

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The Fifth Trumpet is Blown

Revelation 9:1-12

1. A Fallen Star (vs.1-2)

Up to this point in Revelation, “star” has been used to refer to special human messengers (Rev. 1:20; 2:1), to meteors (Rev. 6:13; 8:10-11), and to the celestial bodies in the night sky which give off light (Rev. 8:12). Another star which had fallen to the earth is introduced with the sounding of the fifth trumpet (Rev. 9:1), and this star is very likely the devil himself. He will have a larger role to play in the coming final judgment of God before he is thrown into the lake of fire himself (Rev. 20:10), but his purpose here is to unlock the abyss so as to release a demonic horde upon the earth. The bottomless pit is a designation of both a spiritual reality as well as a physical location. Whether or not the destination feared by the demons (Luke 8:31) is in the layers of the earth’s crust, the release of the horde of demons from their captivity will be accompanied by a spectacle in the physical world.

2. A Demonic Horde: Their Description (vs.3, 7-11)

The denizens released from the abyss are generally described as locusts, but they are anything but a natural breed of locusts. Swarms of locusts have been a terrifying reality in human history and they can leave massive amounts of human suffering and death in their wake (cf. Ex. 10:1-20; Joel 1:1-4). Swarms of normal locusts have been compared to mounted cavalry in the past (Rev. 9:7; cf. Joel 2:1-6). But these hellish hordes are not like normal insects, but are described as powerful and intelligent with frightening teeth (vs.7-9), but the danger is in their tails (vs.3, 10).

3. A Demonic Horde: Their Activity (vs.3-6)

These are certainly not natural locusts because they possess scorpion stingers and they are forbidden from doing the main thing which normal locusts do: destroy plants (Rev. 9:4). They are given the power not to kill (cf. Job 1:11-12; 2:4-6), but to inflict torment for five months upon anyone who is not sealed by the Lord (Rev. 7:2ff; cf. Ex. 8:22; 9:4, 6, 26; Eph 4:30). The affliction will be so bad that men will seek to die but they will be supernaturally prohibited.

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