

## When Hell is Loosed on Earth (Message #21)

Revelation 9: 1-12

At the close of [Chp.8](#) an angel declared 3 [woes](#) that were yet to come. We have read about the first of the remaining 3 trumpets. These verses are the most frightening and disturbing that we've encountered. The Word of God has allowed us a glimpse of what the world will endure as the forces of hell unleash an attack on mankind.

Many today refuse to accept the existence of a literal hell. It is spoken of casually as a by-word and many make jokes about the "party" in hell. Listen, hell is very real and it certainly won't be a "party" for those who are condemned to endure its eternal torment. God's power is restraining the forces of hell, but in the Tribulation that restraint will be removed. Let's consider the events: [When Hell is Loosed on Earth](#).

**I. The Devil Unveiled** (1) – [And 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.](#) Here we find another star that falls from heaven. Unlike the others that were celestial bodies of mass, this star is a literal person, Satan himself. His name is Lucifer which means "*brilliant star or shining one.*" What can we learn about Satan from the text?

**A. His Attributes** (1a) – The word [fall](#) is of great significance. It means "*to descend from a higher place to a lower one; to be thrust down.*" It is a verb in the perfect tense, simply meaning an action has already happened, but the results and consequences remain.

- Satan has fallen from a place of acceptance to a place of rejection and condemnation. He was a highly exalted archangel, but his pride and vanity sought to possess the throne of God. It was that pride that caused God to cast him out of heaven, [Is.14:12-15](#); [Ez.28:13-19](#). Satan is described as [the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience](#). Pride brought Satan's demise and it will for men as well.

**B. His Authority** (1b) – [Satan is given the key to the bottomless pit.](#) He has been given the authority to open and loose the evil that God has bound within the pit of hell. Jesus has the keys of hell and death. Satan was dealt a mortal blow as the events of Calvary unfolded. Jesus paid the ransom for sin and rose victorious over death. (Satan doesn't possess the keys of hell or authority over it!)

- It is here that Satan is allowed the keys of hell for a brief time. These events are not outside the parameter of God's control. The Lord will allow the pit to be opened, but He still

has power over Satan. He always has and always will! The very pit that Satan is allowed to open will one day become his eternal prison, locked away to hinder the redeemed no more!

## **I. The Devil Unveiled** (1)

**II. The Deep Unlocked** (2) – *And 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.* Satan has opened the bottomless pit. The pit is mentioned 7 times in Revelation. It is from this pit that the demonic forces will be loosed upon the earth. What can we discover about the pit?

**A. Its Depth** – The pit is *bottomless*. This comes from the Greek word “*abussos*” from which we get our word abyss. It has the idea of a well. It is literally an endless depth that holds the demons of hell.

- Consider the desire of the legion that possessed the maniac of Gadara, *Lu.8:31 – And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.* The word translated *deep* is the same word translated *bottomless*. Clearly if the demons dread being bound in the pit, man would have no desire to be there!

**B. Its Description** – *and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace;* When the pit was opened, smoke arose as out of a great furnace. I’ve been associated with the local fire department long enough to know where there’s smoke, there’s fire. Hell is definitely a place of fire. The rich man cried from hell being tormented in the flame. *Mk.9:44 – Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*

- Many hold a modern view that there will be no literal fire in hell, but this is contrary to the Bible. Hell is real! It is a place of total separation and eternal condemnation for those who die in sin without Christ.

- I can assure you that there are no unbelievers in hell. (The rich man desired that Lazarus be sent to warn his five brothers.) They are left to face the reality of their rejection of Christ.

- The good news is nobody has to go! The choice is yours. All you need to do to escape the torment and separation of hell is accept Christ as your Savior.

**C. Its Disruption** – *and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.* The smoke from the pit will pollute the air, darkening the sky and hindering the sun’s light.

