

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Week 241 – Revelation 8:10-9:19

Day 1201: Revelation 8:10-13**Verse 10**

Καὶ ὁ τρίτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀστὴρ μέγας καιόμενος ὡς λαμπάς, καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν ποταμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων.

ἔπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s πιπτω fall
ἀστὴρ, ερος m star
καιω see v.8
λαμπας, αδος f lamp, lantern

"The figure is that of a great meteorite set afire as it plunges through the earth's atmosphere. Like the blood-red storm and the burning mountain, it is a symbol of divine visitation." Mounce.

ποταμος, ου m river, stream
πηγη, ης f spring, fountain; well
ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

Verse 11

καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἀστέρος λέγεται ὁ Ἄψινθος. καὶ ἐγένετο τὸ τρίτον τῶν ὑδάτων εἰς ἄψινθον, καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀπέθανον ἐκ τῶν ὑδάτων, ὅτι ἐπικράνησαν.

ὄνομα, τος n name
ἄψινθος, ου m & f wormwood

A plant with a strong and bitter taste. For the metaphorical use of this name cf. Prov 5:3-4; Lam 3:19; Jer 9:15; 23:15 – the latter two passages speak of drinking wormwood as God's punishment on his people.

ἀπέθανον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl
ἀποθνησκω die
ἐπικράνησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
πικραίνω make bitter; pass. become bitter

"This contamination of the fresh water supply recalls the first Egyptian plague in which the water was turned to blood (Ex 7:20)." Mounce.

Verse 12

Καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ἐπλήγη τὸ τρίτον τοῦ ἡλίου καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῆς σελήνης καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀστέρων, ἵνα σκοτισθῇ τὸ τρίτον αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα μὴ φάνη τὸ τρίτον αὐτῆς, καὶ ἡ νύξ ὁμοίως.

τεταρτος, η, ον fourth

ἐπλήγη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s πλησσω
strike, smite
ἡλιος, ου m the sun
σεληνη, ης f moon
σκοτισθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s
σκοτιζομαι be or become darkened
φάνη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s φαινω
shine, give light
νύξ, νυκτος f night
ὁμοίως likewise, in the same way

"The scene recalls the ninth Egyptian plague with its thick darkness which spread over the land for a period of three days (Ex 10:21-23). Constant allusion to the Egyptian plagues is a way of saying that in the last days God will again bring punishment upon those hostile powers which oppress his people. They are the prelude to the great and final Exodus in which the church is taken out of the world and enters into the eternal presence of God." Mounce.

Verse 13

Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἤκουσα ἑνὸς ἀετοῦ πετομένου ἐν μεσουρανήματι λέγοντος φωνῇ μεγάλῃ, Οὐαὶ οὐαὶ οὐαὶ τοῖς κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐκ τῶν λοιπῶν φωνῶν τῆς σάλπιγγος τῶν τριῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν μελλόντων σαλπίζειν.

"Verse 13 serves as a transition between the four plagues brought by God upon nature to lead man to repentance and the subsequent demonic woes in which man will be directly subject to the forces of the abyss." Mounce.

εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω
see
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, a
ἀετος, ου m eagle, vulture

The message of doom is announced by a bird of prey, cf. 19:17-18. Witherington suggests that the bird spoken of here may be a vulture, as in Luke 17:37; cf. also Hosea 8:1.

πετομαι fly
μεσουρανημα, τος n mid-heaven, high in the sky
οὐαὶ interj. woe! how horrible it will be!

The threefold 'woe' corresponds with the three last trumpets.

κατοικεω live, settle, inhabit
λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other
τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
μελλω (before an infin) be going, be about

Witherington comments, "Here and in the rest of these plagues John has taken some of his audience's worst fears and experiences of wars and natural disasters and 'blown them into apocalyptic proportions, and cast them in biblically allusive terms. The point is not to predict a series of events. The point is to evoke the meaning of divine judgment which is impending on the sinful world.' [Bauckham]"

Day 1202: Revelation 9:1-6

Verse 1

Καὶ ὁ πέμπτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ εἶδον ἀστέρα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεπτωκότα εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἡ κλεῖς τοῦ φρέατος τῆς ἀβύσσου.

πέμπτος, η, ον fifth
πεπτωκότα Verb, perf act ptc, m acc s & n
nom/acc pl πλιτω fall

Cf. Is 14:12; Lk 10:18.

ἐδόθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s διδωμι
κλεῖς, εἶδος f key
φρεαρ, ατος n well, pit
ἀβυσσος, ου f abyss, world of dead

Cf. 20:1. Many see this as a reference to a fallen angel or Satan, but Mounce argues that it is more likely to be a divine agent, an angel sent to open up the abyss.

Verse 2

καὶ ἤνοιξεν τὸ φρέαρ τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ ἀνέβη καπνὸς ἐκ τοῦ φρέατος ὡς καπνὸς καμίνου μεγάλης, καὶ ἐσκοτώθη ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ὁ ἄηρ ἐκ τοῦ καπνοῦ τοῦ φρέατος.

ἀνοιγω open
ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαινω
go up, ascend
καπνος, ου m smoke
καμινος, ου f furnace
μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
ἐσκοτώθη see 8:12
ἥλιος, ου m see 8:12
ἄηρ, ερος m air, space

Verse 3

καὶ ἐκ τοῦ καπνοῦ ἐξηλθον ἀκρίδες εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐταῖς ἐξουσία ὡς ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν οἱ σκορπίοι τῆς γῆς.

ἀκρις, ιδος f locust, grasshopper

Cf. Ex. 10:1-20; Joel 1:2-2:11.

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, power
σκορπιος, ου m scorpion

Verse 4

καὶ ἐρρέθη αὐταῖς ἵνα μὴ ἀδικήσουσιν τὸν χόρτον τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ πᾶν χλωρὸν οὐδὲ πᾶν δένδρον, εἰ μὴ τοὺς ἄνθρωπους οἵτινες οὐκ ἔχουσι τὴν σφραγίδα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν μετωπῶν.

ἐρρέθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s λεγω

This and ἐδοθη in the previous and following verse "suggests that this plague, even though demonic, is under the sovereign control of God." Mounce.

ἀδικεω harm
χορτος, ου m grass, vegetation, shoot
χλωρος, α, ον green, green plant
δένδρον, ου n tree
οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἡτις, ὁ
τι who, which
σφραγίς, ιδος f seal, mark
μετωπον, ου n forehead

"As the children of Israel were protected from the plagues which fell upon the Egyptians (Ex 8:22; 9:4,26; 10:23; 11:7), so also will the new Israel escape the torments which are to arise from the abyss." Mounce.

Verse 5

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἵνα μὴ ἀποκτείνωσιν αὐτούς, ἀλλ' ἵνα βασανισθῶσιν μῆνας πέντε· καὶ ὁ βασανισμὸς αὐτῶν ὡς βασανισμὸς σκορπίου, ὅταν παῖση ἄνθρωπον.

ἀποκτενω kill, put to death
βασανισθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl
βασανιζω torment
μην, μηνος m month
πεντε (indeclinable) five

Perhaps corresponding to the life-cycle of the locust. The picture is one of limited or constrained punishment (cf. the use elsewhere in Revelation of βασανιζω and βασανισμος).

βασανισμος, ου m torture, torment
ὅταν when
παιω strike, sting

Verse 6

καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ζητήσουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν θάνατον καὶ οὐ μὴ εὕρῃσουσιν αὐτόν, καὶ ἐπιθυμήσουσιν ἀποθανεῖν καὶ φεύγει ὁ θάνατος ἀπ' αὐτῶν.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those
ζητεω seek, look for
θανατος, ου m death
εὕρισκω find
ἐπιθυμεω long for, desire
ἀποθνησκω die

φευγω flee

"What a dramatic contrast to Paul's desire "to depart and be with Christ" (Phil 1:23)! For one, death leads to eternal blessing; for the other, it is an 'escape' from torment on earth to torture in the lake of fire." Mounce.

Day 1203: Revelation 9:7-12

Verse 7

Καὶ τὰ ὁμοιωματα τῶν ἀκρίδων ὅμοια ἵπποις ἠτοιμασμένοις εἰς πόλεμον, καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν ὡς στεφάνοι ὅμοιοι χρυσῷ, καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ὡς πρόσωπα ἀνθρώπων,

ὁμοίωμα, τος n likeness

ἀκρις, ἰδος f see v.3

ὅμοιος, α, ον like

ἵππος, ου f horse

Cf. Joel 2:4.

ἠτοιμασμένοις Verb, perf pass ptc, m & n
dat pl ἑτοιμαζω prepare, make ready
πολεμος, ου m war, battle
κεφαλή, ης f head
στεφανος, ου m wreath, crown
χρυσος, ου m gold

"They possess power to carry through their mission to a victorious end." Mounce.

