

Revelation week #21

Revelation 9:1-12

Hell on Earth: The fifth trumpet

I. Introduction

- a. Because our world is the theater where the glorious, God-honoring story of redemption is played out, Satan and his demon hosts have attacked the human race, turning the earth into the main battleground in their cosmic war against God, the holy angels, and the elect.
- b. Satan launched his first assault in the Garden of Eden, where he successfully tempted Adam and Eve to disobey God.
 - i. The disastrous consequences were that “sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12).
 - ii. After the Fall, God graciously promised a Savior who would come to destroy Satan and deliver people from his power (Gen. 3:15).
 - iii. Satan countered by sending demons to cohabitate with human women, attempting to produce a hybrid demon/human race of people for whom the God-Man could not atone (Gen. 6:1–4).
 - iv. In response, God destroyed that race and the whole sinful world in the powerful judgment of the universal Flood—the single greatest catastrophe the earth has yet seen.
- c. Satan’s tormenting of righteous Job reveals his hatred for the godly.
 - i. Satan sought to destroy Job’s faith—to take him from God’s kingdom back to his own kingdom of darkness.
 - ii. With God’s permission, Satan destroyed Job’s possessions, killed his children, and ruined his health.
 - iii. Job was left with an embittered wife (Job 2:9), friends whose inept counsel drove him to distraction, and many

unanswered questions about why God allowed him to suffer.

- iv. But Job remained loyal to God, proving that saving faith is permanent and God holds on to His own, so that in the end God was vindicated, and Satan's attempt to destroy Job's faith, as it would with that of any other believer, was unsuccessful.
- v. As he did with Job, Satan continually accuses believers before God (12:10; cf. Zech. 3:1).
- d. No nation has experienced more of Satan's assaults than Israel.
 - i. He has always had a special hatred for God's chosen people, "from whom is the Christ according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:5).
 - ii. First Chronicles 21 records one of his many attacks: "Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel. ... God was displeased with this thing, so He struck Israel" (vv. 1, 7).
 - iii. The Lord's chastening took the form of a plague in which seventy thousand Israelites perished (v. 14).
 - iv. Throughout its history, Satan lured Israel and Judah into idolatry, immorality, and disobedience to God's law.
 - v. As a result, God brought judgment on His people, sending them into captivity in Assyria and Babylon.
 - vi. In the future tribulation period Satan will once again attempt to destroy the chosen nation (12:1–6, 13–17).
- e. From the beginning to the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, Satan fought with all his impotent fury against the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i. He tempted Christ for forty days at the beginning of His ministry, futilely seeking to turn Him aside from the work His Father sent Him to accomplish (Matt. 4:1–11).

- ii. A long and relentless war was waged against Jesus by the Jewish leaders, whom He identified as belonging to the family of the devil (John 8:44).
 - iii. Satan never ceased from that effort, even attempting to use those close to Jesus against Him (Mark 8:32–33).
 - iv. Satan tried to destroy the faith of the apostolic leader, Peter, demanding from God the opportunity to test him severely (Luke 22:31–32) with the intent of destroying his faith (as he had tried unsuccessfully to do with Job).
 - v. The test was allowed by God and was severe. It brought Peter to fear and denial of his Lord on three occasions (Luke 22:34, 54–61), but Peter repented (Luke 22:62) and was restored (John 21:15–23) to become the great preacher of the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14ff.).
 - vi. At the end of Jesus' ministry, "Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve" (Luke 22:3), who then betrayed Christ into the hands of His murderers.
- f. The church has also been a special target of satanic assault.
- i. Shortly after its founding, Satan himself prompted Ananias and his wife Sapphira to corrupt the church by lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3).
 - ii. The couple's foolish, sinful, and hypocritical attempt to impress others with their spirituality ended when God put them to death before the whole congregation (Acts 5: 5–11).
 - iii. Satan also battled the apostle Paul, hindering him from visiting the Thessalonian church (1 Thess. 2:18) and tormenting him with "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan" (2 Cor. 12:7).
 - iv. Satan also attacks the church by bringing unbelievers into it, mixing in his tares among God's wheat (Matt. 13:38–39), blinding the minds of unbelievers so that they reject the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4; cf. Luke 8:12), and

