

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 9

This chapter gives an account of the blowing of the fifth and sixth trumpets, and of the effects following upon them. The fifth angel blows his trumpet, and a star falls; the key of the bottomless pit is given to him, which being opened by it, out of it comes smoke to the darkening of the sun and air, and out of the smoke locusts, who have power like scorpions, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:1-3); whose power is restrained from using it to the hurt of the grass, or any green thing or tree, only of those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads; but are permitted, though not to kill men, yet to torment them five months, which is worse than death unto them, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:4-6). The shapes of these locusts, which are said to be like horses, are described by their heads, faces, hair, teeth, breastplates, wings, and tails, and are said to have a king over them, whose name is mentioned, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:7-11). The blowing of this trumpet brings on one of the woes mentioned in (~~REV~~ Revelation 8:13), and the two other follow, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:12). The sixth angel blows his trumpet, and a voice is heard from the horns of the altar, directed to the said angel, ordering him to loose four angels bound in the great river Euphrates, where they were prepared, for a determinate time, to slay the third part of men, and they were loosed accordingly, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:13-15). The number of the army, under these angels, is given, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:16), and the horses and horsemen are described; the riders by their breastplates of fire, jacinth, and brimstone; their horses' heads as heads of lions, fire, smoke, and brimstone, issuing out of their mouths, by which the third part of men are killed, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:17,18). The reason of this slaughter is, because they had power both in their mouth and tails, which latter were like serpents, and had heads, with which they did mischief, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:19); and yet such who were not killed by these plagues, but escaped, did not repent of their idolatry, murders, sorceries, fornication, and theft, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:20,21).

Ver. 1. *And the fifth angel sounded,* etc.] His trumpet:

and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: some take this star to be Jesus Christ, the bright and morning star; and understand by falling, no other than his descending from heaven to earth, in which sense the word is used in (^{Gen 14:10}Genesis 14:10); and that because he is not only said to have the keys of hell and death, (^{Rev 1:18}Revelation 1:18); but particularly the key of the bottomless pit, (^{Rev 20:1}Revelation 20:1); but then there is a wide difference in the use of the key by the star here, and the angel there, or between the opening of the pit, and letting out smoke and locusts, and the shutting it up, and Satan in it; the one well suits with Christ, the other not: nor is Satan here designed, as others think, who once was a bright star, and shone among the morning stars, but by sin fell from heaven, his first estate; and the fall of this Lucifer, son of the morning, was as lightning from heaven, (^{Luke 10:18}Luke 10:18). But then this was a matter over and past, and what was well known to John; nor did he need a vision to represent this unto him: nor is Arius intended, who lived before any of the trumpets were blown; nor the Emperor Valens, who fell from the heavenly doctrine of Christ's divinity into the Arian heresy, which he encouraged and defended; whereby Christ, the sun of righteousness, was obscured, and the air, the church, enlightened by Christ, was darkened; in whose time the locusts, the Goths and Vandals, infected with Arianism, greatly distressed the eastern Christians; but his reign was long before the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, which was after the year 600: wherefore by this star is meant antichrist; but whether the western or eastern antichrist, the pope of Rome, or Mahomet, is a question: some interpreters go one way, and some another: Brightman thinks both are intended, seeing they both are antichrist, and rose to the height of their power much about the same time; and the characters and circumstances in this vision very. Well agree with them both: what is objected to Mahomet is, that he never was a doctor or teacher in the church, or had any dignity in it, which a star in this book most commonly signifies, and therefore could not be said to fall from it; but this may be observed, that the Arabians, among whom he lived, had received the Christian religion before his time; that he himself was conversant with the Scriptures, as appears by his wretched perversion of them in his Alcoran; and certain it is, that his accomplices were such as had professed Christianity, as Sergius, a Nestorian of Constantinople, and John of Antioch, an Arian, and he himself set up for a prophet: others think the pope of Rome is meant by the star, seeing the bishops of that city had shone out in great light and purity of doctrine and practice formerly, but now about this time most sadly apostatized; they had been indeed gradually

declining for some time, but now they may be said openly to fall from heaven, when Phocas, who murdered his master, the Emperor Mauritius, and took the imperial crown to himself, gave to Pope Boniface the Third the title and power of universal bishop, about the year 606, which he and his successors exercised in a most haughty and tyrannical manner:

and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit; which shows that this could not be a star in a literal sense, but must design some man, or body of men, and agrees well with the popes of Rome: by “the bottomless pit” is meant hell, out of which the beast arose, and into which Satan will be cast, (~~66107~~ Revelation 11:7 17:8 20:3); and by “the key” is designed the power of it, of opening and shutting it, of saving persons from it, or of casting them into it; and which the popes of Rome take to themselves, even all power in heaven, earth, and hell, signified by their triple crown; and which they arrogate to such a degree as to say, that if the pope should send many thousands into hell, no one ought to say, what dost thou? This is a different key from what were given to Peter; he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, his pretended successors have the key of the bottomless pit; his were keys of knowledge, theirs of ignorance, and of the depths of Satan, let out of this bottomless pit, of which the antichristian religion, both Popish and Mahometan, consist; his were given by Christ, theirs by Phocas a murderer; or they had their power from the dragon, (~~66120~~ Revelation 13:2,4); from Satan himself, according to whose working and influence they come forth, though by divine permission.