προσωπον, ου n face

Verse 8

καὶ εἶχον τρίχας ὡς τρίχας γυναικῶν, καὶ οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτῶν ὡς λεόντων ἦσαν,

τρίχας Noun, acc pl θριξ, τριχος f hair
γυνη, αικος f woman

Maybe a picture of vitality.

ὀδους, ὀδοντος m tooth

λεων, οντος m lion

Cf. Joel 1:6.

Verse 9

καὶ εἶχον θωρακας ὡς θωρακας σιδηροῦς, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ τῶν πτερύγων αὐτῶν ὡς φωνὴ ἀρμάτων ἵππων πολλῶν τρεχόντων εἰς πόλεμον.

θωραξ, ακος m breastplate, chest

σιδηρους, α, ουν made of iron

They are invulnerable.

πτερυξ, υγος f wing

άρμα, τος n chariot

τρεχω run, exert oneself

πολεμος, ου m see v.7

Verse 10

καὶ ἔχουσιν οὐράς ὁμοίας σκορπίοις καὶ κέντρα, καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν ἡ ἔξουσία αὐτῶν ἀδικῆσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους μῆνας πέντε.

οὔρα, ας f tail

κεντρον, ου n sting, goad

ἐξουσια, ας f see v.3

ἀδικεω see v.4

μην, μηνος m see v.5

Verse 11

ἔχουσιν ἐπ' αὐτῶν βασιλέα τὸν ἄγγελον τῆς ἀβύσσου· ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστί Ἀβαδδων καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ ὄνομα ἔχει Ἀπολλύων.

βασιλέα Noun, acc s βασιλευς, εως m
king

Mounce (unlike Witherington) argues that this is not the same as the angel that unlocked the Abyss. This is a demonic leader.

Ἑβραϊστί in Hebrew or Aramaic

Ἀβαδδων m Abaddon, Destroyer

(Hebrew name of a demon transliterated into Greek)

Cf. Job 31:12; 28:22; Ps 88:11; Prov 15:11.

Witherington argues that this "is just another name for Hades, the land of the dead."

Ἑλληνικος, η, ον Greek (ἐν τῇ Ἑ. in Greek)

Ἀπολλυων, ονος m Destroyer

"Many commentators feel that the verse contains a derogatory reference to the Greek god Apollo and to those emperors who claimed a special relationship with him. To name the king of the underworld Apollyon would be a cryptic way of saying that an emperor such as Domitian who liked to be regarded as Apollo incarnate was in reality a manifestation of the powers of the underworld... The allusion is strengthened by the observation that the locust was one of the symbols of the god Apollo. Beasley-Murray says that if John had in mind that both Caligula and Nero aped the deity of Apollo, and Domitian claimed to be his incarnation, 'His last word about the fifth trumpet was a master stroke of irony: the destructive host of hell had as its king the emperor of Rome.'" Mounce. Witherington adds that the symbol for Apollo was the locust.

Verse 12

Ἡ οὐαὶ ἡ μία ἀπῆλθεν· ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται ἔτι δύο οὐαὶ μετὰ ταῦτα.

οὐαὶ see 8:13

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

ἔτι still, yet

Day 1204: Revelation 9:13-16

Verse 13

Καὶ ὁ ἕκτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισεν· καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν μίαν ἐκ τῶν [τεσσάρων] κεράτων τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ χρυσοῦ τοῦ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ,

ἕκτος, η, ον sixth
τεσσαρες neut τεσσαρα gen τεσσαρων
four

Textual evidence is evenly divided for the inclusion and omission of τεσσαρων.

κερας, ατος n horn
θυσιαστηριον, ου n altar

Mounce argues that the voice comes not from the horn(s) but from the altar itself.

χρυσους, η, ουν made of gold, golden
ἐνώπιον prep with gen before

"The voice could be that of the angel-priest of 8:3-5 who presented the prayers of the saints to God upon the golden altar. Or it could be the prayers themselves with their unified concern for vindication (cf. 6:9). In either case John is recalling the fundamental truth that the prayers of God's people play an active role in the eschatological drama." Mounce.

Verse 14

λέγοντα τῷ ἕκτῳ ἀγγέλῳ, ὁ ἔχων τὴν σάλπιγγα, Λῦσον τοὺς τέσσαρας ἀγγέλους τοὺς δεδεμένους ἐπὶ τῷ ποταμῷ τῷ μεγάλῳ Εὐφράτῃ.

ἕκτος, η, ον sixth
σαλπιξ, ιγγος f trumpet
λυω loose, untie, release, set free

There is considerable speculation concerning the identity of these angels. Mounce is of the view that they "appear to be in charge of the limitless horde of demonic horsemen who ride across the pagan world spreading terror and death. They correspond to the king of the locusts in 9:11 and like him seem to disappear into the demonic forces they release."

