

Revelation 9 : The Trumpet Judgments – Part 2

The Story So Far

The Lamb breaks the seventh seal in Revelation 8, and heaven falls silent for half an hour. Seven angels step forward with trumpets. Before they sound, an angel offers incense with the prayers of the saints at the altar, then hurls fire from that altar to earth – thunder, lightning, and an earthquake follow.

The trumpets sound in turn:

- **First trumpet**

- Hail and fire mixed with blood burn a third of the earth and all the green grass.

- **Second trumpet**

- A blazing mountain is hurled into the sea, turning a third of it to blood and killing a third of its creatures and ships.

- **Third trumpet**

- A burning star, Wormwood, falls into a third of the rivers and springs, poisoning them – many die from the water.

- **Fourth trumpet**

- A third of the sun, moon, and stars are struck, darkening a third of each day and night.

Then an angel (eagle) cries overhead: ***“WOE, WOE, WOE to the inhabitants of the earth”*** – three trumpets remain, and they

will be worse. The fifth and sixth trumpets sound in Revelation 9, the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11

THE FIFTH TRUMPET SOUNDS

The fifth angel lifts his trumpet, and the sound rolls out across heaven. Below, on earth, something catches – a star, fallen from the sky, lying still. But this is no dead rock. It rises. It has a key in its hand.

The Abyss Is Opened

The key fits a shaft sunk into the earth itself – the Abyss, the bottomless place, the holding cell for things too dangerous to leave loose in the world. The star-being turns the key. Smoke pours up out of the shaft, thick and black, like the exhaust of some vast furnace, and it climbs until it blots out the sun. The sky goes dark at midday.

The Locusts Emerge

Then the smoke moves. It's not smoke at all – it's swarming. Locusts pour out of the cloud by the millions, but they don't behave like locusts. Locusts strip fields bare; these ignore the grass entirely, ignore every green and growing thing, and go straight for people instead. They've been given orders, and the orders are specific: leave alone anyone who carries a mark on their forehead – the 144,000 who were sealed back in chapter seven – and torment everyone else. Not kill. Torment. Five months of it, with no way to stop it and no way to die and escape it either. People will claw for death the way a drowning man claws for air, and death will not come.

Their Terrible Form

A closer look at these things is worse than the swarm itself. They're built like war-horses armored for battle, but crowned like victors, with faces that are almost human – almost

gentle, almost recognizable – under long hair like a woman's. Their teeth are a lion's teeth. Their bodies are sheathed in iron. Their wings roar like a thousand chariots charging at once. And each one drags a scorpion's tail, barbed and full of poison, and it's the tail that does the damage.

Their King

They have a king. He rises from the Abyss with them, and both his names mean the same thing: Abaddon in Hebrew, Apollyon in Greek. Destroyer. That is the whole of his identity – not a name so much as a function.

The fifth trumpet ends. A voice announces that two more horrors are still coming.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET SOUNDS

The sixth angel sounds his trumpet, and this time the command comes from the altar itself, from the golden altar standing in the presence of God: release the four angels bound at the river Euphrates. These are not guardian angels waiting for orders – they are chained, kept for this exact hour, this exact day, this exact month and year, like something too dangerous to let out early. Now the hour has come. They're loosed, and behind them stands an army almost too large to count – two hundred million strong.

The Horsemen Ride

The description of this cavalry is its own kind of nightmare: riders in breastplates of fire-red, smoke-blue, and sulfur-yellow, mounted on horses with heads like lions, breathing fire and smoke and brimstone out of their mouths. That triple plague – fire, smoke, sulfur – kills a third of every person left alive on earth. And the horses' power isn't only in their mouths; their tails are like snakes, with heads of their own, striking as they go.

The Refusal to Repent

A third of humanity dies. And here is the part that lands hardest: the ones who survive don't change. They watch a third of the human race die in fire and they still won't let go of what they're holding. They keep worshiping the things they built with their own hands – idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, objects that can't see, hear, or walk, that never could. They don't repent of the murders. They don't repent of their sorceries, their sexual immorality, their theft. The judgment doesn't produce repentance – it just confirms how deep the refusal goes.

Note: How the 3 woes cover the next chapters ...

Each “woe” (Rev 8:13) covers everything triggered by that trumpet – not just its sounding. **A woe isn't “past” until all its events finish.**

- **1st Woe (5th Trumpet)** – Star falls, Abyss opens, locusts torment men 5 months (9:1-11). Past at 9:12.
- **2nd Woe (6th Trumpet)** – Four angels' army kills 1/3 of mankind; survivors don't repent (9:13-21); seven thunders sealed, end announced, bitter scroll given (10:1-11); holy city trampled 42 months, two witnesses testify, die, and rise, followed by judgment (11:1-13). Past at 11:14.
- **3rd Woe (7th Trumpet)** – Covers the seven bowl judgments and all that follows (11:15-16:17). No verse marks it “past,” but by the pattern, it ends when Babylon falls (ch. 17-18), God's revealing on earth concludes (19:1-16), and the beast and his armies are destroyed (19:17-20) – i.e., when “the mystery of God” (10:7) is finished.

The scope enlarges with each woe – the 2nd far exceeds the 1st, the 3rd far exceeds the 2nd.

CONCLUSION – WHY THEY WOULDN'T REPENT

You will notice judgment alone doesn't produce repentance. It exposes a hardened will rather than creating faith – which is why the woes keep escalating (Section IX) without ever breaking through. The problem was never a lack of evidence; it's refusal itself. What's left, going forward, is either grace freely received or judgment carried through to its end.

Read the passage and cross-references prayerfully a few times over and then answer the questions: [Revelation 9](#)

Question 1:

Trace the sequence of Revelation 9:1-12 from the star's fall to the woe being declared "past" – what is released, what is it permitted (and not permitted) to do, and what does the passage as a whole suggest about the relationship between demonic power and divine authority? [Revelation 9:1-12](#)

Cross references:

- Falling star – [Isaiah 14:12-14](#); [Luke 10:18](#)
- Abyss – [Luke 8:31](#); [2 Peter 2:4](#)
- Locust judgment – [Joel 2:1-11](#); [Exodus 10:12-15](#)
- Scorpion-like torment – [Deuteronomy 8:15](#)
- Seal of protection – [Revelation 7:2-8](#)
- Limits on evil – [Job 1:12](#); [2:6](#)
- Abaddon – [Job 26:6](#)
- Locusts likened to war-horses – [Joel 2:4-5](#)

Question 2:

What happens when the four angels are released, and why does mankind's response to it matter? [Revelation 9:13-21](#)

Cross references:

- Euphrates as a source of judgment/invasion – [Isaiah 8:7-8; Jeremiah 46:10](#)
- Precisely appointed times – [Daniel 11:27, 35; Galatians 4:4](#)
- Hardened hearts despite judgment – [Exodus 7:13, 22 \(Pharaoh\); Amos 4:6-11](#)
- Idolatry catalog (gold, silver, bronze, stone, wood) – [Psalm 115:4-7; Deuteronomy 4:28](#)
- Sorceries (*pharmakeia*) – [Isaiah 47:9, 12; Galatians 5:20](#)
- Unrepentant sin list – [Revelation 21:8; 22:15](#)

Application Question:

Revelation 9 shows judgment escalating dramatically, yet people's hearts stay hardened rather than turning to repentance. Where in your own life have you seen consequences or hardship fail to produce real change – and what would it actually take to break through that kind of resistance?