

The Fifth Trumpet Judgment

Chapter Four - Verse Four

And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.
(Revelation 9:4)

God is the final authority and the giver of life and it is He who commands and brings forth. "Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast," (Psalm 33:8-9). These locusts are commanded NOT to hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, nor any tree. The kingdom of Satan is not given free course to run rampant. God has full control over Satan and his angels and they can go only as far as God will allow them to go. Here in verse four of our study we see that God does not allow these locusts to HURT the trees, the grass of the earth, nor any green thing.

Question: Since God, in no uncertain terms, commands Satan and his hosts not to hurt any green things, why then do we read in Revelation 8:7 that a third part of all green grass was burnt up?

Revelation 8:7 - ¶The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

It does sound very contradictory, but of course we know that can't be. When God states that the third part of the trees, along with the third part of green grass was burnt up, we have to first stop and realize that the term third part refers to the true Word of Christ (His Gospel) and at the same time speaks of all true Christians. Please see chapter twelve of this study. Therefore if a third part of grass, trees, waters, rivers, oceans, etc. are destroyed, we know that it can only be the silencing of the preaching of the true Gospel. It can only mean the silencing of the public proclamation of Christ's words. This silencing will come in many different ways. The radio waves will not broadcast the truth. Television will not broadcast God's true Word. Congregations will no longer be providing their flocks with God's truth. On and on the sad story continues. This final worldwide silencing, hushing, or muting of the only means to salvation is expressed in Scripture as the destruction of the Third Part. When God commands Satan not to hurt any grass, green thing, or any tree, we can rejoice in that as true believers in Christ, our eternal salvation is sealed and the

gates of hell can never prevent us from inheriting our eternal future in God's heavenly kingdom. Yes, the third part can and will be burnt up or silenced for a "little season," but it can never be hurt in the sense of spiritual and eternal destruction.

LOCUSTS COMMANDED: HURT NOT ALL

God does indeed restrain these locusts from hurting any of the trees, grass, or any green thing. This word hurt, as it is applied in this verse and others, carries with it a definite spiritual implication. It can be defined in Scripture as meaning: **not to do spiritual harm**.

Revelation 2:11 gives us a clear understanding of the word hurt:

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the **second death**."

This Greek word translated as hurt is the same Greek word used in Revelation 9:4 of our study. To have victory in Christ guarantees us that we will not be hurt of the second death. And what did we say the second death represented? It is simply outer darkness but not annihilation. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the **second death** hath no power," (**Revelation 20:6**).

Revelation 20:13-14 -

13 - And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and earth and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 - **And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.**

The second death then is clearly the eternal condition of those who do not partake of the first resurrection. That is, those lost souls who do not experience the resurrection of their spirits; the experience of becoming a new creature in Christ. They do not experience the miracle of being made spiritually alive in Christ, **1 Corinthians 15:22**. They do not partake of the wonders of being made "born again" by the Spirit of God (John 3:3, 7) and reigning with Him forever. The second death is undoubtedly eternal hell.

At the sounding of the fifth trumpet, Satan and his angels go forth throughout the earth for the purpose of deceiving the nations (cf., Revelation 20:8). All those who do not truly know Christ at that time will remain subject to this global deception. Those who are truly redeemed by the blood of Christ will not be deceived by this onslaught, for God has promised His people that nothing by any means shall hurt them, **Mark 16:18**. He also says, concerning the subtle deception of this great tribulation: "...if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." But of course God's elect cannot be deceived by this spiritual deception brought on by false doctrines. This is virtually impossible, because God has sealed His people against all the works of Satan. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all

which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day," John 6:39. God has commanded Satan and his fallen angels not to hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree.

GRASS, GREEN THINGS, AND TREES

Thus far in chapter nine of the Book of Revelation God has been revealing His truth through the use of symbols. All of this highly symbolic language can only be accurately interpreted by letting God define His own terms within the pages of Scripture. There is only one way to interpret Scripture, and this is by letter Scripture define itself. In verse four of our study God is commanding Satan and his hosts not to hurt the grass, trees, or any green thing. As we saw, hurt in many cases carries the meaning of the Second Death; that is to be spiritually condemned to outer darkness. God calls for the locusts to hurt ONLY those who do not have the seal of God in their foreheads. Immediately we should realize that the context is in reference to human souls, and not literal grass and green trees. These are all people that are in view here. God clearly makes a distinction between two types of people: One - those who do not have the "mark of God" in their foreheads, whom he commands the locusts to "hurt." Then there are the others. Two - Those people whom God commands the locusts not to hurt. These are the true followers of Jesus Christ, the true church represented by the terms or synonyms green, grass, and trees. These two bodies of people (one spiritual, the other worldly) are the wheat and tares spoken of in Scripture. In referring to them, Jesus states in Matthew 13:30:

"Let both grow together until the harvest [Judgment Day]; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Why does God use GREEN to symbolize the believers? Green represents life, both in a spiritual and a literal sense. The same testimony can be said of Old Testament Ephraim as is said of everyone who has truly been made a "new creature in Christ" - Hosea 14:8 - "Ephraim shall say, what have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found."

