

## **Hell on Earth, part 2**

Revelation 9:13-21

(preached Pine Grove 3/5/17; Sunday AM)

### **Introduction**

Today is a day we join as a church to celebrate the Lord's Supper..

It is one of two ordinances that we are commanded to practice as a church of the Lord Jesus Christ...

The first being baptism, and the second being the Lord's table...

These are both symbolic practices that celebrate what we are as a church...

We are first of all ambassadors for Christ as we take the gospel the nations telling people to repent of sin and come to Christ and then follow him in obedience by being baptized in His name...

But we are all recipients of salvation ourselves...

Having been forgiven of sins through the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross in our place...

Where he paid the penalty for our sin by dying as our sacrificial lamb...

Therefore, we come to the Lord's table to celebrate his death on our behalf...

Though we plan for these in our deacon's meeting, we don't announce them to the church...

And that isn't intentional, we could announce these ahead of time...

There isn't a biblical command to announce or not announce when we are going to celebrate the Lord's Supper as a church...

We just choose to let you find out when you walk into the sanctuary...

There you will see the table and the covering and the wafer and the juice all on the table...

And as you see those things, you will know that this is a day set aside for obey to obey the Scriptures and celebrate the Lord's Supper...

And it is that...

It is a celebration of the forgiveness of sin that came through the blood of Christ...

And we should be celebrating that forgiveness and salvation as often as possible...

Now, to set our minds in that direction, it is normally helpful to preach passages that set that mood in our minds and lead us to celebrate the Lord's Supper properly...

Well, that often becomes a challenge...

Some preachers always preach the same message before the Lord's Supper...

Now, that would be difficult for the early church since they enjoyed the Lord's Supper every day...

But even in our church culture, that would make the preaching of the same passage pretty frequent if you were celebrating the Lord's supper frequently....

So, what do I do?

Well, I like celebrating the Lord's Table as often as possible..

We enjoyed it together on January 1st this year as the new year fell on a Sunday..

And now it is the first Sunday of March and we are celebrating it again...

But here's a question...

What in the book of Revelation sets the tone for enjoying the Lord's Supper together?

How can we prepare our hearts for the Lord's Table when we are seeing so much destruction before our eyes each week?

In my mind, it's simple..

We celebrate the Lord's Supper to praise the Lord that we are on the winning side...

We celebrate the Lord's Supper as a reminder that the Lord has rescued us from the wrath to come....

We celebrate the Lord's Super to rejoice in the fact that Jesus has triumphed over Satan...

And there is no better place to be reminded of that the second half of Revelation 9....

You see, man lies in between two unseen worlds...

One voice that calls to man is the voice of heaven...

This voice calls to men and women through the words of the gospel....

This voice tells people that there is a God...

That He is holy, and that man is sinful..

This voice tells man that he is doomed and needs a  
resume from sin..

This voice tells man that the rescue is Jesus Christ who  
died to pay the penalty for his sin...

This voice calls men to repent and turn from their sin  
and trust in Christ..

And this voice calls all the time...

It calls from pulpits..

It calls from the teaching of the word of God...

It calls in their hearts because man knows he has broken  
God's law from a very early age..

And this voice calls all the time...

It calls in the morning, during the day, and even at  
night...

Yet, that is not the only voice that calls to man...

There is the voice of hell that calls to men..

It tells men that they are basically good..

It tells them that sin isn't that bad...

It tells them that God is simply a made up being but can't possibly be real since the world is so bad..

It tells mankind that they have time to change..

It tells people that sin is fun and that following God is no fun...

And this voice calls all the time as well...

It calls as people come to the love the world and the things of the world...

It calls in the morning, during the day and even at bedtime...

And the saddest truth is this....

For most of the people in the world, the voice of hell drown out the voices of heaven...

People love their sin.

They hate the idea of God's authority over them.

They love playing by their own rules.

And for most people, the voice of hell is so loud that they hear nothing else...

Now if you ask these people if they worshipped the devil, 99 % would say no...

If you ask these people if they believed God, 99% would probably say yes...

Yet, the Bible would tell us just the opposite...