Ver. 2. *And he opened the bottomless pit*, etc.] With the key that was given him; he made use of his universal power over all bishops and churches, enacted laws, issued out decrees, made articles of faith, and imposed them on men's consciences, and obliged all to submit to his hellish principles and practices; and this, as it may be applied to Mahomet, the eastern antichrist, may regard the publishing of his Alcoran, and obliging all his followers to receive it as the infallible word of God:

and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; the Complutensian edition reads, “of a burning furnace”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; which may design false doctrine, and superstitious worship, which sprung from the decrees of popes and councils, and the Alcoran of Mahomet: and smoke being a dark thin vapour, and very troublesome to the eyes and nose, and of a perishing nature, which soon vanishes away, these are fitly expressed by it; for they are the hidden things

of darkness, and the authors and abettors of them are such who darken counsel by words without knowledge; they are empty things, have no solidity and substance in them, are comparable to wood, hay, stubble, smoke, and wind; and are very troublesome and offensive to all enlightened persons, and who have the smell and savour of divine things; and will all perish with the using, being the doctrines and commandments of men, when the true Gospel is an everlasting one. Smoke sometimes designs great afflictions, punishments, and judgments upon men, (¹⁵¹⁷Genesis 15:17 ²³⁴⁶Isaiah 14:31); and here may represent those judgments, both spiritual and temporal, which the antichristian doctrine and worship, brought upon the world, and which have been manifest in all ages since.

And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit; Christ, the sun of righteousness, was greatly obscured by the Romish antichrist, by his false doctrine and worship, in his offices, merits, and grace, he taking upon him to be head of the church, the infallible interpreter of Scripture, and to give out pardons and indulgences; and particularly by the doctrines of merit, of works of supererogation, and of justification by works, etc. as he also was by Mahomet, who represented him only as a mere man, and exalted himself above him as a prophet; and by both were “the air”, the church which receives its light from Christ, darkened; or the Scriptures, which are the breath of God, are given by inspiration of him, these were most grievously beclouded, and most wretchedly perverted, both by the decrees of popes, and the Alcoran of Mahomet. And it is remarkable what Abulpharagius ^{f266}, an Arabic writer, reports, that in the seventeenth year of Heraclius the emperor, which was the year 627, and the fifth of the Hegira, in which year Mahomet began to plunder and make war; for in this year was his plundering excursion into Dumato'l Jundal, and the battle of Bani Lahyan, that half of the body of the sun was darkened; and the darkness remained from Tisrin the first, to the month Haziran, so that very little of its light appeared; which might portend that darkness he was introducing by his wretched religion. And frequently the sun and air have been darkened at noonday by the locusts, as Pliny ^{f267} relates; and of which we have had a late account from Transylvania; (see ¹⁸¹⁵Exodus 8:15).

Ver. 3. *And there came out of the smoke locusts the earth,* etc.] Not literally, for these locusts might not meddle with the grass, nor any green thing, or tree, as locusts do, only men, (¹⁹⁰⁴Revelation 9:4); and had a king over them, (¹⁹⁰⁴Revelation 9:11); which locusts have not, (²³⁸⁷Proverbs

30:27), though the allusion is to such, which spawn and breed in pits, and may be properly said to come out of them; hence in the Hebrew tongue they are called **ybg**, from **abg**, “a pit”, or “ditch”: nor are devils intended, though they may be compared to locusts for their original, hell, or the bottomless pit; and for their numbers, we read of a legion of them in one man; and for their hurtful and mischievous nature: nor are the Goths and Vandals designed; these, though they harassed some parts of the eastern empire, yet chiefly the western; besides, they appeared under the former trumpets: but these are to be understood of the western and eastern locusts, especially the latter. The western locusts are the clergy of the church of Rome, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, of every order; these were not instituted by Christ, but rose out of the bottomless pit, from the antichristian smoke of councils, decrees, and traditions; and are fitly compared to locusts for their number, which have been almost as the sand of the sea innumerable, and have spread themselves all over the nations of the earth, that have gone by the name of Christendom; and for their devouring nature, living in plenty and idleness, upon the fat of the land, in the best commons, glutting themselves with the spoils of others, devouring widows' houses, and impoverishing countries and kingdoms wherever they come. The eastern locusts are the Saracens, and who are chiefly designed; and who were to harass and distress the eastern empire, and prepare for its ruin, which is brought on under the next trumpet by the Turks. These are fitly signified by locusts, because the locusts generally come out of the eastern parts: it was an east wind which brought the plague of locusts into Egypt, (^{<D1013>}Exodus 10:13); and the children of the east, the Arabians, are compared to grasshoppers, or locusts, in (^{<D1012>}Judges 7:12); and one of the names of a locust is **hbra**, “Arbeh”, not much unlike in sound to an Arab. To which may be added, that it is a tradition of the Arabians, that there fell locusts into the hands of Mahomet, on whose backs and wings were written these words;

“we are the army of the most high God; we are the ninety and nine eggs, and if the hundred should be made perfect, we should consume the whole world, and whatever is in it.”

