

Four Angels Bound at the Euphrates

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The Book of Revelation has been interpreted many times by many people, and some have concluded that the prophecies in this book are focused primarily on mankind. However, with a better understanding of the type of figurative language Almighty God uses in His Word it will become apparent that the main focus is on the judgment of Satan, and the fallen host who follow his evil ways. In many cases, a literal interpretation of these prophecies detracts from a correct understanding of activities that will occur in the spirit realm. To emphasize this truth, one section of Revelation will be examined more closely in this study.

Then the sixth angel sounded: And I (John) heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God (Almighty), ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 'Release the four angels who are **bound at the great river Euphrates**' (Rev. 9:13-14; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

The Apostle John saw visions and heard activities that were occurring in the spirit realm (Rev. 1:10). Therefore, the four angels who were bound at the great river Euphrates were in that same spirit realm. John was not seeing these angels on earth because spirit-beings cannot be "bound" at a physical location or by physical means. Another spirit-being was also "bound" and the location was clearly in the spirit realm.

And he (an angel) seized (Gk. 2902, kratéō, to take hold of by one having authority) the dragon (Gk. 1404, drákōn; dragon, large serpent, sea monster), the ancient serpent, who is the Devil

(Gk. 1228, the Slanderer) and Satan (Gk. 4567, the Adversary), and bound him a thousand years, ³ and he threw him into the abyss (Gk. 12, ábussos, abyss, an extremely deep or bottomless place - not a physical location) and closed it and sealed upon him that he would not still deceive the nations until the thousand years were completed. After these things it is necessary to unbind him for a short time (Rev. 20:2-3; RNT, Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In reality, many of the names applied to locations on this earth originated in the spirit realm. This concept should not be foreign to most people living in the Western world. For instance, when the New World was being colonized many towns and cities were named after their European counterparts. Examples of this include Warsaw, Indiana, U.S.A. named after Warsaw, Poland and London, Ontario, Canada named after London, England. Therefore, in the early days of man's sojourn on this earth, some of the landmarks were named after their spiritual counterparts in the spirit realm. The Euphrates River is an example of this. It exists in a different form in the spirit realm and is described very early in scripture.

The name of the third river is Hiddekel (Tigris); it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria (Ashshur). **The fourth river is the Euphrates** (Gen. 2:14; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In the spirit realm, the Euphrates is a demarcation point between the four quadrants that comprise the authorities established by Almighty God in "the heavens." These four quadrants are described using God's figurative language as "four winds".

Against Elam I (the Lord) will bring **the four winds from the four quarters of heaven...**

(Jer. 49:36a; cf. Dan. 7:2; 8:8; 11:4; Mt. 24:31; emphasis added).

Once the demarcation established by the Euphrates is removed, rebellious members of the spirit host can cross over that boundary and create serious problems, if Almighty God allows them to (Job 38:10-11). This is one of the reasons it is against the Law of Almighty God to remove a neighbor's boundary marker (Dt. 19:14; 27:17). In The Book of Revelation, God does allow one demarcation to be interrupted and a battle in the spirit realm ensues.

Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. ¹³And I (John) saw (in the spirit) three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon (symbol of Satan), out of the mouth of the beast (symbol of Satan's governing authorities, inclusive of its armies), and out of the mouth of the false prophet (symbol of Satan's false religious systems). ¹⁴For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:12-14; Ed. notes in parentheses).

It is illogical to apply this scenario to the physical realm because human armies have not been withheld from conquests due to rivers being in their way. The Roman Empire could not have been built if this was the case, and certainly no modern-day army would be prevented from invading an enemy territory because it couldn't cross a river. Instead, this describes a future battle that will take place between the armies of Satan and the armies of Jesus Christ. Satan's armies are synonymous with spiritual Babylon, which is a common metaphor throughout The Book of Revelation (Rev. 14:8).

Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And **great Babylon was remembered** before God, **to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His** (God's) **wrath** (Rev. 16:19; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

It has been speculated that the battle described in this last scripture involves human armies against the armies that God unleashes upon sinful mankind. Supposedly, because the Apostle John did not know how to describe the modern military equipment he was seeing in the spirit (cf. Re. 1:10), he described it using terminology he was familiar with. This is incorrect. What he saw in the spirit, and then described, were the armies of Satan which do not resemble anything in the human realm.

Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million, and I heard the number of them. ¹⁷And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone (Rev. 9:16-17).

Satan and his forces are the primary reason behind the evil that has occurred throughout man's history. Therefore, the judgments that are pictured throughout the Book of Revelation are against those forces (Eph. 6:12). In the following scripture, human beings that have died as a direct result of Satan's actions, are pictured asking God how much longer will it be before their deaths are avenged? It is very important to note that no human being who is alive when Christ returns can be considered responsible for the death of martyrs who were killed hundreds or thousands of years earlier. Therefore, this scripture can only be applied to Satan and the fallen host's judgment.

And they (those slain for obedience to God's word) cried with a loud voice (collectively), saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those **who dwell on the earth**?' (Rev. 6:10; Ed. notes in parentheses)

As the phrase "those who dwell on the earth" can refer to Satan and the fallen host, the use of the word "earth" needs to be examined in its proper context to understand whether it should be applied to the realm of the fallen host, or to physical human beings. Those who dwell on the earth are also described as "kings of the earth, princes, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, and the mighty men." This terminology is throughout scripture and it often refers to the leadership of the fallen host. As the majority of mankind does not know who Almighty God is or the true identity of His son, Jesus Christ, the next section of scripture can only apply to Satan and the demons who do know these things (Jas. 2:19).

Why do the nations (Gentiles; symbolic of the unclean, and therefore representative of nations within the fallen host) rage, and the *people (see note on "citizens" below) plot a vain thing? ² **The kings of the earth** set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord (God Almighty) and against His Anointed (Messiah), saying, ³ 'Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us' (Ps. 2:1-3; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Mankind today, as a whole, is not concerned about whether Almighty God or Jesus Christ is going to rule over them, but the fallen host are, as the next scripture confirms.

But the *citizens (those who know who Christ is and reject him; primarily the fallen host) hated him (a nobleman typifying Christ), and sent a

delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man (Christ) to reign over us' (Lk. 19:14; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As Christ gave this parable and meant the word "citizens" to be inclusive of the fallen host, this same principle applies to the language found in the Book of Revelation. Even the word "man" is sometimes applied to spirit beings, including those within the fallen host as the next scripture confirms.

Those who see you (Satan in a future judgment) will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: '**Is this the man** who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, ¹⁷who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who would not release his prisoners (Isa. 14:16-17; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Christ and two angels that accompanied him were described as "men" when they visited Abraham.

So, he (Abraham) lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, (what appeared to be) three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground (Gen. 18:2; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Daniel described the spirit-being in one of his visions as "a certain man".

I (Daniel) lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, **a certain man** clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire (description of Christ; cf. Rev. 2:18; 19:12), his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color... (Dan. 10:5-6a; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Jesus Christ who, first and foremost is a spirit-being, is described as the Son of Man showing the close relationship between the spiritual and physical families. Also, an angel in the Book of Revelation described himself as being equal to the Apostle John when he stated the following.

Now I, John, saw and heard these things (future activities in the spirit realm). And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹Then he said to me, 'See that you do not do that. For **I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book.** (Instead) worship God (Almighty) (Rev. 22:8-9; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Therefore, depending on the context, prophecies can use words like "citizens", "men", "mankind", "kings", "rulers", etc. to describe spirit-beings in the realm of the fallen host. The next scripture confirms that God uses the word "rulers" to describe evil spirit-beings.

For we (human beings) do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, **against the rulers of the darkness of this age**, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Satan himself is described as a "prince" in Ephesians 2:2, and Christ states plainly that Satan is a "ruler".

