

Revelation 9 (NASB)

The Fifth Trumpet—the Bottomless Pit

9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him.

The word fallen here is past tense. It has already happened. In the previous verses, the use of the word star was literal. (6:12-17 and 8:12). Here we know it is a created being by the use of the word 'him.' This star is Satan. We know that it could be Satan there are different names for Satan. (See Luke 10:18 and Revelation 9:11.) Revelation 8:12 says *"They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon."*

Some of the arguments that this is not Satan include God would not give the key to Satan. Satan is never the master of anything. This bottomless pit is Hell or Hades or Abyss. We know this is not the Lake of fire described in Revelation 20:10 because this is not the final place. The lake of fire in Revelation 20:10 is the final place for Satan. The Greek word for 'bottomless pit' is 'abyssos' and it translates as 'abyss' and means great depth or underworld. Where is this pit?

Romans 10:7.	Down
Ephesians 4:8-11	Descended before ascending
Matthew 12:40	Heart of the earth
Isaiah 14:9	Sheol beneath – Hell or Hades
Proverbs 15:24.	The grave is down. (Not NLT)

Most convincing evidence - Numbers 16:30-33. (NASB Best) This text describes when the earth opened up and swallowed the people who opposed Moses (in the Hebrew nation). They were sent down to Sheol.

Numbers 16:30 "But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord."

31 As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open; 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions. 33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly."

Revelation 5:3 uses the terms *"in heaven or on the earth or under the earth"*

9:2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. 6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.

Remember that John is describing something no one has ever seen before. Satan as a red being with horns and demonic interpretations didn't exist yet. So these locusts are demons and the leader is

Apollyon (Satan). Revelation 9:11 says *“They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.”* Satan is in control here and there are four clues that prove it. (1) Power was given to them. (2) They cannot attack the trees or grass. (3) They can’t touch those with the seal of God. (4) For a 5 month time limit, they cannot kill people. The word 'power' is 'exousia' and means permission. This will be a period of unimaginable torment. Humans will try to kill themselves but they cannot. It says they will seek death but they will not succeed.

9:7 The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle. 10 They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months.

John consistently uses the word "like" which tells us that he was seeing things that he could explain so he used what he knew and added like. The fact that they have both human and animal characteristics is meant to instill fear. We can draw the conclusions that these creatures were fierce, brutal and unstoppable.

9:11 They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.

This verse proves that these are demonic forces and NOT literal locusts because they have a king who is Satan. Proverbs 30:27 says *“The locusts have no king, Yet all of them go out in ranks.”* This king is Satan. We cannot be sure because it differs by Biblical scholar but it is Satan or a demonic being. The words 'Abaddon' and 'Apollyon' both translate as "Destroyer".

9:12 The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.

Verse 12 tells us in modern language that the worst is yet to come.

The Sixth Trumpet—Army from the East

9:13 Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

In the Old Testament, the golden altar was the altar of incense and represented the prayers of God’s people. Two things are extremely important about the horns of the altar. First Exodus 29:37 tells us that they are holy. Exodus 29:42 tells us that God’s presence is on the altar. He came down to talk to His people. When God removed His presence from Israel, He cut off the horns and they fell to the ground and the altars were destroyed. Amos 3:14 says *“On the day I punish Israel for her sins, I will destroy the altars of Bethel; the horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground.”* Blood was applied to the horns of the altar. It was a sweet aroma to God. See the following verses in Leviticus. (See Leviticus 4:18, Leviticus 4:25, Leviticus 4:30 and Leviticus 4:34.) The blood was to purify the altar and to make atonement for sin. (See Leviticus 8:15.) Jesus referred to as the horn of salvation in Luke 1:67-69. *“ And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant.”*

9:14 one saying 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 prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind.

These are evil angels. Jude 6 says "And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day." These "angels" do not free themselves because free will was taken away from them. God "prepared" these demons to kill. Just like in Jonah 1:17 says "Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." (KJV)

The demons described earlier as locusts killed 1/4 of mankind. These demons will kill 1/3 of the remaining people. By the end of this trumpet, 50% of mankind will be dead.

9:16 The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 17 And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. 18 A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm.

There are 200 million riders there. To put this in scale, all the militaries combined involved in WWII was less than 50 million soldiers. Bible scholars believe that they are an army of demons. The riders are not described here but the riders' armor and horses are. Fire, smoke and sulfur proceed out of their mouths and their horses' tails are like serpents shows that these are demons and not humans.

9:20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; 21 and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

Even now, with half of all humans dead, these people will not turn to God. These verses show that man will always break the second commandment (idolatry). Exodus 20:5 says "You shall have no other gods before Me." They worship graven images.