

The Fifth Trumpet Judgment

Chapter Two - Verse Two

And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.
(Revelation 9:2)

THE PIT

The Greek word that is translated as bottomless in the New Testament implies depthless; bottomless; or abyss. This very same Greek word is also rendered twice in the New Testament as deep. This is found in Luke chapter eight and again in Romans chapter ten.

Luke 8:27-31

27 - And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

28 - When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

29 - (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 - And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 - And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep [abyss; bottomless].

32 - And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 - Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 - When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.

In Luke 8:27 we read of Christ encountering a certain man who was possessed a long while with demons. Jesus asked him what his name was and he replied "...Legion:"... "because many devils were entered into him," verse thirty says. In verse thirty-one we read that these demons besought (meaning they begged) Christ that He should not

command them to go out into the “deep.” As we stated, the meaning of this word **deep is translated from the same Greek word as bottomless, and it means abyss!** These demons knew that this abyss was to be their eternal home; thus they begged Christ not to cast them into the bottomless pit before their time (cf. Matthew 8:29). In Matthew 8:29 and Mark 5:7 these demons use the word torment. “...have you come to torment us before our time?” Clearly this is eternal torment, outer darkness. Torment is another word found in Scripture that signifies hell and damnation. These incidents occurred before Christ went to the cross, therefore the demons were not sealed or locked into the bottomless pit as yet. It was only after Christ defeated Satan that they were confined into their prison. The second and final place in Scripture where we find the word deep, as it is derived from the same word translated as bottomless, is in **Romans 10:6-7**:

6 - But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)
7 - Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

Again, from verse seven we see that this bottomless pit, this deep is the abyss or outer darkness itself. Christ plainly descended into hell for our sins and endured God’s eternal wrath in our stead. **Ephesians 4:9** tells the same story:

9 - (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)

The lower parts of the earth being the abyss; the bottomless pit; the deep - where Satan and his fallen angels (demons) are presently being held until the time appointed, when he is to be “loosed for a little season,” Revelation 20:3.

Pit As Seen From Old Testament Passages -

The Old Testament displays many references of the abyss being signified as a pit.

Job 33:30 - To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

Ezekiel 26:20 - When I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth, in places desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living;

Ezekiel 32:23 - Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living.

Ezekiel 32:24 - There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether

parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit.

Ezekiel 32:25 - They have set her a bed in the midst of the slain with all her multitude: her graves are round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword: though their terror was caused in the land of the living, yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit: he is put in the midst of them that be slain.

Psalms 40:1-3 - ¶<<To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.>> I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
2 - He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
3 - And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

The above Psalm 40:1-3 is a beautiful spiritual picture of how one is brought up out of hell itself (the pit) once Christ has saved him and pulled him out of his destiny in the pit. Christ has rescued him out of the horrible pit and set his feet upon the sure ROCK and FOUNDATION of Christ Jesus! It is only then that the true believer will sing a new song (verse 3) and that new song is praises and praises unto our God. Cross reference: Revelation 14:3 "And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

This hundred and forty-four thousand clearly and undeniably represent those - past, present, and future - who have been given this new song and that can only be in reference to Christ's Elect: the whole spiritual House of Israel.

Psalms 143:7 - ¶Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

Ezekiel 32:24 - There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit.

Note: The overall picture in the above verse speaks of those going down into hell because they are uncircumcised! Yes, God's Word is sure and steadfast. Those who are uncircumcised refer to all of humanity who remain dead in their sins and trespasses and without the hope of Christ in their lives. **Colossians 2:11** - "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:"

There are many more Old Testament verses that allude to eternal darkness as the pit.

THE SMOKE OF A GREAT FURNACE

Revelation 9:2 tells us that upon the opening of the bottomless pit, there arose "...a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace." The biblical phrase smoke of a great furnace is descriptive of God Himself, while it is also used as a figure of God's divine judgment. For example, we quote **Genesis 15:17-18** -

17 - ¶And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 - In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

When God appeared to Abram and made His covenant with him, His appearance was as a smoking furnace and a burning lamp. We also read the following account in **Exodus 19:18**, where God appeared unto Moses in the wilderness:

18 - And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

Not only does this smoke of a furnace portray the greatness of God, it can also typify the great wrath and judgment of God. For example, we read of this in **Genesis 19:28**:

28 - And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

When God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, God's wrath and destruction was likened to the smoke of a furnace. More than likely the destruction of these cities was but a smaller picture ultimately pointing to the final judgment of this world at the last day. With many, or perhaps every literal and historic event given in Scripture, there is usually a spiritual lesson to be applied as well.

Matthew 13:40-42 -

40 - As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 - The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 - And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

This furnace of fire is representative of eternal darkness and hell itself, being allegorically signified by fire.