- i. Each of the first four trumpet judgments affect the physical universe in some way, but with the sounding of the fifth trumpet the focus will shift from the physical to the spiritual realm.
 - j. The traumatic events associated with that fifth trumpet vision unfold in four scenes: the pit unlocked, the power unleashed, the appearance unveiled, and the prince unmasked.
- II. **The Pit Unlocked.**
- a. And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. ² He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. (9:1-2)
 - b. When the **fifth** elite presence angel **sounded** his trumpet, John **saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth.**
 - c. In his visions, the apostle had already seen several heavenly bodies plunge to earth (cf. 6:13; 8:8, 10).
 - d. Unlike them, however, this **star** was not an inanimate piece of celestial matter, but an angelic being (cf. Job 38:7).
 - i. That he was said to have **fallen to the earth** suggests that this is a reference to Satan—the leader of all the fallen angels.
 - ii. Isaiah 14:12–15 describes his fall: “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. (cf. Ezek. 28:12–16; Luke 10:18)

- e. The fall of Satan described in 9:1 is not his original rebellion. Though he and the angels who fell with him (cf. 12:4) were banished from heaven, Satan retains access to God's presence, where he constantly accuses believers (12:10; Job 1:6).
 - i. But during the Tribulation he and his demon hosts will unsuccessfully battle Michael and the holy angels.
 - ii. As a result of their defeat, they will be permanently cast down to the earth.
 - iii. Revelation 12:7–9 describes that battle scene: Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.
- f. With his theater of operations now restricted to the earth, and his time running out (cf. 12:12), Satan will seek to marshal all of his demonic hosts—those already on earth, those cast to earth with him, and those incarcerated in the **bottomless pit** (literally “the pit of the abyss”).
 - i. *Abussos* (**bottomless**) appears seven times in Revelation, always in reference to the abode of incarcerated demons (cf. 9:2, 11; 11:7; 17:8).
 - ii. Satan himself will be held prisoner there during the Millennium, chained and locked up with the other demonic prisoners (20:1, 3).
- g. Scripture teaches that God has sovereignly chosen to incarcerate certain demons in that **pit** of punishment.
 - i. Second Peter 2:4 says that “God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.”

- ii. The phrase “cast them into hell” is a participle derived from the Greek noun *Tartarus*.
- iii. Just as Jesus used a term for hell derived from the Jewish vernacular (Gehenna; cf. Matt. 5:22), so Peter chose a term from Greek mythology with which his readers would be familiar.
- iv. Tartarus was the name used in Greek literature for the place where the worst sinners, those who had offended the gods personally, went after death and were punished.
- v. The place where God keeps demons imprisoned is actually different from the imaginary place of Greek mythology.
- vi. Yet the use of the term *Tartarus* does seem to convey the idea that because of the heinousness of their sin, God has imprisoned certain fallen angels in such a place of severest torment and isolation.
- vii. They remain in that place, awaiting their sentencing to final punishment in the eternal lake of fire (Rev. 20:10, 13–14).
- h. The demons incarcerated in the abyss are undoubtedly the most wicked, vile, and perverted of all the fallen angels.
 - i. Jude describes some of them as “angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode,” noting that God “has kept [them] in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire” (Jude 6–7).
 - ii. That passage describes certain fallen angels who left the angelic domain to indulge in sexual sin with humans, just as the men of Sodom and Gomorrah attempted to engage in perverted sex with angels (Gen. 19:1, 4–5).

- iii. Peter reveals when this angelic sin occurred: For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. (1 Pet. 3:18–20)
- i. The “spirits now in prison” in the abyss are those “who once were disobedient ... in the days of Noah.”
 - i. They are the demons who cohabited with human women in Satan’s failed attempt to corrupt the human race and make it unredeemable (Gen. 6:1–4).
 - ii. That demons still fear being sent to the abyss is evident from the fact that some pled with Jesus not to send them there (Luke 8:31).
 - iii. That suggests that other demons have been incarcerated there since the events of Genesis 6.
 - iv. The demons released by Satan at the fifth trumpet may not include those who sinned in Noah’s day (cf. Jude 6), since they are said to be in “eternal bonds” (Jude 6) until the final day when they are sent to the eternal lake of fire (20:10; Jude 7).
 - v. Other demons imprisoned in the abyss may be the ones released.
 - vi. So the pit is the preliminary place of incarceration for demons from which some are to be released under this judgment.
- j. After Satan received the key to the abyss from its keeper, the Lord Jesus Christ (1:18), **he opened the bottomless pit** and released its inmates.
 - i. John Phillips comments, Picture what the world would be like if we were to open the doors of all the penitentiaries of earth and set free the world’s most

vicious and violent criminals, giving them full reign to practice their infamies upon mankind. Something worse than that lies in store for the world. Satan, cast out of heaven, is now permitted to summon to his aid the most diabolical fiends in the abyss to act as his agents in bringing mankind to the footstool of the Beast.