And it was a law established by Mahomet, ye shall not kill the locusts, for they are the army of the most high God; and the Mahometans fancy that the locusts were made of the same clay as Adam was: and besides the

tradition before mentioned, they say, that as Mahomet sat at table a locust fell, with these words on its back and wings;

“I am God, neither is there any Lord of the locusts besides me, who feed them; and when I please I send them to be food to the people, and when I please I send them to be a scourge unto them;”

hence his Saracens may well go by this name. Now these Saracens sprung up in the times of antichristian darkness, both Papal and Mahometan, and may be said to come out of the smoke of the bottomless pit; and the religion of Mahomet, which they embraced, was no other; and like locusts they were innumerable, they went in troops and bands, as locusts do, (^{<3117>}Proverbs 30:27); pillaging and ravaging all they could and their sudden and frequent incursions, the desolations and ravages which they made in the eastern empire, are very aptly expressed by the running to and fro of locusts; (see ^{<2304>}Isaiah 33:4 ^{<2419>}Joel 2:9).

And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power; that is, to torment them, by striking them with their stings in their tails, (^{<6195>}Revelation 9:5,10). These are called “scorpions of the earth”, to distinguish them from sea scorpions, which are a kind of fish: so Aristotle ^{f268} and ^{f269} Pliny speak of terrestrial scorpions, which are the most hurtful; these are of the serpentine kind have an innocent and harmless look, but are soon angry; have stings in their tails, which they are always striking with, that they may miss no opportunity of doing mischief, and with which they strike in an oblique way ^{f270}; and which very fitly describes the Saracens, the race of the Ishmaelites, a generation of vipers, a subtle and treacherous sort of people, very furious and wrathful, and who lived by continual robbing and plundering of others at an unawares: and this may be applied to the western locusts, the monks and friars, who are the seed of the serpent; and who by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, have a form of godliness, and speak lies in hypocrisy, and lie in wait to deceive; and being provoked, are full of wrath and anger, and strike very hard with their anathemas and excommunications, and other sorts of punishment, which they have power to inflict.

Ver. 4. *And it was commanded them,* etc.] The locusts, by Christ, who has a sovereign power over all men, and lays them under the restraints of his providence:

that they should not hurt the grass of the earth: true Christians, private believers, it may be those of the lower class; who for their numbers, and for their flourishing estate under the dews of heavenly grace, and the distillations of the doctrine of grace, and the clear shining of the sun of righteousness upon them, and for their weakness, may be compared to grass; and yet as these being a company reserved by Christ for himself, who will not break nor bruise them, so neither will he suffer others to hurt them, and resents every offence done to these little ones:

neither any green thing; who have the truth of grace in them, are spiritually alive, and in prosperous circumstances, in a fruitful condition, being filled with the fruits of righteousness from Christ, the green fir tree, and whose leaves of profession continue green; and are themselves, as David says of himself; like a green olive tree in the house of God, (^{<4008>}Psalm 3:8).

Neither any tree; any trees of righteousness, good and righteous who are often compared to trees planted by rivers of water, (^{<4008>}Psalm 1:3) (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 17:8); it may be the ministers of the Gospel, then of great grace and gifts, the tall cedars in Lebanon, may be intended; and so by these various expressions, Christians of every size, from the lowest to the highest class, may be signified. Green things and leaves of trees are what the locusts generally destroy, as appears from the plague of them in Egypt, (^{<4008>}Exodus 10:5,12,15); and as they did in Syria in the year 1586, as Thuanus reports ^{f271}. Now as grass, green things, and trees, are what locusts most desire to feed upon and hurt, so real believers, truly godly persons, are those which both the eastern and western locusts, the Mahometans and Papists, have been very desirous of rooting out and destroying; but Christ takes care of these; these are as the apple of his eye, his jewels, his sheep, his sealed ones; none shall hurt them, they shall never perish; he knows them that are his, and he will preserve them amidst fire and smoke, amidst all the corruptions and calamities in the world:

but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads; (see ^{<4008>}Revelation 7:2,3); the antichristian party, those of the Romish apostasy, the Papists; and these were they that suffered most by the Saracens, who abhorred image worship, and fell foul on the idolaters of this kind: and, on the other hand, the western locusts, the clergy of the church of Rome, had only influence over the reprobate part of mankind, and only wrought with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, who were giver,

up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, but not upon any of the chosen ones, (^{scrib1}2 Thessalonians 2:11-13).

Ver. 5. *And to them it was given that they should not kill them*, etc.] As the power of the locusts was limited with respect to the persons they should hurt, so with regard also to the mischief they should do; for even those whom they were suffered to annoy they might not kill, that is, utterly root out and destroy, so as that they were no more: and thus, though the Saracens killed great numbers in the eastern empire, by their frequent incursions and ravages, and made large conquests, yet they could never destroy the empire itself, or bring it in subjection to them; nor did they ever take Constantinople, the metropolis and seat of the empire, though they often besieged it. And as for the western locusts, the months, friars, etc. though they kill the souls, yet not the bodies of men that are under their power and influence:

but that they should be tormented five months; that is, not that the locusts should be tormented, but men by the locusts; and so the eastern empire was grievously teased and tormented by the Saracens, and many parts of it were conquered, plundered, and pillaged by them, though it was not killed and put an end to. In the year 628, Mahomet with his Saracens having obtained a place in Arabia Felix to dwell in, died in the year 631; from which time his successors, the Saracens, by little and little, subdued Palestine, Syria, and Egypt; and, in the year 640, took Persis, putting King Hormisda to flight; they laid siege to Constantinople seven years, but without success; in the year 698, Carthage was taken by them; and in following times many countries on the continent, and many of the islands, were grievously infested and distressed by them; though the empire itself did not fall into their hands; it was tormented by them, but not destroyed. And the western locusts have most dreadfully tormented men by their exorbitant dues demanded of them; and by obliging them to confessions, and to attend Mass; by enjoining them whippings, fastings, pilgrimages, and penances, and with the terrors of purgatory, and the like. The time that the locusts should torment men, which is “five months”, seems not to design any determinate time; but only that seeing five months is the time that locusts live, and are in their strength and power, even the five, hottest months in the year, from April to September^{f272}, this seems to denote, that as long as the locusts live, the Saracens in the east, and the monks and friars in the west, so long men should be tormented by them; for it is certain that these have had power to torment men longer time than barely

