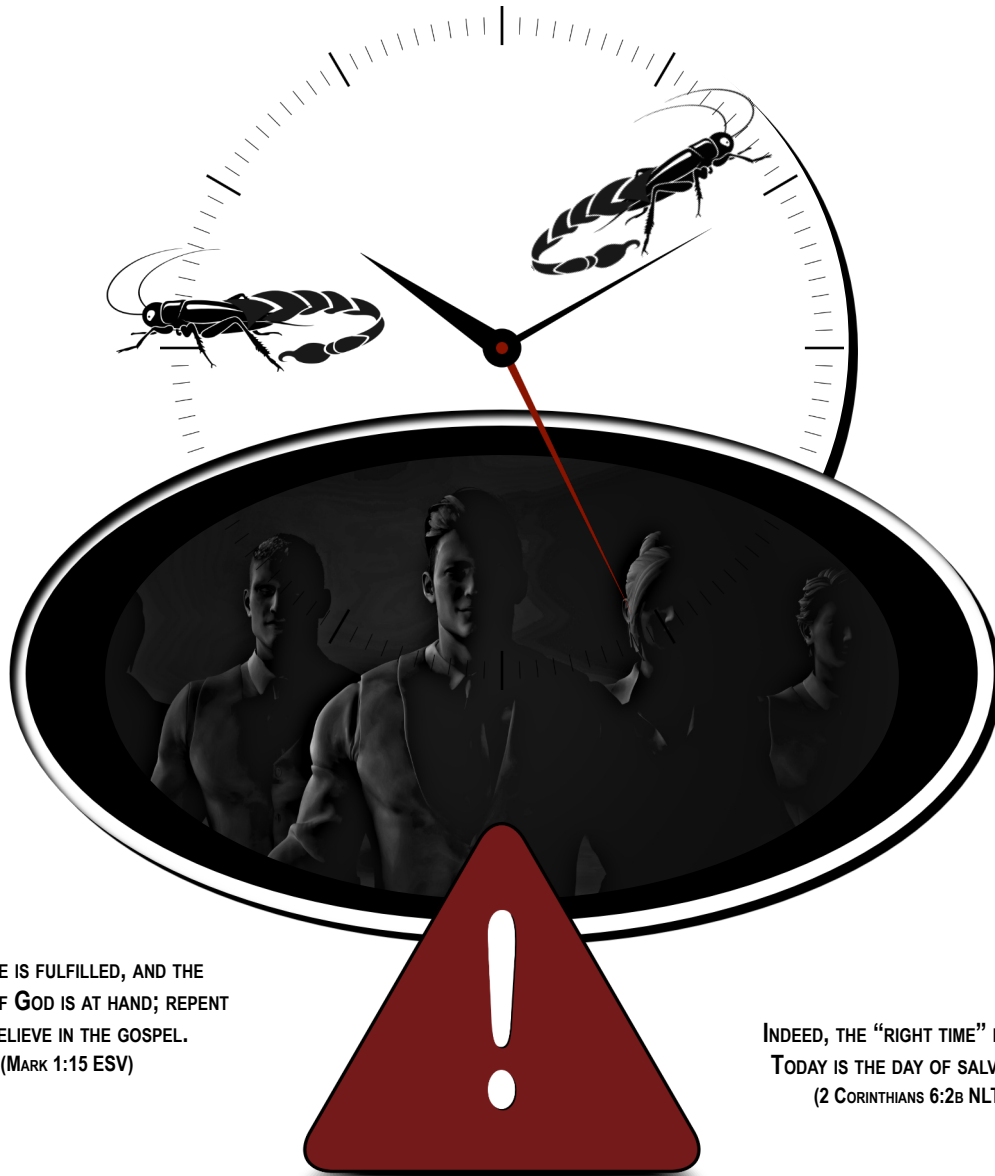


WOE TO THE UNREPENTANT OF EARTH



THE TIME IS FULFILLED, AND THE
KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND; REPENT
AND BELIEVE IN THE GOSPEL.
(MARK 1:15 ESV)

INDEED, THE "RIGHT TIME" IS NOW.
TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.
(2 CORINTHIANS 6:2B NLT)

NOW IS THE TIME FOR JUDGMENT ON THIS WORLD; NOW THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD WILL BE DRIVEN OUT.
(JOHN 12:31 NIV)

OUTLINE: REVELATION 9

THE FIRST WOE ... DEMON LOCUSTS ARE RELEASED FROM THE BOTTOMLESS PIT TO TORTURE THE SEED OF THE DEVIL, 9:1-11.

