



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Revelation 9:1-21

Revelation

“Woes But No Repentance”

TRANSCRIPT

Our text this morning is Revelation 9 and we'll look at the entire chapter, verses 1 through 21. It's a very interesting, intriguing chapter as I guess every chapter in the Book of Revelation is. We're in the trumpet judgments. Four had been sounded and now we come to the fifth in chapter nine. “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. 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. Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the Earth and power was given to them as the scorpions of the Earth have power. They were told not to hurt the grass or the Earth nor any green thing nor any tree, but only men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months and their torment was like the torment of the scorpion when it stings a man. And in those days men will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die and death will flee from them.

“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. They had hair like the hair of women and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. 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. They have tails like scorpions and stings and in their tails is the power to hurt men for five months. 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. The first woe was past; two woes are still coming after these things. Then the sixth angel sounded and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God. One sang to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great River Euphrates.” 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.

“The number of the armies of the horsemen was 200 million. I heard the number of them. 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 jacinth 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. A third of mankind was killed by these plagues and by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. 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. The rest of mankind who are not killed by these plagues did not repent of their works or 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. And they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.” May the Lord bless this reading of His Word and our time of study together. Let’s pray.

Father, we thank you for this day – a beautiful Sunday morning. Thank you for that, but most of all thank you for the opportunity that we have to be together here and worship together as your people – as believers in Jesus Christ; to sing hymns of praise, to read the scripture, to consider the meaning of the text. And in so doing be built up in the faith. It’s a great privilege to do that. It’s an absolute necessity for us to do that, to center our lives in the study of the word of God. It’s as we see the truth of your word that we are transformed, that we are changed, that we are made more and more like your son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And that comes not simply by reading, but through the ministry of the spirit of God within us. It transforms us as we see Christ, as we know your truth. So we pray for that ministry above all this morning, that the ministry of the spirit of God would go on unhindered in our hearts to give us understanding, to see the proper application for these things, to guide us in our thinking and lead us into an understanding and into worship. We pray for that for ourselves, and not only for our spiritual needs but our material needs too. We’ve been instructed by our Lord to pray for our daily bread, which is a reminder that all that we have in this life – in the material realm – is a gift from You. Our health, our provisions, it all comes from You.

We pray, Father, that you would continue to provide for us and bless us, and we think particularly of those who are in need – in need of employment. Bless them and open doors of opportunity. Those who are in need of health, we pray for them. We pray for those undergoing very serious treatment. We pray that you make it effective and restore their health and restore them to our fellowship. We pray for those that are going through great difficulties in their lives of various kinds, Father. We face all kinds of afflictions, some of a material nature others of an emotional/spiritual nature. Bless all who are undergoing hardship and help them to come to the throne of grace and seek help in time of need because there is where we find it. And to reflect deeply on the promises that You have given, know that You are a God of mercy and You do give help. Help us to see these things in our studies this morning. We have an interesting and somewhat difficult text, but we pray that you would guide us and bring glory to yourself in our time of study. We pray these things in Christ’s name. Amen.

Our text is an amazing chapter where locusts from the pit fill the air and fire-breathing horses gallop across the Earth. For many this ninth chapter, like others in the Book of Revelation is hard to believe. One of our members who was raised a Roman Catholic told me that he once asked his schoolteacher, one of the sisters, about the Book of Revelation. She said, “Don’t read that book. John was out of his mind and hallucinating when he wrote it.” Now in fairness to Rome, the Reformers didn’t have any more insight into the book than I assume that well-meaning nun had. Luther said that he held it in low esteem and I’m sure chapter nine only bolstered his bias. Shakespeare had a word of wisdom for anyone who was confused about the Book of Revelation when Hamlet said, “There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” That’s certainly true. If we can believe the Bible – and we can and I do – then we must believe that there is a spiritual dimension that is veiled to us but very real and very active. Elisha’s servant learned that when he and his master were in the town of Dothan. The Syrians were after him. They found out that Elisha knew all their secrets and so they wanted to apprehend him. The king sent his army after him and they found him in that town and they surrounded the city. When his servant woke up and saw the Syrian army outside the walls he was terrified. So Elisha

prayed that the Lord would open his servant’s eyes. The Lord did and the servant saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

