

# The Book Of Revelation

## Study 44

*Rev 9:1-2 (NKJV)*

*<sup>1</sup> 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.*

*<sup>2</sup> 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.*

As we begin tonight, we must look at Hell on earth.

Four events take place as we mentioned in our last study.

1. **The Pit Unlocked**
2. **The Power Unleashed**
3. **The Appearance Unveiled**
4. **The Prince Unmasked.**

### THE PIT UNLOCKED

When the **fifth** elite presence angel **sounded** his trumpet, John saw a **star from heaven which had fallen to the earth.**

In his visions, the apostle had already seen several heavenly bodies plunge to the earth (*6:13; 8:8, 10*)

Unlike them however, this **star** was not an inanimate piece of celestial matter, but an angelic being;

*Job 38:7*, calls them stars

*<sup>7</sup> When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

That he was said to have **fallen to the earth** suggests that this is a reference to Satan, the leader of all the fallen angels.

His fall is recorded by the prophet Isaiah.

*Isaiah 14:12-15*

*<sup>12</sup> "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!*

*<sup>13</sup> For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;*

*<sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'*

*<sup>15</sup> Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.*

*Ezekiel 28:12-16*

*<sup>12</sup> "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*

*<sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.*

*<sup>14</sup> "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God;*

*You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.*

*15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.*

*16 "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones.*

**Luke 10:18**

*18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.*

The fall of Satan described here in *9:1* is not his original rebellion. Though he and the angels who fell with him (*12:4*) were banished from heaven. Satan retains access to God's presence, where he constantly accuses believers (*Psa 112:10; Job 1:6*).

But during the Tribulation he and his demon hosts will unsuccessfully battle Michael and the holy angels.

As a result of their defeat, they will be permanently cast down to the earth.

The battle scene is described in;

**Rev 12:7-9**

*7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,*

*8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.*

*9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

With his theater of operation now restricted to the earth, and his time running out, 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 time in Revelation, always in reference to the abode of incarcerated demons.

**Rev 9:2-3**

*2 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.*

**Rev 9:11**

*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.*

**Rev 11:7**

*7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.*

**Rev 17:8**

*8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

Satan himself will be held prisoner there during the Millennium, chained and locked up with the other demonic prisoners;

*Rev 20:1-3*

*1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

*2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;*

*3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*

Scripture teaches that God has sovereignly chosen to incarcerate certain demons in that **pit** of punishment.

Peter says;

*2Pet 2:4*

*4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;*

The phrase “cast them down to hell” is a participle derived from the Greek noun *Tartarus*.

Just as Jesus used a term for hell derived from the Jewish vernacular (*Gehenna*;(Matt 5:22)

So Peter chose a term from Greek mythology with which his readers would be familiar. Tartarus was the name used in Greek literature for the place where the worst sinners, those who had offended the gods personally, went after death and were punished.

The place where God keeps demons imprisoned is actually different from the imaginary place of Greek mythology. Yet the use of the term *Tartarus* does seem to convey the idea that because of the heinousness of their sin, God has imprisoned certain fallen angels in such a place of severest torment and isolation.

They remain in that area awaiting their sentencing to final punishment in the eternal lake of fire

*Rev 20:10*

*10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

*Rev 20:13-14*

*13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.*

*14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

The demons incarcerated in the abyss are undoubtedly the most wicked, vile, and perverted of all the fallen angels.

Jude describes some of them as “angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode,” Noting that God, “has kept them in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as the example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire” *Jude 6-7*

Demons still fear going to the pit.

Luke 8:26-33

*26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.*

*27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.*

*28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"*

*29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.*

*30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him.*

*31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.*

*32 Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them.*

*33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.*

After Satan received the key to the abyss from its keeper, the Lord Jesus Christ (1:18), **he opened the bottomless pit** and released its inmates.

*John Phillips Comments,*

*Picture what the world would be like if we were to open the doors of all the penitentiaries of earth and set free the world's most vicious and violent criminals, giving them full reign to practice their infamies upon mankind. Something worse than that lies in store for the world. Satan, cast out of heaven is now permitted to summon to his aid the most diabolical fiends in the abyss to act as his agents in bringing mankind to the footstool of the Beast.*

*(Exploring Revelation, rev. ed.[Chicago; Moody, 1987; reprint, Neptune, N.J.; Loizeaux, 1991], 125)*

When the abyss opened, **smoke went up out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. Smoke** in Revelation may refer to holy things (8:4; 15:8) but is usually associated with judgment (9:17-18; 14:11; 18:9, 18; 19:3; Gen 19:28; Isa 34:10; Joel 2:30; Nah 2:13)

Such a vast volume of smoke issued from the abyss that **the sun and the air were darkened** by it.

The smoke polluting the sky symbolizes the corruption of hell belched forth from the abyss to pollute the world.

## THE POWER UNLEASHED

*Rev 9:3-6*

*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.*

**Out of** the vast, billowing, ominous cloud of **smoke** that darkened the sky and caused panic among earth's inhabitants John saw a new terror emerge.

Vile demons, taking on a visible form resembling **locusts**, swarmed out of the abyss to plague **the earth**.