five months; yea, even though these should be understood, according to the prophetic style used in this book, of five months of years, or an hundred and fifty years; and though this should be doubled, seeing they are repeated, (~~419D~~ Revelation 9:10); and so make up in all three hundred ears; for both the Saracens and the Romish clergy have distressed men, either of them, longer time than this: indeed, the flourishing condition of the Saracens was but about three hundred years, or two five months; but their empire or dominion lasted longer, even from the year 622, which was the year of the “Hegira”, or flight of Mahomet, to the year 1057^{f273}, when the Turkish empire succeeded it: though it is pretty remarkable, that from the year 612, in which Mahomet began to preach publicly, and so let out the smoke with the locusts, to the year 762, in which the city of Bagdad was built, when and where the Saracens settled, and made no more excursions of any consequence, were just an hundred and fifty years, or five months of years, as Mr. Daubuz observes; and I will not say that this is not intended by this prophecy. Noah's flood prevailed over the earth one hundred and fifty days, or five months, (~~100724~~ Genesis 7:24).

And their torment [was] as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man; which gives great pain, is very distressing, and their stings are poisonous and mortal: it signifies how troublesome and afflictive those locusts were; to be among them was to live among scorpions, as in (~~3116~~ Ezekiel 2:6). As these locusts are like scorpions, so scorpions have been seen sometimes with wings like locusts; such an one, Pausanias^{f274} relates, was brought into Ionia by a Phrygian.

Ver. 6. *And in those days men shall seek death,* etc.] Or desire to die, as Job did:

and shall not find it; or shall not die:

and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them; death will be preferred to a miserable life; it will be chosen rather than life, (~~2488~~ Jeremiah 8:3). The ravages of the Saracens, their incursions, and the invasions by them, struck such terror into the inhabitants of divers parts of the empire, that they made death more eligible to them than life.

Ver. 7. *And the shapes of the locusts [were] like unto horses,* etc.] The heads of locusts, especially of some of them, are very much like the heads of horses: and here they are compared to horses

prepared unto battle; as they are in (²⁰¹⁶ Joel 2:4). The horse is a warlike creature, swift, strong, and courageous, (^{1832b} Job 39:21-25). Locusts sometimes have appeared in the form of armies, and have marched in great order with their leaders before them, and have pitched their camps very regularly; (see ²⁰¹⁷ Joel 2:7); of which we have lately had an account from Transylvania in our public papers. (This was published in 1747, Ed.) This part of their description may denote the wars of the Saracens, and the rapidity, force, and power with which they overran great part of the empire; and as it may be applied to the western locusts, the disputes, contentions, and quarrels raised by the Romish clergy.

And on their heads [were], as it were, crowns like gold; and in this shape some locusts have appeared, to which the allusion seems to be in, (Na 3:17), “thy crowned men are as the locusts”. In the year 1542, it is said ^{f275}, that locusts came out of Turkish Sarmatia, into Austria, Silesia, and other places, which had on their heads “little crowns”; (see ²⁰³⁰ Ezekiel 23:42). And the Arabians, as Pliny observes, go “mitrati” ^{f276}, with mitres, turbans like crowns, on their heads. This may design the several victories and conquests which the Saracens obtained in Arabia, Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, and many other places; and supposing this to have any reference to the western locusts, it may respect the triple crown of the head of then, the caps of the cardinals, the mitres of the bishops, and the shaven pates of the priests, in form of crowns.

And their faces [were] as the faces of men; which may be expressive of the affable carriage of Mahomet, and his followers, especially to the Christians, and of his great pretensions to holiness and religion, and of the plausible and insinuating ways, and artful methods, used by him, to gain upon men; and being applied to the clergy of the church of Rome, may denote their show of humanity, and their pretended great concern for the welfare of the souls of men, their flatteries, good words, and fair speeches, with which they deceive the simple and unwary.

Ver. 8. *And they had hair, as the hair of women*, etc.] Some locusts have smooth, others hairy heads ^{f277}: this fitly points at the Arabians or Saracens, who, as Pliny says ^{f278}, used to wear long hair without cutting it, and attired as women, and have their names also from women: they were called Hagarenes, from Hagar, Abraham's handmaid, by whom he had Ishmael, the father of these people; afterwards they took the name of Saracens, from Sarah, the wife of Abraham, whose posterity they would be thought to be;

though they may have the latter name, either from *qrs*, to “rob” and “steal”, with the Arabians, or from the same word, as it signifies to “comb”, from the combing and plaiting: of their hair. This may also point at the effeminacy of the western locusts, the monks and friars, who dress more like women than men; and many of them claim the virgin Mary for their patroness; and may in general design the votaries of the church of Rome, who are under the vow of a monastic life, as those among the Jews, under a Nazarite's vow, wore long hair.

And their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions; so in (^{f279} Joel 1:6); which may denote the ravages and devastations of the Saracens in the empire, robbing, pillaging, and destroying all they met with; and is applicable enough to the devouring jaws of the Romish clergy, their plundering the estates of men, their cruelties and barbarities exercised by their Inquisition, etc. Pliny says ^{f279}, that locusts will gnaw the doors of houses.