There are more things in Heaven and Earth than men develop in their narrow materialistic, naturalistic world views. You see that in Revelation 9 when the spirit world is unveiled to us. More than that is revealed to us, because here we also see why it is that men are so narrow in their thinking and cannot see spiritual proof. They are unwilling to. They are dead set against it even when that reality stings them literally. Well that is the nature of the next trumpet judgments. The first four were directed against the earth, the grass, trees and water. The next two are against men, first to afflict them and then to kill. John wrote, it’s interesting to note, six verses to describe the first trumpets in chapter eight. He devotes over three times the verses in chapter nine to describe these two trumpets, and the emphasis gives us a sense of the severity of these next two trumpets. They’re very severe.

And eagle has flown across the sky announcing three woes. John records the first woe in verses 1 through 12; then the second woe in verses 13 through 19. In the first, a horde of locust-like demons come up out of the abyss and torment men. The second woe is one that unleashes an army of demonic horses that sweep across the Earth killing a third of mankind. It’s a terrifying scene. Still, as painful and horrible as the events will be, men will refuse to repent, refuse to give up their idols and their immorality. That tells us a lot about sin, what it does. It has a delusionary effect. It has a blinding and enslaving effect upon people. We learn that from Revelation 9 as well as the terrible and fantastic future that has yet to come upon the Earth. Four angels have played their horns. The Earth has been hurt, but man has been spared. That’s now about to change.

When the fifth angel sounds his trumpet, a star falls from Heaven to Earth. The star is an angel. I mention that because last week in chapter 8, verse 10, the star that fell was a molten mass of matter something like a meteor. This is different. This star is an angel. In fact both Greek and Hebrew use the word star in that way. Star is used for both a heavenly body and also an angel. And here the passage clearly indicates that this star is a star-angel. It is one that can function. It has a key that gives to it and when it comes down it unlocks the abyss. The abyss is the place that we read about in Luke 8. You remember that scene in which the Lord crosses the Sea of Galilee and he goes to the Gerasenes or the Gaterines – depending on which gospel you read it’s spelled and pronounced differently. But it’s that region on the other side – the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee and there he meets a man who is possessed with a demon. The demon’s name is Legion and it becomes apparent that there’s not one demon but a multitude – a whole army – of demons within this man. As our Lord is about to cast them out they beg him not to send them into the abyss. It’s a terrible place. It is the prison of the demons. It is the prison where Satan would be confined in Revelation 20:1-3 during the millennium and he’d be there for 1,000 years.

But the angel that comes down from Heaven unlocks this place – the abyss, the bottomless pit – releasing smoke that billows out like the smoke of a great furnace. And out of the billowing smoke came a great swarm of locusts. Locusts breed out in the desert and invade cultivated areas for food and they do great harm to the crops. They wipe out crops. They fly in thick columns. They’re sometimes estimated to be 100 feet deep and four miles in length. They just sweep across the landscape and devour everything in sight. William Barclay notes that in 1866 a swarm of locusts came out of the North African desert and invaded Algiers and so decimated the crops that 200,000 people died from the famine that followed. Well that phenomenon was known in Bible times. It was not uncommon. So locusts in the Old Testament are symbols of judgment. They were the ninth plague on Egypt. They are the judgment of Joel chapters one and two. The gnawing

locusts, the swarming locusts as he describes them, and they’re a symbol of judgment here in Revelation 9 but these locusts are very unusual.

Natural locusts devour crops but are harmless to people. These locusts are described as having power like scorpions and they’re told in verse four not to hurt the crops or trees, hurt only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They’ll not be permitted to kill men, only to torment them for five months and only unbelievers. God protects His people from their sting. But those who are stung will be affected with such excruciating pain that they were prefer death over that pain. That is how terrible the pain will be. And these demons will be well-equipped to deliver it as is seen from the full description that John gives of them in verses 7 through 11. I won’t read the entire passage, but we read that the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle and on their heads appeared the crowns like gold and their faces were like the faces of men. They had breastplates like iron. They had tails like scorpions and as you read in verse 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.