The destructive power of locusts is noted in several Old Testament passages (*Duet. 28:38; 2 Chron 7:13; Ps 105:34; Joel 2:25; Nah 3:15*)

Locust swarms consume all vegetation in their path. The scene is reminiscent of the locust plague in Joel;

*Joel 1:1-7*

*1 The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.*

*2 Hear this, you elders, And give ear, all you inhabitants of the land! Has anything like this happened in your days, Or even in the days of your fathers?*

*3 Tell your children about it, Let your children tell their children, And their children another generation.*

*4 What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.*

*5 Awake, you drunkards, and weep; And wail, all you drinkers of wine, Because of the new wine, For it has been cut off from your mouth.*

*6 For a nation has come up against My land, Strong, and without number; His teeth are the teeth of a lion, And he has the fangs of a fierce lion.*

*7 He has laid waste My vine, And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and thrown it away; Its branches are made white.*

*Joel 2:1-5*

*1 Blow the trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; For the day of the LORD is coming, For it is at hand:*

*2 A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations.*

*3 A fire devours before them, And behind them a flame burns; The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, And behind them a desolate wilderness; Surely nothing shall escape them.*

*4 Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; And like swift steeds, so they run.*

*5 With a noise like chariots Over mountaintops they leap, Like the noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble, Like a strong people set in battle array.*

But far worse than this is what we see in our text, the imagery of smoke is an apt depiction of a locust plague, since millions of the grasshopper like insects swarm so thickly that they can darken the sky and blot out the sun, turning day into night.

Locust swarms can be unimaginably huge

*Psalms 105:34*

*34 He spoke, and locusts came, Young locusts without number,*

*35 And ate up all the vegetation in their land, And devoured the fruit of their ground.*

*John Phillips writes:*

*The worst locust plague in modern time struck the Middle East in 1951-1952 when in Iran, Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia every green and growing thing was devoured across hundreds of thousands of square miles. Locusts eat grain, leaf, and stalk, right down to the bare ground. When a swarm arises and flies on its way, the green field is left a desert; barrenness and desolation stretches as far as eye can see. (Exploring Revelation, 125-26)*

But listen these we are discussing are not ordinary locusts, but demons, who, like locusts bring swarming destruction.

Describing them in the form of **locusts** symbolizes their uncountable numbers and massive destructive capabilities.

The fact that three times in the passage their **power** to inflict pain is compared to that of **scorpions** indicates they are not actual locusts, since locusts have no stinging tail as scorpions do.

Now the fact that these locust and scorpion like creatures come from the pit and that their leader is the “*angel of the abyss*” (9:11) indicates that demons must be in view in this scene. Demons are also pictured as creatures from the animal kingdom in (16:13) where they appear like frogs.

*Rev 16:13*

*13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

Sadly, even the horrifying experience of this demon manifestation will not cause many to repent;

*Rev 9:20-21*

*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.*

Now strict limitations were placed on the activities of this demonic host.

This judgment, unlike the first four trumpet Judgments, is not on physical world. In fact, **they were told** that there were limits.

God forbade them **to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree** that again shows that they were not actual insects.

The demon’s business is not with vegetation, but **only** with **men**, not all people, but only those who **do not have the seal of God on their foreheads**.

**Believers** will be preserved, just as God sheltered Israel from the effects of the Egyptian plagues.

Those who have the **seal of God** , the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, and also the rest of the redeemed

*Rev 22:3-5*

*3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.*

*4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.*

*5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.*

This **seal** marks them as personally belonging to God and as such protected from the forces of hell.

Ezekiel illustrates the truth that God protects His people in the midst of judgment.

*Ezekiel 9:4-6*

*4 and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."*

*5 To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity.*

*6 Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple.*

Even what the demons can do to the unbelievers is limited.

Although Satan has the power of death, (*Heb 2:14*), its exercise is subject to God's sovereign will and power, this these demons **were not permitted to kill anyone.**

After millennia of captivity, the vile demons would no doubt want to give full vent to all of their pent-up evil by slaughtering people.

Certainly Satan would want to kill all the unregenerate to keep them from repenting.

But God in His mercy, will give people **torment for five months** (the normal life span of locusts, usually from May to September), during which they cannot die but will be given the opportunity to repent, and embrace the gospel.

**Torment** describes punishment in Revelation

That five month period will be one of intense spiritual and physical suffering inflicted on unbelievers by the judgment of God through the demon horde.

This five months will be for many the last opportunity to repent and believe, before they die or are permanently hardened in their unbelief.

How intense will this be? Well it says: **"in those days (the five months) men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.**

All hope is gone; there will be no tomorrow. The earth people have loved and worshiped will have been utterly devastated, the land ravaged by earthquakes and fires, and volcanoes, the sea filled with the putrefying bodies of billions of dead creatures, much of the fresh water supply turned into bitter poison, and the atmosphere polluted with gases and shower of heavenly debris. Then, worst of all, will come foul smoke from the pit of hell as the demons are released to spiritually and physically torment wicked people.

The dreams of a worldwide utopia under the leadership of the Anti-Christ will have died.

Driven mad by the filth and vileness of the demon infestation people will seek relieve in death, only to find that death has taken a holiday.

There will be no escape from the agony inflicted by the demons, no escape from divine judgment.

All attempts at suicide, whether by gunshot, poison, drowning, or leaping from buildings, will fail. They will suffer greatly.