

They Did Not Repent of the Works of Their Hands

Revelation 9:1-21

Before we read this chapter, I need to remind you of the context. The events associated with the seven trumpets and later the vial, or bowl, judgments are part of the second half of the tribulation period. Jesus calls it *great tribulation*. Our Lord, as predicted by these sobering words, will judge the evil of mankind during this future period of world history.

In a parallel Old Testament passage the prophet Isaiah says:

*“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. **And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.**”*

Without question, one of God’s purposes for the coming great tribulation is to judge the world for their evil. However, even in judgment God remembers mercy. During the great upheaval of the seven-year tribulation a great multitude will repent. In fact, most if not all of them, will die a martyr’s death. Sadly, however, despite the obvious hand of God in judgment many others will not repent as we shall see.

Now let’s read chapter nine together:

1And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

2And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

8And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

9And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

11And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

12One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

13And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

18By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

21Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Now look again at verse one. John says he saw a star fall from heaven. He then proceeds to reference this star with personal pronouns. He says “to him” was given the key of the bottomless pit and “he” opened the bottomless pit. Clearly this is not a literal star. Rather, it represents a personality. Jesus says in Luke 10 he saw Satan fall from heaven. Here John says he saw a star fall from heaven *unto* the earth. While Jesus saw Lucifer’s original fall from his place in heaven when he led a rebellion

against God, now John sees Satan fall to the earth. This means he is consigned to the earth and no longer has access to the throne of God as the accuser of the brethren.

Revelation 12:12 says, *“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.”*

You will also notice “to him was given the key” to the bottomless pit. He had no authority to open the pit until it was given to him. Of course, you may recall when John saw the resurrected Christ in Revelation chapter one, Jesus is in possession of the keys of hell and of death. Thus, Satan is granted permission to open the pit.

At this point I need to remind you that Satan is a murderer. Left to himself he would destroy mankind completely. He is driven by hatred of God and mankind. When the fifth angel sounds the Lord allows a unique judgment to fall upon those who do not have the seal of God in their foreheads.

The Bible says a great horde of locusts will proceed from the smoke arising from the bottomless pit. They will proceed to torment men for five months and in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it. In fact, men will desire to die, and death will flee from them. This is the first woe, but two woes remain.

Now look with me again at verses 13 and 14:

13And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

These verses reveal that four angels who reside in the kingdom of darkness are now bound in the great river Euphrates. They are not currently free to bring their deceptive influence upon the nations east of the Euphrates. However, when the sixth trumpet sounds during the great tribulation an army of 200 million men will march

against the west. Sadly, by these another third of the world's population will die. At this point in the tribulation a full half of the post rapture population of planet earth has died under judgment!

Try to imagine the global upheaval if over 3 billion people die around the world in less than seven years. Remember, the Lord says through Isaiah the prophet that he would make a man more precious than fine gold. This is the Lord's way of saying only a few will remain alive on the earth. And as you may recall, Jesus says of this great tribulation that if those days were not shortened there should no flesh be saved. Our Lord is saying the tribulation period will not be allowed to exceed the exact days determined lest all the human race come to extinction.

Conclusion

Now I come back to a question I must ask often during this series of messages: *where will you be when these judgments fall upon the earth?*

Look now at verses 20 and 21:

*20And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:
21Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

This is a sad picture. Even under the obvious judgments of God there is no repentance in the hearts of those yet alive.

Will you be among those who do not repent in this present hour? My friend, if you do not repent Jesus says you will perish. It is time to turn to the Lord and flee the wrath to come. Call on him today in a simple prayer and tell the Lord you are sorry for your sins and that you are turning to Christ for forgiveness and salvation. Remember this, the Lord is rich to all who call upon his name. Indeed, whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!