1. DEMONS (LOCUSTS) ARE RELEASED FROM THE BOTTOMLESS PIT, 9:1-3.

- (Revelation 9:1–3 ESV) And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, **and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit**. 2 He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. 3 **Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth**, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth.

Who are these demons who will be released from the abyss? At various times throughout earth history our Sovereign God has imprisoned fallen angels in the abyss—the bottomless pit.

MacArthur ... So by the time Satan in chapter 9 is given the key, he's already been thrown to the earth and all of the demons who have occupied the territories in the heavens and warred with the holy angels at that level are also cast down and so there is a greater force of demon power in the world than ever.

It is the vile filth of the worst of the demons incarcerated in the pit let loose. Demonic, satanic oppression comes roaring out of the heart of the earth, pushed out by infernal heat and pressure. John writes that it is like the smoke of a great furnace, billowing smoke. The furnace of the pit of hell is opened and the blackness and the heat start billowing out to such a degree that the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. [Excerpt: *Hell on Earth, Revelation 9:1-12, John MacArthur sermon.*]

REFERENCES IN SCRIPTURE TO THE ABYSS ...

A. The many demons (Legion) who begged Jesus to not send them to the abyss.

- (Luke 8:30–31 ESV) Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” for many demons had entered him. 31 **And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss.**

ἄβυσσος [abussos] ... bottomless; unbounded; the abyss; the pit; the immeasurable depth; a very deep gulf or chasm in the lowest parts of the earth used as the common receptacle of the dead and especially as the abode of demons.

abyss – a supernatural, unfathomable, bottomless gulf or pit regarded as the antithesis to heaven; most often for the detaining and punishment of demons.

B. Peter made reference to angels who sinned and God cast them into hell.

- (2 Peter 2:4 ESV) For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but **cast them into hell** and committed them to **chains of gloomy darkness** to be kept until the judgment.

To cast into hell – to punish a sinner by sending him to a supernatural realm known for its darkness and bottomlessness or emptiness.

5020 τάρταρώω [tartarōō] ... the deepest abyss of Hades; the name of the subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead, where they suffer punishment for their evil deeds ... Gehenna to the Jews.

Gloom [“gloomy darkness”] – a state of partial or total darkness; especially used of a supernatural nature.

2217 ζόφος [zōphos] ... darkness, blackness; used of the darkness of the nether world.

C. Fallen angels who violated the parameters God established were bound and imprisoned.

- (Jude 6 ESV) And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under **gloomy darkness** until the judgment of the great day.

(See **“gloomy darkness”** in notes for 2 Peter 2:4.)

The demons of the abyss will join forces with the rest of Satan's demonic horde.

MacArthur ... With his theater of operations now restricted to the earth, and his time running out (cf. 12:12), Satan will seek to marshal all of his demonic hosts—**those** already on earth, **those** cast to earth with him, and **those** incarcerated in the

bottomless pit (literally “the pit of the abyss”). **Abussos (bottomless) appears seven times in Revelation, always in reference to the abode of incarcerated demons** (cf. 9:2, 11; 11:7; 17:8). **Satan himself will be held prisoner there during the Millennium** (20:1, 3). [MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1999). *Revelation 1-11* (p. 257). Chicago: Moody Press.]

- (Revelation 12:12 ESV) Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! **But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!**

The demons incarcerated in the abyss are undoubtedly the most wicked, vile, and perverted of all the fallen angels. [Ibid. (pp. 257-258).]

2. THE DEMON LOCUSTS ARE RELEASED WITH THE PURPOSE OF TORMENTING THE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE THE SEAL OF GOD ON THEIR FOREHEADS, 9:3-6.