Now in Proverbs 3:27 we’re told that the locusts have no king yet all of them go out in ranks. These locusts are different. They have a king, a kind whose name is Apollyon, which means destroyer. So these are not natural locusts, they are spiritual locusts, supernatural locusts, terrible creatures of the pit. But the question that we naturally have as we read this, in fact as we read so many of these visions that John has in the Book of Revelation, is how are we to understand these things? Did these locusts and the monsters that follow in the next trumpet judgment actually stalk the Earth visibly as they are described here? In answer to that, we need to remember that John is seeing a vision. He describes things in symbols not as they actually are. He gave us that clear indication and rule of interpretation in the very first verse of the book, in chapter one, verse one when he said, “These things were communicated to him.” And that word communicated means communicated by symbols, by signs. In fact it has been translated that they were sign-ified or signified to him. So this is a symbolic presentation here and I think he reaffirms that in verse seven when he speaks of what he saw in a vision.

The grotesque picture he gives are these two great hordes of demons corresponds to their evil origin and their malicious nature so that’s what John is describing. He is describing their character. He is describing their activity. John is not describing demons as they actually appear. This isn’t what man will actually see when these events occur. John is describing the spiritual character of evil beings and this is my opinion. I don’t know that it’s shared by every student of the Book of Revelation, but in my opinion we won’t actually see super bugs flying around stinging people. Demons aren’t material beings. They’re spiritual beings. They are not visible beings, but they can inflict physical pain. You see that in the gospels. You see that in the Book of Job. These demons, these spirits, will be given that kind of power, but this is not a literal description. And I think we have an example of what John is doing here in Daniel 7 where Daniel has a vision of four nations that he sees as four beasts – other-worldly beasts. When you read the chapter and the description they aren’t like any wild beasts that we know. And what he is doing there in Daniel 7 is describing the nations of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome and describing them as God sees them.

As men see them, their glorious – the kingdoms of this world. But as God sees the kingdoms of this world they’re hideous, like ravenous beasts. Just as Daniel was describing the spiritual character of those empires, not their physical appearance, so to John is describing the demons’ evil character and their ability to harm. How else do you describe and communicate the wickedness, the harmfulness of something that’s invisible. You do it in symbols as John does here. They’re given great authority. They’re given power to do much harm. Their mission is to inflict suffering on the

wicked and they have the ability to do it. That’s the point that he makes. They are described as having human faces to indicate that these locusts are intelligent. They know their mission. They have minds like people. They’re rational in that sense. They’re able to follow their leader and obey orders. That’s the sense of the face like men.

The iron breastplates indicate that they’re impregnable. Men may be able to ward off a swarm of locusts in the natural world, but men will not be able to stop this play. Their lion teeth and their scorpion tails tell of their violent character and their power for pain. They will inflict terrible torment, but mercifully only for a time. It’s restricted to five months and the commentators point out something that’s rather interesting and that is that that’s the life cycle of the locust – five months. So they’re given that time to inflict this great pain and suffering but it’s limited time, and time enough for those who have been afflicted for their wickedness to turn from that – to turn to Christ, to repent. That’s at least one of the purposes of the plague, to bring men to repentance. But as we find, men will seek death as an escape instead of repentance. They prefer death to faith. They prefer death to Christ. What a commentary that is on man and on whom they trust. They will not have Christ to rule over them, so they seek death but they won’t be permitted to die. Death flees from them, according to verse six. It keeps running from them, that’s the sense. They’re chasing after death and death flees from them.

