

The Book of Revelation
Revelation 9:1-12 (NIV)
“A Look Into the Abyss”

Introduction

Then the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen out of heaven to the earth, and the key to the pit of the abyss was given to him. He opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke came up out of the pit like the smoke from a huge furnace. The sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit. And out of the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given the kind of power that scorpions of the earth have. They were told not to harm the earth’s grass, any green plant, or any tree, but only those people who do not have God’s seal on their foreheads.

Indeed, they were not given permission to kill these people but only to torture them for five months. And the pain they cause is like the pain caused by a scorpion when it stings a person. In those days people will seek death but will certainly not find it. They will long to die, but death will escape them.

The locusts looked like horses ready for battle. On their heads were what appeared to be crowns that were like gold. Their faces looked like human faces. They had hair that looked like women’s hair, and their teeth were like lions’ teeth. They had breastplates that appeared to be made of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of many chariots and horses charging into battle. They had tails with stingers like those of scorpions, and in their tails they had power to hurt people for five months.

They have the angel of the Abyss over them as their king. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he has the name Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).

One woe is past. Look! After these things two more woes are coming.

Revelation 9:1-12 (NIV)

In Chapter Nine, we are taken on a journey to where angels fear to tread, literally. Most *Bible* teachers prefer to skip over this difficult and terrifying passage. But sometimes, in order to gain wisdom and understanding, we must face our fears and dive into the “deeper end of the pool”. With this in mind, let us read what the Word of God has to say as we join hands and peer over the edge and into the darkness of the Abyss. Needless to say, this passage, as well as the other passages of Scripture that correspond with it, are extremely controversial. But honestly, when taken together as a whole they make perfect sense and are necessary to fully comprehend the things that shall take place during the times of the seventh seal.

First, we must understand that there is a group of fallen angels (demons) that have been imprisoned for centuries. This is repeated throughout the Scriptures. As a result of this long imprisonment, I imagine that the fury has long stirred within these demon’s blackened hearts. Producing within them a deep desire for retribution. These wicked demonic hordes will be loosed from their bonds for a brief period of time during the Great Tribulation. And they will vent their wrath upon the wicked of this world. As the flying eagle has given warning in ***Revelation 8:13***, it will be a time of unprecedented horror, when these evil creatures are loosed upon the already decimated planet. Nothing, not even the most terrifying sci-fi movie ever made in Hollywood, could ever prepare the imaginings of mankind for the coming of the vast legions that will arise from the bottomless pit.

The Devil (vs.1-7)

Although the same Greek word used for star (Aster) in **Revelation 8:10** is also used in this passage, we can see a distinct difference between the two. This "star" is not some inanimate object that falls from the heavens. No, this star is a sentient being. It is a person. We know this to be true, because it is called "he" in the verses that follow. And not only that, he initiates activities that no inanimate object could ever perform.

The star who falls from heaven in verse 1 is none other than Satan himself. On two separate occasions, we read in Scripture of the devil being cast down from heaven. The first occurrence was before the creation and is described for us in **Luke 10:18**, as well as, **Isaiah 14:12**. The second time we see the devil thrown down from heaven is in **Revelation 12:7-9** immediately following his defeat in the cosmic battle against the Archangel Michael and his heavenly host.

It is important for us to know that up until this second expulsion from the heavenly realms, Satan still currently has access to the throne of God (**Job 1**; **Zechariah 3**). He periodically makes an appearance before the throne to accuse the people of God, bringing a barrage of charges against them. Jesus, our Advocate, defends us against Satan's attacks (**1 John 2:1-2**; **Romans 8:34**). Our LORD stands at the right hand of God representing us as our attorney in the courtroom of heaven. While Satan serves as a prosecuting attorney. But this activity will come to an end at the sounding of the fifth trumpet.

Even though Satan has been given this access to God in this way, a day will come when he will be cast out of heaven forever (**Revelation 12:9**), but for now, he serves a purpose in the overall plan of God. It is also for this ongoing purpose that God gives Satan the key to the Abyss. The devil is allowed to set loose upon the earth the legion of demons that God has kept imprisoned until the proper time. God is going to allow their release upon the earth for a limited period (five months) to torment the unrepentant people of this world (**vs. 4 - 5**).

The Deep (vs. 8-9)

Since the beginning of time, it has been Satan's desire to irrevocably separate mankind from God. And then, once completely severed from their Creator, the devil's intent is destroy the human race completely. Throughout scripture, from the tempting of Eve in the garden to the present day, this has been Satan's single purpose. Once he caused the fall of man in **Genesis 3**, he then attempted to crossbreed humans with demon angels in **Genesis 6:1-4**, thereby making mankind unredeemable. It is because of this abomination that God sent a flood to destroy all of humanity, save Noah, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord (**Genesis. 6:8**).

Since the sin of these fallen angels was so grievous, God sent them to the Abyss (**Jude vs 6**; **2 Peter 2:4-5**) to be bound until the end of time. Upon His death, Jesus was transported by the Spirit of God into the Abyss to preach to these fallen angels to inform them that their terrible scheme had backfired. Through His death upon the cross, fallen mankind now have a means by which they can be reconciled to God.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in The Spirit. After being made alive, He went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits — to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built."
1 Peter 3:18-20a

This group of demons is the worst of the worst, and for this reason they have been locked in chains until God allows them to be released to unleash their revenge upon the unrepentant. The Abyss has held them back, but upon being unlocked and opened up, the greatest evil that mankind has ever known shall be loosed upon the earth. Just imagine the chaos that would ensue if all the world's prisons were opened and every murdering thief, rapist, and vicious criminal were reintroduced into society. And even this would not come close to the evil that is coming when the bottomless pit is opened.