(*Exploring Revelation*, rev. ed.[Chicago: Moody, 1987; reprint, Neptune, N. J.: Loizeaux, 1991], 125)

- k. When the abyss opened, from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace.
- l. **Smoke** in Revelation may refer to holy things (8:4; 15:8), but is usually associated with judgment (9:17–18; 14:11; 18:9, 18; 19:3; cf. Gen. 19:28; Isa. 34:10; Joel 2:30; Nah. 2:13).
- m. Such a vast volume of smoke issued from the abyss that **the sun and the air were darkened by it**.
 - i. The smoke polluting the sky symbolizes the corruption of hell belched forth from the abyss to pollute the world.

III. **The Power Unleashed.**

- a. Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. ⁴They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. ⁶And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them. 9:3-6
- b. **Out of** the vast, billowing, ominous cloud of **smoke** that darkened the sky and caused panic among earth's inhabitants John saw a new terror emerge.
 - i. Vile demons, taking on a visible form resembling **locusts**, swarmed out of the abyss to plague **the earth**.

- ii. The destructive power of locusts is noted in several Old Testament passages (Deut. 28:38; 2 Chron. 7:13; Ps. 105:34; Joel 2:25; Nah. 3:15); locust swarms consume all vegetation in their path.
- iii. The scene is reminiscent of the locust plague in Egypt (Ex. 10:4–5, 12–20), and of the description of the locust plague in Joel 1:1–7; 2:1–5, but far worse.
- iv. The imagery of the smoke is an apt depiction of a locust plague, since millions of the grasshopper-like insects swarm so thickly that they can darken the sky and blot out the sun, turning day into night.
- v. Locust swarms can be unimaginably huge (cf. Ps. 105:34); one swarm over the Red Sea in 1889 was reported to have covered 2,000 square miles.
- vi. The destruction they can cause to crops and other vegetation is staggering (cf. 2 Chron. 7:13).
- vii. John Phillips writes: The worst locust plague in modern times struck the Middle East in 1951–52 when in Iran, Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia every green and growing thing was devoured across hundreds of thousands of square miles. Locusts eat grain, leaf, and stalk, right down to the bare ground. When a swarm arises and flies on its way, the green field is left a desert; barrenness and desolation stretches as far as eye can see.
(*Exploring Revelation*, 125–26)
- c. But these were not ordinary locusts, but demons, who, like locusts, bring swarming destruction.
 - i. Describing them in the form of **locusts** symbolizes their uncountable numbers and massive destructive capabilities.
 - ii. The fact that three times in the passage (vv. 3, 5, 10) their **power** to inflict pain is compared to that of **scorpions** indicates they are not actual locusts, since locusts have no stinging tail as scorpions do.

1. **Scorpions** are a species of arachnid (a-wreck-nid), inhabiting warm, dry regions, and having an erect tail tipped with a venomous stinger.
 2. The stings of many species of scorpions are excruciatingly painful, and about two dozen species are capable of killing humans.
 3. The symptoms of a sting from one of the deadly species, including severe convulsions and paralysis, resemble those of demon-possessed individuals (cf. Mark 1:23–27; 9:20, 26).
- d. Combining in the description of the demons both locusts and scorpions emphasizes the deadliness of the demon invasion.
 - e. But the devastating pain inflicted by these demons will be far worse than that of actual scorpions.
 - i. In this judgment God brings demons into direct contact with the unrepentant people with whom they will spend forever in the lake of fire.
 - ii. The fact that these locust and scorpion-like creatures come from the pit and that their leader is the “angel of the abyss” (9:11) indicates that demons must be in view in this scene.
 - iii. Demons are also pictured as creatures from the animal kingdom in 16:13, where they appear as frogs.
 - iv. Sadly, even the horrifying experience of this demon infestation will not cause many to repent (cf. 9:20–21), if any.
 - f. Strict limitations were placed on the activities of this demonic host.
 - i. This judgment, unlike the first four trumpet judgments, is not on the physical world.
 - ii. In fact, **they were told** (probably by God, who gave the angel the key to the pit in 9:1, and who controls everything for His purposes) that there were limits.
 - iii. God forbade the locust horde **to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree** (cf. 8:7).