δεδεμένους Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc pl
δεω bind, tie
ποταμος, ου m river, stream

The Euphrates was a natural boundary between Israel and her enemies (cf. Gen 15:18; Deut 11:24; Josh 1:4; Is 8:5-8) and also later of the Roman Empire. So Witherington comments, "The location of these angels is significant, for not only were the Romans frightened of the Parthian hordes that might charge out of the east, but the Jews were as well, for their captors – both Babylonians and Assyrians – had come from beyond the Euphrates."

Verse 15

καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοίμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν καὶ ἡμέραν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἐνιαυτόν, ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

ἐλύθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl λυω
ἠτοίμασμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl
ἔτοιμαζω prepare
ώρα, ας f hour, moment
μην, μηνος m month
ἐνιαυτος, ου m year

The angels have been prepared for this specific moment. "All the forces of history are under the sovereign control of God. He is the Almighty One (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 19:15; etc.)." Mounce.

ἀποκτείνω kill, put to death
τρίτος, η, ον third

Verse 16

καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν στρατευμάτων τοῦ ἵππικοῦ δισμυριάδες μυριάδων· ἤκουσα τὸν ἀριθμὸν αὐτῶν.

ἀριθμος, ου m number, total
στρατευμα, τος n troops, soldiers, army
ἵππικον, ου n cavalry, horsemen
δισμυριας, αδος f twenty thousand
μυριας, αδος f group of ten thousand

200 million! An immense force which no-one can escape. Witherington comments, "probably a larger number than the entire population of those who lived in the Mediterranean crescent!"

Day 1205: Revelation 9:17-19**Verse 17**

καὶ οὕτως εἶδον τοὺς ἵππους ἐν τῇ ὄρασει
καὶ τοὺς καθημένους ἐπ' αὐτῶν, ἔχοντας
θωρακας πυρίνους καὶ ὑακινθίνους καὶ
θειωδεις· καὶ αἱ κεφαλαὶ τῶν ἵππων ὡς
κεφαλαὶ λεόντων, καὶ ἐκ τῶν στομάτων
αὐτῶν ἐκπορεύεται πῦρ καὶ καπνὸς καὶ
θειὸν.

ἵππος, ου f horse
ὄρασις, εως f vision
καθημαι sit, sit down, live
θωραξ, ακος m breastplate, chest
πυρινος, η, ον fiery red, the colour of fire
ὑακινθινος, ου m jacinth, hyacinth (a
precious stone, perhaps blue in colour)
θειωδης, ες sulphur-yellow

The colours match the fire, smoke and
brimstone from the mouths of the horses.

κεφαλη, ης f head
λεων, οντος m lion
στομα, τος n mouth
ἐκπορευομαι go or come out
πυρ, ος n fire
καπνος, ου m smoke
θειον, ου n sulphur, brimstone

A picture of demonic forces.

Verse 18

ἀπὸ τῶν τριῶν πληγῶν τούτων
ἀπεκτάνθησαν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρωπων,
ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ τοῦ καπνοῦ καὶ τοῦ
θείου τοῦ ἐκπορευομένου ἐκ τῶν
στομάτων αὐτῶν.

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
πληγη, ης f plague

The fire, smoke and brimstone are each
separate plagues.

ἀπεκτάνθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
ἀποκτενω

Verse 19

ἡ γὰρ ἐξουσία τῶν ἵππων ἐν τῷ στόματι
αὐτῶν ἐστὶν καὶ ἐν ταῖς οὐραῖς αὐτῶν· αἱ
γὰρ οὐραὶ αὐτῶν ὅμοιαι ὄφεσιν, ἔχουσαι
κεφαλάς, καὶ ἐν αὐταῖς ἀδικοῦσιν.

ἐξουσια, ας f power
οὔρα, ας f tail
ὁμοιος, α, ον like, of the same kind as
ὄφις, εως m snake, serpent

Perhaps another way of indicating their
demonic nature.

ἔχουσαι Verb, pres act ptc, f nom pl ἔχω
κεφαλη, ης f head
ἀδικεω harm

Witherington comments, "Again the author is not describing what will happen but using images to create a sense of the horrible nature of undergoing God's wrath. In 12:9 Satan is called the old serpent, which is probably an indication of the demonic nature of these creatures. The point is that God allows evil but uses it for his own just purposes – he makes the wrath of even Satan serve Him. That the horses are harmful before and behind may also be reminiscent of the Parthians, who shot both going forward and turning around facing backward."