What a contrast they are to Paul in Philippians 1:21-23 where he says, “For to live is Christ, to die is gain.” And that his desire was to depart and be with Christ. For Paul life was good. He wasn’t seeking an escape in death – not at all. He was happy to live. Life was good. Even though he’s writing this letter of Philippians in a Roman prison with chains on his arms, yet it was good for him because life – every moment of life gave him an opportunity for service and he desired that. But death was better. Death was better not because it gave him an escape from his chains and from his affliction, but because it gave him access to Christ. It would bring him into the riches of fellowship with Christ. We’ll see later in this book, in chapters 21 and 22 that the great goal of our pilgrimage in this world is the new Heavens and the new Earth and the new Jerusalem and the pride that comes down out of Heaven. And there in the midst of it all, in them midst of the City of God is the throne of God and the Lamb and we will see the Lamb. We will see Christ face to face. That’s the great glory of Heaven. All of us are longing for that. That’s why he desired death. Not as an escape, but as the fullness of everything that he wanted, which was to see Christ for him and for all Christians.

Death leads to blessing. For the unbeliever it is, at best, an escape from physical and emotional torment so they think, but the reality is it is no escape. It is the entrance into the eternal pain of endless punishment. But seeking it only shows the insanity of sin and unbelief, the blindness that it causes to reality. Christ, on the other hand, not only gives his people eternal life in the sense of endless blessing, he also gives us blessing now. In this present life he blesses us with understanding of reality. He blesses us with a sound mind. What a blessing that is to be able to think clearly. What a blessing it is to know the truth, to have a firm grasp on reality and to know where to go to find wisdom and truth and insight on life. We’ve been blessed with that. It’s what the Lord has given us.

Well, this is the first woe John says in verse 12. There are two more to come and the second is described in verses 13 through 19. Now comes the sixth trumpet and it is worse than the previous five. When it is sounded John says, “I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God. The voice speaks to the sixth angel and says, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great River Euphrates.” The voice for us isn’t identified. It may be an angel. It may be God. It is at the altar before God. You might wonder why is it speaking from the altar? You

can ask that question about so many things in this book, why certain descriptions are given, and some of it is just rather general I think, to give us an impression of the terribleness of the plague or the awesomeness of the glory of Heaven. Sometimes we’re not to press the details too far, but here I think this detail of the altar is significant. It has four horns and those horns on the altar were for tying the sacrificial victim to the altar where it was slaughtered.

So this speaks of sacrifice and atonement, but men have rejected Christ, the only sacrifice for forgiveness, the only way of reconciliation with God and salvation. And so because the only means of help has been refused over these five months of affliction, the only response is one of retribution, of judgment. And that is called for from the altar and so that announcement from the altar is the reminder of the reason this judgment has come. The altar reminds us of sacrifice and it reminds us of what men have turned their backs on. It’s a reminder the reason for the sixth judgment that follows. It brings forth a demonic cavalry 200 million strong, and this plague brings death. A third of unbelieving mankind falls under their attack. They’re released from the Euphrates River, which was the eastern end of the Roman Empire. Commentators have noted that the people in John’s day would have thought of the Parthians, who were great horsemen and archers. They were Rome’s great nemesis in the east. Twice the Parthians defeated the Romans in major battles and were greatly feared.

Some modern commentators have made a connection with this number – this great army – and China. One reason is *Time Magazine*, a number of years ago, did an article in which they cited the Chinese army as having 200 million men. And so some have made the connection between this and that. But John’s not describing the Parthians and John’s not describing the Chinese. This isn’t a human army. It is a supernatural, demonic force. He sees this second great horde in a vision and describes it in a visionary way with symbols to again reveal the evil nature of these spirits and the deadly power of their attack. The description is given in verses 17 through 19, “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 jacinth and of brimstone. And the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions and out of their mouths proceeded fire and smoke and brimstone. A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues – by fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. The power of the horses is in their mouths and then their tails, for their tails are like serpents and have heads and with them they do harm.

