

Revelation -20

Continuing the symbols of Rev. 6-9

9:3..locusts upon the earth...in the Old Testament the locust was an insect of judgment...these creatures are not locusts in any normal sense but are beasts of judgment uniquely qualified to afflict the men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads (the 144,000).

9:5..five months ...not sure of the significance but it is interesting to note the precision of time in Revelation. Specific time periods are very common. "five" is sometimes called the "number of grace" and it has been suggested the five months was a repenting period...I am not sure if that can be pressed.

9:7-10...the description of the locusts is by a connection of similes (comparison expressed with the use of "like" or "as").

9:11...a king, Abaddon (Apolyon) The Greek and Hebrew proper names indicate ruin or destruction. ..or a destroyer that causes such. The term is used a half dozen times in the Old Testament to speak of the place of departed spirits..."persons ruined" so to speak. This "angel" will oppose the witnesses of Revelation 11 but should not be thought of as Satan...he is rather a powerful force in the Satanic armies. Some have thought he may have been one of the fallen angels of earlier times.

9:13...the golden altar ...standing outside the holiest of all in the place of incense and prayer. The Old Testament symbolism continues to be very pronounced.

9:14...the four angels...probably in the sense of messengers...bound may merely mean that they were restrained in their operations. Note the specific nature of verse 15. The number of persons in verse 16 is what prophecy scholars often call the "army from the east."

9:17...the horsemen...are similar to the locusts but with a killing power. The figurative language is to make a feeling for the terror they inspire. As we have mentioned before, the action of men is not to repent.

SOME LESSONS AVAILABLE IN THESE CHAPTERS

1. Men, not ruled by God, become their own worst foes.
2. Divine judgment is sharply programmed, not hit or miss.
3. The Lord has a remnant of grace among Israel...and other persons as well.
4. The Lord is always responsive to those who look to Him.
5. Difficulties in themselves are not likely to turn people to God.