Ver. 9. *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron*, etc.] Alluding to the hard skin of the locusts, with which nature has fenced it ^{f280}; (see ^{f280} Joel 2:8); and denotes the armour with which the Saracens were accoutred: and if to be understood of the western locusts, the hardness of their hearts, their seared consciences, or their protection by the princes of the earth, the many privileges they are possessed of, the laws made in their favour, and for their security; their breastplates were not breastplates of righteousness, faith, and love, nor in defence of truth, but against it. And some think the iron colour may denote the colour of their habit, their black garments:

and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; (see ^{f281} Joel 2:5). The sound of locusts, when they fly or march in large companies, is very great. Pliny says ^{f281}, they make such a noise with their wings, when they fly, that they have been thought to have been other winged creatures; hence a locust, in Hebrew, is sometimes called *l x l x*, the same name that is given to the high sounding cymbal. The sound of them is said to have been heard six miles ^{f282}. Aristotle ^{f283} ascribes it to the rubbing of their legs or thighs one against another; and so the Ethiopic version here renders it, “the sound of their feet”: this may be expressive of the swift and rapid incursions of the Saracens, and of the dreadful alarms to the nations which their invasions made; and may be applied to the noisy declamations, anathemas, excommunications, and interdicts of the Romish clergy.

Ver. 10. *And they had tails like unto scorpions*, etc.] Locusts are said to have the tail of a serpent, and of the vipers of the earth ^{f284}; (see Gill on “~~695~~ Revelation 9:3”), (see Gill on “~~695~~ Revelation 9:5”). And there were stings in their tails; either in the baser sort of them, the Saracens and Papists; or in their doctrines, the prophet being the tail, (~~295~~ Isaiah 9:15); with which both Mahomet, who set himself up for a prophet, and the Romish clergy, who set up their decrees and unwritten traditions above the word of God, have poisoned and destroyed multitudes of souls:

and their power [was] to hurt men five months; (see Gill on “~~695~~ Revelation 9:5”).

Ver. 11. *And they had a king over them*, etc.] Which natural locusts have not, (~~397~~ Proverbs 30:27); by whom is meant the false prophet Mahomet, who was at the head of the Saracens, and led them on to commit the outrages they did; and is believed in by the Turks to this day, as the great prophet of God, and by them preferred to all prophets, not only to Moses, but to Jesus Christ; he is the king of the eastern locusts, as the pope of Rome is the king of the western ones; for the Romish antichrist reigns, or at least has reigned, over the kings of the earth, (~~677~~ Revelation 17:17,18);

[which is] the angel of the bottomless pit; to whom the key of it was given, (~~695~~ Revelation 9:1);

whose name in the Hebrew tongue [is] Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath [his] name Apollyon; both which signify a “destroyer”; and are very applicable both to Mahomet, who by his imposture has been the cause of the destruction of multitudes of souls, as well as by his wars, and those of the Saracens and Turks, of the lives of millions, and of the ruin of many kingdoms, countries, cities, and towns. Abulpharagius ^{f285}, an Arabic writer, relates, that in the times of the Chalif Al-walid, there was one Hejajus, who had caused to be slain, of the chief and illustrious men, an hundred and twenty thousand, besides others of the common people, and that fell in war; moreover, that there died in his prison fifty thousand men, and thirty thousand women: and the same writer reports ^{f286}, that the famous Abu Moslem put to death six hundred thousand men, who were known, besides those that were unknown, and whom he slew in wars and battles: both these instances are taken notice of by Mr. Daubuz, who justly observes, that surely nothing can come near this “Abaddon”, but the beast, the son of perdition, (~~311~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:3). And to him, the pope of Rome, may the name be truly applied, who has led thousands into

perdition, and will go into it himself; and both he, and the false prophet, with the devil, will be east into the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, and will be tormented for ever and ever, (²Thessalonians 2:4 ⁶⁶⁷⁸Revelation 17:8,11 20:10). “Abaddon”, with the Jews, is one of the habitations or apartments of hell ^{f287}, because it destroys all; “Apollyon” is the same with “Apollo”, the god of the Heathens, who has his name from destroying ^{f288}.

Ver. 12. *One woe is past*, etc.] One of the three woe trumpets, the first of them; that is, in the vision which John had of it, not the thing itself designed by it:

[and] behold there come two woes more hereafter; under the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.

Ver. 13. *And the sixth angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God; the allusion is not to the altar of burnt offering, which was covered with brass, but to the altar of incense covered with gold; and hence here, and elsewhere, it is called “the golden altar”, and was a figure of the intercession of Christ; for on this altar incense was offered, which was typical of the prayers of the saints offered by Christ, through his mediation: the matter of this altar was shittim wood, a wood that is incorruptible, and of long duration, denoting the perpetuity of Christ's intercession; and its being covered with gold expresses the glory and excellency of it; its form was foursquare, as is the city of the new Jerusalem, and shows that Christ's intercession avails for all his people in the four parts of the world: and on it were “four horns”, which some think represent the four evangelists, or the Gospel sent into the four parts of the world, and which is the power of God unto salvation; and for the contempt of which, in the eastern empire, the judgments signified under this trumpet came upon it; though rather these may point at the large extent and fulness of Christ's intercession, for all his people, in the four corners of the earth, as well as his power to protect and defend them, and to scatter and destroy his and their enemies. This altar is said to be “before God”, in a visionary way, as the altar of incense was before the vail, and the mercy seat, and by the ark of the testimony, (⁶²⁰⁶Exodus 30:1-3,6); suggesting that Christ continually appears in the presence of God for all the saints. Now from hence was a “voice heard” by John, and which seems to be the voice of Christ, the advocate and intercessor. In the Greek text it is, “one voice”;

not the voice of many angels round about the throne, nor of the souls under the altar, but of the one and only Mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ; and this was a voice, not supplicating, but commanding, being addressed to one of his ministering spirits.

