



YES, NO AND MAYBE

1. I am more stubborn than the people sitting closest to me.
2. I love bugs! I wouldn't mind if I were surrounded by locusts and scorpions.
3. Satan can only hurt us as much as God allows him to.
4. Satan and his demons do everything they can to make people's lives happy and comfortable, so they won't want God.
5. The painful trials in the last days are Satan's attempts to get you to deny God.

THE FIFTH & SIXTH TRUMPETS

➤ READ Revelation 9 (NIV)

The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. 2 When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. 3 And out of the smoke locusts came down on the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. 4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 They were not allowed to kill them but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes. 6 During those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them.

7 The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. 8 Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. 10 They had tails with stingers, like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. 11 They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon (that is, Destroyer).

12 The first woe is past; two other woes are yet to come.

13 The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar that is before God. 14 It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 The number of the mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand. I heard their number.

17 The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur. 18 A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. 19 The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury.

20 The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

« What makes some people miserable today?

» **Vs. 1: The Abyss** – A "bottomless pit"; literally "the pit of the abyss." Luke makes it clear that this "pit" is the abode of the demons (Luke 8:31), and John states that Satan will be temporarily "jailed" there during the 1000 years after the Second Coming (Rev. 20:1–3). The Antichrist (i.e., "the beast") will ascend out of this pit (Rev. 11:7; 17:8). It is not the lake of fire, for that is the final destination for Satan and all who follow him (Rev. 20:10),

DIG DEEPER



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NOTES

DIG DEEPER...CONTINUED

» **Vs. 1-11: A star that had fallen from the sky** - This fallen star is a person, the king over the beings in the pit (Rev. 9:11). He does not have complete authority, for the key to the pit had to be given to him before he could loose his army. This “star” is probably Satan and the army, his demons (Eph. 6:10ff). One of the names for Satan is Lucifer, which means “brightness”; he also is compared to the “morning star” (Isa. 14:12-14). Jesus said to His disciples, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 10:18).

« **Why do you think God would give Satan the key to release himself fully upon the earth?**

» **Vs. 5: Five months** - The locusts were allowed to torture those without the seal of God for five months. This is approximately the length of the portion of the year that locusts could attack—from early spring to late summer. That they attacked for the entire time emphasizes the plague’s considerable duration. It is the length of the flood of Noah’s day (Gen. 7:24) and was also used to describe the length of time Gessius Florus terrorized Jerusalem during the Jewish War of the mid-first century (Ford, 1975:149). Although five months describes a long time for such intense tribulation, it is of limited duration, and the mercy of God will intervene to bring it to an end.

« **What does the phrase “for five months” symbolize to you about God, and what He’s doing?**

» **Vs. 11: Abaddon & Apollyon** - The leader’s name of the demonic hordes is given in two languages. Abaddon transliterates a Hebrew word meaning ‘destruction’ (Job. 26:6; 28:22; Ps. 88:11; Prov. 15:11). The Greek equivalent is given as Apollyon, which means ‘destroyer’. It is possible that this name is used rather than one of the other possible equivalents in order to convey a derogatory allusion to the god Apollo. What the Greeks worshiped as a god was no more than a demon. Theologians think there may be in mind the fact that Emperor Domitian saw himself as an incarnation of Apollo.

« **What do these names reveal to you about Satan, and about his plan for your life?**

» **Vs. 13: The Sixth Trumpet** - The sixth trumpet closely parallels the fifth that precedes it. It is another attack by satanic creatures on the unfaithful but more intense than the preceding one: the fifth trumpet brings torment; the sixth carries death.

» **Vs. 14: Release the four angels** - These four at the Euphrates are not attested elsewhere. Their location prevents us from identifying them with the four angels of 7:1. The fact that they have been bound shows that they are not good angels going forth voluntarily to do God’s will. They are evil beings who have been restrained until now. This ties in with the general pattern how this section of the book deals with the demonic.

» **Vs. 16: Twice ten thousand times ten thousand** - Literally 200 million. The number of the angels indicates that their destructive activity extends throughout the universe—to the four corners of the earth. This number signifies that you, as a human, do not have the power to defend yourself.

« **Why do you think God would allow these fallen angels to escalate their attacks’ deadliness?**

» **Vs. 20: The rest of mankind...did not stop worshiping demons** - In this vision there is emphasis on the refusal to repent. God releases Satan and his army upon the wicked to show what their nature and intent is, but God’s aim is not to hurt. There is a purpose of love behind the judgments. They are to make plain the seriousness and the ill intent of sin, they are to lead people to repent, to turn to God and be saved. But when they do nothing of the sort they should not think that they have triumphed over God. They may resist his will, but it is to their own hurt. John’s disturbing vision is that none of the judgments described up to now have succeeded in bringing about repentance or any change of heart in an evil world. The surviving inhabitants of the earth are like Pharaoh in the face of the plagues on Egypt in Moses’ time: their hearts are hardened and they will not repent.

« **Why do you think that people are unwilling to see that the source of pain is coming from evil?**

» **Vs. 21: Magic arts** - The word translated “magic arts” or “sorcery” is the Greek word pharmakia, which means “the use of drugs.” Drugs are often used in pagan religious rites and demon worship. As we see the expansion of today’s “drug culture,” we have no problem envisioning a whole society given over to these demonic tricks.

« **How do you see the devil using addictive drugs today to separate people from God’s salvation?**

MY PRAYER...

1. How stubborn am I against the will of God?
2. How can I help people see God’s love and unwavering hope?
3. What new aspect of God’s character does He want me to know?



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