If you want to go faster, go alone, but if you want to go farther, go together.
African Proverb
And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of His coming back again is drawing near.
Hebrews 10:25 (New Living Translation)

REVELATION CHAPTER NINE
THE FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPET
Handout #15
Prayer Study #414
First Love Ministries of Perry, Georgia USA

The Fifth Trumpet

1 *Then the fifth angel blew [his] trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth; and to the angel was given the key of the shaft of the Abyss (the bottomless pit).*
2 *He opened the long shaft of the Abyss (the bottomless pit), and smoke like the smoke of a huge furnace puffed out of the long shaft, so that the sun and the atmosphere were darkened by the smoke from the long shaft.*
3 *Then out of the smoke locusts came forth on the earth, and such power was granted them as the power the earth's scorpions have.*
4 *They were told not to injure the herbage of the earth nor any green thing nor any tree, but only [to attack] such human beings as do not have the seal (mark) of God on their foreheads.*
5 *They were not permitted to kill them, but to torment (distress, vex) them for five months; and the pain caused them was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings a person.*
6 *And in those days people will seek death and will not find it; and they will yearn to die, but death evades and flees from them.*
7 *The locusts resembled horses equipped for battle. On their heads was something like golden crowns. Their faces resembled the faces of people.*
8 *They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.*
9 *Their breastplates (scales) resembled breastplates made of iron, and the [whirring] noise made by their wings was like the roar of a vast number of horse-drawn chariots going at full speed into battle.*
10 *They have tails like scorpions, and they have stings, and in their tails lies their ability to hurt men for [the] five months.*
11 *Over them as king they have the angel of the Abyss (of the bottomless pit). In Hebrew his name is Abaddon [destruction], but in Greek he is called Apollyon [destroyer].*
12 *The first woe (calamity) has passed; behold, two others are yet to follow.*

The trumpet judgments are getting more and more severe. The object of these next judgments is not nature but human beings and specifically those human beings who do

not have the seal or mark of God on their foreheads. (An interesting passage of scripture dealing with the seal of God is found in Ezekiel 9.) J. Vernon McGee says of this passage of scripture in Revelation, "The last three trumpets [from Chapter 8] are separated from the other four by the fact that these new judgments are three *woe* trumpets…. These woes mark the deepest darkness and the most painful intensity of the Great Tribulation Period. They are generally associated with the last three and one-half years of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, which is the Great Tribulation Period. These will be the blackest days in human history."

The amplified version is not clear as to whom was given the key, but almost every other translation makes clear the key was given to the star, who is referred to in the masculine case, and not to the angel. This star is a being with intelligence and capable of action. There is no doubt that this star that fell from heaven, or the sky, as some translators render it, is none other than Satan himself. Remember Jesus' words in Luke 10:18: *And He* [Jesus] *said unto them,* ***I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."***

This star or whom I, and I believe most Biblical scholars and theologians would agree, is Satan. He is given the key to the Abyss, which is some type of intermediary holding, which is later referred to as *the bottomless pit.* Notice that he was given the key. He did not take it forcefully. Apparently, he is given this authority and power by God Himself to punish those who have rejected God. This whole scene is backed up by Isaiah 14, one of the most revealing chapters in the Bible, concerning Satan. Isaiah writes in 14:12: *How art thou fallen down from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"* (Anyone wanting to know more about Satan should read Ezekiel 28, especially noting verses 14-17. The King of Tyre is a type in Scripture for Satan.)

The key opened the shaft, like a mine shaft, that leads down to a bottomless pit. Jesus speaks of this place as *the heart of the earth* (Matthew 24:40). Scripture refers to the place as Hades or Sheol. Apparently, there were two compartments there before Jesus paid for our sins: Abraham's Bosom or paradise, where the saved went until they were redeemed by Jesus during the three days between his death and resurrection; and the place of torment, where the wicked go (remember the rich man and the poor man-Luke 16:19-31). We know that this is a literal place and that demons are imprisoned there. Jesus holds the key to the abyss, but during the Great Tribulation He will give this key to Satan, who will operate in the greatest freedom he has had or will ever have, bringing great darkness and fear to the earth and causing men to pray to die during this period. We find in Chapter 12, one of the most astounding chapters in Revelation to me, the second part of verse 12: *…For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.*

Notice that this is the Abyss, not the lake of fire and brimstone. The lake of fire is mentioned in Revelation 19, 20, and 21. After the thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth, Satan will be released but will continue his deception and will finally end up in the

lake of fire. Revelation 20:10-*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 locusts, released by the opening of the shaft, obviously are symbolic of demon hoards being released on unrepentant mankind. They are not interested in eating vegetation but in stinging human beings, bringing the greatest torment the world has or will ever see. Unlike other Biblical locusts, they have a king over them, they attack humans and not vegetation, and they resemble literal animals: the lion, the horse, the scorpion, and the man.

A French writer, Olivier, says this of the locusts: "It is difficult to express the effect produced on us by the sight of the whole atmosphere filled on all sides and to a great height by an innumerable quantity of these insects, whose flight was low and uniform, and whose noise resembled that of rain."

The locusts are commanded not to harm the grass or any green thing and can only touch those humans who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They can, however, not kill but only torment. The sting of a scorpion, one of the animals they resemble, is very painful but seldom fatal.