Ver. 14. *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet*, etc.] The sixth trumpet, which was given him, and he had prepared himself to sound, and had sounded:

loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates; not the four angels in (~~600~~ Revelation 7:1); they stood upon the four corners of the earth; these were in, or at the river Euphrates; they held the four winds, that they should not blow, or restrained the savage nations, that they should not hurt; these are bound themselves, that they might not do mischief; nor are angels by nature at all intended; not evil angels, though they are bound in chains of darkness, and are reserved to judgment, they are admitted indeed to rove about in the air and earth, but are under the restraints of the power and providence of God; nor good angels, who are at the divine beck, and go in and out, and are detained and sent forth according to the pleasure of God, and are sometimes employed in killing great numbers of men; (see ~~1245~~ 2 Samuel 24:15,16 ~~2195~~ 2 Kings 19:35); but men are here meant, as appears from (~~6016~~ Revelation 9:16,17), and particularly the Turks, as most interpreters agree; who dwelt on the other side the river Euphrates, and were let loose, or suffered to pass over that river into the eastern empire, to ruin and destroy it, as they did: these are called “angels”, because of their might and force, their power and strength, with which they bore all before them; and for their great swiftness and rapidity in the victories and conquests which the Ottoman family obtained; who, from very small beginnings, raised themselves, in a very little time, to a large monarchy, and founded the Turkish empire, which, from them, is to this day called the Ottoman empire. Ottoman the First subdued great part of Bithynia, and fixed the seat of his kingdom at Prusa; or rather his son Urchanes, who conquered Mysia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Caria, and the rest, to the Hellespont, and the Euxine sea. Amurath his son took Callipolis, Hadrianople, and the adjacent provinces. Bajazet added to the empire Thessalia, Macedonia, Phocis, Attica, Mysia, and Bulgaria; and Mahomet the Second took Constantinople itself, and thereby put an end to the eastern empire; and all this was done in a very few years: it is said of this last, that he conquered two empires, and twelve kingdoms, and above two hundred cities ^{f289}. And these Ottoman Turks may be called angels, or

messengers, because they were the messengers and executioners of God's wrath upon the eastern empire: they are signified by “four angels”, either, as some think, because of the four names of Saracens, Turks, Tartars, and Arabians, though all Mahometans, under which they went, before they were united under one emperor, Ottoman; or rather because of the four principalities, or governments, into which they were divided, while they were upon the banks of, or near to the river Euphrates; the seat of one being at Iconium, another at Bagdad, a third at Aleppo, and a fourth at Damascus; and chiefly because, when they passed the river Euphrates, they had four princes at the head of them, Soliman Shak, and his three sons. Soliman himself, as he passed, not knowing the fords of the river, was drowned in it; at which his sons being so affrighted, two of them, Sankur Zengi, and Gun Tugdi, returned to Persia, but the third, Ortogrules, with his three sons (which made “four” again) Condoz, Sarubani, and Othman, or Ottoman, continued, to whom Aladdin, sultan of Iconium, gave them some land among the mountains of Armenia ^{f290}; and from hence, by degrees, as before observed, a large empire was raised. Now these are said to be “bound in the great river Euphrates”; which river is to be literally understood, and is the same with that which is so called in (~~Gen~~ Genesis 2:14 15:18), and ran through Mesopotamia and Chaldea, and was the boundary of the Roman empire; so it was fixed by Hadrian ^{f291}; and beyond which the Turks, before this time did rarely go, and if they did, retired again: for till this time, as the historian says ^{f292}, the Turks had Asia, **εντος του ευφρατου**, “within Euphrates”, and the Arabians Coelo-Syria and Phoenicia. Now here these were bound; they were not suffered to pass the river, or to make any inroads of any consequence further into the Roman empire; they were restrained, by the decree of God, from proceeding any further till this time; which, as he fixes a decreed place for the sea, that its waves should come thus far, and no further, so he restrains princes from their enterprises, and settles the bounds of empires, as long as he pleases; and they were kept back by the power of God from pouring in upon the empire, and pouring forth their fury upon it, who causes the wrath of men to praise him, and restrains the remainder of it; and they were also prevented from coming any further, as yet, through the internal divisions among themselves, and by the victories of the Christians in Palestine.

Ver. 15. *And the four angels were loosed*, etc.] The time being come, fixed by the decrees of God, making use of the Turks for the destruction of the eastern empire, the restraints of divine Providence were taken off from

them, and they were suffered to pass the river Euphrates; they were let loose like so many furies, and in a little time overran and destroyed the whole empire, and settled their own, now called the Turkish or Ottoman empire; and which was done about the year 1301.

