

**GRACE BIBLE CHURCH**  
*Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries*

**The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.**  
**The Tree of Life for week ending 10/27/02.**  
The Angelic Conflict Part 3  
**The Demon King Abaddon and the Demon Assault Armies**

As we continue studying the vital doctrine of the *Angelic Conflict*, we have begun to note the two categories of fallen angels under the command of Satan, beginning with the non-operational (incapacitated) demons. There are two groups of angels who are now in prison but will be released in the future. The first is the angels of **Gen 6** who infiltrated the human race with a line of half-angelic creatures, and who are now incarcerated underneath the ground in Tartarus, a compartment of Hades. The second group is the demons in the abyss who transgressed the boundaries and the rules of the angelic conflict in human history. The abyss is the location of the demon king, Satan's second-in-command, Abaddon. He will play a major role in the Tribulation period. In **Rev 9:1-3**, in the middle of the Tribulation period, Satan is allowed to open the abyss and release these fallen angels.

**Rev 9:4-5** *And they [the demon assault army] were told [commanded] that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torture for five months; and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it strikes a man.*

For many individuals, this is their last chance to be saved—they have hit “rock bottom” in life. For believers, the only means of protection will be their decision to rebound and recover. After five months of terrible torture that drives them to the point of suicide, many of them will still not understand the issue, and that they are alive because their volition still has the opportunity to respond to the grace of God. This is warning before disaster, *grace preceding judgment*. This is God's final appeal to the believer to get out of the cosmic system and to the unbeliever to become born again and saved. This magnitude of torture and pain can serve as motivation, but in many cases pain only makes the person a lot worse. Pain, suffering, and adversity either make a person stronger or weaker, but *never* leaves them the same. Just like He always has throughout history, God provides the solutions *before* the problem.

**Rev 9:6** *And in those days [the last half of the Tribulation period] men [believers and unbelievers living in the cosmic system] will seek death and will not find it.*

The phrase “*those days*” is important, because this has absolutely nothing to do with *these days*, the present time. At this time, we *cannot* be physically attacked by demons.

Our greatest danger from demons lies in our residence in the cosmic system under the stages of reversionism, where we allow ourselves to be influenced by demons.

Satan, who is an evil and an unjust ruler, will now attempt to rule the world with his demon assault armies. This is something that has never happened before in all of his reign over this world. And he will turn his own kingdom into shambles.

**Rev 9:7** *And the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads, as it were, crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.*

These demons are described in terms of a cavalry, representing mobility and firepower. They have a military insignia, crowns “like gold.” It implies that they already consider themselves a victorious army. Their faces are “like men” indicating that demons can appear as men, although they have greater intelligence, power, and adaptability. The last time demons visibly appeared as men was in **Gen 6**, in Noah’s generation. From that time to the middle of the Tribulation, they are invisible.

Verse 8 talks about the “demon beauty parlor”; these demons are very beautiful and attractive as the demons of **Gen 6**, having “hair like women,” **Rev 9:8**, “*And they had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions.*” The woman’s hair depicts beauty and physical attractiveness, as we read of Satan in **Eze 28:12**, “*You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.*” The phrase “the teeth of lions” indicates that behind the facade of beauty is the ruthless desire to destroy.

**Rev 9:9** continues, “*And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.*” “Breastplates of iron” were considered to be the best armor in the ancient world, making its wearer extremely difficult to attack. It emphasizes the fact that demons are not vulnerable to human attack, and therefore human beings have no protection against these demon armies, unless they are behind the “wall of fire” of the predesigned plan of God. The noise of the battle is awesome, “like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.” Even before they strike, they have already paralyzed their victims with fear. One of the great powers of the cosmic system is vulnerability to fear. When a person becomes frightened, he stops thinking and starts emoting, and emotions cannot think. The victims are attacked, not because God made this happen, but because they made negative decisions from a position of weakness, and willfully rejected His divine protection. Bad decisions in the cosmic system from false doctrine result in demon influence and even demon possession of unbelievers. The greatest power we carry in our soul is a greater power than the attack of demons, our volition responding to Bible doctrine. God gave us *free will* in order to resolve the angelic conflict. Physical violence on the part of fallen angels is not permitted today because God the Holy Spirit is the Restrainer. When He is removed in His function as the Restrainer in **2Th 2:7**, those in the cosmic system will be vulnerable to an attack that has never before occurred in all of human history.

In **Rev 9:10**, we see the “scorpion” description of the first demon army: “*And they have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt [torment or torture] men for five months.*” They have power, but it is limited; they cannot go beyond what God allows them.

