

Date: March 1, 2020

Text: Revelation 9:13-21

Title: All Hell Breaks Loose

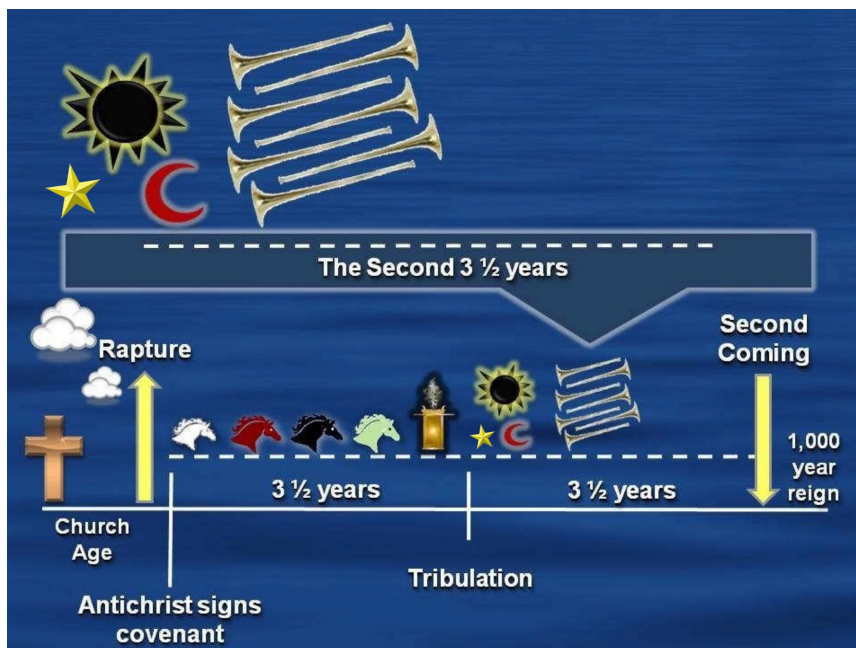
Theme: Judgment

Proposition: When God removes His restraint from Satan, the world sees and feels his rabid destruction.

Sticky: Bad news: Satan hates you and has a destructive plan for your life. Good News: God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.

Introduction: Aren't you thankful for the cross and what Jesus did for you? I love John 6:47 which records for us Jesus' words, **"Verily, Verily I say unto you, he that believes in Me, has everlasting life."** The good news is that God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. The bad news is that Satan hates you and has a destructive plan for your life.

We are studying the prophetic Book of Revelation, the Great Day of the Lord, which is called *The Tribulation*. Look with me at our chart so I can recap where we are in light of this seven year period.



Chapter 8, verse 13, says, **“And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, ‘Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.’”** Chapter 9 produces two of these great “Woe’s.” These are terrible, horrible disasters that continue to increase in intensity. Last week Pastor John spoke to this fifth trumpet judgment which tormented men for five months. This morning let me invite you to join me beginning in verse 13 of chapter 9 of Revelation. And as you’re turning, let me quote to you what one pastor said in preparing for this text. “Mankind lies between two mighty opposite spiritual spheres, both touching the earth and man directly. And each of those spheres operates to conform man to itself. And as he yields to one or the other, he [either] becomes a companion to God or a companion to Satan, a companion to holy angels or a companion to demons, a companion to saints or a companion to sinners” (MacArthur). Friends, heaven is one of those spheres that calls man to Christ Jesus. That is the good news. Hell, the other sphere, is calling man to Satan. That is the bad news. The voices of hell have always been deceptive in seducing the world to Satan. This conflict between heaven and hell, light and darkness, between God and Satan has been raging for almost six-thousand years. Satan understands that when the end of the age is come and that he hasn’t defeated God, he will be cast into the lake of fire. We know he will not defeat God and he will ultimately, completely and finally be driven out of business. But the Bible tells us as we approach the end of time, Satan will increase his demonic activity. The message of hell will be so powerfully seductive that it will drown out the voice of the preachers who are calling people to heaven.

This morning we will see that God takes a world that will not honor nor give thanks to Him and He will remove His restraint from Satan, and when He does, much of the world will be tortured and killed by the demonic forces of hell. Anyone want to

take a bet as to how many people who survive will repent or not? Follow along with me beginning at verse 13 and we will see.

“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 (hai-uh-snth) 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 mouth so 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.”

Friends, as the end approaches, isn't it such a source of comfort and hope that we will not go through this time of tribulation? But you must know Jesus personally. What a hope knowing your eternal destination is heaven.

