

Chapter 9

In this chapter John is still being shown the angels who will appear after the opening of the seventh seal, just prior to the ushering in of the millennial reign. Even though John is witnessing these angels sounding their trumpets, the actual events will not take place for approximately another 2000 years. This chapter begins with John witnessing the fifth angel, who in around 2000 years from John's time.

[1] And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth; and to the angel was given the key of the bottomless pit.

Scholars say there is considerable ambiguity in this verse as to who was given the key, the fifth angel or the star that fell from heaven. The King James bible says, "to him was given the key;" the J.B. Phillips says "he (*meaning the star*) was given the key; Good News for Modern Man says "it was given the key, (*also meaning the star*). It is significant that Joseph Smith was inspired to write, "**to the angel** was given the key." It is also significant that modern translations of the bible begin a new sentence with; "I saw a star which **had**, or that **had** fallen from heaven," which means that it would have fallen before the time covered by the fifth angel, therefore, before John's time also.

The time depicted by this angel begins with Jesus' birth and continues to 1000 A.D. This included the time in which John was witnessing this event. It also included the time in which Jesus organized his Church, ministered to his people, was crucified, and resurrected.

Jesus made this statement to his disciples who held the priesthood office of Seventy:

"As lightning falls from heaven, I beheld Satan also falling." [Luke 10:19]

And from [Revelation 12:8] we read:

"Neither was there place found in heaven for the great dragon, who was cast out; that old serpent called the devil, and also called Satan, which deceives the whole world; he was cast out into the earth; and his angels were cast out with him."

Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven and **into the earth**. But, according to the following scripture, being "cast into the earth" is the same as being cast "to the sides of the pit," i.e., the bottomless pit. ***why would God cast them into the pit and then give Satan the key?**

[12] How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! [13] For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; [14] ... I will be like the Most High. [15] Yet you shall be brought down to hell, **to the sides of the pit**. [16] They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and shall consider you, and shall say, **Is this the man** that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; [17] And made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; and opened not the house of his prisoners? *Satan, a man!* [Isaiah 14:12-17]

[**Genesis 3:4-5**] Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him; and also that I should give unto him my own power; by the power of my Only Begotten **I caused that he should be cast down; and he became Satan.** [5] Yes, **even the devil**, the father of all lies, to deceive, and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.

Notice in the following scripture that, referring to a different time, it is unquestionably “an angel” who has the “key of the bottomless pit”:

[1] And I saw an angel come down out of heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. [2] And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, [3] **And cast him into the bottomless pit**, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. [**Revelation 20:1-3**]

And, it will be seen in [**Verse 14**] of this Chapter that these angels which are sounding their trumpets exercise authority over those angels in the bottomless pit, for a voice told the sixth angel to “Loose the four angels which are bound in the bottomless pit.”

More will be said about the bottomless pit, and those in it, in [**Chapters 11, 12, 13 & 17**].

But for now it can be surmised that the star which John saw fall from heaven is much like the one he saw in **Revelation 8:10-11**:

“And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”

Lets emphasize again that Jesus was born, lived and died at the front end of this fifth thousand year era! This is when he brought salvation to man! For concerning this landmark in time, we read:

I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, **Now is come salvation**, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. [**Revelation 12:9**]

And Paul said that: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that **through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.** [**Hebrews 2:14**] *ref [2 Nephi 6:10-47] And – Remember this?

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; [18] I am he that lives, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; **and have the keys of hell and of death.** [**Revelation 1:17-18**]

Even though hell and the bottomless pit are not the same place, Jesus holds the key to both of them. * lets refer again to the Lord speaking of Lucifer in:

Yet you shall be brought down to hell, **to the sides of the pit**, [Isaiah 14:15]; i.e., the bottomless pit; into which he and his angels were cast. This became their home base from which they leave when they come to earth to be born at their appointed time. *[Matthew 13:35-38]

[Ezekiel 26:20] speaks of the pit as “the low parts of the earth.”

[Ezekiel 31:14 & 32:18,24] speaks of the pit as “the nether parts of the earth.”

[2] And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reasons of the smoke of the pit.

Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. [Ephesians 2:2] *** more on the “smoke” in the study of [Revelation 14:10-11] ***

The wind blows where it does, and you hear the sound thereof, but can not tell from where it comes, and where it goes; so is every one who is born of the Spirit. [John 3:8]

It has already been seen, and will perhaps be seen more clearly in [Chapter 12], that the “sun” is symbolic of “the gospel.” So, when the angel opened the bottomless pit, the influences of the devil came out in great force, eclipsing the gospel during the time from 0 to 1000 A.D. As soon as Jesus established his Church, these influences began to infiltrate it. The hardships endured by the Christians during the first half of this epoch is probably incomprehensible to us today. The sufferings imposed upon the saints by the edit of the ten “Imperial Persecutions,” instituted by the Emperors of Rome, were inhuman, they were brutal, and they were sadistic.

They began with Nero and each of the nine successive Emperors continued the Imperial Persecutions at varying levels of severity.

Nero reigned as Emperor to Rome A.D. 54 - 68. His rule is best known for a fire that destroyed much of Rome in 64 A.D. There were rumors circulating that Nero had started the fire so that he could build the Golden House, a colossal palace, that was built in the center of the burned-out area. However, Nero blamed the Christians, an unpopular group in Rome at that time, and began persecuting them; instituting the First Imperial Persecution of the Christians. According to historians, Paul and possibly Peter were put to death during this first imperial decree.

John was banished to the isle of Patmos during the persecution of the Christians by Domitian who was the Emperor of Rome 81-96 AD. Domitian instituted the Second Imperial Persecution of Christians 95-96 AD, which, though short lived, was extremely severe. Over 40,000 Christians were tortured and slain. John was allowed to return to Ephesus in 96 AD and it was then that he began his writing.

Domitian’s successor, Trajan, reigned from 98 to 117 A.D. He was not against the Christians but felt that he should uphold the laws of the Empire. The church was regarded as a secret society, which was forbidden. Under his reign Christians were not sought out but were punished when accused. Simeon, the brother of Jesus and Bishop of Jerusalem, was crucified 107 A.D. Ignatius,

Bishop of Antioch, was taken to Rome and thrown to the wild beasts 110 A.D. The next two Emperors, Hadrian; 117-138 A.D. and Antoninus Pius; 138-161 A.D. also punished the Christians in moderation. But after them the persecution began to worsen until they were not just executed, they were tortured in indescribable ways and then executed. The word moderation used here is merely a relative term, for their moderation would seem very harsh to the Christian world today.

Tertullian, 160-220 A.D. “The father of Latin Christianity;” wrote of the Christians; “We are of yesterday. Yet we have filled your Empire, your Cities, your Towns, your Islands, your Tribes, your Camps, Castles, Palaces, Assemblies and Senate.” By the end of the Imperial Persecutions in 313 A.D., Christians numbered about one-half of the population of the Roman Empire.

Is it not amazing that, regardless of how much pain and death the Empire unleashed upon the Church, membership continued to grow until it numbered roughly one-half of the Roman Empire’s population! It’s when the church has it’s free reign that it begins to demoralize, as it did after Constantine’s time. Paul saw it coming even in his day and said:

[29] I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. [30] Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. [Acts 20:29-30] And the Lord told Alma, the son of Alma, that: “This is my church, and I will establish it; and **nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people.**” **[Mosiah 11:166]**

In spite of opposition from without, the Church suffered more from opposition within. And then, along came Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus, commonly known as Constantine. He was born around 275 A.D. and was the first emperor of Rome to become a “Christian.” In 313, Constantine arranged a partnership with Emperor Licinius, ruler of the eastern provinces. They met in Milan and drafted the Edict of Toleration, which gave freedom of worship and equal rights to all religious groups. Constantine was baptized a Christian on his deathbed in 337 A.D.

Imperial Persecution of Christians was now a thing of the past and the Imperial Church was a thing of the future. While the Church was being persecuted it was held together by common goals, common values and principles; moral ethics were important to its members. But after Constantine became a Christian, joining the church was the popular thing to do. The church still flourished; but those joining it had different goals; different values and morals; and finally, a different church.

[3] And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

The Arabians ruled the Muhammadan world for 400+ years, 630 – 1058 A.D. Arabia was unparalleled as a land of locust.

[4] And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Muhammadans spared trees, grass and all vegetation, because Muhammad commanded it. Muhammad became their prophet and in essence, their king. This is allegorical of their not being allowed to hurt those who had been sealed unto God. *reference [Revelation 7:2-3]

[5] And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man.

[6] And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

The normal stay of locust is 5 months, May to September. Five months of 30 days each equals 150 years, extending roughly from 630 A.D. to 790 A.D. (150 years) They went through Asia like the plague, forcing their religion upon the people; and when they left a city, village, or province, there were only Muslims left alive. Man, woman and child, if they did not convert, were brutally tortured and killed. After they had conquered and converted Asia, they began to cultivate their religion in their own country through peaceful means. * the conversion from 5 months to 150 years is from the formula given in [Ezekiel 4:6] "I have appointed you each day for a year."

