**May 27, 2021**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

3750 Washington Street, Sanford, FL 32771; www.RefugeSanford.com

**Elder Joel Brooks, Pastor**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**THE FIFTH ANGEL**

**Revelation 9:1-12**

***Revelation 9:1 "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."***

Upon the fifth angel’s trumpet blast, John saw a star that had fallen from heaven to earth. Stars can be people who have won worldly acclaim. A star can even symbolize Jesus.

***Numbers 24:17 “I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.”***

We read earlier where the leaders of the seven churches were called stars. It is not unusual for people to be called stars. Notably, the star is not an inanimate object but has a personal identity, for John says a “key” was given to him. In Isaiah the prophet says the “shining morning star” had “fallen from the heavens.” This description of that star has led many Bible interpreters to conclude that the passage is describing Satan, in addition to its reference to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. In other words, Isaiah spoke of Satan’s original fall into rebellion and applied it to Babylon’s prideful king.

***Isaiah 14:12-14***

***12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!***

***13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:***

***14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.***

Just as a key grant us access to a home, office, or car, this key grants Satan access to the shaft to the abyss. The abyss is the abode of the demons, according to **Luke 8:31**, in which demons begged Jesus “not to banish them.” During the tribulation, Satan will be granted authority to unlock the pit. A principle illustrated in this verse is that Satan only has as much authority as God grants him. Nowhere in Scripture is that principle more prominently displayed than in **Job 1:12 and 2:6**, in which Satan cannot harm Job without God’s permission. But what the devil intends for evil, God intends for good. We know that Jesus Christ holds the key to the bottomless pit. He took the key away from Satan when He (Jesus) went there, preached, and brought captivity captive out with Him.

***Ephesians 4:8 “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”***

***2 Peter 2:4 “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;”***

***Revelation 9:2 "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."***

From the abyss comes smoke like smoke from a great furnace. When it rises, the sun and the air will be darkened as though it were nighttime. Here again we see great volcanoes erupting. Many natural disasters. From the spiritual standpoint, this could be a time when men's minds are darkened with false doctrines and evil thoughts. God commanded Satan to carry out the punishment here. This covers the spiritual and the physical. Jesus gave Satan the keys so that he could be released to carry out this punishment. Just as Satan had to have permission of God to afflict Job, Satan brings all of these terrible things on the earth and his people by permission of God. The physical smoke that comes up surely will obscure the sun and diminish the light. In the spiritual, it will diminish the Light, as well. The abyss is the home of Satan and the demons. When Satan opens the abyss, here come the demons in force to deceive and destroy. If any religious activity is still going on at this time, there will be a flood of false doctrine and defaming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be a kind of religion of the flesh, (anything goes religion). It sounds very much like what is going on today in most churches.

***Revelation 9:3 "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."***

***Revelation 9:4 "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."***

Locusts will emerge from the smoke with scorpion-like powers and will be told not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green plant, or any tree, but only those people who do not have God’s seal on their foreheads. Interestingly, this marks a departure from the activity of normal locusts, which eat grass, plants, and trees. But as indicated by their origin in the abode of demons, these “locusts” are demons. The “seal” represents God’s divine protection of believers. These demons will have to leave followers of Jesus alone. Notice, they had no power in and of themselves. It was given unto them. This is an attack on the person, which makes us take another look at it spiritually. They have orders not to hurt the vegetation or the 144,000 who have been sealed in their foreheads. The devil, or his demons, cannot really hurt anyone covered in the blood of Jesus. Looking at V-4 from the physical standpoint, there is a weapon that the large powers of the world have now, that can destroy just the people and not property. Chemical warfare has this effect, as well, but this is a new type of bomb which acts about the same as chemicals. Whether this is spiritual or physical, these same results could come about. These that are sealed in their forehead are the physical Israelites.

***Revelation 9:5 "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."***

***Revelation 9:6 "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."***

These locusts will be permitted to torment nonbelievers on earth for five months, though they will not be permitted to kill them. We do not know the specific manner in which this demonic attack will be delivered, but it will be painful, like the torment caused by a scorpion when it stings. Here again, whether this is physical pain and torment from fallout causing sores and torture, or whether this is spiritual and terrible suffering, it is brought on by constant attack from the devil for five months. It is terrible. As at Hiroshima, those who survived the nuclear bomb, wished they were dead. Great sores, deformities and torment beyond our comprehension took place. In many cases it took five months to die. A terrible burn would have the pain of a scorpion's sting. Death would be a welcome relief to all this suffering. These forces of evil turned loose (unrestrained) upon the earth, whether physical or spiritual, will be so terrible that men will beg to die.

***Revelation 9:7 "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."***

***Revelation 9:8 "And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions."***

The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. This sentence emphasizes the ferociousness of the locusts and their intimidating looks. In the Old Testament, locusts were instruments of judgment, as in the eighth plague God brought upon the Egyptians **(Exodus 10:1-20)** and in the judgment envisioned by the prophet in **Joel 1:2-12.** All of this is describing a most terrible war. These figures with "faces of men" probably are men who are taken over by these evil spirits and are bringing war. If anyone, even now, would see their error and repent God would save them. This war is of such terrible nature that it is beyond anything we might comprehend. Probably, as bad as the chemical warfare that we have seen going on between Iraq and Iran. The "crowns like gold" appear to be gold at a glance. They are, probably, some sort of helmet worn in battle. The placement of golden crowns on their heads signifies authority from hell. The locusts’ demonic origin is further underscored by their strange appearance: they have faces like human faces and hair like women’s hair. That they have teeth like lions’ teeth also points to their ferociousness. Some of these descriptions in are probably describing war machines, and the faces are actually men seen through windows in the machines, such as in an airplane or helicopter. Whatever all of this is, we do not want to be here when it happens.