They are in fact, Satan lovers and God haters...

Because no one in the world is neutral...

You are on God's team or Satan's team as you play the game of life everyday...

Now, the question is how long will this game go on?

How long will you live?

And how long will God allow this spiritual tug of war to continue in the world?

Because here is the issue...

God will triumph in the end...

You will either follow the voices of hell to your death and then join the forces of evil in hell...

Or you respond to the voice of heaven and repent and trust Christ and see the Lord in heaven...

These are the only options...

Now, as we find ourselves in the 9th chapter of the book of Revelation, we are nearing the end of the world where God is going to bring this spiritual struggle to an end...

And what we are going to see is this...

As the world draws to a close, the voices of hell will become so loud in people's ears that the majority of the world will refuse to repent and believe in Christ...

To our amazement today, we are going to watch millions perish because they will refuse to believe in the Lord...

In these final days of the end of the world, the majority of the world's population will see the power of God but instead of submitting to it, they will shake their fist at it..

Now, that may seem harsh to us...

Isn't God a saving God?



Absolutely he is...

And even in wrath, he will remember mercy...

In fact, we have already seen this in the book of Revelation, where he saves all of Israel and even a massive number of Gentiles...

But what you need to know is this...

God will not endure with evil men forever...

Though God gave years to the world's population in the days of Noah, eventually the rain starting falling and the waters started rising...

And though God will give time to millions in the tribulation period, eventually people's hearts will harden and they will listen to the voices of hell over the voices of heaven....

For some people, they reject this idea which is plainly spelled out in the Scriptures...

And what they do to make this seem less harsh is they dont even preach the book of Revelation and if they do, they make all of this symbolic and not literal..

And they tell their people that the world is going to get better and better and eventually God is going to save everyone...

And they do that despite what the Bible teaches because they can't deal with the fact that God eventually has enough...

Yet, that is the truth..

There is a coming a time when the call of heaven ends and the call of hell grows louder, and people will go to hell despite seeing the power of God...

And that time has already begun for us in the book of Revelation, and it will continue today...

As we near the end of the 7 year tribulation period, God will turn people over to the one they worship....

As we near the end of the 7 year tribulation, God will stop protecting those who follow Satan, and they will get what they deserve from him...

They will get what the devil does best....

He steals, kills, and destroys...

So, let's look at this chapter, and as we look at the horror of it, let's prepare our hearts for the Lord's Table...

If there is ever a reason to rejoice in the Lord's goodness to us, it is when we see how bad it could have been for us...

I have divided these verses into 2 sections...

In verses 13-19, we will see...

I. The Unmerciful Enemy (13-19)

Followed by...

II. The Unrepentant Remainder (20-21)

Let's begin by reading verses 13-19 as we see...

## **I. The Unmerciful Enemy (13-19)**

Now, as we close out Revelation 9, let's remind ourselves of where we are in the timeline of the end of the world...

The end will begin as the church is raptured out of the world...

As the church is removed, the restraint of evil is loosened and God begins judging the world for 7 years in a period of time known as the tribulation...

However, this judgment begins with a false world peace that is established by a man named the Antichrist...

We haven't seen much of him yet, but we will in the chapters ahead...

And this peace simply lulls people into thinking that the world is headed in the right direction...

This peace is the light in a dark tunnel that turns out to be a train...

And eventually this peace ends near the middle of this 7 year period as worldwide war breaks out in the second judgment of God...

That is followed by famine and disease and animal attacks that kill 1/4 of the worlds population...

Then God unleashes more judgments by sending a worldwide earthquake and meteors from heaven...

Followed by super volcanic eruptions and large asteroids striking the earth...

And the ocean is polluted and the fresh water drinking supply is contaminated...

And the sun grows darker and less bright and then to make matter worse, we saw last week the devil is given to the key to a demonic prison where the worst demons have been bound by God...

And these demons take the form of locust like creatures except they are given a scorpion tail to sting the unsaved on the earth and torment them for 5 months...

And we watched in horror last week as this 5th trumpet judgment will be so bad that people will want to kill themselves but they wont be able to...

