

Revelation Chapter Nine

Introduction to the 5th and 6th Trumpets

1. Only six verses are devoted to describe the first four trumpet plagues (8:7-12).
2. But now follows almost three times that number of verses present the 5th and 6th plagues.
3. The first four plagues target the natural world with human suffering being more or less indirect.
4. Under the 5th and 6th plagues humans are directly subjected to torments that arise from the demonic underworld.
5. The first Woe (9:1-12) constitutes a horde of demonic locusts that emerge from the Abyss and torments everyone who does not have the seal of the living God.
6. The pain and distress are so great that although people seek death they are unable to find it.
7. The second Woe (9:13-19) is a demonic cavalry of some two hundred million mounted troops who, astride their fire-breathing mounts, sweep over the land, killing one-third of humanity.
8. Both trumpets introduce us to grotesque creatures, tormenting and killing people, whose appearance corresponds to their evil origins.
9. Even these two plagues, horrible and destructive as they are, fail to dissuade the survivors from continuing in false worship.
10. Unrestrained by the plagues, they continue to practice the deeds of darkness, including idolatry, bloodshed, sexual immorality, and theft.

The 5th Trumpet (vv. 1-12)

The Impact of the Locusts (vv. 1-6)

Falling Star (v.1)

VERSE 1 **Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth** (Καὶ ὁ πέμπτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ εἶδον ἀστέρα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεπτωκότα εἰς τὴν γῆν [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. pemptos fifth + noun nom.m.s. angelos + aor.act.ind.3s. salpinzo blow a trumpet + conj kai + aor.act.ind.1s. eidon see + noun acc.m.s. aster star + prep ek + art.w/noun abl.m.s. ouranos heaven + perf.act.part.acc.m.s. pipto fall + prep eis to + art.w/noun acc.f.s. ge earth*]; **and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him** [καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἡ κλεῖς τοῦ φρέατος τῆς ἀβύσσου [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. didomi give + pro.dat.m.s. autos him + art.w/noun nom.f.s. kleis key + art.w/noun gen.nt.s. phrear cistern; pit + art.w/noun gen.f.s. abussos bottomless pit, transliterated abyss; place where the dead go, e.g., the underworld (Rom. 10:7)*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 1

1. The lengthy description of the 5th trumpet falls into two parts: the impact of the locusts (vv. 1-6) and the characteristics of the locusts (vv. 7-12).
2. With the sounding of the 5th trumpet, John sees yet another fallen star.
3. This star differs from those under that of the 3rd trumpet of 8:10, but is the same in nature as that of 6:13 seen under the 6th seal.
4. The “stars” associated with the 6th seal are connected with the defeat and confinement of Satan and his angels around the midpoint of the tribulation.
5. This star’s receipt and use of “the key of the pit of the abyss” (vv. 1-2) clearly stands for an intelligent being rather than an inanimate object like a meteor.
6. This star is an angel, and not a man, as this being is granted a task not possible with ordinary humans.
7. The question that remains with respect to the identification of this star is whether he is an evil or elect angel.
8. The determinative factor is the participle “fallen.”
9. If he were an elect angel on a mission from God the participle would probably be “descended,” and that, is in fact the exact term used in 20:1 of the elect angel assigned the duty of placing Satan in the abyss (cf. 20:3).
10. Here the word is “fallen” suggesting divine disapproval with respect to the angel in question.
11. So this star is here taken as a fallen angel dispatched on a mission to advance the next stage of God’s wrath against the nations.
12. No angel retains possession of the key to the abyss, so God had to give it to him (“to him was given”) for use on this special occasion.
13. Jesus Christ holds the keys of death (e.g. grave) and of Hades (underworld of the departed spirits).
14. He exercised special authority over that realm when He transferred all OT saints from Hades to heaven (Eph. 4:8-10).
15. Christ exercises complete authority over the underworld.
16. Here He grants a super demon specialized authority to release the demonic horde from “the bottomless pit.”
17. The actual translation could read: “the shaft of the bottomless pit.”
18. The noun translated “pit” (*phrear*; 5x) is used of a deep well or pit in Lk. 14:5; Jn. 4:11, 12.
19. Its other two uses in the NT have to do with the underworld called Sheol in the OT and Hades in the NT.
20. The term abyss (*abussos*) is the counterpart to the Hebrew noun *tehom* (“depths”) used in connection with the oceanic depths (cf. Gen. 1:2).
21. Etymologically, the alpha privative combines with *buthos* (“depth”) to mean “without depth,” and in usage it means “bottomless.”
22. Here it is a synonym for the underworld or realm the spirits of the deceased and a certain group of demons.
23. This noun is found 9x in the NT.
24. All the usages (9x) in the NT refer to the region beneath the earth where men and fallen angels reside (cf. Lk. 8:31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3).
25. It is the place from which the antichrist will ascend (Rev. 17:8).
26. So the term is comprehensive of the entire realm of men and angels.
27. The abyss spoken of here is the preliminary place of incarceration for fallen angels and unbelievers.