***Revelation 9:9 "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."***

***Revelation 9:10 "And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power [was] to hurt men five months."***

Because the locusts have chests like iron breastplates, they will be protected from harm as they torment others. This second mention of horses rushing into battle highlights the organization and the power of God’s judgment on nonbelievers. Venomous tails with stingers like scorpions are mentioned in addition to the locusts’ teeth as another instrument of destruction. The angel of the abyss, the Hebrew name Abaddon, and the Greek name Apollyon are references to Satan. He is directing the entire locust attack. This could be jet airplanes, or it could be tanks. Either way, we know these are war machines. This is describing a literal war and not a spiritual. We are speaking of a time of total terror and suffering, with nowhere to hide. John is trying to describe something he had never seen before, something nearly 2,000 years into the future. Here again we see equipment which has killing weapons in the rear. This could be flame throwers, planes with gun turrets in the rear, etc. This war extends for five months. Even though these locusts are evil in nature, remember Jesus is the one who loosed them. Jesus is allowing this terrible thing to happen (whether spiritual or literal) to cause mankind to repent and turn to God.

***Revelation 9:11 "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."***

***Revelation 9:12 "One woe is past; [and], behold, there come two woes more hereafter."***

You can call him any name you care to. This is Satan. Lucifer was one of the angels close to God in heaven. He was a very beautiful angel before his fall. All of the demons were angels in heaven until 1/3 of the angels followed Lucifer and became demons.

***Revelation 12:4 “And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”***

***Revelation 12:7-11***

***7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,***

***8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.***

***9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.***

***10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.***

***11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.***

Angels are ministering spirits. These fallen angels (demons) are ministering pain and suffering. Their mission is to destroy. Their leader Lucifer is the epitome of evil. He has been their king since they were cast out of heaven by God. Their abode, when they are not on a mission of destruction, is in the abyss. This is where they were loosed from in V-2. They are continuously causing war, both spiritual and literal. Their mission is to destroy any way they can. This "king" in V-11 is the star we saw in V-1, which was thrown out of heaven and has hell for an abode. Just as he led these angels out of heaven, he leads them in this mission of destruction. Satan, even though fallen, must do everything the Lord commands him. It is very important to understand who our adversary the Devil is, and what he is able to do. We must be careful not to attribute to him abilities and honors that belong to God and Him alone. Though he would like people to think so, he is not the opposite of God. God is omnipotent (all-powerful), omnipresent (everywhere present), and omniscient (all-knowing). Satan is none of these. He does not have unlimited power, he cannot be everywhere at once, and he does not know everything. He is a created, limited being. He depends upon God for his existence.

***Isaiah 46:9-10***

***9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,***

***10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:***

Remember all of this happens because God's wrath is kindled. God alone can stop Satan. This time God does not want to stop him. God allows, and even orders, this to happen. Satan, Apollyon (destroyer), Abaddon (destruction), Lucifer, the devil, or whatever you care to call him, is still obedient to God. He, as we, or any other being, or angel, are created and subject to the desires of the Creator. God alone could stop this destruction.

***Acts 26:15-18***

***15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.***

***16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;***

***17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,***

***18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.***

As if this is not terrible enough that we have been hearing about, there are two more woes. The open warfare on the streets of Lebanon and Israel remind us very much of the things we read about in this lesson. Abraham’s sons Ishmael and Isaac (the flesh and the spirit) are still in mortal combat after all the 1000's of years that have passed. Just as there is a spiritual battle of the flesh and the spirit that we must face each day, there is a physical battle in Israel between the Arab and the Jew. Ishmael was told that his descendants would live around the Jews and would be fighting continuously. The Bible is true. A woe is a terrible calamity.

***Genesis 17:20-21***

***20And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.***

***21But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.***

**QUESTIONS**

1. When the fifth angel sounded, what did John see?
2. What was given to him?
3. Who holds the key?
4. Is this a real star?
5. What two things could the darkness indicate?
6. Who does Satan have to have permission from before he can afflict?
7. Where is the home of Satan and his demons?
8. What in the spirit realm are locusts?
9. These locusts were not to harm vegetation, who could they hurt?
10. What protects believers from the devil and his demons?
11. How long shall they torment?
12. What shall men seek in those days?
13. What were the shapes of these locusts like?
14. What was on their heads?
15. What did their faces resemble?
16. The breastplates were as of iron and their wings were as the sound of what?
17. These tails as scorpions were probably what?
18. Give the two names their king was known by in different languages.
19. Who is he really?
20. What position did Lucifer have in heaven?
21. How many angels followed Lucifer when God threw him out of heaven?
22. What is their mission?
23. Who is the only one who could stop all of this?