Various interpretations have been given of these horses and their riders from the armies of Islam to the cannons and tanks of modern warfare, but warfare kills indiscriminately and these trumpet judgments are selective. They are on the unbelieving world. The passage makes it clear that this plague is one the impenitent, those who will not repent. Again, this is all visionary. John is not describing something natural. It is supernatural and symbolic. One of the commentators on the Book of Revelation, Beasley-Murray, wrote, “The picture is meant to be inconceivable, horrifying and even revolting.’ Well, the revolting appearance indicates that they are unholy creatures. Their armor and fire indicate their invincible power to kill. It’s all real. This is a real event that will happen. These are real beings, but given in a figurative description of a reality that will be released on the Earth, a demonic plague with a mission of massacre. They kill a third of unbelieving mankind. That’s a staggering number. But all of this is by design. All of this is a part of God’s purpose. That’s clear from the timing of the plague, according to verse 15 it was prepared beforehand, prepared for the year, the month, the day, the very hour.

So John sees God, not the demons, in control. All of this fits within God’s sovereign plan and purpose. It’s not an arbitrary act. It’s not an arbitrary event. It is the divine plan of God and it is His response to man’s willful rejection of His truth, His response to man’s unbelief, and His

response to man’s persecution of His people. The release of these demonic forces is the result of human sin. It is what we would call retributive justice – and justice and punishment that will only come after long years of divine patience. We must remember that or realize that as you study the judgment of God and you go through your Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament, judgment comes after long patience by God. So this is justice, but not only that, this is not only for God’s retribution, but for man’s repentance. There is mercy in all of this well-deserved punishment. There is a pattern to the way God deals with men. I think Paul gives us a good indication of that in Romans 2:4. He points out that God first deals with men in kindness, in goodness with common grace. He gives life, He gives the provisions of life, He gives abundantly, and that is to lead men to repentance. But the result so often is rather than lead men to a sense of repentance, it instills in them a sense of self-acceptance and self-approval. They feel they’re fine with God and they’re just indifferent. They’ve come to think of these things that we have, the good things of life, life itself and all of its provisions, as something that we deserve, that’s our inheritance. It’s our birthright.

And so God brings hardship because men won’t respond to His goodness. He brings difficulty, He brings suffering, all for the purpose of shaking people out of their complacency, out of their delusion, out of their unbelief. C.S. Lewis wrote that, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pains.” That’s a good quote. I’ll give it to you again. C.S. Lewis wrote that, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pains.” He does that for our good. In that future day, few will be listening to His shouts. People’s response is given in the final verses of the chapter, verses 20 and 21, “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. They did not repent of their murders nor their sorceries nor their immorality nor their thefts.

They prefer death to Christ and idolatry to repentance even though these things, these idols, can neither see nor hear nor walk, even though they cannot deliver them from their time of need. That’s an example again of the delusionary power of sin. The power of Satan, the God of this age, to blind the eyes of men, that they would desire a piece of dead wood to living God. Now we read such things about men practicing idolatry and sorcery and we wonder what age John is describing because it seems like primitive times. This does not read, at least at fir glance, like modern times. And many commentators have found the fulfillment of these things – these plagues – in various periods of history. I think in our first lesson or so in this series I must have mentioned that there are basically three approaches or methods of interpretation of the Book of Revelation, the preterist, the historical and the futurist views.

The preterist approach is that it all happened in the 1st century. Preterist is from the word preterite, which is past, and so they interpret the entire book as something that happened in the past. The historical approach is very similar to that. It stretches it out over church history and understands that John is giving a figurative, symbolic prophesy of events in the history of the church. So they interpret the plagues in that way. The locusts are Lutherans or the Popes or Mohammed, all those interpretations are given. I take the futurist approach. I think it’s consistent with the outline of the Book of Revelation that’s given in chapter 1, verse 19. Everything from chapter four is yet to occur. It’s all future. Now it may be soon to occur. The society that’s described here fits easily in every age. It does fit quite naturally in the 1st century, but it fits naturally in the 21st century as well. We live in an immoral and violent age. Many of us here

remember the 1960’s quite well with the sexual revolution and the drug culture. We think of the 60’s and we think of that, but that hasn’t gone away. It’s only increased and become accepted.