Daniel's Furnace -

In the Book of Daniel we are given an allegory of hell, which is figuratively depicted as a fiery furnace. Although God's three servants, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

were cast into this fiery furnace, yet this fire had no effect upon them, as **Daniel 3:27** states:

27 - "And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

In the above allegory of eternal hell, we discover these three servants of God being tossed into the fiery furnace, which was "exceedingly hot." So hot, in fact, that its flame slew those men who were ordered to throw the Hebrews into the fire, (Daniel 3:22).

Then King Nebuchadnezzar rose in haste and was astonished, seeing his men roasted alive, and yet these three Hebrew men were not even singed by this fiery furnace, Daniel 3:24. What is very astonishing in this historic parable is indeed just what King Nebuchadnezzar saw in this furnace, as we read in **Daniel 3:25** - "...lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt [as we saw in **Revelation 2:11** - "...he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death"] and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Yes, Christ did appear in this fiery furnace with God's three servants to protect them from the incinerating flames; showing forth a beautiful truth in that eternal hell holds no power on all who truly trust in Christ for their eternal security. Daniel 3:27, in speaking of these three servants of God, states that the fire of this furnace had no power. The following passage states the same truth in **Revelation 20:6** - "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."

SUN AND AIR DARKENED FROM SMOKE

When God releases Satan from the bottomless pit, there will arise smoke, as the smoke of a great furnace. This is the smoke of great spiritual destruction, which originates within the confines of hell itself - the great furnace.

"And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace...", Revelation 9:2.

Webster's dictionary defines smoke this way: (1) Any volatile and specifically any carbonaceous matter escaping from a burning substance. (2) Something light, inconsiderable, or unimportant; idle talk; mere words; vanity; emptiness. In the context of spiritual destruction relating to smoke, God's definition can be found in the Bible:

Isaiah 9:18 - For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.

The smoke that ascends out of the bottomless pit is in fact God's own definition of spiritual wickedness. As Isaiah states, this wickedness shall "mount up as the lifting up of smoke." When Satan is released, this spiritual wickedness will be at its height, and will have become universal, as to be defined by God as the smoke of a great furnace...yes, the smoke of hell itself.

Revelation 14:10-11:

10 - The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 - And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

The figurative smoke of all wickedness finds its home with the brightest of all fallen angels - Lucifer himself. This is where the smoke originated from and likewise this is where the smoke shall be contained, as it is cast into the second death of the lake of fire, Revelation 20:14. Because Satan has been bound in prison from the time of the cross does not mean there is no sin in the earth today. Far from it! Unregenerate man is still unsaved humanity exercising at every opportunity their inhumanity toward man. When the fifth trumpet sounds this world will witness - and perhaps already are witnessing - the full impact of Satan's fury. If God would peel back the physical picture and allow all to see the world today as it really is, we would most likely be able to see absolutely nothing due to the thick dark smoke that the world is engulfed in. This is the smoke that is released at the sounding of the fifth trumpet.

The second half of Isaiah chapter nine (as we read above) centers on the apostasy of ancient Israel, and ultimately predicts the spiritual destruction of the New Testament "Israel of God," the corporate church. Verse eighteen is stating that wickedness will burn as a fire. This is not pertaining to the wickedness of the pagan world; this is pointing directly to the wickedness found within the church itself. Continuing on in verse eighteen we're told that this wickedness shall consume or devour the briers and thorns. As wheat portrays believes in Scripture, tares are the enemies of God. Similarly, **briers and thorns** are opposite of green grass and that which produces fruit - the true Christian. These thorns and briers (unbelievers) will be deceived and devoured by the masses, as a result of "smoke" from the wickedness of spiritual deception. Astonishingly, this will take place within the church itself, will it not? Within all congregations where the truth is still being taught. Verse eighteen states that this wickedness will kindle or burn in the thickets of the forest. In other words it will be found in the midst of the church - in the midst (thickets) of the forest (church). The church in scripture is likened in one sense to a forest with green and lush vegetation (please see "Grass, Green Things, and Trees" in Chapter Four). The

end of verse eighteen states that this spiritual deception shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke. This is the fruit of the end time church, watered down gospels of flatteries; adding to and taking from the true Word of God to such an extent that it becomes clearly a false gospel.

From verse two in our study of Revelation chapter nine, we see that the sun and air were darkened as a direct result of this smoke ascending from the bottomless pit. Since the context of Revelation is strictly spiritual in nature, we must compare these verses with the rest of Scripture to determine its Biblical meaning. In citing another example, let us refer to **Isaiah 14:29-32** -

29 - Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.

30 - And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

31 - Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times.

32 - What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.