- g. That again shows that they were not actual insects, since real locusts devour plant life.
 - i. The reference to **the grass of the earth** suggests that some time has passed since the first trumpet judgment scorched all the grass that was then in season (8:7).
 - ii. The damaged grass has grown again and is to remain untouched in this plague, indicating that enough time has elapsed for a partial recovery of the earth's environment.
- h. The demons' business is not with vegetation, but **only** with **men**—not all people, but only those who **do not have the seal of God on their foreheads**.
- i. Believers will be preserved, just as God sheltered Israel from the effects of the Egyptian plagues (Ex. 8:22ff.; 9:4ff.; 10:23).
 - i. Those who have the **seal of God** include not only the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (7:3–4; 14:1), but also the rest of the redeemed (cf. 22:4; 2 Tim. 2:19).
 - ii. This **seal** marks them as personally belonging to God and as such protected from the forces of hell.
 - iii. Jesus promised the faithful members of the Philadelphia church that “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name” (3:12).
- j. Ezekiel 9:4–6 illustrates the truth that God protects His people in the midst of judgment.
 - i. God commanded an angel to go through Jerusalem and put a mark on the redeemed.
 - ii. Those who did not have that mark were subject to death when the city fell to the Babylonians.
 - iii. The Lord said to him, “Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on

the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.” But to the others He said in my hearing, “Go through the city after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity and do not spare. Utterly slay old men, young men, maidens, little children, and women, but do not touch any man on whom is the mark; and you shall start from My sanctuary.” So they started with the elders who were before the temple.

- k. Even what the demons can do to the unregenerate is limited.
 - i. Although Satan has the power of death (Heb. 2:14), its exercise is subject to God’s sovereign will and power, thus these demons **were not permitted to kill anyone.**
 - ii. After millennia of captivity, the vile demons would no doubt want to give full vent to all of their pent-up evil by slaughtering people.
 - iii. Certainly Satan would want to kill all the unregenerate to keep them from repenting.
 - iv. But God, in His mercy, will give people **torment for five months** (the normal life span of locusts, usually from May to September), during which they cannot die but will be given the opportunity to repent and embrace the gospel.
 - v. **Torment** describes punishment in Revelation (11:10; 14:10–11; 18:7, 10, 15; 20:10; the only exception is 12:2; “pain” is the same Greek word elsewhere translated “torment”).
 - vi. That five-month period will be one of intense spiritual and physical suffering inflicted on unbelievers by the judgment of God through the demon horde.
 - vii. That fearful judgment is likened to the torment inflicted **by a scorpion when it stings a man.**
 - viii. Unbelievers will also hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ preached by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, the two witnesses, and other believers.

- ix. The five months will be for many people the last opportunity to repent and believe, before they die or are permanently hardened in their unbelief (9:20–21; 16:9, 11).
 - l. So intense will be the torment inflicted on unbelievers that **in those days** (the five months of v. 5) **men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.**
 - i. All hope is gone; there will be no tomorrow. The earth people have loved and worshiped will have been utterly devastated, the land ravaged by earthquakes, fires, and volcanoes, the sea filled with the putrefying bodies of billions of dead creatures, much of the fresh water supply turned into bitter poison, the atmosphere polluted with gases and showers of heavenly debris.
 - ii. Then, worst of all, will come foul smoke from the pit of hell as the demons are released to spiritually and physically torment wicked people.
 - iii. The dream of a worldwide utopia under the leadership of Antichrist (the beast of 13:1ff.) will have died.
 - iv. Driven mad by the filth and vileness of the demon infestation, people will seek relief in death—only to find that death has taken a holiday.
 - v. MacArthur writes, There will be no escape from the agony inflicted by the demons, no escape from divine judgment. All attempts at suicide, whether by gunshot, poison, drowning, or leaping from buildings, will fail.
- IV. The Appearance Unveiled.
- a. In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, ⁸ their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; ⁹ they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into

