

REVELATION 9:13-21  
SIXTH TRUMPET, SECOND WOE:  
EUPHRATES ANGELS  
NOV.17, 2009

Have you ladies noticed the prevailing attitude toward sin in our society? Well, I should categorize that even more. Sin is no longer called sin. It is now called choice, as in “I have not made the best choices, but I am learning to make better ones.” Or as misspeak, as in “I did not lie, I simply misspoke!” In other words, “I am not guilty.” When it comes right down to it, lying has become a way of life, and when people tell the truth it is seen not as refreshing honesty but hateful speech. Many children are being taught that things need to be fair, ‘cause if things are not fair, then children are not to blame for their actions. One of my granddaughters got injured during a fight between 2 young men in the Patrick Henry cafeteria during lunch last week. I heard someone want to blame the fight on overcrowding due to the recession! Give me a break! We live in a society that has either forgotten or never even heard that God hates sin, no matter what we try to call it. And the reason God hates sin is that it separates His creation from Him. Sin is not a popular word today, nor has it ever been, yet regardless of what we call it, God calls it sin. We can try to justify our actions, and justify ourselves all we want, but only those who are justified by God through faith in His Son Jesus Christ will escape the coming wrath. For all others sin will be punished.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, come and guide us into all truth. Be our Teacher and Comforter. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

As our passage opens John hears a voice speaking to the 6<sup>th</sup> angel from the horns of the golden altar which is before God. Let's take a look at that altar. In Ex.30 God's instructions to Moses are to make an altar on which to offer incense, with horns built into it, and gold was to cover the whole thing. It was placed outside the veil before the Ark of the Covenant, upon which was the mercy seat where God would meet with Aaron as High Priest. As high priest, Aaron was to make atonement once a year for the sins of the people, pouring the blood of the sin offering upon the horns of the altar. It is significant, I believe, that the voice comes from those horns, the place of atonement, but the words are ominous. Has the time of atonement passed? Is that free gift of atonement no longer available? Certainly the blood of Jesus has not lost its power to save, but the time for decision seems to have passed. If so, then this time would coincide with the taking of the mark of the beast in chap.13:16. The command was to liberate the 4 angels bound at the great river Euphrates. These angels cannot be anything but evil, for they have been bound by God. They have been waiting to wreak havoc on mankind but they have been physically restrained from doing so. Why they so hate human beings is not known, but if you remember what I said last week, I don't think Satan has many happy servants. They hate because it is their nature to hate. Can it be because humans are the recipients of God's love poured out in the blood of His

one and only Son? These fallen angels were among the first recipients of God's love, yet they threw it away to follow their master, Lucifer.

With the word to release these angels, we read that they were prepared for this exact moment in time, released to kill 1/3 of mankind. I was led to look the word mankind up in Strong's Concordance, and was rather surprised to find that it referred almost exclusively to homosexuals, those who pervert God-given sexuality. It breaks my heart to say this, but one of my friends told me that her 2 young daughters were at a Halloween party where the young girls were daring each other to kiss each other open mouthed. This spirit of sexual perversion is out in the open right now. Guard your children, ladies.

These 4 evil spirits are at this moment bound at the river Euphrates, which formed one of the boundaries of the Garden of Eden. As a matter of fact, the river Euphrates has its beginning in the Garden of Eden, according to Gen.2:10. It was in that area that man first rebelled against God, committing the first sin of unbelief, falling for the trick of the enemy, "Did God really say...?" And it was there that Adam blamed God for giving him the woman who convinced him to eat the fruit. It was there that Cain killed his brother Abel, and blamed God, saying, "Am I my brother's keeper? Isn't that Your job?" It was there that mankind became so evil that God decided to destroy all but 8 with a flood and begin again. It was in that area that man decided to defiance of God make a name for themselves, ignoring God's instructions to populate the earth. (Gen.1:28) It

was near the river Euphrates that Nimrod built the city of Babylon, where idolatry received its origin, and surged throughout the world. It was to Babylon that the children of Israel were taken captive, and it will be in this same area that the final sin of man will culminate. According to Rev.18, Babylon the city will be rebuilt and become the headquarters for the commercial, religious, and military activities of the world under the Antichrist's rule.

John hears the number of mounted troops being unleashed by the 4 angels as 200 million! John sees them, but again, they could be only visible to John in this vision, and invisible to humans, because they are spirit-beings. Although it is not specifically stated, I believe we can assume these ungodly horses and riders have come from the unlocked abyss. It is obvious that these are not to be taken as human for several reasons. The riders are not identified as men, only as riders, who wore sulfur colored breastplates. Horses do not have mouths that emit fire and smoke and sulfur, nor do they have heads like lions or tails like serpents. They will apparently get their victims either coming or going! The horses will either kill with their breath, and it ain't garlic, or with their tails. Some have speculated that what John saw was modern war machinery, tanks, artillery, mortars, rockets for which he had no words, so he said they were horsemen. I would say that is definitely a stretch. I believe that this is a demonic hoard that has been given some fittingly demonic bodies to inhabit. At any rate they will leave a trail of devastation behind them, but

once again, they appear to be limited by God's merciful timing, for their plagues seem to come to an end.

The 4 angels bound by God until the minute and second are definitely not the ministering spirits referred to in Heb.1, yet they are administering the judgment of God upon men and women who prefer to take their chances rather than trust in a loving God. (Such a choice! Let me think about it: eternal damnation or eternal security? Hum- give me a moment- death by fire, smoke and brimstone, or acknowledging God's sovereignty? It IS pretty tough to choose!)