In the Middle East the five dry months of the year is the season for locusts. However, a normal attack does not involve eating humans and only last for a few days. This is a much more intense and severe attack of human beings and last for 5 months.

The angel who is king over this demonic hoard is also called Abaddon in Hebrew and Apollyon in Greek. These words mean destruction and destroyer, respectively. The editors of the New King James' Bible look at the names for Satan in Scripture:

"Satan, or Adversary is the most frequently used name for the devil in the New Testament, appearing over fifty times. Devil or Slanderer is used over thirty times. Satan, the personification of evil in this world, is the great superhuman enemy of God, His people, and all that is good. His character is vile and evil, and he is portrayed as the great deceiver. So sly is Satan in his deception that he sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light (2nd Corinthians 11:14). Regarded by many scholars as a fallen angel, Satan has a continuing ambition to replace God and have others worship him (Matthew 4:8-9). He constantly tempts people to try to entice them into sin (1st Thessalonians 3:5). In falling from God's favor, Satan persuaded other angels to join him in his rebellion (Revelation 12:9). When Christ returns, Satan will be defeated and ultimately cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:1-10)."

The editors also give us a pretty complete list of Satan's names in scripture:

- Beezebub, Ruler Of Demons (Matthew 12:24)
- The Wicked One (Matthew 13:19)
- The Enemy (Matthew 13:39)

- Murderer (John 8:44)
- A Liar (John 8:44)
- Ruler Of This World (John 12:31 & John 14:30)
- God Of This Age (2nd Corinthians 4:4)
- Prince Of The Power Of The Air (Ephesians 2:2)
- Ruler Of Darkness (Ephesians 6:12)
- The Tempter (1st Thessalonians 3:5)
- The King Of Death (Hebrews 2:14)
- A Roaring Lion (1st Peter 5:8)
- Adversary (1st Peter 5:8)
- Angel Of The Bottomless Pit (Revelation 9:11)
- Abaddon (Destruction) (Revelation 9:11)
- Apollyon (Destroyer) (Revelation 9:11)
- The Dragon (Revelation 12:7)
- Accuser Of The Brethren (Revelation 12:10)
- Serpent Of Old (Revelation 20:2)
- The Deceiver (Revelation 20:10)

The last verse in this section ends on a very ominous note. There will be two more *woe* trumpet judgments.

Sixth Trumpet (Army from the Far East)

13 *Then the sixth angel blew [his] trumpet, and from the four horns of the golden altar which stands before God I heard a solitary voice,*
14 *Saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Liberate the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.*
15 *So the four angels who had been in readiness for that hour in the appointed day, month, and year were liberated to destroy a third of mankind.*
16 *The number of their troops of cavalry was twice ten thousand times ten thousand (200,000,000); I heard what their number was.*
17 *And in [my] vision the horses and their riders appeared to me like this: the riders wore breastplates the color of fiery red and sapphire blue and sulphur (brimstone) yellow. The heads of the horses looked like lions' heads, and from their mouths there poured fire and smoke and sulphur (brimstone).*
18 *A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues—by the fire and the smoke and the sulphur (brimstone) that poured from the mouths of the horses.*
19 *For the power of the horses to do harm is in their mouths and also in their tails. Their tails are like serpents, for they have heads, and it is by means of them that they wound people.*

20 *And the rest of humanity who were not killed by these plagues even then did not repent of [the worship of] the works of their [own] hands, so as to cease paying homage to the demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor move.*
21 *And they did not repent of their murders or their practice of magic (sorceries) or their sexual vice or their thefts.*

This is one passage in the Bible that no one has been able to fully explain. We don't know who these angels are, nor can we adequately explain all the mysterious imagery of this last portion of Chapter 9. We do know that the number 6 in Scripture is the number of men, and we can guess that this passage has a lot to do with mankind. We can surmise that the angel is blowing his trumpet at a place of prayer since this area of the tabernacle was a place of prayer, and in Revelation 8:3 the angel offers the incense with the prayers of the saints at the golden altar, after the seventh seal is broken but before the seven trumpet judgments are released. The solitary voice is no doubt the voice of Jesus, the only one worthy to open the seals.

We think these four angels most likely are demonic spirits because they are bound and not free, and they assignment is very destructive. They are in an area from which so many of the Bible events took place: the Garden of Eden and the Fall of Man; the place where the first sin, the first murder, and the first war took place; the place where the Tower of Babel was erected; and the place of the Babylonian captivity. These angels have a specific time in history when they will be released and will destroy 1/3 of mankind. (We have already seen 1/4 of mankind destroyed - Revelation 6:8.)

The world with China and India and the Middle East could field an army of this size today, although the number might be symbolic and just mean that they could not be counted by human onlookers. There is a real possibility that these troops are human armies, but J. Vernon McGee sees them as a demon host whose mission is wholesale invasion of the earth, creating a real-world war in which every nation will take part.

As we look at the description of these horses and riders, all we can do is speculate. For example, was John seeing missiles and rockets launched from jets, and only able to put the descriptions down in the lack of knowledge he would have about modern aircraft. Or are these supernatural beings demons? Any conjecture we make cannot be adequately taken from scripture, although there is certainly nothing wrong with speculating on these matters.

The real tragedy is both of these trumpet judgments that brought woe, destruction, and torment likes in the fact that the idolatrous people on the earth did not repent of their idolatry, sorcery (drug addictions, etc.), sexual immorality, and thievery.