

May 7, 2023 - Revelation 9:13-21 - "The Sixth Trumpet Judgment"

### Introduction:

One of the most googled words today is Euphrates. The Center for Strategic & International Studies in Washington DC and Reuters warned that the Euphrates River could run dry by 2040. This is due to declining water levels and droughts driven by climate change. NASA's twin Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellites collected images of this area in 2013 and found that the Euphrates and Tigris river basins had lost 34 cubic miles of freshwater since 2003. "GRACE data show an alarming rate of decrease in total water storage. In the Book of Revelation, it is prophesied that the Euphrates or as the literal word mean "breaking forth like water" of the middle east will dry up in preparation for the Battle of Armageddon... Years ago J. B. Smith stated that it was remarkable that this Biblical prediction is already being fulfilled; for in many areas it is drying up. When we get to Chapter 16 of Revelation I will give future details.

Last week, in our study of the fifth trumpet judgment we saw Hordes of these "locust-like" creatures from the pit of the abyss. These were allowed to torture men for 5 months and yet most of them blasphemed the Lord. Today we note four more bound angels loosed in...

### I. The Sixth Trumpet Sounds: 13-14

1. I understand this voice from the altar to refer to the saints' prayerful and ascending to God from the golden altar of incense. In the temple of Israel, the golden altar was the altar of incense, which was a representation of the prayers of God's people. The four horns of the golden altar stood at each corner of the altar. Atoning blood was applied to the horns. It appears if mankind will not allow the blood of Christ to "atone" for their sins, then they must stand at the altar of God in fiery judgment. The blood of Christ saves from sin.

2. ***"Loose the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."*** Remember, last week we talk about bound and unbound angels. Scripture never refers to holy angels as being bound. These are fallen angels. The fact that they are bound should make it clear to anyone that they are fallen angels who God restrained and held until he allow them (luo) not ap-ol-oo'-o (against the day of judgement. The Greek text indicates a perfect tense verb which means that something has bound them in the past with continuing results. The language has the force of an awesome foe getting loose. They are in a state or condition of having been bound up and freed. So here are four bound evil fallen angels, prepare to unleash destruction in the Cradle of Civilization.

Remember, God's control extends even to the demonic forces; they are bound or freed at God's command. We talk about that in our Job's reference in his book

3. Did you notice where these evil Angels are bound at the Euphrates River maybe more precisely under it. The Euphrates River is one of the 4 rivers which flowed through the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:14). However, why are they bound at this particular location? This has always been Satan's strong hold since the beginning of creation. The Euphrates River is one of the most prominent rivers referred to in the Bible. It was also a boundary for

Israel (Genesis 15:18), the easternmost boundary of Egypt, and of the Persian Empire.

4. This is no accident that these four angels are today bound in that area of the world. Some of the world's greatest events took place near the Euphrates River. The first sin of humankind was committed in that area. The first war was fought in that area. The tower of Babel was built in defiance of God in that area. Nimrod built the city of Babylon in that area which is portrayed as a very evil place. And under Nimrod, the greatest display of astrology, pantheism, polytheism, idolatry, witchcraft, and man-made philosophy began to flourish! Babylon is the same place that has given the world a great deal of trouble today. Babylon existed in modern day Iraq.

You look at it today and it is utterly and totally without any Christian influence. So you see the Euphrates is a demonic area. That part of the world is as pagan as pagan gets. It is as anti-Christian as it could be. Its vicinity to Israel makes it a good launching platform to destroy God's people Israel.

## II The Evil Army Unleashed: 9:15-16

1. ***The hour and day and month and year***" I believe we must take this very literally, because the hour and day and month and year are marked out. This simply means there is an exact hour in God's time table that these angels will be loosed and judgment will ensue. Matthew Henry states, "The time of their military operations and executions is limited to said time. God works according to His predetermined plan.

2. There will come to pass a 200 million troop army it will be unlike any other in human history. Critic of the Bible laughed at this when John wrote it and for centuries thereafter because the population of the whole world in 95 AD was only 200 million and we didn't even hit one billion until 1804. Some believe this army to be taken literally some might equally interpreted it as an army of demons. I believe in light of this being China no other nation on earth can produce this size army along with its allies. I believe with the advancement of AI we are looking at a very possible robotic army with incredible abilities. There is a link to the following...