In **Rev 9:11**, “*They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.*” “Abaddon” is a word that occurs quite often in the Old Testament as a synonym for *Sheol* or *Hades*, as in **Job 26:6**. Abaddon is also the name of the demon prince being held in the abyss (it is perhaps his *title* as opposed to his real name, just as “Satan” and “the devil” are titles). “Apollyon” is very close to “Apollo,” the Greek name for one of the demons most heavily involved with the great attack of **Gen 6**; he may not have actually had sex with women, but apparently committed crimes and violations that may have been even worse, since he is now incarcerated in the abyss. Apollo was the demon God of *light*, who was very much involved with the kingdom of darkness and Satan himself. Apollo was one of the forerunners of demonic attack as an “angel of light.” Apollo (along with Zeus) was the most widely revered and influential of all the Greek gods. He was known for death and terror, and his name actually means the “exterminator” in Greek. Next to Satan he is the highest-ranking demon out of the millions who followed Satan in the prehistoric angelic revolt. The only other fallen angel who is probably on an equal level with him is a demon prince called “Beelzebub.” He is Satan’s masterful minister of deceit. Beelzebub deals with the realm of deceit whereas Apollyon deals with the realm of military action.

Abaddon will reign for 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years, the second half of the Tribulation, **Rev 13:5** (“42 months”), **Dan 7:25, 12:7** (“a time, times, and half a time”—literally, one year plus two years plus half a year). It is important to understand that he is a different fallen angel from Satan. Paul describes Abaddon as the “man of sin” in **2Th 2**. In **Rev 17:5**, he is the beast that the woman, the “mother of harlots,” is riding (she represents all the false religious systems of this world). In **Dan 7** and **Rev 17**, he will be the foremost leader of the *new world order* (which will last for only a very short time). In **Dan 7**, he is called the “little horn,” separate from the “ten kings.” He will become the ruler of the entire earth in the ultimate and final realization of Satan’s governmental system, **Rev 13:4**. In **2Th 2**, he will take a seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. In **Dan 8:10**, he will lead his military of fallen angels against the elect angels and even accomplish a temporary victory over some of them, which will, of course, be very short-lived. After the Israelites have returned to the Holy Land, Abaddon will summon his rulers and their armies to in his all-out effort to destroy them, **Eze 38-39**, but he will fail, **Rev 19:19-20:3**, as all anti-Semitism inevitably fails.

In **Rev 9:12-21**, there is a *second* demon assault army stationed underneath the Euphrates River. The Apostle John writes in **Rev 9:12-13**, “*The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things. And the sixth angel sounded [a winner angel from the original angelic conflict blowing a trumpet], and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God.*” The golden altar is analogous to the golden altar of incense which was in the Tabernacle and the Temple, and it represents the *imprecatory* (invoking harm and defeat on one’s enemies) prayers of the Tribulational saints in **Rev 6:9-11**. The four horns of the golden altar remind us that all answer to prayer, including imprecatory prayers, are based on the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. This alone is what gives us the privilege and opportunity of answered prayer.

In **Rev 9:14**, the order to release the commanders of the second demon assault army is given: “*One commanding the sixth angel who had the trumpet, ‘Release the four*

*angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates [one of the four rivers that flow from the Garden of Eden, a river of great significance].’” This is a command to release four demon princes (or generals) who have been restrained until now. They are under the earth, and they cannot operate in human history at this time; we do not know *when* and *why* they were imprisoned, but only that they have been there since the beginning of the human race. (The only demons allowed to operate on planet earth at present are disembodied spirits.) Each one of these demon generals commands a great demon assault army, probably divided into 50,000,000 demons each. These demon armies have impressive physical bodies, weapon systems, and uniforms and patches, and they are a fully developed and organized military. So fierce was this army that it was held in a separate “maximum security” prison from the demons who are in Tartarus, and once these four demon officers are released, they will do the rest. This is a very hard-core “search and destroy” military.*

In **Rev 9:15**, we see the time and the objective of the second demon assault army: *“And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released...”* This group will be composed of four hard-core armies, probably sent to the North, South, East, and West. Their objective is stated at the end of this verse: *“...so that they might kill a third of mankind.”* It is no wonder that God reveals more about this period of time than any other period in history. There is going to come a time on this earth when **Rev 9** will become a reality, and the fallen angels who are now underneath the ground will be released on this earth. The comfort for us as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ today is that we will not be here during this period.

The only ones this army will not kill will be believers in the plan of God and certain demon-possessed unbelievers, who will be used later in the final attack against God’s plan in the Tribulation. This final attack will be *religion*, found in **Rev 17-18**.

**Rev 9:16-18** *And the number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone. [This demonic assault forges straight ahead with great success, with great power, and with great shock.] A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone [sulfur], which proceeded out of their mouths.*

This fire, smoke, and sulfur are fatal (killer agents). This demonic army takes no prisoners. The casualty list is *one third* of the world’s existing population, members of the human race living in the cosmic system. After one fourth of the world’s population has already been destroyed (**Rev 6:7-8**), a third of the survivors will be killed. In totality, *one half* of all mankind will have been destroyed at this point. And all anyone has to do to be spared from this holocaust is respond to the grace of God. As for Church-age believers, we can take comfort in the fact that our Lord will take His Bride out of the world before any of this happens, **1Th 4:17-18**, *“Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore **comfort one another with these words.**”*

For a more detailed study, order last week’s tapes, IA11-228 to IA11-232.