts harm vegetation, but these nightmarish creatures do not (v. 4). Keep these thoughts in mind as the chapter is discussed symbol by symbol. Do not lose sight of the total picture as the brush marks are examined. ...

In studying the seven trumpets, there is a progression: The first four trumpets indicated that sin makes a shambles of life in general. The fifth trumpet proclaimed that sin tortures and torments. the sixth trumpet warns that sin often results in death. Sin not only hurts the sinner, but affects others as well. [David Roper, *Revelation 1-11*, Truth for Today Commentary, p. 354-355, 367].

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

9:1... **THE BOTTOMLESS PIT**--“... a better translation of the Greek phrase, ... (tou phreatos tes abussou) is ‘the shaft of the abyss.’ In verse 11, the NASB has ‘the abyss.’ The imagery is of an underground cave called ‘the abyss,’ with a shaft reaching to the surface. The top of the shaft is closed and locked, and the star/angel is given a key to open it so the inhabitants of the abyss

may be released” [David Roper, *Revelation 1-11*, Truth for Today Commentary, p. 356]. Certainly this does not mean that there is such a cave somewhere on earth—IT IS SYMBOLIC.

- 9:4... **BUT ONLY THOSE MEN WHICH HAVE NOT THE SEAL OF GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS**—“The primary purpose of the sealing of the 144,000 in chapter 7 was to protect God’s people. Revelation 9:4 gives an example of that protection. Since the locusts represent consequences of disobedience, the obedient are spared those consequences” [Roper, p. 358].
- 9:6... “The locusts of verse 6 are reminiscent of the eighth plague which came upon the land of Egypt (Ex 10:12-15). An even closer parallel of Revelation 9 may be found in Joel, chapters 1 and 2” [Roper, p. 358].
- 9:1-11... “By now, it should be clear that Revelation 9:1-11 does not portray historical events such as the ravages of Mohammed’s hordes or attacks by Cobra helicopters with nerve gas. In days past, the former was a favorite conclusion by those following the continuous-historical approach. The latter is the present interpretation of some premillennial sensationalists. Such interpretations would have had no meaning for first-century readers. Also, both Mohammed’s army and Cobra helicopters killed people—but the locusts did not. Rather, most writers agree that, in some way, the locusts portray **THE TORMENTING NATURE OF SIN**” [Roper, p. 365]. |||| “The demonic locusts graphically picture the torment to the human spirit and human personality that evil brings. The smoke that rises to darken the sky and brings with it the torments that make men cry out to die and desire death, yet find no death, graphically expresses the slavery that sin exerts over men” [Frank Pack, *Revelation, Part I*, The Living Word, R.B. Sweet Co. Inc., p. 77].
- 9:13... **AND I HEARD A VOICE FROM THE FOUR HORNS OF THE GOLDEN ALTAR WHICH IS BEFORE GOD**—“The reintroduction of the golden altar is a reminder that God hears and answers the requests of His people. The source of the **voice** from the four horns is not mentioned. In 16:7, the altar itself will speak, and that may be the case here. The significant detail is that the altar was **before God**. The words from the horns were a divine command” [Roper, p. 367].
- 9:14... “Ray Summers noted that three factors combined to overthrow the Roman Empire: natural calamity, internal rottenness, and external invasion. He pointed out that the first four trumpets involved natural calamity and proposed that the locusts of the fifth trumpet typified internal rottenness. He then declared that the sixth trumpet is a symbolic representation of the third factor: external invasion. Keep in mind, however, that the language is symbolic, not literal. The apostle did not so much have in mind a certain geographical location and a specific invading army as he did the general concept that **DANGER** was lurking nearby—imminent danger **BECAUSE OF SIN**. The army beyond the Euphrates was ‘more terrible by far than any human army. It [was] a supernatural, indeed an infernal, host” [Roper, p. 368].
- 9:15... **AN HOUR, AND A DAY, AND A MONTH, AND A YEAR...**—“This terminology is a dramatic way of speaking of a **SPECIFIC** time—a special time fixed in the mind of God. ... The message of this phrasing is that God is in control. His time-table is known only to Himself (see Mt 24:36; Acts 1:7)—but at the proper time, His plans will be carried out. His people can count on it” [Roper, p. 369].
- 9:16-19... “This vision of an irresistible force announced to Christians in John’s day that God had more than sufficient resources to dispose of their persecutors. It announces to every age that sin brings consequences both terrible and overpowering to nations as well as individuals” [Roper, p. 371-72].

