

16. A Taste of Hell

9/26/2004

The most feared concept in the majority of people's minds is death. You and I are going to die. There is no escaping it. Who hasn't heard of the two inescapable facts: death and taxes. Yes, death and taxes are inevitable, but death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

The statistics on death are quite impressive – one out of one people die except those who are in Christ Jesus at the rapture. They will not taste the death. As a matter of fact, they will even cheat death.

Generally, people don't want to talk about death. I did a few funerals. It is the most somber moment. It is one of those times the people actually listen to my preaching. How about that? Whether the listener believes some stupid reincarnation garbage or not, all of them face the unknown future of their own – death.

We are going to see the people who will live on the earth during the Great Tribulation time will have a taste of living hell on earth and literally begging for death because of the great torment they have to go through.

A. THE FIFTH TRUMPET - THE LOCUSTS FROM THE ABYSS

Revelation 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

If I can choose the most difficult area of understanding in the study of the Book of Revelation, I would choose the chapter nine, seventeen and eighteen due to the descriptions of the symbols and the things we are not familiar with.

The first four seals and trumpets presented judgments directed against the earth. In the first four seals, these were the "four horsemen" bringing tyranny, war, famine, and death on the earth. In the first four trumpets, these were the ecological destruction of the vegetation, seas, fresh waters, and sky.

The last three seals focused upon heaven: the cry of the martyrs, cosmic disturbances, and the heavenly prelude to the seven trumpets. But the last three trumpets will speak of hell, in terms of the demonic.

What is this "a star fallen from heaven" ? It is none other than satan himself. Satan was a former archangel in heaven. But because of his pride, he was kicked out of heaven with 1/3 of angels which turned into to be demons according to Isa 14, Ezek 28 and Rev 12.

Some of demons pushed their limits against God and they were thrown into the 'Bottomless Pit' which is known as 'Abyss' according to Jude 6. A 1989 movie 'Abyss' directed by James Cameron has nothing to do with this one. What else do you expect from ignorant Hollywood movie makers?

Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

Satan does not have complete authority, because the key to the pit had to be given to him before he could loose his army.

Revelation 9:2-6 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

Can you imagine what will happen when the worst demons presently chained are suddenly released? If every prison inmates including all the death row inmates in across the nation was immediately released without any limitation, it would be nothing compared to what will happen when these demons are free.

Educated people today scoff at the very idea of demons. "You don't really believe in demons, do you?" they mock at us. "We now know that demons are only another name for fears, phobias, and psychological imbalances." The Bible says demons are at work presently causing people to experience depression, emotional distress, and relational trauma. If you believe there is a God Almighty, you must also believe that there are demons who want to destroy you.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

God will allow demonic hordes, previously imprisoned, to ascend to the earth like a swarm of destructive locusts. Those who have the seal of God on their foreheads – the 144,000 and perhaps more – are protected, but no one else. This is an inescapable judgment of God.

In v5, these powerful demon have limited power by God. They are not allowed to kill people. Their purpose and period is expressly governed by God, and the purpose of all this to bring repentance.

The tormented people want to die. However, death is not an option for them. Even if they had the option of death, it would be a leap from the frying pan of present torment into eternal fire. Because these unbelievers will end up in hell.

Speaking of death, I need to talk about two things before we go any further:

1) Suicide

If you are considering suicide for whatever the reason, you are making a mistake. You may think that there is no way out or you had enough. If you are a child of God, born-again Christian, it is a God's promise for you that He would not give you temptations or trials more than you can bear.

I am talking to you, young people, especially. Whatever you go through at school or at home, a few years from now, you will laugh at. How do I know? Because I was a high school kid, too. A million years ago.

Whatever you are facing is not the end. It is not over until God says it is over.

Mt 19:26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Php 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

If you need to talk to someone for this, please see me or the elder Jack or any one of deacons after the service.

2) Euthanasia

For a few years, Jack Kevorkian, also known as "Dr. Death," seemed to show up on the news every few weeks. He paints himself as a man of compassion, telling people that they don't have to stay in the situation of "Coma" or "being a vegetable". His view that the organs of those who die should be auctioned to the highest bidder for use as transplants resulted in the loss of his medical license. And his statement that, "Jesus would have died a much more dignified death in the back of my van than on that Cross," sends chills down the spine. Since 1990, he has helped at least 130 people kill themselves. However, autopsies show twenty-four were of people without terminal illness, three without any illness at all. Finally, he went too far.

"You had the audacity to go on national television, show the world what you did and dare the legal system to stop you. Well, sir, consider yourself stopped." Judge Jessica Cooper, after sentencing Kevorkian to 10 to 25 years in prison in April 1999.