This judgment, the slaying of fully 1/3 of all mankind is one of the most devastating judgments mentioned anywhere in the Book of Revelation before the second coming, the glorious appearing, of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the pale horse was released, at the opening of the 4<sup>th</sup> seal, and its rider was given power to kill by sword, famine, wild beasts and death, 1/4 of the earth's population was gone. Now, with this devastation by the horses killing 1/3 of the remaining people, fully 1/2 of the world's population will be gone. By today's standards, that is over 3 billion people. There goes the threat of overpopulation of our planet!

Vs. 20 is so hard to understand: "But the rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the works of their hands..." Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that "the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" This Book certainly answers the suggestion of individuals that "what man needs is a second chance after death." In our study so far we have seen that people have been given

unprecedented opportunities to see the omnipotent hand of God working in human affairs yet they will continue to rebel against and reject Jesus Christ. In spite of the destruction of half the world's population, and one-third of the world's vegetation, light and water supply, people will not repent of their stubborn self-will and sinful practices.

The Message Bible puts the last 2 verses in common vernacular: "The remaining men and women who weren't killed by these weapons went their merry way-didn't change their way of life, didn't quit worshiping demons, didn't quit centering their lives around lumps of gold and silver and brass, hunks of stone and wood that can't see or hear or move. There wasn't a sign of change of heart. They plunged right on in their murderous, occult, promiscuous and thieving ways."

This sure puts a kink in the philosophy that man is basically good, doesn't it? Let's look at the things, the sins, which will keep these men and women from repentance:

The first is idolatry. Anything that takes first place in our lives, if it is not God, is idolatry. Christians are not exempt from idolatry, for anything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God is idolatry. Augustine put it this way: "Idolatry is worshiping anything that ought to be used, or using anything that is meant to be worshiped." Have you ever thought that we all use God? We take for granted breath and health, sunlight and water, freedom and movement. But man was made to worship God, and when he refuses to do that he must fill the need by transferring that worship to something else.

The worship of material possessions or people or anything other than God leads to the fear of losing that thing, which in turn becomes idolatry.

The second is murders. Someone has said, “Wherever the influence of the gospel is unknown, human life is cheap.” We can see this happening all over the world where Muslim militants are systematically murdering Christians who will not renounce Jesus Christ. We even saw it happen last week at a U.S military base, in the name of Allah. Allah, by the way IS NOT another name for the God of Christians and Jews. According to the Qur’an Jesus is only one of God’s messengers. “Far is it removed from his transcendent majesty that he should have a son.” [Surah 4:171] In that vein, Surah 4:111 declares that “each person must take care of his or her own sins”.

The third is magic arts and sorceries. This will no doubt be manifested in the use of drugs, be it in satanic rituals or to simply escape reality. The word in the Greek used for sorceries here is pharmekeia, from which we get our word pharmacy. Drug use among young people was pretty much unknown when I was in high school. Of course alcohol is also a drug, and drinking was not uncommon; I easily fell into that trap. But illegal drugs were just coming into vogue after I left high school. And during the hippy movement, of course, they became very popular. It amazes me that today many professionals use cocaine and other illegal drugs as a way of life! I would have thought that they would have grown wiser, but apparently that is not the case.

Anyway, drugs will be rampant, as a means of escape for

sure, and also a means to treat the pain inflicted by the locusts. Oxycontin is apparently the drug of choice of school kids today, and that is today! Lord protect our children from the lying spirits!

The fifth is sexual immorality. This has always been a tool of the enemy because he knows that God made human beings in a way that the sexual union not only joins bodies but souls and spirits as well. When one is not joined in spirit and soul to God, he or she will seek that joining wherever it can be found. Of course that need cannot be fulfilled sexually, though they will continue to try. Without Christ it becomes a never-ending cycle. There is also a tie between drugs and sexual promiscuity, for trading sex for drugs is another never-ending cycle.

The last is thefts. In their mad quest to find fulfillment and peace apart from their Creator, people will turn further and further away from God, the only One who can and will give them what they seek. All types of lawlessness will abound during the tribulation, for people will get money or things by whatever means possible. It is obvious from these last few verses that this time will be characterized by an all-out giving in to the fulfillment of the desires and lusts of the flesh. In man's mad quest for peace and contentment at any cost people will turn further and further from God. Not only will they damn their immortal souls but they will bring upon themselves all the heartaches of their misspent lives. The peace they seek will elude them until it totally disappears. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians, "A man reaps what he sows." [Gal.6:7]

I cannot leave you with this terribly dismal picture of the future, so I am going to finish with this passage from 1Thess.5:1-11, read from the Living Bible: “When is all this going to happen? I really don’t need to say anything about that, dear brothers, for you know perfectly well that no one knows. That day of the Lord will come unexpectedly like a thief in the night. When people are saying, ‘All is well, everything is quiet and peaceful’—then, all of a sudden, disaster will fall upon them as suddenly as a woman’s birth pains begin when her child is born. And these people will not be able to get away anywhere—there will be no place to hide. But, dear brothers, you are not in the dark about these things, and you won’t be surprised as by a thief when that day of the Lord comes. For you are all children of the light and of the day, and do not belong to darkness and night. So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Watch for His return and stay sober. Night is the time for sleep and the time when people get drunk. But let us who live in the light keep sober, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the happy hope of salvation. For God has not chosen to pour out His anger upon us, but to save us through our Lord Jesus Christ; He died for us so that we can live with Him forever, whether we are dead or alive at the time of His return. So encourage each other to build each other up, just as you are already doing.”

Do you understand that the Lord has brought us together to study this book for many different reasons? We are not only here to learn, but to encourage each other! Do you ladies know that you are building me up?

Do you see yourselves building each other up? Your mere presence in this study is building us all up! Thank you! Now, go out and tell others the good news!