Which were prepared for an hour and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men; which may in general denote their readiness, vigilance, and quick dispatch: they lay for a good while hovering over the banks of the river Euphrates, as if they were waiting for an order, or a commission to go over it: they were ready not only at a year's, a month's, a day's, but at an hour's warning, and all of them together; and as soon as ever they had the divine permission, they lost no time; they improved every opportunity, every year, every month, every day, every hour, to settle and enlarge their dominions to the ruin of others; and in a very short time did they accomplish what they desired: though others think this refers to a certain time fixed by God, in which they should be employed in killing men; and the sense is, that these people were prepared in the purposes and decrees of God, or were appointed for such a length of time here signified, by several dates, in which they should destroy a large multitude of men, by way of punishment for their idolatries, murders, sorceries, fornication, and thefts, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 9:20,21). An hour, which is the twenty fourth of a day or year, in the prophetic style, is fifteen days, and a day is a year, and a month is thirty years, and a year is three hundred sixty five years and a quarter, or ninety one days; in all, three hundred and ninety six years, and a hundred and six days; which is the precise time between A. D. 1057, when the Turkish empire begun, the empire of the Saracens being entirely demolished by Togrul Beg, or Tangrolipix, and A. D. 1453, in which year Constantinople was taken by the Turks, and an end put to the eastern Roman empire, signified by the third part of men; or else this space of time may be reckoned from the date of Ottoman's reign, May 19, 1301, which, to September 1, 1697, is just this term of time, when Prince Eugene obtained a remarkable victory over the Turks, the effect of which was the peace at Carlowitz the next year, since which time the Turks have done but little in Europe: and by this it should seem that their time of killing men here is over, and that their own destruction is hastening on. Mr. Daubuz rejects these computations, since a prophetic year consists of 360 days or years, and not 365, as those suppose; and thinks there is no mystery in these dates, and only signify the angels' unanimous execution of their commission at once.

Ver. 16. *And the number of the army of the horsemen*, etc.] This shows that the four angels before mentioned were men, and design generals of armies, or armies of men, even of horsemen; and manifestly point at the Turks, who were not only originally Persians, and had their name, as some say ^{f293}, from Turca in Persia, and **᠘ᠷᠫ**, from whence the Persians have their name, signifies an horseman; but the armies of the Turks chiefly consisted of horse, and what for show and for use, they had generally double the number of horses and mules as of men ^{f294}; and they are very good horsemen, and very dextrous at leaping on and off ^{f295}; and the horse's tail is still carried before the general, and principal officers, as an ensign expressive of their military exploits, and showing where their main strength lies. And the number of this mighty army, it is said,

[were] two hundred thousand thousand; or “two myriads of myriads”; two hundred millions, or twenty thousand brigades of ten thousand each; that is, a very large and prodigious number, almost infinite and incredible, like the army of Gog and Magog, as the sand of the sea, (^{f296} Revelation 20:8). The Turks used to bring, and still do bring vast armies into the field: in the year 1396, Bajazet, with three hundred thousand men, fell upon sixty thousand Christians, killed twenty thousand of them, and lost sixty thousand of his own: against him afterward, in the year 1397, came Tamerlane the Tartar, with four hundred thousand horse, and six hundred thousand foot, and having killed two hundred thousand Turks, took Bajazet prisoner, and carried him about in a cage, in golden chains. In the year 1438, Amurath entered into Pannonia, with three hundred thousand horsemen: and in the year 1453, Mahomet took Constantinople with the like number ^{f296}; yea, it is said, that the army at the siege of that city consisted of forty myriads, or four hundred thousand men ^{f297}. It is reported, that the great Turk contemptuously sent to the emperor of the Romans a camel, or a dromedary, loaden with wheat, with this vow by a message, that he should bring against him as many fighting men as there were grains of wheat therein ^{f298}. And it is related ^{f299}, that when Ladislaus, king of Hungary, went out against Amurath with four and twenty thousand horse, Dracula, governor of Walachia, advised him not to attack the emperor of the Turks with so small an army, since he went out every day a hunting with more men than such a number:

and I heard the number of them; expressed by some angel, and therefore John was certain of it, otherwise he could not have told them.

Ver. 17. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them,* etc.] In such numbers, and with horsemen on them, and in such order, and in appearance, as follows:

having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth and brimstone; which may be understood either literally of their external breastplates, which being of polished iron, according to the custom of these people, looked at a distance like sparkling fire, and seemed to be of the colour of hyacinth, or of a sky colour, and appeared as flaming sulphur; though some think that their breastplates were of different colours, some looked like fire, others like jacinth, and others like brimstone; or it may denote that they would be accoutred in scarlet, blue, and yellow, which are the colours the Turks have commonly wore; or this may be understood of their internal breastplates, and the disposition of their minds, having in their breasts nothing but wrath, fury, desolation, and destruction; a fire devoured before them, and behind them a flame burned:

and the heads of the horses [were] as the heads of lions: gaping and roaring for their prey, or all bloody with it, and looked fierce, and savage, and terrible: this designs not so much the strength, boldness, and intrepidity of their horses, which are warlike creatures, and very undaunted in battle, as of the men that sat upon them, who were like David's heroes and warriors, (^{<318>}1 Chronicles 12:8).