[7] And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

[8] And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

The Muhammadan army was fierce and relentless; famous for their beards, with long hair like women; breast plates as of iron; they wore yellow turbans on their heads that looked like gold.

[9] And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

[10] And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months. *see [Verse 5]

[11] And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue has his name Apollyon.

Abaddon in Hebrew means destroying angel, while Apollyon in Greek means destroyer or Satan. Remember, angels can be messengers, or even ministers. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." [2 Cor 11:13-15]

And, is it not more than a coincidence that Muhammad was born 570 A.D., the same year the Church was taken off the earth for 1260 years, nearly in the middle of this thousand year era, to a place prepared of God. And, is it not peculiar that an angel appeared to him; told him that Jesus was not the Son of God; told him that Jesus was merely a prophet who had failed in his mission; and was told that whereas Jesus had failed, he, Muhammad, would succeed and become God's right hand man. No one is allowed entrance to paradise without Muhammad's permission.

[12] One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.
[13] And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,
[14] Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the bottomless pit.
[15] And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.
[16] And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand; and I saw the number of them.

Notice that according to [Verses 13 and 14], the sixth angel, in addition to sounding his trumpet, will take an active part in what happens at the end of this era; he will “loose the four angels which are bound in the bottomless pit.”

John doesn't say who the four angels are, which is ok, for one should not be eager to make their acquaintance. For they were to be loosed during this era to slay “the third part of men,” History shows that many died, and are still dying, as a result of the wars waged during this time.

[17] And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.
[18] By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.
[19] For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

The Turks took over Muhammadan rule in 1058 A.D. In 1057 a vast hoard of Turks from central Asia appeared on the banks of the Euphrates. They were even more intolerant and cruel than the Arabians had been. The Turks had become Muslims, but unlike the Arab Muslims, they made it difficult for Christian pilgrims to reach the holy places. The Turks crushed the Byzantines in the Battle of Manzikert in Asia Minor in 1071. Their barbaric treatment led to the Crusades which began in 1095 A.D., when the Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus asked Urban II, pope of the Roman Catholic Church, for assistance in fighting the Turks. Urban agreed to help, and in the autumn of 1095 he held a meeting of church leaders in Clermont, France, where he called for a crusade. He gave a stirring sermon, urging European Christians to stop fighting among themselves and recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims. He promised the crusaders both spiritual and material rewards for their work. The crowd enthusiastically responded with shouts of “God wills it!” An intense desire to fight for Christianity gripped Western Europe, and thousands of people joined the cause.

There were a total of eight Crusades that continued from 1095 to 1272 A.D., and they had recovered the Holy Land only briefly through negotiating a peace treaty with the Muslim sultan during the Sixth Crusade (1228-1229). The sultan gave Jerusalem to the Christians and Jerusalem remained Christian until the Muslims seized it again in 1244. But after 1272 the Europeans were losing interest in the Holy Land. Several weak attempts to organize crusades during the 1300's and 1400's failed. Europe was turning its attention westward to the Atlantic Ocean and beyond. After

Columbus sailed to the New World in 1492, the European countries looked toward America for their expansion. They left the Holy Land to the Muslims. There were other attempts at Crusades until the Byzantine Empire fell to the Ottoman Empire in 1453. **Artillery with gunpowder was first used in this conflict.**

In 1231 A.D., Pope Innocent III established the religious court known as the Inquisition, which was set up to investigate and combat heretics. Instead of the church being the persecuted, it now became the persecutor. This court had 60,000,000 people tortured and killed in the name of God.

However, the seed that sprouted and grew to become the Inquisition was not planted by a pope, it was planted in 392 A.D. by the Roman Emperor Theodosius I, who outlawed all non-Christian and non-Jewish worship. **From then on, the teachings of the Christian church were regarded as the foundation of law and order. Heresy was now an offense against the state as well as the church.**

The number of those executed by this church, however, wanes in comparison to those victimized by Islam. From one man, Mohammad, propagated the world's largest faith; a faith which excludes Jesus. Following is a list of the three largest religions which do not believe in Jesus.

