

The Seven Trumpets, Part Four
Spiritual Warfare (Revelation 9:13–21)
By Pastor Jeff Alexander (10/4/2015)

Introduction

1. Spiritual warfare is carried out in the real world through the conflict of ideas put into practice.
2. There are two peoples in the conflict: those who bear God’s seal and those who do not. “*For the LORD’s portion is his people*” (Deut. 32:9; Matt. 16:18; Isa. 8:16, 17).
3. There are two principles involved in this conflict: the wisdom of God and the wisdom of this world (Isa. 8:20).
4. God’s law was given to humans as a blessing, informing them of God’s nature and expectations.
 - a. God’s law is not for salvation, but for life (Lev. 18:5; Gal. 3:12).
 - b. The characteristic of godless society is *lawlessness* (Matt. 24:12; 2 Thess. 2:3, 7–9).
 - c. The wages of lawlessness is death (Rom. 2:23; 1 John 3:4–8).
5. There are two agendas in this conflict: Satan’s kingdom and Christ’s. Only Christ’s will prevail.
6. The pattern of this conflict is revealed in Job. God permitted Satan to cause Job to suffer in order to attest to the truth of Job’s sealing as God’s own portion. Job won the conflict by seeing the God he owned and trusted—“*I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you*” (Job 42:5).

I. The Source of the Judgment

1. A voice coming from the four horns of the altar (v. 1)
 - a. The number *four* refers to completeness of creation.
 - b. The *horns* stand for Divine power to act (14:18).
 - c. The *golden altar* is before (“in the presence of”) God, signifying His presence in the heavenly temple.
 - d. The vision indicates that this judgment is God’s response to the prayers of the saints (6:10; 8:3–5).
2. The voice issues a command.
 - a. To release four bound angels
 - 1) These are fallen angels who have a specific connection to the Euphrates River.
 - 2) The Euphrates River was the boundary that separated the kings of the East and North (Assyria and Babylon); thus, the connection is to the fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision (Daniel 2:40–45) and the fourth beast (7:7–14).
 - b. This vision is likely derived from Jeremiah 46 where judgment comes on Egypt by armies from the north being like serpents and locusts innumerable.
 - c. This trumpet also anticipates the battle of the sixth bowl of wrath (9:19); indeed, both describe the same event.

- d. These bound angels could very well be the gods of the wicked nation at the north boundary (Dan. 10:13, 20, 21; cf. 7:26, 27; Psa. 82).

II. Prepared for Judgment

1. The four angels were prepared for a specific time to exercise their purpose (v. 15).
 - a. God is in absolute control of these events.
 - b. He uses Satan to bring judgment upon the very ones who follow Satan.
2. The angels will use terrifying warfare to “kill” one third of mankind.
 - a. As seen by the description of this army, symbolic terms depict both the armies, the battle, and its outcome. This battle is spiritual warfare; although actual physical warfare will likely accompany this.
 - b. Killing the body is the means of ensuring that the spiritually dead will be sealed to their eternal fate.
3. The power of the horses lies in their mouths and tails.
 - a. The plagues of their mouths is probably a reference to deception, Satan’s primary tool.
 - 1) Satan’s followers believe that they are bringing in a New World Order that will assure a Utopia without God. How they are being deceived!
 - 2) Death comes to the deceived in various ways: diseases to the sexually immoral; spiritual death to the followers of false teachers, etc.
 - b. Serpent tails do not describe a different form of inflicting torment but focus on the source of destructive deceptions—the serpent Satan (Luke 10:17–19).
 - 1) The serpent defiled the human race by deceiving them into believing they could be as gods.
 - 2) Now the serpent wants to use sinful humans to destroy the Old World order to bring in a New World Order. Believers are the only ones standing in the way.

III. The Unrepentant

1. Those not killed by this demonic horde will be like Pharaoh—unrepentant and hardened hearts.
2. They remain deceived, worshipping demon-gods represented by images of gold, stone, and bronze.
3. Note that the sins listed in verses 20 and 21 are violations of God’s law (Psa. 106:36–39).

Use

1. Beware of Christianity that gets cozy with false teachers. Many will claim to come in His name and lead many astray (Matt. 24:5, 11).
2. Jesus warned that Satan would try to deceive, if possible, the very elect (Matt. 24:24).
3. These truths are presented to encourage the saints to be discerning by knowing the truth. Lazy Christians are in danger of the plethora of deceivers that are multiplying in these last days (1 John 2:14).