

THE TORMENT OF THOSE WITHOUT GOD'S SEAL - Rv 9:1-11

032022A

INTRODUCTION

1. 5th trmpt - Rv 9:1-12 1st of 3 woes [= 5th, 6th, & 7th trmpts] - 8:13 [2T 3:1,13]
2. 1st 4 trmpts target earth; last 3 target men: v4b *who do not have seal of God*

1st: The Fallen Star and the Smoking Pit - v1-2

1. Jn sees symbols: a star - fallen to earth: angel [Lk 10:17-20]: *him*
 - i. Rv 12:9 Dragon thrown to earth. Jesus' enthronement - Satan & demons cast from heaven's court - 12:12-13 Satan persecutes Church
 - ii. Rv 9 - Satan persecutes earth-dwellers. Serpent opposes seed of the wmn: physical seed [mankind] & seed of promise [Jesus & all in Christ]
2. *Given a key*: by Lamb: authority to accomplish task. "Satan is God's Satan."
3. *bottomless pit* - abyss, *the deep* - boundless well - "deep difficult topic"
 - i. Gn 1:2 *the surface of the deep* - after fall: associated w/ death.
 - ii. Prison for condemned demons - 2Ptr 2:4; *abyss* [Lk 8:31]; Rv 11:7;17:8 Beast from abyss; Rv 20:1-3 Dragon cast into abyss for 1K yrs
 - iii. Demons come from this dark realm & wreck havoc on earth among men
4. *Smoke of furnace darkens sun & air*
 - i. *smoke of furnace* - burning Sodom [Gn 19:28]; 9th Egyptian plague
 - ii. *Darkness* - metaphor for spiritual blindness & death here effected by doctrines of demons: 1Tim 4:1; Eph 2:2; 2Cor 4:4

2nd: The Locusts and the Unsealed - v3-4

1. *locust* [8th Egyptian plague] swarm *the earth*.
2. *given power* [2x]: the right & capacity to act. Jn 1:13 You are given *the right* to be sons of God Most High - authorized to wield sword; keys of kingdom
 - i. *as scorpions* - [v5 & 10]: tail stings, inject poison, affect nervous system

3. Locusts hurt men not sealed. We are sealed: Rv 7:3ff; Eph 1:13. Seal fore- head: renewed mind - thinking; on hand [Rv 13:16;14:9;20:4] behavior.
4. Rv 14:9-11 3rd flying angel declares doom of those w/ mark/seal of beast
 - i. Those not sealed by God are sealed by Satan - idolaters.
 - ii. *All who dwell on the earth will worship him* [1st beast: State power].

3rd: The Torment of the Unsealed - v5-6

1. *Torment* is peculiar term - limited in effect: *not permitted to kill anyone*.
2. Limited in duration - *5 months* = symbolic #: ½ of #10: God's purpose
3. *Torment*: idea of rubbing - to test quality of metal: "Lydian Stone". Here figurative - pain assoc'd w/ birth; cause anguish: psychological distress.
 - i. Enemies cast into confusion
 - ii. Curse for apostasy - Dt 28:28-29, v34, v60, v65, v66-67 Physical pain along w/ psychological torment. Lk 21:26 *fainting from fear*
4. Rv 9:6 - scorpion's sting induces a desire to commit suicide, but *death will elude them* [NIV]. A deep despair characteristic of HOPELESSNESS
5. See Pharaoh -"repented" Ex 9:27-28; 10:16-17 but increasingly hardened
 - i. Rv 9:21 impenitent - hardening - despair/hopeless: [Eph 2:12].
 - ii. Demonic sting: deluded by idolatry in self-destructive despair - nihilistic

4th: The Locust and Their King - v7-11

1. Symbols: *appearance was like* [outward resemblance - 10x] Locusts = invading army - similar to Barbarians
2. Joel 2:1-10 - real locusts as invading army. Layers of meaning. Jdgmnt on Israel - Joel 2:11-13 [Pentecost - A2]. Repent! Context of vs14ff - v27-32a
 - i. Rv 9 - locusts = *woe*. No call to repent, only *torment*: => impenitence.

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3. Rv 9:10 - *hurt men for 5 mons*: lit: "no righteousness"; injure thru injustice.
 - i. Civil injustice? Powers - corruption in those w/ authority
 - ii. If *torment* is more psychological - condemning conscience?
4. Rv 9:11 army of locust march under direction of a king: *the angel of the abyss*: *Abaddon* [Destruction] or *Apollyon* [Destroyer].
 - i. *Abaddon* = place of death [Job 26:6; 28:22]; OT Sheol [Ps 88:11; Prv 15:11; 27:20].
 - ii. *Destroyer* = Angel of Death [10th plague]; some say *Gog* [Rv 20:8]
 - iii. Death - 4th hrsmn w/ Hades [6:8], both thrown in lake of fire: Rv 20:14.

Summary:

Applic #1: Beware Despair

1. Job - [Job 3;11-13; 7:15]; Elijah - [1Kg 19:1-4]; Jer - [Jer 20:14-18]; Jonah [4:3,8]. Ps 88 - only Ps w/o resolution or hope. Is this biblical?
2. Beware despair - symptom of lost focus of faith in enthroned Jesus.
3. Xns hear trmpts too - tests: apostate? overcomer? [1Jn 4:4].

Applic #2: Rejoice! In Christ We are Sealed, Not Stung!

1. 1C 15:54b-58 when locusts buzz by, remind them - they have no sting! If you are in Christ - you're sealed, not stung.