The earth has always had to contend with demonic forces at work, (i.e. - the legion, who possessed the Gadarene demoniacs in **Luke Chapter 8**), but even those demons, as terrible as they were, begged not to be sent into the Abyss to be chained alongside the evil demons of **Genesis 6 (Luke 8:31)**. It is no wonder that the eagle in **Revelation 8:13** flies through the air to warn people of the coming doom before the sounding of the fifth trumpet.

The Demonic (vs. 10-11)

Upon their release, the once bound demonic hoard descends upon the earth in the form of stinging locusts (**vs. 3-4**). Unlike the traditional locusts of the insect world, these locusts are not interested in consuming vegetation (**vs. 4**). Their only intent is the torture of mankind. With their stinging tails they inflict horrible pain upon all mankind except those protected by the seal of God (**vs. 4**).

The sting of these demonic creatures is compared to the sting of a scorpion. It is interesting to note that some species of scorpions have a venom so toxic it causes paralysis and uncontrollable convulsions. These symptoms are similar to the actions of some who were possessed by demons in scripture (See **Mark 9:17-18**).

These “scorpion-like” demons will, once again, be like nothing this world has ever seen. John tries his best to describe the indescribable. The scorpions will rise in a swarm from the Abyss when Satan looses them from their dark prison. The very smoke from hell itself will rise up like the smoke from a gigantic furnace, and from the smoke the demons emerge. The appearance of them is as terrifying as the intense pain they bring with their stings. They appear as war horses prepared to do battle as they rush from the pit.

They have crowns on their head, symbolizing the authority that they have been given. The Greek word for the type of crown they wear is “*Stephanos*” meaning “*victors crown*”. This means that for the five months that they are allotted to terrorize this world they will be unstoppable.

Their faces resemble that of a man, which is symbolic of their intelligence. These are no ordinary insect, but rather intelligent reasoning beings with one purpose in mind. They have a demonic desire to inflict as much pain and suffering as they can in the short time they have been given.

Their hair is like that of a woman, long and flowing. Many *Bible* scholars have speculated that this is symbolic of the seductive nature of these demons. Even though they have no purpose but to cause pain, they will somehow lure their victims into a trap of suffering. It is interesting to note that sin always has its allure, and yet, it is designed for one end, the destruction of the sinner. So we should not be surprised that these horrid creatures are somehow able to seduce their victims.

But just like sin, these demons will seduce and then attack with the teeth of a lion. We must never forget who it is that has dominion over them.

Be alert and of over mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. **1 Peter 5:8**

The locust from the abyss will be armor plated, and therefore, impossible to kill, and the sound of their wings will be as thunderous as an oncoming train. Men will run in terror as they try to escape these hosts of hell and the indescribable torture of their stings. Famine and disease will have weakened the populous to such a degree that finding the ability to evade the wrath of these creatures will be nearly impossible.

The infestation of the demonic locusts lasts for five months (consequently, the average lifespan of a locust). During this time people will long for death, but will not find it (**vs. 6**). The intense pain with no possibility of escape is but a taste of what awaits the unbeliever for an eternity in hell. Endless torment, with no possible means of escape.

But do not forget, these creatures have a king, a commander who will direct them on their path of destruction. The demons are under the command of their captain named Abaddon (Hebrew) and Appollyon (Greek), both names mean “*destroyer*” or “*sent to destroy*”. As we stated earlier, this is the devils objective for humanity. It is Satan himself who is king of the demonic hosts. And after he loses his war with the armies of the Archangel Michael, he will vent his wrath upon those who live upon the

earth. Mortal men are no match for the devil. He can only be defeated by running to Christ for refuge. But this is the one thing that the blasphemous inhabitants of the earth will refuse to even consider. Just as every sinner will eventually find himself in hell, those who live during the tribulation and refuse Christ and the salvation He offers will experience hell on earth. How tragic when a person chooses to suffer wrath when the escape has been provided!

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our LORD. ***Romans 6:23***

God has offered this world redemption and freedom from sin in His Son. But the devil has seduced this world into believing a lie. Every temptation or enticement the devil throws our way is for the sole purpose of our destruction. Make no mistake. The devil doesn't tempt you to give you freedom to live as you choose. He entices you in order to separate you from God's protecting power so that he may ultimately destroy you. I recently heard a preacher say the thing that you love more than Jesus will ultimately be your punishment. Don't be fooled by the destroyer. Follow Christ. It is He and only He, that always has your best interest at heart. After the devouring locust are come and gone, we hear yet another warning from heaven:

"The first woe is past; two other woes are yet to come." ***Revelation 9:12***

God's vengeance is truly terrible indeed. Woe to them who refuse the truth in order to believe the devil's lies. But the blood of Jesus is able to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It can deliver us from the wrath of The One Who sits upon the throne and the Lamb (***Revelation 6:16-17***). So repent and be saved... before it is too late.

And let all the bloodshed saints all say... TRUTH!!