Notice that verse thirty-one states where this smoke originates from...it comes from the north. Upon closer examination of the word north, as used in relation to God's divine end-time judgment, one will discover that in many cases "north" is a symbolic synonym used in describing Satan's domain. **Isaiah 14:13** states that Satan will "...sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north." **Ezekiel 39:2**, with reference to the latter years, states "...and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel." **NOTE:** Many of these passages we are quoting may have a parallel and physical fulfillment as well as spiritual. Again in **Ezekiel 38:15**, as another end-time judgment, we read: "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thus, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army." All of this symbolism indeed is typifying Satan's end-time army being in full battle array and equipped for warfare.

Sun and Air Darkened -

Revelation 9:2 declares that the air and sun were darkened by reason of the smoke. When we look closely at this word sun in Scripture, we find that it is often times used as a representation of Christ Himself. For example, Christ is unquestionably the focal point of **Malachi 4:2**, which reads:

2 - But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; ..."

The above verse focuses upon the coming of Christ who will heal His people of their sins (with healing in his wings). Notice particularly in this passage that Christ isn't

referred to as “son” of righteousness, but He is said to be the **SUN** of righteousness. The word sun in the Hebrew means to be brilliant; as a brilliant ray of light, and is used many times in referring to the very sun itself. The following verses mention the sun in reference to God:

Psalm 84:11 - For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Psalm 89:36 - His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.

Matthew 17:1-2: ¶And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,
2 - And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

Saul of tarsus encounters Christ in a vision on his way to Damascus:

Acts 26:12-13:

12 - ¶Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 - At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

Why is Christ likened to the sun? Because He is the bright and morning star, (**Revelation 22:16**). It is His light that came into the world (**John 1:9**). It is His light that shineth in a dark place (**II Peter 1:19**). It is the light of Christ that penetrates many that dwell in the land of the shadow of death (**Isaiah 9:2**). Christ, the Son of God, is the light of the world (**John 9:5**). “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness,” (**John 12:46**). Again in **Revelation 1:16** we read: “And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.”

Revelation 12:1 -

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:”

This woman can only be the bride of Christ: the true Church. She is clothed with the **SUN**; that is she is clothed with the righteousness of Christ. This woman is God’s instrument for penetrating spiritual darkness, and we do this by reflecting God’s brightness. To be clothed with the sun is a precious gift and honor that the riches of this world can never buy. It is the pearl of great price (Matthew 13:46). This woman is God’s own representative or entity on the earth. To be a part of this woman, we must be dead to our old sinful nature, and our lives must be hid with Christ in God. “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, (**Colossians 3:3**). That is not to say to hide from being a Christian, contrary we are to let our light shine before men while our hearts are sealed and hidden with Christ.

In studying Revelation chapter nine, we saw from verses one and two the preparation being made for the releasing of Satan and his angels. As the world is being made ready for this cataclysmic event, it is first engulfed and inundated by smoke barreling from this bottomless pit, to such an extent that the sun and the air have even become darkened as a result. This phenomenon is taking place in the spiritual realm mainly, in which a great majority of self-confessing Christianity will today refuse to believe. They would insist that this is a physical occurrence, and to spiritualize it robs the church of its importance in teaching and preparing for the end of the age. On the contrary, the very opposite is true. Let us consider **1 Corinthians 2:10-14**:

10 - But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the **deep things** of God.

11 - For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 - Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 - Which things also we speak, **not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**

14 - But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are **spiritually discerned.**

God is opening up Scripture in these last days that formerly have been sealed and remained hidden until the end of the age. Much of the visions given to the prophet Daniel are synonymous with the visions given in the Book of Revelation. Daniel himself was told by God that these visions would not be understood until the appointed time, and that the words would be closed and sealed until the time of the end.

Daniel 12:4, 9:

4 - But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, **even to the time of the end**: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

9 - And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: **for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**

In our study thus far, we have seen the opening up on the bottomless pit. As smoke pours from this pit, the **sun** and the **air** are darkened as a direct result of the denseness of this smoke. The true and pure Gospel of Jesus Christ; the light of the world; the sun (of righteousness) has grown dim at the opening of this pit. The word **darkened** in the Greek implies the process of being obscure. The preaching of the Gospel of salvation, to the saving of souls, has now become very obscure. We see this same word **darkened** used in **Ephesians 4:18**, which reads: "Having the understanding **darkened**, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

Romans 1:21 gives us this same information:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; and their foolish heard was darkened.”