28. Once upon a time one of its compartments housed the souls of believers.
29. The fact that both believers and unbelievers resided in this underworld is seen in the example of the rich man and Lazarus in Lk. 16:19-31.
30. The final destination for all fallen angels and unbelievers is the Lake of Fire (cf. Matt. 25:41; Rev. 19:20; 20:10).
31. Satan will be incarcerated in this place for 1000 years (Rev. 20:3).
32. Like all wells or pits there is a shaft that descends into it.
33. In this verse this is probably the intent of the noun *phrear*, thus avoiding the redundancy of the reading “the pit of the bottomless pit.”
34. Hence, “the shaft of the bottomless pit” is what this fallen “star” is granted authority over.

The Pit Opened (v. 2)

VERSE 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the

smoke of a great furnace (καὶ ἤνοιξεν τὸ φρέαρ τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ ἀνέβη καπνὸς ἐκ τοῦ φρέατος ὡς καπνὸς καμίνου μεγάλης [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. anoigo open + art.w/noun acc.nt.s. phrear the opening of a deep hole in the ground or shaft + art.w/noun gen.f.s. abussos bottomless pit; abyss + conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. anabaino ascend, go up + noun nom.m.s. kapnos smoke + prep ek from + art.w/noun gen.nt.s. phrear shaft + conj hos as + noun nom.m.s. kapnos smoke + noun gen.f.s. kaminos furnace + adj.gen.f.s. megas great*]; **and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit** [καὶ ἔσκοτώθη ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ὁ ἀήρ ἐκ τοῦ καπνοῦ τοῦ φρέατος [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. skotoo become darkened + art.w/noun nom.m.s. helios sun + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.m.s. are air + prep ek + art.w/abl.f.s. kapnos smoke + art.w/noun gen.nt.s. phrear shaft, pit*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 2

1. The fallen angel proceeds with his mission of releasing the occupants (demons/fallen angels) of the abyss.
2. The divine agent uses “the key,” whatever that consists of, to unlock the shaft leading to the subterranean pit resulting in a volcanic-like eruption.
3. When he did so, smoke rose from the shaft.
4. This is literal smoke as from “a great furnace.”
5. The literal understanding of the trumpets up to this point verifies this.
6. In Revelation smoke pertains to judgment (Rev. 8:4; 9:2,3,17; 14:11; 15:8; 18:9, 18; 19:3), whether it is related to something in heaven or on earth.
7. Visible smoke is a reminder of divine wrath.
8. The volume of smoke resembles that of a large smelting furnace.
9. The volume is so great that it darkens the light of the sun and earth’s atmosphere through which light passes.
10. This smoke causes the sunlight to be greatly diminished and pollutes the atmosphere, much like a volcanic eruption which spews forth ash.
11. The hindering of the sunlight is not a reduction in the sun’s ability to illuminate.

12. The mystery relates to the method used by this angel to enable incarcerated demons to escape their prison in the center of the earth.

Locust Swarm (v.3)

VERSE 3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth (καὶ ἐκ τοῦ καπνοῦ ἐξῆλθον ἀκρίδες εἰς τὴν γῆν [*conj kai + prep ek + art.w/noun abl.m.s. kapnos smoke + aor.act.ind.3p. exerchomai come out + noun nom.f.p. akris locust + prep eis + art.w/noun acc.f.s. ge earth*]), **and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power** [καὶ ἐδόθη αὐταῖς ἐξουσία ὡς ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν οἱ σκορπίοι τῆς γῆς [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. didomi give + pro.dat.f.p. autos "them" + noun nom.f.s. exousia authority; "power" + conj hos as + pres.act.ind.3p. echo have + noun acc.f.s. exousia authority + art.w/noun nom.m.p. skorpios scorpion + art.w/noun gen.f.s. ge earth*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 3

1. From the cloud of smoke emerges a swarm of locusts.
2. But these are not ordinary locusts.
3. They have a leader (cf. v.11) unlike locusts of the earth (Prov. 30:27), and unlike locusts in nature, their power to inflict pain is in their scorpion-like tails.
4. The irresistible destructive power of locusts is proverbial in the OT (e.g., Deut. 28:38; 2Chron. 7:13; Joel 2:25) as is their seemingly limitless number (e.g., Ps. 105:34; Nah. 3:15).
5. One of the plagues against Egypt was locusts (Ex. 10:13-19).
6. There were a variety of kinds of locusts according to Joel 1:4.
7. In the day of the Lord there are plagues that are locust-like in their effect (cf. Nah. 3:15-17).
8. The Nahum prophecy has to do with nuclear war and its effects upon vegetation, etc.
9. Also, the Joel prophecy that relates to the Day of the Lord, shows an analogy between a super locust plague and human warfare.
10. Also, see Jer. 51:14 and 27 for unconventional warfare brought against prophetic Babylon of Rev. 18.
11. But these locusts are different, and it remains to establish their identity.
12. The place of their origination is against identifying them as human agents of torture.
13. Certainly ordinary locusts are out of the question as they have an angel as their leader (9:11).
14. They come from the abyss where fallen spirits are imprisoned (cf. 2Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6).
15. They assume a form such as no human has ever seen.
16. The capacity of demons to morph into any conceivable form is seen in verses 7ff.
17. They assault men rather than vegetation.
18. The only demons in the underworld are those imprisoned there in connection with the angelic infiltration of Genesis six (cf. 2Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6).
19. What we have here is a horde of supernatural creatures unleashed upon humanity under the 5th trumpet plague.

Divine Restriction (v. 4)

VERSE 4 They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree (καὶ ἐρρέθη αὐταῖς ἵνα μὴ ἀδικήσουσιν τὸν χόρτον τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ πᾶν χλωρὸν οὐδὲ πᾶν δένδρον [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. eipon say; “told” + pro.dat.f.p. autos “They” + conj hina so that + neg me + fut.act.ind.3p. adikeo hurt, damage (of a thing) + art.w/noun acc.m.s. chortos grass, herbage + art.w/noun gen.f.s. ge earth + conj oude neither, nor + adj.acc.nt.s pas any + adj.acc.nt.s. chloros green thing + conj oude nor + art.w/noun acc.nt.s. dendron tree*], **but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads** [εἰ μὴ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οἵτινες οὐκ ἔχουσι τὴν σφραγίδα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων [*conj ei if + neg me = except; “but only” + art.w/noun acc.m.p. anthropos man + pro hostis who + neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3p. echo have + art.w/noun acc.f.s. sphragis seal + art.w/noun gen.m.s. theos God + prep epi upon + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. metopon forehead*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 4

1. These creatures have specific and strict limitations imposed upon them.
2. The one issuing these limitations is unnamed, but the unexpressed agent of the aorist passive indicative verb “told” is the same as the unexpressed agent of the threefold usage of “it was given” in verses 1, 3, and 5—God Himself.
3. God exercises sovereignty to control this plague to fulfill His wrath.
4. These demons are severely restricted in the exercise of their own wills.
5. The restraint excludes harming earth’s vegetation.
6. Damage to plant life came earlier (cf. 8:7).
7. Considering the bad mood these demons are in, it is not out of the question that they would engage in a rampage that would result in widespread destruction of all forms of life.
8. Only those who do not have the seal of God upon their foreheads are valid targets of the torment assigned to these demons.
9. Those with the seal are of course the 144,000 mentioned in 7:4-8.
10. Otherwise, even believers are subject to the horror and sting of these locust-like beings!

A Further Restriction (v.5)

VERSE 5 And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months (καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἵνα μὴ ἀποκτείνωσιν αὐτούς, ἀλλ’ ἵνα βασανισθῶσιν μῆνας πέντε [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. didomi give + pro.dat.m.p. autos “They” + conj hina so that + neg me + aor.act.subj.3p. apokteino kill + pro.acc.m.p. autos “anyone” + conj alla but + conj hina that + fut.pass.ind.3p. basanizo torture, torment + noun acc.m.p. men month + adj.acc.m.p. pente five*]; **and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man** [καὶ ὁ βασανισμὸς αὐτῶν ὡς βασανισμὸς σκορπίου ὅταν παίσῃ ἄνθρωπον [*conj kai + art.w/noun basanismos torture + pro.gen.f.p. autos “their” + conj hos + noun nom.m.s.*

basanismos torment + noun gen.m.s. skorprios scorpion + conj hotan when + aor.act.subj.3s. paio strike, sting + noun acc.m.s. anthropos man]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 5

1. Yet further restrictions are imposed upon this demonic horde out of the pit of the Abyss.
2. They have permission to torment but not to take life.
3. Under the 4th trumpet death was possible but not here.
4. In the NT “torment” entails acute pain, either physical (Matt. 8:6; Rev. 12:2), mental (Matt. 8:29; 2Pet. 2:8).
5. The duration of the torment is limited to five months or 150 days.
6. This corresponds to the normal period of ravaging of nature locusts, beginning in May and extending through September.
7. An acceptance of the text’s plain meaning is satisfactory.
8. The habit of ordinary locusts furnishes the starting point for the description of this demonic and world-wide swarm.
9. The torment of this plague could be intermittent and move from place to place, but the duration of this misery, is limited to five months during the last three and one half years of the tribulation.
10. The physical aspect of the torment is akin the sting of a scorpion, one of the most painful inflicted by insects.
11. It is hard to fathom the misery a single demon is capable of inflicting upon a single person.
12. While this may seem cruel, it must be remembered that this is only a part of the just deserts inflicted against a corrupt and unrepentant humanity.

Futile Quest for Death (v.6)

VERSE 6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it (καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ζητήσουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν θάνατον καὶ οὐ μὴ εὕρῃσουσιν αὐτόν [*conj kai + prep en + art.w/noun loc.f.p. hemera day + fut.act.ind.3p. zeteo seek + art.w/noun nom.m.p. anthropos man + art.w/noun acc.m.s. thanatos death*]); **they will long to die, and death flees from them** [*καὶ ἐπιθυμήσουσιν ἀποθανεῖν καὶ φεύγει ὁ θάνατος ἀπ’ αὐτῶν* [*conj kai + fut.act.ind.3p. epithumeo earnestly desire, long for + aor.act.infin. apothnesko die + conj kai + pres.act.ind.3s. pheugo flee, take flight + art.w/noun nom.m.s. thanatos death + prep apo + pro.gen.m.p. autos “them”*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 6

1. The painfulness of the sting brings men to desperation.
2. The words “in those days” bring a change in style from an eyewitness to something to a prediction on the part of the seer.
3. Since 4:1 John has been an apocalyptic reporter, but he now changes to being a direct agent of the Spirit.
4. For most the scorpion sting evokes a quest for death, promoted by an intense desire to stop the misery.
5. The verb “will seek” indicates a desire to commit suicide.

6. The verb “will long” denotes the strongest of desires.
7. The verb “will flee” suggests the total frustration on the part of those who “seek” and “long for” death.
8. The question that begs to be answered is why is it so difficult for men to find a means to end it all in an act of suicide?
9. The answer must lie with the very ones who torment the living.
10. They will not allow it or otherwise men would in large numbers take their own lives.
11. Death will be impossible to find as it will run away from those desiring it.
12. The implication of all this seems obvious, the tormentors will act as protectors of human life.
13. Otherwise there is no explanation for the frustration on the part of those seeking and longing for death only to find it beyond their reach.
14. Men will attempt to kill themselves only to be thwarted by a guardian demon.
15. The apostle Paul was tormented physically by a demon during a period in his life immediately after his brief visit to the 3rd heaven (see Doctrine of the Thorn in the Flesh).
16. This was a blessing designed to thwart his pride.

Description of the Locusts (vv. 7-10)

VERSE 7 The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle (Καὶ

τὰ ὁμοιώματα τῶν ἀκρίδων ὅμοια ἵπποις ἡτοιμασμένοις εἰς πόλεμον [*conj kai + art.w/noun nom.nt.p. homoioma a copy; “appearance”; cf. Rom. 1:23 + art.w/noun gen.f.p. akris locust + adj.nom.nt.p. homoiios like + noun dat.m.p. hippos horse + perf.pass.part.dat.m.p. hetoimazo make ready, prepare + prep eis + noun acc.m.s. polemos war, battle, fight*]; **and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men** [*καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν ὡς στέφανοι ὅμοιοι χρυσοῦ, καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ὡς πρόσωπα ἀνθρώπων* [*conj kai + prep epi + art.w/noun acc.f.p. kephale head + pro.gen.f.p. autos “their” + conj hos as, like + noun nom.m.p. stephanos wreath, crown + adj.nom.m.p. homoiios like + noun dat.m.s. chrusos gold + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.nt.p. prosopon face + pro.gen.f.p. autos “their” + conj hos like + noun nom.nt.p. prosopon face + noun gen.m.p. anthropos man*]).

VERSE 8 They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions (καὶ εἶχον τρίχας ὡς τρίχας γυναικῶν, καὶ οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτῶν ὡς λεόντων ἦσαν [*conj kai + imperf.act.ind.3p. echo have + noun acc.f.p. thriz hair + conj hos like + noun acc.f.p. trix hair + noun gen.f.p. gune woman + conj kai + art.w/noun nom.m.p. odous tooth + noun gen.f.p. autos “their” + conj hos like + noun gen.m.p. leon lion + impf.act.ind.3p. eimi “were”*]).

VERSE 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron (καὶ εἶχον θώρακας ὡς θώρακας σιδηροῦς [*conj kai + impf.act.ind.3p. echo have + noun acc.m.p. thoraz breastplate + conj hos like + noun acc.m.p. thorax breastplate + adj.acc.m.p. siderous iron*]; **and the sound**

of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle

[καὶ ἡ φωνὴ τῶν πτερύγων αὐτῶν ὡς φωνὴ ἁρμάτων ἵππων πολλῶν τρεχόντων εἰς πόλεμον
[conj kai + art.w/noun nom.f.s. phone voice, sound + art.w/noun gen.f.p. pterux wing +
pro.gen.f.p. autos “their” + conj hos like + noun nom.f.s. phone sound + noun gen.nt.p. harma
chariot + noun gen.m.p. hippos horse + adj.gen.m.p. polus many + pres.act.part.gen.m.p. trecho
run + prep eis into + noun acc.m.s. polemos battle]).

VERSE 10 They have tails like scorpions, and stings (καὶ ἔχουσιν οὐράς ὁμοίας

σκορπίοις καὶ κέντρα [conj kai + pres.act.ind.3p. echo have + noun acc.f.p. oura a tail +
adj.acc.f.p. homoios like, resembling + noun dat.m.p. skorpios scorpion + conj kai + noun
acc.nt.p. kentron stinger]; **and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months**

[καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτῶν ἀδικῆσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους μῆνας πέντε [conj kai +
prep en + art.w/noun dat.f.p. oura a tail + noun gen.f.p. autos “their” + aor.act.infin. adikeo
harm, hurt; be in the wrong, do wrong + art.w/noun acc.m.p. anthropos man + noun acc.m.p.
men month + adj.acc.m.p. pente five]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 7-10

1. In the description of the “locusts,” John utilizes the comparative conjunction and adjective nine times.
2. The description begins with a etymological cognate of the adjective *homoios* the adjectival noun *homoima* (“likeness”).
3. This noun occurs 6x in the NT at: Rom. 1:23; 5:14; 6:5; 8:3; Phil. 2:7 and here.
4. Outward likeness of a thing is the sense here.
5. John’s description begins with the head and ends with the tail of these demonic creatures.
6. One suggestion has these “locusts” appearing lobster-like to their tormentors.
7. The comparative terminology has led some interpreters to conclude that the language here is an idealized depiction of a natural swarm of locusts.
8. Some aspects of the description contradict what we know about locusts such as they have tails with stingers.
9. Basically they are like locusts, hence the use of the term *akris* (“locust”), but their supernaturalness adds greatly to their dreadfulness for the sake of psychological terror.
10. Demons, as well as angels in general, can assume any physical shape, for that of a human to what we have here (cf. Gen. 6).
11. The “shape” or the “appearance” of these locusts resembles (adj *homoios* “like”) war horses.
12. In addition to the view that these are literal locusts, there is the view that this is a description of invading armies of men.
13. But again the creatures are like locusts and not men.
14. These “locusts” simply resemble “horses prepared for battle.”
15. There is a similar comparison in Joel chapters one and two (esp. 1:6, 22; 2:3-11).
16. But this description clearly has human invaders in view.
17. The figure of the massing of cavalry is the comparison John makes.

18. These creatures also appear to have something like crowns on their heads.
19. The bronze helmets of the Roman legionnaires come to mind.
20. These crowns or wreaths point to the success of the locusts in respect to their divinely assigned duty.
21. Their success is implied from the symbolic significance of the *stephanos* (“wreath”) as seen in Rev. 14:14.
22. At the end of verse 7 is a description of the faces of these locusts.
23. Their faces are distinctly human-like suggesting superior intelligence, and not what we see in the faces of insects.
24. They are capable of altering their expression to reflect their mood.
25. For humans who come face to face with them, it will not be a pleasant face to look into!
26. They will express fierceness and maliciousness towards those they torture.
27. Verse 8 adds two more features of the locusts’ appearance.
28. They manifest a distinctly female characteristic, namely their long hair.
29. For males to sport long hair demonstrates emotional revolt of the soul. and the male’s short hair is a badge of authority, while the woman’s long hair is a badge of submissiveness (cf. 1Cor. 11:14).
30. This feature the locust-demons manifest demonstrates revolt against the divine order and reflects confusion.
31. Ordinary locusts have teeth (cf. Joel 1:6), but not the kind associated with lions.
32. This feature further adds to the visible fierceness, yet these demons are not permitted to tear their victims apart.
33. This feature is strictly intended for its mental terror.
34. In v.9 there are two aspects that resemble military forces on the march.
35. One is their iron breastplates which denote armor.
36. Their armor adds to the sense of invincibility.
37. Like ordinary locusts these demons possess wings.
38. The sound of their wings is like that of horse driven chariots engaging in battle.
39. The loud rushing sound of the swarm of these agents of terror and misery creates a formidable psychological assault upon humanity.
40. Joel compares the noise of locusts’ wings to the clatter and clang of chariot wheels and the hoof beat of horses moving into battle (cf. Joel 2:4-5; cf. 2Kgs 7:6; Jer. 47:3).
41. All these features of the demonic swarm contribute to soulsh terror while their scorpions like tails bring excruciating physical pain upon those who are stung.
42. What is referred to in v. 10 is a further detailing of v. 5.
43. The noun “stings” (*kentra*) is only found elsewhere in the NT at Acts 26:14 and 1Cor. 15:55 in a metaphorical sense.
44. As noted in verse 5 and repeated here the duration of this woe is five months and the plague disappears from the earth.
45. This plague seems to move from place to place during those five months.
46. It appears that they come and go as would an ordinary locust plague.
47. After afflicting one region they move to the next and so forth.

Their Commander (v.11)

VERSE 11 **They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss** (ἔχουσι ἐπ’ αὐτῶν βασιλέα τὸν ἄγγελον τῆς ἀβύσσου [*pres.act.ind.3p. echo have + prep epi over + pro.gen.m.p.*])

autos “them” + *noun acc.m.s. basileus king* + *art.w/noun acc.m.s. angelos* + *art.w/noun gen.f.s. abussos abyss*]; **his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon** [ὄνομα αὐτῶ Ἑβραϊστὶ Ἀβαδδὼν, καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ ὄνομα ἔχει Ἀπολλύων
[*noun nom.nt.s. onoma name* + *pro.gen.m.s. autos* “his” + *adv hebraisti Hebrew*; 7x: *Jn. 5:2; 19:13,17,20:16; Rev. 9:11; 16:16* + *noun nom.m.s. Abaddon means destroyer* + *conj kai* + *prep en* + *art.w/adj.loc.f.s. Hellenikos Greek language* + *noun nom.nt.s. onoma name* + *pres.act.ind.3s. echo have* + *noun nom.m.s. Apolluon means destroyer*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 11

1. A characteristic of a locust swarm is that they are leaderless, yet conduct themselves as if they had a leader (cf. Prov. 30:27).
2. The resemblance of the advancing locusts to an army suggests the need of a commander to direct the battle plan.
3. The identification of this commander-king as an angel is proof positive that these are not regular locusts, but rather a horde of demons that morph into grotesque and scary creatures.
4. This verse gives the leader an identity and a name.
5. While Satan is “the prince of the demons” (Matt. 12:24), he has never been confined to the abyss.
6. Only “the sons of God” of Genesis 6 have so confined to the underworld (cf. 2Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
7. Here we learn that this unspecified but extremely large number of fallen angels have a leader.
8. This probably is their leader in the Genesis 6 conspiracy.
9. Their leader at that time was probably directly responsible to Satan or some other high ranking demon.
10. Nowhere else does Satan have a connection with the abyss until being cast into it later (cf. Rev. 20:1-3).
11. Satan has leaders and sub-leaders under his command (Eph. 6:12).
12. The angelic powers specified in verses like Eph. 6:12 are free –fallen angels, while the powers from the abyss designated to fulfill this plague are imprisoned angels let loose to fulfill this judgment against unrepentent humanity.
13. These demons designated as a locust swarm have been incarcerated since the Flood of Noah.
14. Jesus made a victorious proclamation to these angels following His resurrection (cf. 1Pet. 3:19).
15. His responsibility is to direct the five month campaign of terror and torture against those who persist in worshipping demons rather than the living God.
16. So we have here an angel from the hierarchy of evil that the text discloses his name.
17. John supplies this demon’s name in two languages.
18. In the NT, the habit of supplying information bilingually characterizes only the gospel of John and Revelation (cf. Jn. 1:38, 42; 4:25; 6:1; 9:7; 11:16; 19:13, 17, 20; 20:16; Rev. 1:7; 3:14; 12:9).
19. The name “Apollyon” comes from the verb *apollumi* which means “I destroy.”
20. The Greek term has the same meaning as the Hebrew “Abaddon” or “Destroyer.”