

The Book Of Revelation

Study 45

Rev 9:7-10 (NKJV)

7 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.

When the fifth angel sounded there were four events that took place they were as follows:

~~1. The Pit Unlocked~~

~~2. The Power Unleashed~~

3. The Appearance Unveiled

4. The Prince Unmasked

We have already taken up the first two of these events; the Pit Unlocked, and the Power Unleashed. As this army of demons come out of the abyss. So many it darkened the sky and the sun could not shine and the moon could not make its light penetrate the darkened skies

Now we will take up the remaining two events. The Appearance Unveiled, and the Prince Unmasked.

THE APPEARANCE UNVEALED

John writes of the magnitude of the devastation these demon hordes will bring with them and we learned that their horrible war is upon the people of the earth and not the earth itself.

Having delineated the devastation the **locusts** (demons) will cause, John gives a more detailed description of their appearance in the vision.

They are described as locusts because they bring massive, devastating, rapid judgment from God.

(Ex 10:4-5, 12-15; Duet 28:38; 1Kings 8:37; 2Chron 7:13; Psa 78:46; 105:34; Joel 2:1; Amos 7:1)

Their exaggerated, terrifying features reveal them to be unlike any locust, scorpion, or any other creature ever before seen on earth.

John can give only an approximation of what this formidable spiritual army looked like, as the repeated use of the terms **like** (used ten times in this passage) and **appeared to be** indicates. To describe the supernatural and unfamiliar demon horde, John chooses natural and familiar analogies.

The general **appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle.**

They were war like, powerful and defiant, like horses straining at the bit and pawing the ground in their eagerness to charge forward on their mission of death.

Joel 2:1-11

- 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.*
- ⁶ Before them the people writhe in pain; All faces are drained of color.*
- ⁷ They run like mighty men, They climb the wall like men of war; Every one marches in formation, And they do not break ranks.*
- ⁸ They do not push one another; Every one marches in his own column. Though they lunge between the weapons, They are not cut down.*
- ⁹ They run to and fro in the city, They run on the wall; They climb into the houses, They enter at the windows like a thief.*
- ¹⁰ The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness.*
- ¹¹ The LORD gives voice before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; Who can endure it?*

Here Joel describes a locust plague in the same terms..

On their heads John saw what **appeared to be crowns like gold**. **The crowns** they wore are called *stephanoi*, the victors crowns, indicating that the demon host will be invincible, unstoppable, and all conquering.

Men will have no weapon that can harm them and no cure for the terrible torment they inflict.

That **their faces were like the faces of men** indicates they are intelligent, rational beings, not actual insects.

Look at Jeremiah:

Jer 51:27

²⁷ Set up a banner in the land, Blow the trumpet among the nations! Prepare the nations against her, Call the kingdoms together against her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a general against her; Cause the horses to come up like the bristling locusts.

Here we see Jeremiah describing the army like locusts with bristling hair, but the **hair** as being **like the hair of women** more likely emphasizes their seductiveness.

The glory or beauty of a woman is her hair, which she may decorate to become more alluring.

Like the Sirens of Greek mythology, these locusts like demons will lure people to their doom.

Having **teeth like the teeth of lions** they will be for more fierce, powerful, and deadly than lions, ripping and tearing apart their victims.

They will have **breastplates of iron**, designed to protect the vital organs and preserve the life of the soldier, here symbolize the demon horde's invulnerability; they will be impossible to resist or destroy.

In a further metaphor drawn from the battlefield, John, like the prophet Joel compares **the sound of their wings** to a moving army, noting that it **was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.**

There will be no escaping their massive, worldwide onslaught; nowhere to run or hide.

The three fold comparison of the demons to scorpions stresses that their sole mission is **to hurt men.**

The nature of this full scale demonic torment that drives people to seek death and not find it, to pursue death and not catch it, is not described.

However, a look at some biblical illustrations of demonic torment offers some good insights.

The maniacs of Gadara were so tormented by demons that they were insane, living in tombs;

Matt 8:28

28 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.

All about Galilee Jesus encountered tormented demoniacs.

