

Revelation 9: The Sixth Trumpet and the Ranks of Fallen Angels

Revelation 9:13–16 | Sunday, June 14 | Revelation Series

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OVERVIEW

Hal announces Revelation 9:13–21 and begins with the shape of the book: the chronology is carried forward by three series of judgments, the seventh seal opening the trumpets telescopically, the earth judged by fourths in the seals and by thirds in the trumpets. Then the sixth trumpet. A voice from the four horns of the golden altar — the place of prayer, standing for all the prayers of God's people and all who have been martyred by a Christ-rejecting world — orders four angels bound at the great river Euphrates to be released. What happens in heaven, he says, determines what happens here. Most of the message is then given to who these angels are. Out of Ephesians 6 he takes the ranks: rulers are archons, powers are exousias, world forces is kosmokratoras. Out of Jude he takes the caution — Michael the archangel would not pronounce a railing judgment on the devil, but said, the Lord rebuke you. Two hundred million horsemen are mustered from east of the Euphrates.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 9:13–14 — The voice from the four horns of the golden altar: release the four angels bound at the great river Euphrates

Revelation 9:15 — The four angels prepared for the hour and the day and the month and the year, released to kill a third of mankind

Revelation 9:16 — The number of the armies of the horsemen

Revelation 9:17 — “This is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them”

Ephesians 6:10–12 — The full armour of God; our struggle is against rulers, powers, world forces of this darkness

Jude — Michael the archangel, disputing about the body of Moses, would not pronounce a railing judgment

Revelation 16 — Where this army is called the kings of the east

KEY TERMS

Telescopic judgments — how the series open out of one another — the seventh seal is opened and it opens the trumpets

Fourths and thirds — the seal judgments took a fourth of mankind; the trumpet judgments deal with the earth in thirds

The four horns of the golden altar — the place of prayer in the heavenly tabernacle, representing all the prayers of God's people and all who have been martyred

The four angels — particularly violent and powerful angels, bound at the Euphrates, prepared for a certain hour, day, month and year

Archons — the first order of power in the angelic realm — the word behind “archangel”; the cherubim are among them and are the most powerful

Exousias — the “powers” of Ephesians 6 — mighty authorities that specialize in blinding people to the truth of God and to his word

Kosmokratoras — the “world forces” — kratoras, a mighty power, with kosmos, an organized world system, not simply the world

Filled with the Holy Spirit — at any given moment, by your faith and your choice, allowing the Holy Spirit to take control of your life and depending on him

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer from the message itself. Every answer is in the teaching.

1. How is the chronology of Revelation carried forward?

2. What is the difference in scale between the two series so far?

3. Where does the order for the sixth trumpet come from, and why does Hal make so much of that?

4. When does Hal say the four angels were bound, and why?

5. What does the Greek behind “had been prepared” tell us?

6. What three ranks does Hal draw out of Ephesians 6, and what are the Greek words?

7. What are the archons?

8. What do the exousias specialize in?

9. What does kosmokratoras mean, and what does Hal say the world system is?

10. What does Jude show about Michael, and what does Hal draw from it?

11. What does Hal say being filled with the Holy Spirit means?

12. Where does the army come from, and how does Hal connect it to the four angels?

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Hal says what happens in heaven determines what happens here, and the order for this judgment comes from the altar where the prayers are kept. What does that do to your sense of whether praying matters?

2. God prepared these four angels for a specific hour, day, month and year, and kept them bound until then. Where is it hardest for you to trust that God's timing is that exact?

3. Ephesians 6 says the struggle is not against flesh and blood. Who or what are you currently treating as the enemy that may not be the real one?

4. Michael would not take the devil on personally but called on the Lord. What would that kind of restraint look like in the conflicts you are actually in?

5. Hal describes an organized world system — its thought, its thought control, the way the world is run. Where do you feel that system pressing on you?

6. Being filled with the Spirit, he says, is a moment-by-moment choice to depend rather than a one-time event. What makes that hard to sustain past Sunday?

MEMORY VERSE

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil."

— Ephesians 6:10–11, as Hal reads it in this message