Yet, this 5 month attack by these demons on people will end, and though the unbelievers of the earth will be glad to see the demonic locusts leave...

Things are not going to get better with the 6th trumpet blows...

Because when it sounds, four angels who have been bound at the Euphrates River will be released, according to verse 14...

Here is a map of the Middle East...

The Euphrates River lies to the north and east of Israel...

It is a very important water source for a land that is filled with desert...

The Euphrates River forms the northern and eastern boundary of the land that God promised to Israel according to the book of Genesis and Joshua...

The Euphrates River formed the border of the Roman Empire...

The Euphrates River was the site of the great city of Babylon...

The Euphrates River was a river near the garden of Eden where Adam and Eve lived in the very beginning of the world...

And here we are at the end of the world and we see this river named again...

It is where God has bound some demonic angels until this very time on the tribulation...

And in verse 14, these 4 demonic angels are released with one purpose...

To kill a third of the world's population...

At this point in the 7 year tribulation, a fourth of the world's population has already been killed in seal judgment 4...

And others have died as a result of the judgments that we have already seen...

Some are certainly killed in the meteor strikes and the super volcanic eruptions...

Some are killed by the poisoned drinking supply...

By the time we get to the this 6th trumpet judgment, the world's population has already been drastically reduced in the judgment of the tribulation...

But now, it will get a 1/3 smaller because death will return to the earth...

Now this will still be a massive number of people...

A 1/3 of the world's population, even at this point, could still top a billion...

So, how do you kill a billion people or even hundreds of millions?

Well, you unchain 4 demonic angels and they lead a demonic army of 200 million demons...

And that is exactly what we see in verse 16...

John tells us he saw an army of 200 million being unleashed in this 6th trumpet judgment...

People and preachers have made this a literal army...

Some have suggested that this is an army from the Far East of China or other Asian countries...

But that doesn't seem to fit the destruction we see here or the description we are about to look at...

This is simply hell on earth, part 2...

As the stinging locusts give way to fire breathing horses...

John sees this army of horses and riders..

The riders have on breastplates in verse 17...



The breastplates have the color of fire, the color of hyacinth, which is a bluish purple and the color of brimstone, which is yellow like sulphur..

These are the colors of hells army...

But the focus this time is not on the riders but on what they ride...

John describes the horses as the agents of judgment in verse 17...

Their heads are like the heads of lions, but they also breath out fire and smoke and brimstone...

And unfortunately for those on the earth, this is the worst kind of bad breath imaginable...

Because this combination of fire, smoke, and brimstone is deadly...

Look back at verse 18...

Their breath kills a 1/3 of the world's population...

But to make matters worse, the head of these horses id deadly, but their tails are equally destructive...

Verse 19 tells us that they have snakes for tails..

In other words, these creatures are killing machines...

Deadly heads and deadly tails...

And their destruction is clear..

They go out to kill people...

Now, the question always comes...

Isn't this cruel and unusual punishment?

Doesn't this show us a cruel and mean God?

And the answer to that is clearly no...

Just this week, I heard the story of a little girl who was tortured and then killed by mom and stepdad...

It was a horrible tale of abuse and torture at the hands of someone who was supposed to provide love and care and protection..

When we hear those things, our hearts cry out for justice...

When we hear those things, we want the worst possible sentence for those people...

Well, guess what?

When God sees those things, he is equally angered by sin...

And guess what?

God's justice is coming...

The people who make it this far in the tribulation will have equally hard hearts...

This isn't God being mean and unjust...

The picture of Rev 9 and really all of tribulation is God answering the prayers of His people to pour out his wrath on evil...

Don't you want God to punish the wicked?

Sure you do...

The people of God have no desire for evil to win...

We want justice and we want fairness...

So, when God pours it out, we should rejoice...

And so, the stinging, non-lethal locusts will eventually become the deadly fire breathing horses...

And God's justice will be poured out on those who refuse to acknowledge His authority...

Let me make a comment here...

This is the true nature of Satan and his demons....

They promise you the world...

They promise you the enjoyment of sin...

They promise you the freedom of doing what you want to do...

But in the end, they want you dead...