Now is the judgment of this world; now **the ruler of this world** (Satan) will be cast out (Jn. 12:31; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

The word "fire" is used symbolically in the Book of Revelation to denote the Law/Word of Almighty God. Therefore, individuals can be

judged and found guilty of the death penalty if this "fire" comes upon them. In other words, the realization that they are now going to die as a result of their sins.

And he said: 'The Lord came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and came with ten thousands of saints; **from His right hand came a fiery law** for them (Dt. 33:2; emphasis added).

I (Paul) was alive once without (knowing) the law, but **when the commandment came, sin revived and I died** (Rom. 7:9; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Paul did not die at the very instant that he made the above statement, but he knew that without repentance and forgiveness for his sins he most certainly would die and have no hope of everlasting life. With this in mind, the spiritual army of two hundred million that had fire coming out of their mouths is describing the death of those who are unrepentant, but it is an assumption to limit the term "mankind" to physical human beings.

By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed – **by the fire and smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths** (Rev. 9:18; emphasis added).

Fire is associated with refining sinful individuals in the hope of rehabilitating them.

I (Christ) counsel you to **buy from me gold refined in the fire**, that you may be rich (spiritually speaking); and white garments (symbolic of righteous conduct), that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness (sinful behavior) may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve (clean out the sin), that you may see (clearly what you have

been doing contrary to God's word) (Rev. 3:18; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The main purpose for God's judgment is to rehabilitate those who are spiritually sick and, if it takes a period of time, God is more than willing to wait and work with those who need this treatment. More often than not, this process is very painful because the carnal mind resists correction.

Because the carnal mind (which the fallen host have) is enmity against (hostile toward) God; for it (the carnal mind) is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be (Rom. 8:7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Christ stated plainly that Satan has this mindset.

But he (Christ) turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You (Satan) are an offense to me, for (because) **you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men** (i.e. carnally minded)' (Mt. 16:23; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

If Satan is carnally-minded, which he is, then it should be no surprise that the entirety of the fallen host is the same. This means there is not much difference between mankind and the fallen host except in their composition. Therefore, the plagues that John saw in the spirit-realm are aimed at rehabilitating the fallen host. If it was God's intention to rehabilitate mankind, He could have accomplished that quite easily by now. However, by correctly understanding God's plan of salvation, as outlined in His Holy Day sequence, it is clear He had no intention of rehabilitating all of mankind in any one generation. Nor is it Almighty God's plan to rehabilitate just the one generation of mankind living at the time of Christ's return. Instead, the Book of Revelation is the starting point for the rehabilitation of Satan and the demons.

Therefore, this last scripture applies to the fallen host and the term "mankind" is used because it is dealing with their judgment, in the same way that Satan is described as a "man" at the point of his future judgment (Isa. 14:16).

But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons (reference to religious practices within the realm of the fallen host and obeying demons in positions of leadership over the others), and the idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; ²¹and they did not repent of their murders (Jn. 8:44) or their sorceries or their sexual immorality (Jude 6-7) or their thefts (Jn. 10:10) (Rev. 9:20-21; **see study: Copies of Things in the Heavens**; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As mentioned previously, most of the events associated with Christ's return are focused on the judgment of Satan and the fallen host. This is confirmed by examining the next scripture that describes those responsible for Christ's death, and it was not the physical human beings who carried out the sentence of the Roman authorities (Jn. 19:34).

Behold, he (Christ) is coming with clouds, and every eye (in the spirit realm) will see him, and **they also who pierced him** (Satan and the demons). And all the tribes of the earth (spirit realm) will mourn because of him. Even so, Amen (Rev. 1:7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Those who literally pierced Christ will still be in the grave when Christ returns, and they will remain there until the second resurrection. Therefore, the only ones who will be alive and aware they were responsible for Christ's death will be Satan and his demons, and they are trembling at the thought of their future

judgment (Jas. 2:19; cf. Mt. 8:29; Mk. 1:24; 5:7; Lk. 8:28).

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