God refers to those of His household as a green olive tree, fair and of goodly fruit." Jeremiah 11:16. A similar statement is found in Psalms 52:8 - "But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever." Recall when God sent the plague of locusts upon Egypt. We know that the plague of locusts was indeed a historic parable, but this event foreshadowed and pointed to a specific and spiritual truth. In this case the plague of locusts was a small scale picture of God's spiritual judgment at the end of time. We are repeating ourselves to a certain extent in these studies because the point needs to be driven home and made clear. We will once more quote from Exodus 10:15 dealing with the ancient Egyptian plague of locusts.

"For they [the locusts] covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which

the hail had left; and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the fields, through all the land of Egypt.”

What a terrible picture that is presented here. We are warned and commanded throughout Scripture that when we see this abomination that is making the church desolate (scripturally called “The Abomination of Desolation,” we are to flee [Matthew 24:16] or “come out of her my people,” [Revelation 18:4]). Daniel 9:27, in referring to this time declares that Satan will make the church desolate by the overspreading of abominations. This will continue, as Daniel declares: until “...the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” Yes, God is warning man, even back in the Old Testament Book of Daniel, that there is coming a time in which Satan would be allowed to deceive all unbelievers within the corporate church (including the world), even desecrating the true church itself, for a given time. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the establishment and completeness of Christ’s true Church. Nevertheless, the true doctrines of salvation through Christ will be hushed, choked off, and silenced to such a high degree that the true vine of God will have been stripped away by these locusts. The grass, green things, and trees (characterized by true believers) will have been eaten up as Joel chapter one tells us.

In the Exodus chapter ten allegory of the Great Tribulation, we find that the locusts have eaten all the herbs of the field; they have eaten all the fruit of the trees, and all the green things. Let us first look at the biblical definition of herb. It comes from the Hebrew word “eh’-seb” and means: to glisten or to be green; as the grass or any tender shoot. This word is translated seventeen times in the Old Testament as herb and sixteen times it is translated as grass. We see then that herbs do indeed correlate to green things, and fruit of the trees all set forth and designate a picture of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the physical sense, green, grass, herbs, and fruit represent life. If they are withered, they no longer have life. Likewise, one spiritually has life eternal through the Gospel of Christ. He then has true life and produces spiritual fruit. If Christ’s Gospel is cut off, His Word withers as the literal grass, herbs, and trees. It is then impossible to bring forth fruit. Such will be the case during the Great Tribulation.

“And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the first,” Matthew 3:10.

Matthew 7:15-17, 20 -

15 - Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 - Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 - Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

20 - Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

In the Book of **Jude** we also read of these false prophets. In **verse twelve** we read: “Those are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, **without fruit, twice dead** , plucked up by the roots.”

The above passage in Jude is stating that these false prophets are **twice dead**. As we said earlier in this study, to be twice dead is in reference to the second death. To be twice dead is to partake of the second death; to be spiritually consigned to hell.

Romans 6:22 - But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your **fruit unto holiness**, and the end everlasting life.

Romans 7:4 - Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the **body of Christ**; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, **that we should bring forth fruit unto God**.

The reason God commands these locusts of Revelation chapter nine not to hurt any green thing, nor the grass of the earth, nor any tree is because these are all terms or synonyms used in reference to the true Christian. The true believers cannot be deceived (hurt) by these locusts. The following are randomly chosen verses to further substantiate the claim that the Bible does indeed associate the followers of Christ with trees, grass, and green things:

Jeremiah 17:7-8-

7 - Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

8 - For he shall be as a **tree planted by the waters**, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but **her leaf shall be green**; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, **neither shall cease from yielding fruit**.

Isaiah 61:1-3 -

1 - ¶The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 - To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 - To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called **trees of righteousness**, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Isaiah 55:12 -

12 - For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Ezekiel 47:12 -

12 - And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

SERVANTS OF GOD SEALED BEFORE SATAN IS LOOSED

The distinction has already been made between the grass, green things, and trees as opposed to “those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads,” Revelation 9:4. These two types of people represent all of humanity; those who are truly saved and those who are not. Of those who are not saved, God says of them: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do..,” (John 8:44). However, God says of those who do belong to Him: “All that the father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,” (John 6:37). These two classes of people represent all peoples of the world. The difference being that most are still spiritually dead in their sins and trespasses, thus remaining in bondage to Satan, while few in comparison have undergone a spiritual conversion and have had their sins forgiven. The latter are the trees, grass of the earth, and green things in opposition to those men that “have not” the seal of God in their foreheads. It is these people without the seal of God whom God pronounces judgment on, by allowing them to be deceived (hurt) by Satan and his host.