Prayer:

John needed only six verses to set forth the first four trumpet judgments of Chapter 8. Now he devotes an entire chapter, 21 verses, to trumpets 5-6, and the first two woes. Demonic activity will dominate the plagues and judgments associated with both.

Friends, demons are certainly alive and active in our day. Jesus rebuked demons and taught about their existence. I find it interesting that the world has a fascination with demons. All you have to do is google the word “demon” and you will find over seventy million websites to surf. Every year, hundreds of new books are published dealing with demonism, witchcraft, magic, spiritism and ghosts. Every television season brings new programs and documentaries on the occult, like the TV shows *Lucifer* and *Evil*. But, amazingly, most professing Christians in our day are out of step with the Bible on this. A Barna survey found that only 27% believe Satan to be real. But the Bible teaches He is real, and His minions will be on a rampage when the Great Tribulation arrives. Listen, Satan is not a guy with a pitchfork and two red horns, nor is he the guy on the chili can or the hot sauce bottle. No, He is a real, rabid, powerful, wicked destroyer and God reveals it in Revelation 9.

A couple of times in my life I have been in the presence of people I felt were demonic. And I remember the feeling I had, for it felt that I was in the presence of something sinister and oppressive. Never dabble in sorcery, games like the Ouija board, seances, and divinations, for they are openings to your mind.

Have you ever heard of all hell breaking loose? In this chapter all hell does breaks loose. Man has indulged himself all too long in Satan’s deception and believed his lie for centuries. His lie is that He is good and He is the one to follow. But Demons are destroyers, accusers, and deceivers, and the day will come when God takes off their leashes and gives them access to do to mankind what they have really wanted to do all along. They want to torment the believer and kill the unbeliever, lest they repent and come to God. In chapter 9 we see two frightening armies of Satan that are liberated at just the right time to judge mankind. The fifth trumpet judgment unlocks the abyss and unleashes horrific, tormenting locusts from the pit of hell. Mankind is tormented for five months with the sting of the scorpion, unable to escape the pain. Man wants to die and cannot.

Secondly, the sixth trumpet judgment, we see another army from hell discharged that brings death to a third of mankind. In these verses we learn something about their character and their conduct, and their terror. God uses Satan and his demons to carry out His judgments (vv. 1-2, 11-12).

But if Revelation teaches us anything, it teaches us that God is in control. He is Lord. He is sovereign. All of time has a purpose and is the grand design of God. This morning I would like for you to see two demonstrations of God's judgment. 1) God's judgment is a demonstration of His Sovereignty (vv. 13-19); and 2) God's judgment is a demonstration of man's sinfulness (vv. 20-21).

1. God's judgment is a demonstration of His sovereignty - vv. 13-19 The sixth angel sounds and an unspecified voice speaks from the golden altar which is before God. That this voice comes from the **"altar before God"** ties these judgments to God Himself. He speaks to the sixth angel with clear and precise authority. This reveals an incredible truth.
 - God directs their destiny - vv. 13-16 **(14) saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 'Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.'**" The river Euphrates is prominent in Scripture and why they are bound here is not explained, though that area is often referred to as the cradle of civilization. It was the Euphrates that flowed out of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:14), not to mention it was one of the boundaries for Israel (Gen. 15:18). Notice the four angels who have been bound. Some would say that these are good angels rather than fallen angels because they seem to be similar to the four angels at the corners of the Earth in Revelation 7. However, the verb indicates that these angels have been in this condition for some time. We never find any reference in Scripture to good angels ever being bound. The Book of Jude gives us some insight here, for we read, **"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” (Jude 6). Peter stated, **“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” (II Peter 2:4).** The word for hell is the word *tartaroo*. This is the only time it appears in the New Testament. It’s the word someone would give to a grain pit, like a cellar. In other words, God is in control of the demonic world and has kept many in the deepest part of the abyss until this time. Notice verse 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.”** This verse reveals that God’s plans are not accidental, but they have been prepared (perfect tense), meaning for the 1) hour, 2) day, 3) month, and 4) year. This is a precise time. There is also a precise purpose. They are to kill one-third of the world’s population. This means that half of the world’s population will be dead by the time the sixth trumpet judgment is completed. Make no mistake—God is in charge, even as the demonic forces are bringing terror, torture and death to mankind. Verse 16, **“Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.”** John states, “If you think I was mistaken or just took a wild guess, I actually heard this number used in reference to this army. There are two different interpretations here: either 200 million demonic forces or a literal army of 200 million. I lean more to it being a demonic army from hell. For one thing, the emphasis in this paragraph is not on the riders, but on the horses. Warren Wiersbe’s comment here focuses “on the description and [says] that it cannot fit war-horses as we know them or, for that matter, modern warfare equipment, such as tanks. To assert that this is some nation (such as China) that claims to have 200 million soldiers, is to miss the message John is