Matt 4:23-24

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

24 Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

A Centurion's servant was tormented with paralysis

Matt 8:5-6

*5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him,
6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."*

A demon possessed boy kept throwing himself into fires and water in acts of self destruction;

Mark 9:20-22

20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood.

22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Such are the physical and spiritual torments demons can inflict.

For **five months** they will do such to a whole world of ungodly sinners.

The reiteration that demons will be permitted to torment people for a limited time stresses God's sovereign power over the duration of their assault.

Eventually He will return them to the abyss with their evil master

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.

And then He will send them to the 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.

THE PRINCE UNMASKED

Rev 9:11-12

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.

Unlike real locusts;

Prov 30:27

27 The locusts have no king, Yet they all advance in ranks;

The demons had a **king over them**.

John gives his title as **the angel of the abyss**.

Some identify this angel as Satan, but his domain is the heavenlies (*Eph 6:12*) where he is the "*prince of the power of the air*" (*Eph 2:2*)

He is not associated with the abyss until he is cast into it;

This angel is better viewed as a high ranking demon in Satan's hierarchy.

John notes that **his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon**.

John uses both names to emphasize his impact on both ungodly Jews and Gentiles.

Both words mean "destroyer" an apt name for the head of the devastating army of demons that rises from the abyss.

Abaddon is used in the Old Testament to describe the place of eternal punishment;

Job 26:6

6 Abaddon is naked before Him, And Destruction has no covering.

Job 28:22

22 Abaddon says, 'We have heard a report about it with our ears.'

This further reinforces this angels connection with the abyss and hell.

Apollyon comes from the Greek verb *apollumi*, which means “I destroy”

These terms identify this leader as the king of the demonic death squad.

Having described **the first woe** (8:13; the fifth trumpet judgment). John cautions that God’s wrath has not run its course.

Two woes (the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments, including all the bowl judgments) **are still coming after these things**, so there will be nothing more than a brief sigh of relief before still more fearful judgments follow on those “*who suppress the truth in unrighteousness*” (Rom 1:18)

SATANIC SLAUGHTER

Rev 9:13-21

13 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.

17 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.

Mankind lies between two powerful opposing spiritual spheres, each seeking to conform people to itself.

No one is neutral in the cosmic battle;

Everyone is either part of the “domain of darkness” or of the “kingdom of God’s beloved Son;

Col 1:13-14

*13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

As they yield to one sphere or the other, people become the companions of God; or the companions of Satan, the companions of holy angels, or the companions of demons; the companions of saints, or the companions of sinners.

To doubt that reality is the gravest mistake any person can make, because making the wrong choice results in eternal disaster.

God offers people the life giving gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; Satan and the forces of hell lure people to their destruction by dangling before them the “passing pleasures of sin”

Heb 11:24-25

*24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,
25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,*

The loud voices of hell have always tried to drown out the preaching of the gospel.

There is coming a day when the siren call of hell will be so loud as to be all but irresistible. The people of that time will ignore the repeated powerful preaching of the gospel and the warning conveyed by terrifying, devastating judgments from God.

Having rejected all offers of grace and mercy, they will see death come upon mankind through the trumpet and bowl judgments, which will deliver death on a scale unprecedented in human history.

Yet even then they will not repent; in fact, they will curse God.

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.

Rev 16:9, 11

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.

11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

People at that time will have made the irrevocable choice to side with the forces of hell.

While there will be divine judgments throughout the seven year Tribulation, they will escalate during the last three and one half years, the time Jesus calls “*the great tribulation: (Matt 24:21; Rev 7:14)*”

As we have discussed in earlier studies in Revelation the judgments will unfold sequentially in three telescoping series: the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls.

Out of the seventh seal comes the seven trumpet judgments, and out of the seventh trumpet comes the seven bowl judgments.

Like the fifth trumpet (*9:1-12*) the sounding of the sixth trumpet heralds another, more severe demonic attack on sinful mankind. This attack, unlike the previous one, brings death.

It unfolds in three stages:

- 1. The release of demons**
- 2. The return of death**
- 3. The reaction of defiance.**

We will take these up in our next study.