Throughout Scripture, darkness always signifies animosity toward God, with a few exceptions such as dark sayings, which actually carries the meaning of hidden. At the sounding of the fifth trumpet God will unleash His judgment first upon the corporate church, just prior to the judgment to this ungodly world. As the smoke glooms across the world, one congregation after another will fall victim to this spiritual eclipse of the sun of righteousness. **NOTE:** The growing apostasy within the worldwide churches today isn't and will not be a sudden event. Although Satan is loosed for a little season at the end of time, yet the apostasy or falling away has been transpiring now for many decades.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 -

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;”

We plainly see “that day,” meaning the day of Christ or the last day, will not come until the falling away is fulfilled. There is no indication that this falling away will transpire during the Great Tribulation. To the contrary, it is at the height of this falling away - when the apostate church is ripe for judgment - that Satan will be loosed as God's instrument of judgment. Listen to what God tells us in Daniel 8:23 -

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.”

When the transgressors are come to the full, or in other words when their sins have peaked, topped out, or reached full fruition. Then Satan will stand up within the global congregations and be worshipped as God. We see then very clearly that sin abounds upon this earth even while Satan is yet bound in spiritual chains until the Great Tribulation.

THE AIR DARKENED

Not only will the SUN be darkened, which we saw was a synonym for Christ, the light of the Gospel, but the AIR will likewise be darkened and obscured, by reason of the smoke ascending from the bottomless pit. How then are we to understand this word air? Will the earth's invisible atmosphere take on a noticeable change at this time? The answer is no. Not until the judgment at the last day will the appearance of the heavens be changed (II Peter 3:10). We see from verse two of our study that the air is darkened right along with the sun, thus the air must be affiliated spiritually in some way with the sun. Since the sun and the air are both darkened by this smoke, we know that these two terms must have similar meanings to them. There are two different Greek words in the New Testament that are translated in English as air. One usage of this word means the sky, or heavens. For example, “...as the fowls of the air...” The second word that is translated air means: to breathe; to blow;

atmosphere. It is this definition from the Greek that is applied to the word air in our study. From this definition alone, we know that a much more spiritual meaning is suggested, than the literal sky being smoke filled and darkened. This particular word is used as air seven times in the New Testament.

Going back to the Old Testament we find the Hebrew translation of air being breath and/or breathe, with basically the same meaning as air has in the New Testament context of our study. The Hebrew defines this word as **wind; breath, and figuratively meaning life**. Again, we see that this word carries the same meaning as did the air defined in the New Testament. Wind; atmosphere; to breathe; to blow; breath; all carry the same meaning. Breathe in the Old Testament carries the same meaning as does air in Revelation 9:2. In the Old Testament we read the following accounts:

Genesis 2:7- And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the **breath of life**; and man became a living soul.

Psalm 135:15-17 -

- 15 - The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
- 16 - They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;
- 17 - They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any **breath** in their mouths.

Psalms 150:6 - Let every thing that hath **breath** praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

II Samuel 22:16 - And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the **breath** of his nostrils.

Ezekiel 37:5 - Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause **breath** to enter into you, and ye shall live:

As Ezekiel states here in verse five, the breath that God gives to His elect, that is the whole house of Israel, is eternal life which is given to the spiritual and heavenly house of Israel, that is to say Christ's "Israel of God,"...all who come into salvation. Likewise, the breath that God gave to Adam when he was created was the **breath of eternal life**. In going back to our study, we should clearly understand precisely what this **AIR** represents. It would seem to represent the breath of eternal life and can only come from the Lord Jesus Christ and the saving power of His Gospel. In the natural realm, we must breathe in order to live. We also must also have God's **breath of life** in order to live eternally, and that breath (**AIR**) of life is the Gospel of Salvation. In Revelation 9:2 we saw that the air and the sun were darkened by reason of the smoke of the bottomless pit. The air being translated as breathe or breath of life is of course a symbol and synonym for the Word of God, along with the sun being representative of the true Word of God.

God will allow Satan to deaden and silence His Word as judgment upon the apostate church and the unbelieving world, shortly before His return to judge and dissolve this earth and the universe, as we know it. In speaking of this time, **Daniel 8:24** declares the following: “And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.” Satan’s power shall be mighty, but not by his own power. Why? Because God gives him the power as His (God’s) instrument of judgment upon the earth. Recall in Revelation 9:1 we saw that it is God who allegorically gives Satan the key to the bottomless pit, releasing him from his prison. Satan will be mighty, but not by his own power.

We are told in **John 6:29** that the work of God is to believe. “Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” A direct parallel to this statement concerning this work during this time of spiritual darkness is found in **John 9:4**, where Christ states: “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can WORK.” The night spoken of in much of Scripture is the time of great spiritual darkness, when no man can work...that is to say when no man can believe on Christ as John 9:4 says. This is very strong evidence that seemingly would support the teaching that none, or few, will be saved during this time of Great Tribulation.

End of Chapter Two