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La Jolla Christian Fellowship

Revelation: The Sixth Trumpet Blows // S3E3

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Revelation 9:13-21 NIV 1984

13 The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God. **14** It said 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 kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. **16** The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number. **17** The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur. **18** A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. **19** The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury. **20** The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood--idols that cannot see or hear or walk. **21** Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality, or their thefts.

Key: We need to understand and interpret apocalyptic literature correctly - not as a puzzle to be solved, but as a message to be heard.

Main Points

1. **God's boundaries protect and define us.**
2. **Idol worship has consequences.**

1. **God's boundaries protect and define us. Vs. 14** *It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."*

- The Euphrates River is mentioned 52 times in scripture. (Gen 2:14, Ex 22:31, Josh 1:4, 24:3, 24:14, Rev. 16:12)

"The Euphrates, a historic boundary in the physical realm, serves in Revelation as a profound spiritual demarcation, vividly illustrating the line between good and evil. It reminds us that every day, we stand on the banks of decision, faced with the critical choice to cross into the territory of righteousness or to wander into the shadows of moral compromise."

2. **Idol worship has consequences. Vs. 15** *And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind.*

- **God has a specific time for judgment: Vs. 15** makes it clear that the timing in this passage is not symbolic, but rather specific.
- **Idolatry leads to death.**

The Rest Resisted Repentance

Vs. 20-21 *The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood--idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

PRACTICAL TAKEAWAYS:

1. **Re-establish the boundary lines.**
2. **Destroy your idols.**

Discussion questions for small groups:

1. **Reflection on Boundaries:** How does the imagery of the Euphrates River as a boundary in Revelation 9:14 help us understand God's boundaries in our own lives?
2. **Understanding Apocalyptic Messages:** What are some key ways we can approach and interpret the apocalyptic literature of Revelation to find relevant messages for today, rather than seeing it as merely a puzzle to be solved?
3. **Idolatry in Modern Times:** In what ways do contemporary forms of idolatry (such as materialism, power, or technology) mirror the idol worship mentioned in Revelation 9:20, and what might be their consequences?
4. **Repentance and Resistance:** Revelation 9:20-21 shows humanity's stubbornness even in the face of divine judgment. How can we cultivate a heart that is responsive to God's call to repentance and resistant to hardening?
5. **Divine Timing and Judgment:** How does the specific timing of the judgments in Revelation 9:15 (reflecting God's precise control over events) affect our understanding of divine judgment and providence in the face of current global crises and moral decay?