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## REVELATION

### Deception and Destruction

Revelation 09:01-12

#### I. God's Good Creation

a. How would you summarize the creation narrative in Genesis 1 and 2?

- i. The beginning of this world and everything in it
  - ii. The first verse is the summary – ***Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.***
    1. Starts with our Creator – In beginning God – self-existent – He was there before the beginning
  - iii. Then we have verse 2 – ***Gen 1:2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.***
    1. (Hebrew: tohu va-bohu) describes a state of formlessness more specifically a wasteland, or chaotic desolation. Raw and unstructured.
    2. Darkness was on the face of the deep - tehom, the chaotic waters – the deepest part of sea, the grave, or the abyss
    3. ***the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters*** – ready to act
  - iv. God begins to speak
    1. By His mighty Word, He brings something out of nothing
    2. Creates light and separates it from the darkness – creates the sky and separates it from the waters – creates vegetation on the earth – places the sun and the moon in the sky – and He fills the earth and the sea with living creatures – God creates and orders the universe
      - a. And He says - this is good
      - b. The order of the universe and the fine tuning of the earth -
    3. and He creates man in His own likeness – brings Him into a right relationship with Him (order – fine tuning of our lives) - gives mankind authority over the beast of the field, and the birds of the air, and the fish in the sea
    4. Gen 2 – more detail about how God ordered His good world – invites Adam to join Him in bringing order – naming the animals
      - a. And He looks at all that He has made and the order in which He has arranged all things – this is very good
- b. What happened?
- i. You don't even have to be familiar with Genesis 3 to see that something is off
  - ii. If you are familiar with Genesis 3 – you know why – sin entered the world – rebellion – rejection of God and His God plan – His order
- c. Revelation – the fruit of the fall
- i. Creation – Rebellion – the Promise – Redemption – The Church – Restoration
    1. Before the final restoration is the final judgement of those who wish to remain in that state of rebellion

2. That is what we have been studying in these chapters – and it has not been pretty
- ii. Breaking of the 7<sup>th</sup> seal has led us into the trumpets
- iii. The first four angels sounded the first four trumpets – we have seen environment chaos – hail and fire that burned up a third of the trees and all of the grass, something like a volcano thrown into the sea, a star falling from the sky turning freshwater toxic, sun and the moon and the stars are darkened
  1. How would describe this – Chaos? Disorder? – the world before the Spirit of God brought life and order?
  2. These judgements have been environmental – God didn't just create the heavens and the earth – He created mankind – if the this is the condition of the earth – what is the condition of humanity?

***Rev 8: 13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"***

***Rev 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. 7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. 12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.***

## II. The Fallen Star

- a. This star was a "him" - who?
  - i. Isaiah 14:12 — "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"
  - ii. Luke 10:18 — "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."
  - iii. Revelation 12:9 later identifies Satan as the one "cast to the earth" with his angels.
    1. satan - meaning? - Not a name originally, but a title or role - Literally means: "adversary," "accuser," or "opponent"
      - a. Enemy of Christ and His people – Primary goal, purpose?
- b. Verse 11 whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.
  - i. Abaddon (Hebrew) – means "Destruction"
    1. Rooted in Hebrew theology (e.g., Job 26:6, Proverbs 15:11) a place of ruin or destruction.
    2. That place personified - it shows his destructive nature
  - ii. Apollyon (Greek) – means "Destroyer"

1. A Greek-speaking audience would recognize this title and think “Apollo,” the Greek god of light, reason, and healing but also associated with plagues and pestilence
2. Many emperors liked it identify themselves as Apollo—especially Domitian, the emperor during John’s writing of Revelation
- iii. Who is really behind your god Apollo?
  1. You think your placing your trust in the emperor and empire, in your gods – worldly power and authority? Let me take the mask off – this is who you are placing your trust in
  2. The destroyer - destroyer of marriages, families, and lives
  3. ***John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.***
- c. Hopefully that helps us understand this strange and terrifying army he has at his disposal
  - i. Locust – what do locust do? They destroy. Specifically crops – that which sustains, that which gives life
    1. These locust are instructed, not to go after crops, but go after men who do not belong to God
    2. In the parable of the Seeds and Sower – the first seeds fall by the side of the road and the birds snatch them up – Jesus explains “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.”
  - ii. The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, Teeth like lions’ teeth, Breastplates like iron, Sound of wings like chariots
    1. Some may trust in horses, some may trust in chariots – but we will remember the name of the Lord
    2. False authority – the might of man – you trust in your kings and their armies to deliver you – there is only one who can truly save

### III. Deception

- a. Faces like the faces of men - Hair like women’s hair
  - i. Face of men suggests they are intelligent, calculated, and rational
    1. They are not simply mindless beasts – cunning, crafty – this may represent the wisdom of man
      - a. Scripture makes a clear distinction between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God
    2. ***Rom 1:21 Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools...***
    3. ***James 3: 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.***
  - ii. Hair like women’s hair
    1. In Greco-Roman culture, long hair was a symbol of allure or sensuality
    2. Seduction – the appeal of superficial beauty

- a. The lust of the eyes – captivated by what we see
  - 3. David’s son Absalom was proud of his hair – he even weighed it every year when he cut it
    - a. His thick, heavy hair likely entangled in the branches, contributing to him being suspended and helpless
    - b. Vanity, pride – trust in the superficial
  - iii. All of this points to satan’s favorite weapon – his primary purpose is destruction and his primary weapon is deception
- b. Primary weapon
  - i. Jesus says in John 8 - When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."
  - ii. Saw this in Genesis - Then the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die.
  - iii. Paul warns the church in Corinth in 2 Cor 11:3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
    - 1. Later goes on that write that “Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”
  - iv. Rev 12 - the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world...

#### IV. Return to the Abyss

- a. ***1 To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth***
  - i. Bottomless pit - The abyss (abussos) is a place of imprisonment for demonic beings
    - 1. Luke 8:31 – demons beg Jesus not to send them into the abyss.
    - 2. Revelation 20:1-3 – Satan is bound there during the Millennium.
    - 3. The word evokes an infinite chasm, a prison, or a place cut off from heaven and earth.
    - 4. 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6, where rebellious angels are “reserved in chains” for judgment.
  - ii. Old Testament, the deep (tehom) is the chaotic waters of Genesis 1:2
    - 1. A return to the abyss – the bottomless pit – a place without God’s power, light, and order
    - 2. Abyss is where evil is held in check – darkness, chaos – where evil belongs
  - iii. This isn’t an arbitrary punishment - This locust army is the physical manifestation of every false messiah we place our hope in
    - 1. Ultimately leads to our destruction
- b. ***they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.***
  - i. Scorpion tail - sting – why this torture? – God’s mercy
    - 1. Pain of a life out of order – the chaos and confusion of a life separate from God (early childhood development – lack of structure and order)
    - 2. Feel the pain – the sting – Oh death where is your sting – the sting of death is sin – God gives us victory through Jesus Christ