And they will stop at nothing to get the chance to kill you and send you to hell with them....

Eventually at the very end of time, God will grant their request and a demonic army will roam the earth, killing at will...

And the reason they do that is because they are servants of an unmerciful enemy...

Let's now finish up with...

## **II. The Unrepentant Remainder (20-21)**

Now put yourself in the shoes of those on the earth in this day...

You have survived the worst 6 years that the world has ever seen..

You have watched earthquakes rock the world..

Meteors strike the earth...

Asteroids crash into the sea...

You have seen a 1/3 of the trees on earth die...

A third of marine life die...

A third of the ocean turn to blood...

Now, in the past 5 months, you have watched an army of demonic locusts sting and torment people...

And now you have seen a 1/3 of the world's population die at the hands of a demonic army of 200 millions horses and riders...

What is your emotion?

What are you thinking?

What are you doing?

Well, let's find out...

Verse 20...

***20 The rest of [r]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.***

In case you are wondering what people will be like in all this destruction, we get a picture of what is going in the world while it is falling apart...

Unlike what we see today, there wont be much goodwill to help out neighbors in the tribulation....

Instead, unbelievers will be busy stealing from one another...

They will be busy committing acts of immorality with one another...

They will be busy killing others as well...

And on top of that, they will be turning to sorcery and idol worship...

You see, all the destruction will not cause these unbelievers to seek God, but instead they will begin to worship the same demons that are killing them...

And they will turn to sorcery and witchcraft in hopes to make friends with the enemy...

You see, man's heart is so inclined to wickedness that he won't seek help from God but will instead try to make friends with the devil...

Man's heart is so sinful that he will see the deaths of others as more opportunity for looting and killing people...

Man's heart is so resistant to submitting to God that it will try to find a way to make peace with Satan...

And here is why...

People are born resistant to the authority of God...

Though God made them, they refuse to acknowledge his ownership of them...

And even when all hell is breaking loose on the earth,  
men are more inclined to obey the devil's voice than the  
voice of God...

Men and women will try to tame hell's horses than bow  
a knee to God...

What foolishness is that!

Yet, that is the depth to which the human heart will sink  
to avoid submitting to God's authority...



## **Conclusion**

What about your heart this morning?

Have you submitted it to the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

Salvation is more than an acknowledgment that God is real..

It is more than joining a church and trying to live right...

Salvation is a turning away from sin, while turning to God in faith...

You can't be your own boss and let God have his way some time...

Salvation is not "I believe in God" and "I will do what I want to do"

Salvation is "I believe in the salvation that God has provided in Jesus" and "I will change anything in my life that doesn't please you Lord."

In case you don't yet understand, you are under authority this morning...

According to the word of God, you are either under the authority of the true God of the universe or you are under the authority of Satan...

And every moment, you either do the will of God or the will of the enemy of God...

And as we approach the Lord's Supper this let me remind you of the Master that you serve...

Jesus said this in John 10...

***7 So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and [a]have it abundantly.***

If you aren't saved this morning, you have a master who loves to steal, kill, and destroy...

And Revelation 9 has shown us the true colors of Satan and his demons stealing, killing and destroying...

And if refuse to acknowledge to submit to the authority of the Lord, Satan will steal from you, and he will ultimately kill and destroy you...

The table we are coming to this morning is the table of the Lord...

And it symbolizes the life that he brings to his people...

Jesus didn't come to take our life, he came to take away our sins and give us eternal life...

This morning, you will either from the table of Satan that kills or you will eat from the table of Jesus that gives life...

If you don't know Christ, repent of your unbelief in Him..

Repent of your unwillingness to obey him...

Refuse to stay in your sin...

Reject your life of sin...

And come to the Lord today in repentance and faith...

Believe that his body was broken in your place and that his blood paid the penalty for your sin...

Church, for the rest of us, let us come to the table today thankful for what Christ has done...

Thankful that he has rescued us from the wrath that is coming in the tribulation period...

But most thankful for his rescue from the wrath of an eternal separation from God in an eternal lake of fire...

Today is the day to see the evil of the enemy, and to celebrate the deliverance of the Lord...

Let us pray...