- The pit of hell hasn't been opened yet, but its influence is strongly felt in our day. Satan is hard at work to undermine the cause of Christ. He wants to destroy as many lives, homes, and churches as he can. We are in a battle this evening with the forces of hell. [Ep.6:12 – For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.](#) Satan wants to hinder the gospel light. [II Cor.4:4 – In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.](#)

### **I. The Devil Unveiled** (1)

### **II. The Deep Unlocked** (2)

**III. The Demons Unrestrained** (3-12) – There are skeptics who deny the literal existence of Satan and his demonic forces also. Jesus, the disciples, and Paul all dealt with demons. It is a dark area of life that we like to avoid, but it is real nonetheless.

- Adrian Rogers posed an interesting thought in his book on end times. Imagine the chaos and carnage if all the prisons in America would open their doors and free all the murderers, rapist, thieves, and insane upon society without any protection from the police. That is exactly the idea here as the pit of hell is opened and men stand before the forces of hell utterly defenseless at their onslaught of terror!

**A. Their Presence** (3) – [And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.](#) Out of the smoke came what appear to be [locusts](#), but these are not mere insects. A swarm of locusts can overwhelm and devour an entire area in a short time. They usually come in vast numbers, covering everything in their path.

- These demons will behave as locusts, overwhelming and consuming all they encounter. They will have the [power to sting as scorpions](#). This is referring to the great pain and fear that they will inflict upon their victims.

**B. Their Purpose** (4-5) – [And 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. And 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.](#) This demonic horde will be focused on their attack.

- There is a limit to what they can do. They are restrained from harming the grass and vegetation. They are not out to destroy and consume the landscape, but mankind. They are sent to bring judgment on those who have rejected the Lord.
- They won't have the power to kill men, only inflict great torture and pain. This invasion will last for five months. There will be five months of intense suffering with no death. Even in this time of chaos, God is still sovereign and in complete control!

**C. Their Precision** (6) – *And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.* The demons will accomplish their purpose. Men will not die, but they will seek death. The pain and suffering will be so severe that men will desire to die to escape their misery. This will be impossible. Those who have rejected God and are left to face His judgment will have no escape.

- Sadly, if they could die, it would only bring more suffering in hell. For these death has been delayed as God's wrath is poured out. I praise the Lord that I'll escape these horrors! The blood of Jesus has cleansed me and I am free of judgment for sin.

**D. Their Portrait** (7-11) – *And 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. [8] And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. [9] And 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. [10] And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. [11] And 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.* In these verses John paints a vivid picture of what these demons will resemble.

- 1) Horses prepared for battle-** They appear as strong horses, ready to pursue the enemy.
- 2) Crowns upon their heads-** They are seen wearing a victor's crown, completely conquering men.
- 3) Faces like men-** They are seen as intelligent beings. They are real personalities with real objectives, not an imagination.
- 4) Hair like women-** This seems to suggest their seductive nature. They will seduce the unsuspecting victim prior to pain. Satan and sin usually appeal to the flesh.
- 5) Teeth of lions-** They will be powerful and dominating. Creatures that are relentless in their pursuit, stalking prey.

- 6) **Breastplates of iron**- They will be unstoppable. There will be no way to overcome or defeat their attack. These will be completely insensitive to the pain and torment they inflict.
- 7) **Sound of their wings**- This reveals the swiftness of their coming. Men's hearts will fill with fear at the sound of their arrival, but there will be no escape.
- 8) **Sting of their tails**- It will be their main objective to inflict great pain and suffering.
- 9) **Allegiance to their king**- This demonic army will be under the command of Satan. His name listed in both Hebrew and Greek reveals that all unbelievers, Jew and Gentile alike, will face the ruthless attack of these demonic forces.

Most in our day would deny these as literal events yet to unfold. These are not only symbolic references. One day this 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet will sound and hell will be loosed on earth.

There is comfort for the saved; we'll never endure this satanic attack. But, those left behind after the rapture of the church have a date with destiny involving the demons of hell. You can be assured of missing this horrible time. You can make preparations to be in the number that is raptured out. Salvation is the only means of escape!