And out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone; which may be referred either to the horses, or to the horsemen, or both: some interpret this allegorically, and by "fire" understand either the tyranny of the Turks over their own people, or their fury against others, or their blasphemy against God, and Christ, and his people, being like so many railing Rabshakehs against the God of the Christians; and by "smoke" the false doctrine of Mahomet, which came out of the same bottomless pit the doctrine of the Romish antichrist did; and is fitly compared to smoke for its disagreeableness, darkness, levity, and duration; (see Gill on ^{<319>}Revelation 9:2"); and by "brimstone" the immorality and sad corruption of manners among the Turks, and what is allowed of, or winked at, as fornication, polygamy, sodomy, etc. but rather this is to be taken more literally, and represents the firing of guns on horseback in battle. Guns are a late invention, and the use of them was found out in the age this trumpet refers to; and were much made use of by the Turks in their wars, and particularly great guns or cannons; these were used by Amurath at the

sieges of Belgrade, and of Constantinople^{f300}; and by Mahomet the Second at the taking of Constantinople, where a gun or cannon was used of that size, as to be drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and two thousand men^{f301}. Gunpowder set on fire is fitly signified by fire, smoke, and brimstone, which is made of nitre, charcoal, and brimstone; and the firing of guns on horseback is most aptly described by these coming out of the mouths of horses and horsemen: nor could it well appear to John to be otherwise, who could never have seen a gun, and one fired off in his life; nor could he well represent to others what he saw in vision, than in this manner.

Ver. 18. *And by these three was the third part of men killed*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “by these three plagues”: as the western Roman empire is in the preceding chapter frequently expressed by the third part of several things, (see ~~688~~ Revelation 8:7-12); so here the eastern Roman empire by the third part of men; vast numbers of the inhabitants of which were destroyed by the Turks, through the use of guns, out of which issued fire, smoke, and brimstone; and Constantinople, the metropolis of it, was taken in this way, as before observed, with the taking of which the empire ceased.

By the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths; that is, by the firing of guns.

Ver. 19. *For their power is in their mouth*, etc.] In what proceeded out of their mouth, or seethed to do so; in their guns, and what came out of them:

and in their tails; which may design their foot soldiers, which were as the tail to their horse, and who sometimes did great service; or their way of fighting when they fled, by casting up arrows into the air, which would fall upon the heads and horses of those that pursued them; or their ambushments, by which they destroyed many; or their perfidious violation of treaties; or it may be their tails may intend the doctrine of Mahomet, the false prophet, who is the tail, (~~295~~ Isaiah 9:15),

for their tails [were] like unto serpents; crooked, crafty, poisonous, and, pernicious:

and had heads; every tail had a head to it; which may be understood of the officers of the foot soldiers, or of the priests and teachers of the Mahometan religion:

and with them they do hurt; with their guns, the power in their mouth, they did hurt to the bodies of men; and with their false doctrines, their tails, they did hurt to the souls of men; the Ethiopic version here adds, “five months”; which seems to be taken from (~~690~~) Revelation 9:10).

Ver. 20. *And the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues*, etc.] By whom are meant the western antichristian party; and such of them as were not plagued, harassed, and destroyed by the Turks, as in Germany, at least some parts of it, France, Spain, Italy, etc.

yet repented not of the works of their hands: their idols, their images of saints departed, which their hands had made; the goodness of God in saving them from the depredations of the Turks, should have led them to repentance for their idolatrous worship of images, but it did not:

that they should not worship devils; or demons, a sort of deities with the Heathens, that mediated between the superior gods and men; and here design angels and saints departed, which the Papists worship, and use as mediators of intercession for them; and this is no other than worshipping of devils, in God's account, and is downright idolatry, and the doctrine of it is the doctrine of devils:

and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which are the several materials of which the Popish images are made: and what aggravates the stupidity of the worshippers of these images, and of the persons represented by them, is, that these are such

which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; can neither see their persons, nor hear their prayers, nor stir one foot to their help and assistance; (see ~~480~~ Psalm 115:4-7).

Ver. 21. *Neither repented they of their murders*, etc.] Of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood the western antichrist is made drunk, and which will be found in her, and for which she is answerable. Now, though the western parts of the empire escaped the scourge of the Turks, yet this did not bring them to repent of their murderous practices, but they went on to take away the lives of godly men; witness the persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses, the murders of John Huss and Jerom of Prague, the burning of the martyrs here in Queen Mary's days, and the massacres in Paris and in Ireland, and their butcheries elsewhere; and which they have continued unto this day, where the Inquisition obtains:

nor of their sorceries; Jezebel the whore of Rome has been famous for, by which she has deceived all nations; many of the popes of Rome have been necromancers, given to the magic art, and have entered into covenant, and have had familiarity with the devil; and one part of the Romish service lies in exorcisms, conjurations, and enchantments, and which they still continue:

nor of their fornication; all sorts of uncleanness; not only simple fornication, but adultery, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; brothel houses have been set up and licensed by authority, which have yielded to the popes a yearly revenue of forty thousand ducats; the Romish clergy, popes, cardinals, priests, monks, and friars, have been dreadfully guilty of all manner of uncleanness, and still are; whence Rome is called Sodom, (~~6108~~ Revelation 11:8);

nor of their thefts; who under pretence of granting indulgences and pardons, and praying souls out of purgatory, with other tricks, cheat men of their money, pillage and plunder their estates, and devour widows' houses; rob men of their substance, and make merchandise of their souls: now all these iniquities the Papists in the eastern empire were guilty of, for which the Turks as a scourge were let in upon it, and destroyed it; and yet the western papacy, who did not suffer in these calamities, took no warning by them, did not repent of their sins, and reform their practices; but went on, and still go on in the same wicked way, and by their hardness and impenitence treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.