- seeking to convey. The deadly power of these horses is in their mouths and tails, not in their legs. They can attack men from the front as well as the back” (The Bible Exposition Commentary; Wiersbie, page 595). You talk about a weapon of mass destruction. The Bible always speaks of fire and brimstone as pictures of God’s divine wrath. These demons are messengers of the wrath of God on earth-dwellers that do not have the mark of God. The church has never been and will never be purified by demons during the Tribulation (I Thessalonians 5:9-10).
- God determines their destruction - vv. 17-19 Look with me at verse 17, **“And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth (hai-uh-sinth) 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.”** The color of fire is red. The brimstone represents a sulphuric gas, the color of it would be yellow. The color of hyacinth is anything from blue to black. The red of fire, the blue/black smoke and a yellow sulfuric gas, the colors of hell. It’s very descriptive language for God wants John to see these demons visually. The vision is of these lion-headed beings, meaning they are fierce, strong, determined, stalking their victims to slaughter.

Transition: The most tragic and terrifying reality of Revelation 9 is not necessarily the judgments of God, but the sinfulness of man. Even as God punishes them for their sins, they still persist in their rebellion.

2. God’s judgment is a demonstration of man’s sinfulness - vv. 20-21 **“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands.”** Those who are still living after all of this have hearts that are not softened—they are hardened just like Pharaoh of the Egyptians. These people will not repent even though they are breaking the two greatest commandments; their sins

match the two divisions of the Ten Commandments. Rather than worship God, they worship idols. Rather than love their neighbors, they murder, dabble in drugs, commit adultery, and steal. Their gods have not delivered them from the judgments of the one true and living God. Look with me at these five sins that mankind pursues.

- Man does not repent of his idolatry - v. 20 Mankind will still cling to its idol the antichrist and worship the demon world and Mother Nature. As unbelievable as it may seem, men and women will remain committed to Earth and his pleasures, rather than to the Creator. To worship stuff is to worship Satan. What folly!
- Man does not repent of his murders - v. 21 Gone is all value of human life. People are surrounded by decaying corpses and think nothing of adding more to the number of dead. It's a depraved world!
- Man does not repent of his sorceries - v. 21 This is a word that come from the Greek word *farmakeia* which gives us our English word "pharmacy." It is the word used for drugs. It can also be used for incantations, charms, witchcraft, contacting mediums, and spells. They went hand in hand with pagan worship.
- Man does not repent of his immorality - v. 21 Satan wants a society to be immoral. At this time in the Tribulation immorality will abound. This is the word for unrepentant immorality. The Greek word is *porneia* and is where we get our English word "pornography." It is a general term for sexual relations of any kind outside of marriage. Imagine, even in the face of death; even having survived scorpion stings, demons and fire-breathing horses, mankind will cling to sexual addictions. Mankind will totally abandon itself to the lusts of the flesh. This sin pervades the church today, but these sins will explode as they reach the end time.

- Man does not repent of his stealing - v. 21 And finally people are unwilling to give up stealing. In other words, stealing will literally become a way of life. Morality and honesty will be nonexistent as people compete for the scarce supplies of food, clothing, water, and even medicine.

Conclusion: Just as God sent out red flags to halt Samson's worldly pursuits, so God in His mercy sends out warning bells to us that go off when we dwell on sinful thoughts or pursue sinful desires. Don't silence them, but yield to the warning of the Holy Spirit. Big or small these five sins should not be characteristics of our lives.

In this day of intense tribulation that the world has never known mankind, continues to reject God, and is unwilling to turn to Him for salvation. That is incredible is it not? The writer of Hebrews said it clearly, **"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3)**. Even through these judgments, God is trying to get man's attention: "Turn to Me and be saved." God is not willing that anyone face the judgment and perish, but that all should come to repentance and trust Him. Dear Christian friend, I trust this chapter will increase your appreciation of the sovereignty of our God. I also hope that you will thank Him for His mercy. He could easily wipe mankind from the face of the Earth in one fell swoop, yet He displays long-suffering toward us.

Prayer: