

LESSON 11

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPETS

Whether or not man agrees, God still proclaims that the sinner receives his wages—the cold, hard coinage of death (Rom. 6:23). Nowhere is that truth proclaimed more vividly than in Revelation 9.

The first four trumpets emphasized sin's effect on the natural world. The fifth trumpet (9:1–12) shows the effect that sin has on the sinner himself. The sixth trumpet (9:13–21) highlights the effect of sin on others.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET SOUNDS (9:1–6)

Revelation 9:1–12 is one of the most unique and terrifying scenes of the whole book.

1. Why does the “star from heaven” in 9:1 appear to have a different meaning than the one in 8:10?
2. What answer could be given to someone who argues that the star in verse 1 represents a fallen angel?
3. How would the phrase translated “bottomless pit” in verse 1 be better translated?
4. What does the Greek word for “abyss” mean, and how is it used in the Bible?
5. What is the common thread between the fifth trumpet and the fifth bowl, and what does the parallel indicate?
6. Why were locusts so dreaded in the ancient world?
7. What was the significance of the “five months” (9:5)?
8. What could be the significance of the phrase in verse 6, “men will seek death and will not find it”?

THE LOCUSTS DESCRIBED (9:7–12)

To this point, John had not given a description of the locusts. He remedied that situation in verses 7 through 10.

9. What similarities and differences can be found between the description of the locusts in 9:7 and that of Joel 1, 2?
10. What was significant about the fact that the locust had faces like men (9:7)?
11. Who might “the angel of the abyss” (9:11) be?
12. What do most writers agree that the locusts portray?

THE SIXTH TRUMPET SOUNDS (9:13–19)

In studying the seven trumpets, there is a progression: The first four trumpets indicated that sin makes a shambles of life in general. The fifth trumpet proclaimed that sin tortures and torments. The sixth trumpet warns that sin often results in death. Sin not only hurts the sinner, but affects others as well.

13. What special significance did the Euphrates River have for Jews and for Rome?
14. How was the purpose of the angels released with the sixth trumpet different from the purposes of the other trumpets?
15. Why does the scene seem suddenly to switch from the four angels to armies of horsemen in verse 16?
16. What is significant about the fact that fire and brimstone proceeded *out of the mouths* of the horses?
17. What does the army of two million horses represent?
18. What three important truths does 2 Peter 3:9, 10 teach, which are developed in the passages on the seven trumpets?

THE REST DID NOT REPENT (9:20, 21)

Even after God did all He could to bring men back to Him, by and large the human race remained impenitent. People continued to cling to the very actions and attitudes which were destroying them.

19. Of what two types of sin did the rest of mankind fail to repent?

20. What does the word translated “sorceries” in verse 21 mean?