- (Revelation 9:3-6 ESV) Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. 4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, **but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.** 5 They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. 6 And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

Beale ... These plagues will have a redeeming effect only on a remnant of compromisers inside the church and idolaters outside the church, **who, it will turn out, will have been sealed beforehand and finally benefit from its protective function.** ... **The pastoral purpose is to remind readers that antagonism to their faithful witness will continue to the end of history and that they should not be disheartened since it is part of God's plan, in which they can trust.** [Beale, G. K. (1999). *The book of Revelation: a commentary on the Greek text* (pp. 517-518). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.]

3. THE DEMON LOCUSTS AND THEIR POWER TO HURT PEOPLE ARE MORE FULLY DESCRIBED, 9:7-11.

- (Revelation 9:7-11 ESV) In appearance the

locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, 8 their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; 9 they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10 They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. 11 **They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.**

This king is either the devil or a different but also very powerful fallen angel.

Ἀβασδὼν ... a destroying angel; ruin, destruction, the place of destruction, the name of the angel-prince of the infernal regions, the minister of death and the author of havoc on the earth

Ἀπολλύων ... a destroyer (i.e. Satan); the angel of the bottomless pit, the Destroyer.

- (John 10:10 ESV) The thief comes only to steal and kill and **destroy**. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

DESTROY ... same word ... **ἀπόλλυμι [apollumi]** ... to destroy; to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to ruin; render useless; to kill, destroy; metaphorically to devote or give over to eternal misery in hell; to perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed.

THE SECOND WOE ... THE FIRST WOE ENDS, THE SECOND WOE BEGINS, 9:12-21.

4. FOUR DEMONS/ANGELS ARE RELEASED FROM THEIR BONDS TO KILL A THIRD OF HUMANKIND, 9:12-15.

- (Revelation 9:12-15 ESV) **The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.** 13 Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” 15 **So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind.**

God in his sovereignty and providence has prepared four specific fallen angels to execute his vengeance at a ... **specific hour, day, month, and**

year; they will be released to kill a third of humankind.

5. THE DEMON LOCUSTS, THE DEMONIC ARMY AND THEIR FUNCTION ARE MORE FULLY DESCRIBED, 9:16-19.

- (Revelation 9:16–19 ESV) The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. 17 And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. 18 **By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed**, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.

Thomas ... No explanation tells the source of the armies. It is only by implication that their origination has something to do with the four angels. [Thomas, R. L. (1995). *Revelation 8-22: an exegetical commentary* (p. 45). Chicago: Moody Publishers.]

The fact that the horses rather than the riders are the destructive agents and that they and their riders wear brightly colored breastplates matching the destructive forces proceeding from their mouths suggests that the combination of horse and rider is of superhuman origin. [Ibid. (p. 46).]

6. THE SURVIVORS OF THESE PLAGUES—THE “UN”GODLY—WILL NOT CHANGE THEIR MINDS TOWARD GOD, 9:20-21.

- (Revelation 9:20–21 ESV) The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, **did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood**, which cannot see or hear or walk, 21 **nor did they repent** of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

A. The survivors refuse to repent.

The children of the devil will never—even under the fierce wrath of God—change their minds and agree with God because this is who they are.

- (Mark 1:15 NIV) “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. **Repent and believe the good news!**”
- (Matthew 3:2 ESV) **Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

When we repent, we change our mind and agree with God; we believe his good news.

REPENT—Gk. μετανοέω [metanoëō]—means to change one's mind; to reconsider—to have a change of self (heart and mind) that abandons former dispositions and results in a new self, new behavior, and regret over former behavior and dispositions.

CONFESS—Gk. ὁμολογέω [homologeō] ... to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with, assent; to concede; to confess, i.e. to admit or declare one's self guilty of what one is accused of.

- (1 John 1:9 ESV) **If we confess our sins**, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we agree with God—say what he says—about our sins, he forgives us and cleanses us.

- (Revelation 3:5 ESV) The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. **I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.**

Here Jesus agrees with—and proclaims before—the Father and the holy angels our exalted position in the family of God.

B. The survivors refuse to change their minds about salvation and worship.

They are shocked and terrorized, but like the demons they worship they refuse to change their minds. But what else should we expect? When a person worships demons, that person becomes more like them, just as when we worship God in truth and spirit we become more like God.

- (James 2:19 ESV) You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

C. The survivors refuse to change their minds about how they live.

Sounds all too familiar, doesn't it?