V. **Lessons & Applications.** David Roper’s excellent commentary concludes each chapter with a series of practical applications from the text. I encourage you to get the book and study them further. These brief excerpts are from that source...

1. **The Fifth Trumpet Sounds** (Revelation 9:1-11). A sermon on 9:9-11 could be entitled “The Torment of Sin.” For a dramatic title, you might like “The Locusts from the Abyss.” This text could be used as a sermon with emphasis on the consequences of a specific sin, such as homosexuality with its well-publicized consequence, AIDS.
2. **Putting Yourself into the Vision** (Revelation 9:13-19). To get a feeling for God’s message, put you inside this vision. Imagine yourself as a man or a woman who has rejected God’s overtures.
3. **The Consequences of Sin** (Revelation 9:13-19). We must understand that, as fire consumes, smoke overwhelms, and brimstone sears, in the same way our sins hurt and destroy others.
4. **The Folly of Ignoring God’s Warning** (Revelation 9:20-21). Harry was the caretaker of a recreation lodge on Spirit Lake, five miles north of Mt. Saint Helens. The rangers warned him, neighbors begged him to leave with them, and Harry’s sister called to try to talk sense into the old man’s head—but Harry ignored them. ... On May 18, 1980, as the boiling gases beneath the mountain’s surface bulged and buckled the earth, Harry cooked his eggs and bacon, ... At 8:31 a.m., the mountain blew up.
5. **Idols—Then and Now** (Revelation 9:20). At the heart of any sin is the setting up of someone or something else in the place of God.
6. **Drugs and the Occult** (Revelation 9:21). Cf., W.E. Vine on “Sorceries.”

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Locusts were commanded NOT to eat any green thing.
02. _____ The power of the locusts was to hurt men eternally.
03. _____ After the sixth angel sounded, an innumerable company of horsemen appeared.
04. _____ The men who were not killed repented of their idolatry.
05. _____ The locusts had faces of men.

MATCHING

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. Sounding of Sixth trumpet | F. Idols of gold |
| B. A bear | G. Women |
| C. Scorpions | H. Heads of lions |
| D. The locusts | I. When men repented |
| E. Bottomless pit | J. The mouth of the horses |

06. _____ The heads of the horses were like these...
07. _____ The sun was darkened by the smoke coming out of here.
08. _____ When were the four angels loosed?
09. _____ Can neither see, hear, nor walk.
10. _____ Teeth of lions and hair of ...

Fill in the Blanks

11. In addition to idolatry, sins NOT repented of in this chapter include: _____;
 _____; _____; _____.
12. The fifth angel was given a _____ to the _____ pit.

13. At the sounding of the sixth angel, John heard a voice from the _____ altar, which is _____ God.
14. John spoke of days when men shall seek _____ and not find it.
15. _____ or _____ were names of the angel of the _____ pit.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Revelation 8 Questions... **01**—False, (8.13); **02**—True (7); **03**—True (11); **04**—False (4); **05**—False (1); **06**—E (7); **07**—J (8); **08**—F (10-11); **09**—C (12); **10**—A (13); **11**—Seven (6); **12**—Seven (6); **13**—Four (7-12); **14**—1/3 (12); **15**—3 (13).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL



ANGEL	BOTTOMLESS	BREASTPLATES	BRIMSTONE	DEATH
EARTH	FIRE	FIVE	FOUR	GIVEN
GREAT	HEADS	HORSES	HURT	KILL
LIKE	LOOSE	MONTH	MOUTH	NEITHER
POWER	SCORPION	SMOKE	SOUND	TAILS
THERE	TORMENT			