battle. ¹⁰ They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. 9:7-10

- b. Having described the devastation the **locusts** (demons) will cause, John gives a more detailed description of their appearance in the vision.
- c. They are described as locusts because they bring massive, devastating, rapid judgment from God (cf. Ex. 10:4–5, 12–15; Deut. 28:38; 1 Kings 8:37; 2 Chron. 7:13; Pss. 78:46; 105:34; Joel 2:1ff.; Amos 7:1), but their exaggerated, terrifying features reveal them to be unlike any locust, scorpion, or any other creature ever before seen on earth.
 - i. John can only give an approximation of what this formidable spiritual army looked like, as the repeated use of the terms **like** (used ten times in this passage) and **appeared to be** indicates.
 - ii. To describe the supernatural and unfamiliar demon horde, John chooses natural and familiar analogies.
 - iii. The general **appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle**.
 - iv. They were warlike, powerful, and defiant, like horses straining at the bit and pawing the ground in their eagerness to charge forward on their mission of death.
 - v. Joel 2:4–5 describes a locust plague in similar terms.
- d. **On their heads** John saw what **appeared to be crowns like gold**.
 - i. **The crowns** they wore are called *stephanoi*, the victors' crowns, indicating that the demon host will be invincible, unstoppable, and all-conquering.
 - ii. Men will have no weapon that can harm them and no cure for the terrible torment they inflict.
- e. That **their faces were like the faces of men** indicates they are intelligent, rational beings, not actual insects.
 - i. While Jeremiah 51:27 describes locusts as having bristles like hair, the description of their **hair** as being

like the hair of women more likely emphasizes their seductiveness.

- ii. The glory or beauty of a woman is her hair, which she may decorate to become more alluring.
- iii. Like the Sirens of Greek mythology, these locust like demons will lure people to their doom.
- iv. Having **teeth like the teeth of lions** (cf. Joel 1:6), they will be far more fierce, powerful, and deadly than lions, ripping and tearing apart their victims.
- v. **Breastplates of iron**, designed to protect the vital organs and preserve the life of the soldier, here symbolize the demon horde's invulnerability; they will be impossible to resist or destroy.
- vi. In a further metaphor drawn from the battlefield, John, like the prophet Joel (Joel 2:4–5), compares **the sound of their wings** to a moving army, noting that it **was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle**.
- vii. There will be no escaping their massive, worldwide onslaught; nowhere to run or hide.
- f. The threefold comparison of the demons to **scorpions** (cf. vv. 3, 5) stresses that their sole mission is **to hurt men**.
- g. The nature of this full-scale demonic torment that drives people to seek death and not find it, to pursue death and not catch it, is not described.
- h. However, a look at some biblical illustrations of demonic torment offers some good insights.
 - i. The maniacs of Gadara were so tormented by demons that they were insane, living in tombs (Matt. 8:28).
 - ii. All about Galilee Jesus encountered tormented demoniacs (Matt. 4:23–24).
 - iii. A centurion's servant was tormented with paralysis (Matt. 8:6).

- iv. A demon-possessed boy kept throwing himself into fires and water in acts of self-destruction (Mark 9:20–22).
 - v. Such are the spiritual and physical torments demons can inflict.
 - i. For **five months** they will do such to a whole world of ungodly sinners.
 - i. The reiteration that the demons will be permitted to torment people for a limited time stresses God's sovereign power over the duration of their assault.
 - ii. Eventually, He will return them to the abyss with their evil master (20:1–3) and then send them to the lake of fire (20:10).
- V. **The Prince Unmasked.**
- a. They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon. The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come. 9:11-12
 - b. Unlike real locusts (cf. Prov. 30:27), the demons had a king over them.
 - c. John gives his title as the angel of the abyss.
 - i. Some identify this angel as Satan, but his domain is the heavenlies (Eph. 6:12), where he is the “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2).
 - ii. He is not associated with the abyss until he is cast into it (20:1–3).
 - iii. This angel is better viewed as a high-ranking demon in Satan's hierarchy.
 - iv. John notes that his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.
 - v. John uses both names to emphasize his impact on both ungodly Jews and Gentiles.
 - vi. Both words mean “destroyer”—an apt name for the head of the devastating army of demons that rises from the abyss.

- d. Abaddon is used in the Old Testament to describe the place of eternal punishment (cf. Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Ps. 88:11; Prov. 15:11; 27:20), thus further reinforcing this angel's connection with the abyss and hell.
 - i. Apollyon comes from the Greek verb *apollumi*, which means "I destroy." These terms identify this leader as the king of the demonic death squad.
 - e. Having described the first woe (8:13; the fifth trumpet judgment), John cautions that God's wrath has not run its course.
 - f. Two woes (the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments, including all the bowl judgments) are still coming after these things, so there will be nothing more than a brief sigh of relief before still more fearful judgments follow on those "who suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18).
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¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Revelation 1–11*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 253–265.