**Rev 16:12 --- And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.**

3. This verse states the kings of the east; the Red Chinese army and its allies. Some say that If the Euphrates were dried up and made a road, massive armies from the east (nations such as China, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Southeast and South Asia, including Iran, Turkey and Syria could move westward with ease. They could easily assemble this size of an army all from the east. When the Euphrates River dries up these armies would have easy marching orders. With the current conditions of the river that could be easily resolved with a military takeover of the At' a turk Dam in Turkey.

4. One man can walk into the Ataturk Dam in Turkey. and push one button and dry up the Euphrates taking it down seventy-five percent of its normal flow and do that rather simply. About 90% of Euphrates' total annual flow originates in Turkey, while the remaining part is

added in Syria. In Mid -January of 1990, when the first phase of the dam was completed, Turkey held back the flow of the Euphrates entirely for a month to begin filling up her reservoir. Turkey had notified Syria and Iraq in November of 1989 of her decision to fill the reservoir over a period of one month. Her downstream neighbors protested vehemently. Death which took a holiday under the fifth trumpet now returns with a vengeance.

### III The Evil Army's Carnage: 9:17-19

1. These four evil angels will empower this army for this very hour and day and month and year... to kill one third of mankind. The Euphrates will accommodate this 200 million man army to march ultimately to Armageddon. The last plague lasted only 5 months and men were not allowed to die. Some say another billion people will perish. Joel chapter 2 speaks to this future.

The description of the army as having breastplates of fire and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone has been interpreted as symbolic, but it could very well be a literal picture of modern warfare with tanks, mechanized armor and robotic soldiers and machines. Their weapons are three, fire, smoke and brimstone (sulfur). The use of terms such as horses with breastplates of fire and heads of lions was apparently the closest comparison John could make in describing this awesome picture. Verse 17 sees the imageries as guns, helicopters, jet aircraft, tanks and rockets.

2. Whatever John saw, it resulted in terrible destruction because twice he states the third parts of men were killed. Remember,  $\frac{1}{4}$  has already been killed in the fourth seal judgment, some say that could be about a billion who die then another  $\frac{1}{3}$  meaning another billion. With this much death and destruction one would ask where is the 200 million man army coming from? The two thirds are left alive, the rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues, refused to repent! (True story it appeared in The Sunday London Times 6-7-98)

A man named Josh Hempel of Calgary, Alberta was struck by lightning shortly after ending an argument by inviting God to strike him with lightning if he was wrong. The subject of his argument was whether God exists. He was hospitalized and later recovered. Don't be too hard on him because there will be a multitude of people who will do worst in denying the existence of God. His wrath will be unleashed with great fury and they still won't repent or believe in the one true God.

John says; **they repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood (9:20).** Then, in vv. 20-21 John lists 5 sins they would not repent of- idolatry, murders ... sorceries ... fornication ... thefts.

The idolatry continues as well as the murders, witchcraft, sexual immorality and thefts. Under the influence of the demonic forces the world will descend to a point un-parallel in history. Many during this second woe refused to repent and surrender to Jesus Christ.

3. The word translated sorceries (*pharmakeia*) is the word from which we get our English word pharmacy, which has the root meaning of "drugs." This indicates there will be

widespread drug abuse during the tribulation period. We see a proliferation of that in our culture today. Fornication refers to all forms of sexual immorality and probably the disregard of the sacredness of marriage. The word thefts characterize a general practice of dishonesty and the disregard for the rights and property of others.

4. We are moving toward the end of that latter half of the seven years and we finish trumpet number six. There is only one more trumpet to blow and that trumpet contains seven bowl judgments which are rapid-fire, so we're nearing the end.

#### Conclusion:

We found that in spite of all that has transpired on the earth, that men are still rebellious toward the Lord. Their hearts are still hard and they refuse to get right with God. Those left on the earth will increase their occultist practices and demonic worship! They will become even more hardened against the Lord, and more set for destruction!

All too often, man has been hardened by sin and enslaved by evil that he refuses to repent. This will be the case when one third of the population is swept away.

God is coming to execute justice! It is our responsibility as believers to faithfully proclaim the gospel to our generation. Vance Havner RBC said, "The real test of how much we believe of prophetic truth is what we're doing to warn men to flee from the wrath to come. To believe the solemn truths of prophecy...he said...and then make our way complacently through a world of sin and shame is not merely unfortunate, it is criminal," end quote.