In 2 Timothy 2:19 God defines in a very direct manner His definition of His “seal.” “Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

So then, the “Seal of God” is indeed a spiritual seal; it is marked by those who belong to God, and in belonging to God we must strive to depart from sin. This then is the true child of God; this is he who has the seal of God in his forehead. In the Greek, this word seal means: a stamp or mark, and can be used literally or figuratively. Consider the following verse:

The Inkhorn of Sealed Faith

Ezekiel 9:3 -

3 - And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side;

4 - And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a **mark** upon the **foreheads** of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

Jerusalem is in view in the above passages of Ezekiel chapter nine. Has anyone during Old Testament days actually gone throughout Jerusalem with a cup full of ink (inkhorn) and placed a mark upon the foreheads of all those who sigh and mourn due to all of the abominations that were performed within the midst of this city? An Impossible task because this is highly spiritual language spoken here. The only one worthy of this task is the Lord Jesus Christ and He it is who places this **mark** or **eternal SEAL** upon the heads of all believers. Yes, true believers will mourn at the abominations that be done in the midst of this spiritual city of Jerusalem - God's global and corporate church. Christ is the one clothed with linen, which had the writer's **inkhorn** by his side. Christ is the **author** and finisher of our faith (**Hebrews 12:2**). Our Lord is the author of His Word from Genesis to Revelation and He is the One who placed the inkhorn in the hands of the prophets and inspired them to write His precise words.

Clearly a spiritual mark is given to those who believe and obey the Gospel of Christ. "And I looked, and, lo, a lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his father's name written in their foreheads," **Revelation 14:1**. The redeemed of the Lord throughout history are signified by the invisible and spiritual seal or mark that God has stamped upon their foreheads.

Revelation 22:3-4 -

3 - And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4 - And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

A Brief Look at Revelation 7:1-3

1- ¶And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 - And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to **hurt** the earth and the sea,

3 - Saying, **Hurt not** the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

It is necessary at this time to point out the fact that God does indeed lift His Holy Spirit from restraining Satan and his hosts at the time of this Great Tribulation. Let us examine verse one of the above Revelation chapter seven. Here we read of four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four WINDS of the earth. To hold the four winds of the earth means to hold back. This word hold comes from a Greek word meaning to retain or to take. This word is used in conjunction with all

three definitions: hold, take, and retain. For example, we read in John 20:23 - "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain [meaning to hold back or to take back], they are retained."

This word is also used in meaning to take or to lay hold of, as we see in the following verses:

"And consulted that they might take [same Greek word meaning "to hold back" or "to retain"] Jesus by subtilty, and kill him," (Matthew 26:4).

"And Jesus said unto him, friend, wherefore art thou come? Then they came, and laid hands of Jesus, and took [same word as retain or hold back] him," (Matthew 26:50).

"But Jesus took [same word as retain or hold back] him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose," (Mark 9:27).

In returning to verse one of Revelation chapter seven, we see the four winds of the earth being held back. This word wind is rooted from the Greek word "ah-ayr," which we saw in verse two of our study means to breathe or to blow. In Revelation 9:2 this same word is translated as air, and we saw that this was in reference to the air (a synonym for the Gospel of Christ) being darkened. Now we see this same word being applied to WIND. Wind and air are both related in the Greek language as well as in their figurative usage. What does the wind signify throughout Scripture? It testifies to the Holy Spirit of God. We read of the Holy Spirit being likened to the wind in the following verses:

John 3:8 -

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Acts 2:1-4 -

- 1 - ¶And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
- 2 - And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
- 3 - And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
- 4 - And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

In Revelation chapter seven and verse one we have a picture of the Holy Spirit (represented by the four winds) being held back; that it should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. The earth and the sea would consist of every square inch of the earth itself. The number four in Scripture usually symbolizes universality; the state of being measureless or boundless. For example: "And they shall come from the EAST, and from the WEST, and from the NORTH, and from the SOUTH, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God," Luke 13:29. Also consider Matthew 24:31: "And he

shall send his angels with a great sound of the trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the FOUR winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” The number four in Scripture can and does in many places signify universality. In Revelation chapter seven, God is commanding His angels to hold back His Spirit from blowing upon the earth. It is the time of Great Tribulation! When has God ever held back His Holy Spirit from off the face of this earth? As far back as **Genesis 1:2** we find God’s Spirit upon the earth. “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Are we to understand that God’s Spirit will be lifted out of the way as II Thessalonians 2:7 declares, or does this mean that it is totally removed from the earth? Either way, it will be a time of great tribulation.

In verses two and three of Revelation chapter seven we read:

2 - And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 - Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Scripture certainly seems to indicate that this great spiritual tribulation cannot commence until God’s elect have first all been brought into the kingdom of God’s salvation.

END OF CHAPTER FOUR