Hear me well, please. Euthanasia and suicide are wrong in God's eyes. It is God who establishes the day of our death.

Job 14:5 Since his days are determined, The number of his months is with You; You have appointed his limits, so that he cannot pass.

Death brings a clear and non-reversible final decision to any person. If you don't know Jesus as your Savior and Lord, please remember what this preacher says to you: "You might think that what you are living in is hell, but the true hell is yet to come."

Prov 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Strolling through the forest, you spy a cocoon hanging from a tree. Upon closer examination, you see it move. "Bobby Butterfly is trying to get out," you say. "He's struggling. He must be hurting. Poor Bobby." And so, in the name of compassion, you take out your Swiss Army knife and clip the bottom of the cocoon, whereupon Bobby Butterfly falls to the ground. You're so proud. After all, you saved him from the struggle and pain of breaking out of his cocoon. But look at him. He's dead, because the wings of a butterfly are strengthened only through struggle.

Revelation 9:7-12 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

Suggestions that these locusts actually describe something such as the "helicopter gunships of the Antichrist" are interesting, but purely speculative, and don't fit all the details. But this approach misses the obvious demonic connection.

Why do demonic spirits who swarm and destroy like locusts? Among other reasons, because locusts are agents of God's judgment. This is a consistent Old Testament figure in passages like Exodus 10:4-14, Deuteronomy 28:38, 1 Kings 8:37, 2 Chronicles 7:13, Joel 1:4, and Amos 4:9.

The total impact of this description of the locust like demon is awesome cruelty.

This army follows the rule of Satan, the angel of the bottomless pit. 'Abaddon,' 'Apollyon' both names mean "destroyer." No matter what your language or culture, the devil always does the same thing: He's an equal opportunity destroyer. He wants to destroy everyone true to his nature as Jesus said in John 10:10.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

B. THE SIXTH TRUMPET - TWO MILLION ARMY FROM THE EAST

Revelation 9:13-16 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is 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 and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

These four angels are apparently wicked, because no holy angel would be bound. Each angel is in charge of part of the vast army that follows them at their liberation, an army of 200 million beings! The army is released at a precise time, for a special purpose: to kill a third of the world's population. Since a fourth of mankind has already been killed in Rev. 6:8, this means that half of the world's population will be dead by the time the sixth trumpet judgment is completed. My guesstimate is 3.2 billion will survive through this judgement.

China, India, Korea and Japan could easily put 200 million soldiers in the field today. However, even if such an army was assembled, and marched towards the west, it is hard to see such an army killing a billion or more people – a third of mankind. Behind this mass killing, there is the demonic forces.

Why are these angels of judgment connected with the Euphrates River? The Euphrates was a landmark of ancient Babylon. It was the frontier of the Israel's land as fully promised by God. It was also the boundary of the old Roman Empire, which will be revived under the Antichrist.

The river Euphrates area is also associated with the first sin in Genesis 2, the first murder by Cain in Genesis 4, the first organized revolt, the Tower of Babel, against God in Genesis 11, the first war confederation in Genesis 14, and the first dictatorship by Nimrod in Genesis 10.

Revelation 9:17-21 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed--by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails

are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. 20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

One would think that the combination of five months of torment and then death from fire, smoke, and brimstone would bring men and women to their knees in repentance. But such is not the case.

The most frightening thing about Revelation 9 is not the judgments that God sends but the sins that men persist in committing even while God is judging them.

These people continue their idol worship which is demon worship, killing each other, stealing from one other, practicing false religions that uses sorceries and drugs and sexual immorality.

“Sorceries” is the Greek word ‘pharmakia’, from which we get our English word ‘pharmacy’. Pharmacy means “drugs.” The Great Tribulation will be a period when the use of drugs will not be controlled. Drugs will play a large part in the lives of the unsaved and will serve in their religious purposes. Drugs will enable them to bear the judgments of the Great Tribulation Period.

C. APPLICATIONS

1) We are created with a purpose from God. Let’s glorify Him in our lives.

Life that is given by God is precious in His sight. Life is more than eating, drinking, and living for our selfish pleasure. With our actions, with our words, with our hearts, we can glorify Him by living for Him.

2) If you are planning to do anything other than what the Lord commands in the Bible, you are obeying the devil. Stop it while you have a chance.

Whether it is walking away from your marriage, gambling, sexual immorality, drinking, using drugs, or anything you want to hide from the eyes of God, you know you are doing wrong. You are following the devil’s instruction. Stop it. God is merciful and He is giving you a chance to make it right with Him.

3) If you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything.

The moment that you reject the Gospel and shut your heart to God, you are wide open for the big lies from the devil. This is the reason so many today fall for everything that comes along. This is it exactly: those today who are not standing for the Word of God are easy prey for the cults.