Islam or Muslim: Over **1.1 billion**. The countries with the largest Muslim populations are Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. About one-fourth of all Muslims live in the Middle East. They make up the majority of the population in the European country of Albania and nearly half the population in Bosnia. Muslims rank as the second largest religious group in Belgium, France, and Germany. Several million Muslims live in the United States.

Hinduism: About **750 million**, is the major religion of India.

Buddhism: About **350 million**. Most live in Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), Southeast Asia, & Japan.

The Ottoman Empire was the most powerful empire in the world during the 1500's and 1600's. At its height, it controlled what is now Turkey and parts of northern Africa, southwestern Asia, and southeastern Europe. The empire began about 1300 and lasted until 1922. The Ottomans were nomadic Turkish tribes that migrated to the Middle East from central Asia. The term Ottoman comes from Osman, also called Othman or Uthman, the founder and first sultan (ruler) of the empire.

Before the arrival of the Ottomans, the Byzantine Empire had occupied parts of Asia Minor (now Turkey) and southeastern Europe for almost 1,000 years. That empire ended in 1453, when the Ottomans conquered the Byzantine capital of Constantinople (now Istanbul). They made the city their capital. By the mid-1500's, the Ottomans ruled Asia Minor, the Balkans, and parts of northern Africa and present-day Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. The Ottomans were Muslims, and they spread their religion throughout the empire.

The Ottoman Empire slowly declined only after 1700, when it was faced with the emerging powers of Europe. When World War I began in 1914, the Ottoman Empire consisted of only Asia Minor, parts of southwestern Asia, and part of the Balkans. The Ottomans were defeated in the war, and the empire came to an end in 1922.

[20] And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; [D&C 1:3a-e]

[21] Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

[1] ... in the last days perilous times shall come. [2] For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, [3] Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. [4] Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; [5] **Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof;** from such turn away. [6] For of this sort are they which ... *are* led away with divers lusts, [7] **Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.** [2 Timothy 3:1-7] [1 Timothy 4:1-3]

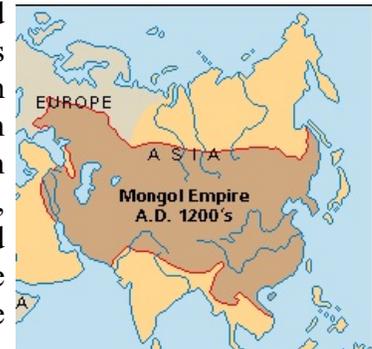
they shall turn away their ears from the truth, **and shall be turned unto fables.** [2 Timothy 4:4]

In **Chapter 6** were presented sketches of events that happened mostly in Europe, Egypt, Asia Minor, and etc., during the thousand year era profiled by each of the first six seals.

Chapter 6 also profiled what happened to those on the American continent during the time represented by the fifth seal.

Now – Lets look at events, other than those already presented, that happened in various parts of the world during the time depicted by the sixth seal and the sixth angel.

Genghis Khan, (1162?-1227), was a Mongol conqueror who founded the largest land empire in history. He ruled an area that stretched across central Asia from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Japan. His grandson Kublai Khan completed the conquest of China in 1279. This barbarian invasion came from the center of Asia after 1206 when Genghis Khan united Mongol tribes and conquered northern China, northern India, Persia (now Iran), and parts of Europe. The Mongol Empire extended from China and Korea to the Danube River in Europe. The empire lasted until 1368, but it achieved its greatest importance during the mid-1200's under Kublai Khan.



Civil War (1861-1865) took more American lives than any other war in history. (620,000)
Vietnam War (1957-1975) was the longest war in which the United States took part. It was enormously destructive. Military deaths reached about 1.3 million.

World War I (1914-1918) involved more countries and caused greater destruction than any other war except World War II. The war lasted four years and took the lives of nearly 10 million troops.

World War II (1939-1945) killed more people, destroyed more property, disrupted more lives, and probably had more far-reaching consequences than any other war in history. Military deaths probably totaled about 17 million. Civilian deaths were even greater as a result of starvation,

bombing raids, massacres, epidemics, and other war-related causes. The battlegrounds spread to nearly every part of the world.

[4a] And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delays his coming until the end of the earth. [4b] And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound; and when the time of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fullness of my gospel; [4c] but they receive it not, for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me **because of the precepts of men**; ... [4e] but my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but **among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God, and die**. [4f] And there shall be earthquakes, also, in divers places and many desolations; **yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword one against another, and they will kill one another**. [D&C 45:4a-f]

And after these things I heard another voice saying, Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, yes, and they who dwell upon the islands of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time. [Revelation 12:12]

[James 4:7] Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.