The murder rate is high. We hear about the culture of death within our society, with feticide, infanticide, homicide, genocide, euthanasia. So when we read about men not repenting of their murders, immorality and theft it sounds very contemporary as do idolatry and sorcery. Idolatry is still with us. Throughout the world people literally worshipped the works of their hands. They worshipped idols made of wood and stone. They even do that in Christendom. You see it in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. People bow before a bronze statue of the apostle Peter and they kiss its foot. The foot has literally been worn down to a nub by the kisses of men. Now many wouldn’t call that idolatry, but I’ll tell you something that is idolatry and that’s materialism. We must all agree on that because Paul writes in Colossians 3:5 that greed is idolatry. There’s lots of idolatry today. People worship their money, their cars, their houses, their pleasures. They live for that – the works of their hands.

No, we live in an age that fits well within the description given here at the end of Revelation 9. So the future events described here may be soon coming. They may not be. They may be well off in the future for another generation. We don’t know. Even if they are, even if chapters eight and nine with their terrible trumpet judgments are still a thousand years in the future, that doesn’t mean that we’re living in secure times. We’re not. Men never are. I read a statistic that worldwide 150,000 people die every day, which if my calculator is correct, is something like 54 million or 56 million people a year. That’s almost four billion people in an average lifetime. Now the statistics are not precise, but the reality is people are dying all around us. We are shocked and appalled by the figures of the Holocaust in Germany that Hitler perpetrated on the Jews. Six million Jews slaughtered in the death camps as well as six million non-Jews.

And then we read about Stalin and his career in which he is estimated to have been responsible for the death of from 20 to 40 million people over the many years that he was the Premier of Russia, the Soviet Union. And then Mao Tse-Tung is responsible, they say, for over 50 million deaths during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward. Those are staggering figures, but that’s happening every year. There’s a holocaust every year going on; people just dying. Life is brief. We’re just a vapor, James tells us. This is a day of urgency. Things are urgent to day. They’re urgent right now. It’s just as necessary and important to repent today as it will be in that future day when the trumpet judgments begin. And God promises to bless in the greatest way those who do repent – those who look to Him. There’s a promise in Job 2 that fits well with the description of things in Revelation 9 too. I think it’s a good compliment to it. It’s a promise that’s given to Israel and will be fulfilled in the future when the Jews are brought to faith in Jesus Christ as their true Messiah, but it applies in principal to all who repent today, Jew and Gentile alike.

After describing the plague of locusts, the Lord promises in Job 2:25 that He will make up the years that the swarming locusts have eaten. God can give back far more than we can waste and infinitely far more than dead idols can give. They can’t give anything. They can give nothing. A man’s money and his cars and his prestige will not deliver him on the day of death. The living God can do that. The living God can rebuild the lives of those who look to Him and can make them eternally useful for him and give them joyful lives and He will do that. He is a just God. He judges sin. That should be apparent from our text. But His great work is not His judgment, it is His mercy. That’s what he delights to show – mercy and grace and He shows that to all who turn to Him. So if you’re here without Christ we invite you to come to Him. Turn from your idols, whatever they may be, and trust in Christ, God’s son, who laid down his life as a substitute for

sinners. All who do that are forgiven at the moment of faith and they are received into God’s family. They are made sons and heirs and He will make up the years that the swarming locusts have eaten. He’ll make your life very useful; eternally significant.

Interestingly, that man I spoke of earlier who was warned by the nun not to read the Book of Revelation, some years later he did read it and became a Christian through his study of this very book. So the Book of Revelation, which is full of fantastic visions and full of judgment, is also full of grace and mercy and the love of God. Let’s pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for that grace that has delivered us through the belief in Jesus Christ from the wrath to come. Judgments that we read about in Revelation 9 cannot compare to what is yet to come and what is eternal. You’ve delivered us from that by Your grace through the work of Your son. Thank you for him. It’s in his name we pray. Amen.