

Book of Revelation, Chapter 9 (American Standard Version)

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth: and there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss.

2 And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there went up a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3 And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads.

5 And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when it striketh a man.

6 And in those days men shall seek death, and shall in no wise find it; and they shall desire to die, and death fleeth from them.

7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for war; and upon their heads as it were crowns like unto gold, and their faces were as men's faces.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as teeth of lions.

9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to war.

10 And they have tails like unto scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men five months.

11 They have over them as king the angel of

Manson's Interpretation of the Book of Revelation**

1. Manson saw himself as "the fifth angel" (Verse 1) who would be given "the key to the pit of the abyss."

2. Verse 11 refers the fifth angel as "king," whose "name in Hebrew is Abaddon." The Catholic Douay Version contains also a Latin name, inadvertently omitted from other versions: "Exterminans."

3. Verse 3 says that "out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given them." Manson believed that the "locusts" were in fact "beetles"--the English musical group, "The Beatles."

4. Manson found confirmation for the Beatles being the "locusts" of Revelation in verses 7 through 9. Verse 7 refers to the locusts having "faces as were men's faces," but verse 8 says "they had hair as the hair of women"--which Manson took to be a reference to the Beatles' long hair. Also, verse 9 refers to the locusts as having "breastplates of iron." In Manson's interpretation the Beatles' breastplates were their electric guitars. The "horses" that they rode (verse 7) were dune buggies. Finally, Manson saw the "fire and smoke and brimstone" that came out of their mouths (verse 17) as being the powerful lyrics to their songs--especially those in the White Album. Manson also at times saw the Beatles as "the four angels" of verse 15.

5. The 200,000,000 persons comprising "the armies of the horsemen" (verse 16) who would spread destruction around the earth were, in Manson's interpretation, motorcyclists.

the abyss: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue he hath the name Apollyon.

12 The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two Woes hereafter.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 one saying to the sixth angel that had one trumpet, Loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates.

15 And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men.

16 And the number of the armies of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand: I heard the number of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates as of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone: and the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceedeth fire and smoke and brimstone.

18 By these three plagues was the third part of men killed, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths.

19 For the power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails are like unto serpents, and have heads; and with them they hurt.

20 And the rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk:

21 and they repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

6. Manson interpreted verse 4--"And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing"--as meaning that it was wrong to kill any living thing--except, perversely, people. Manson would frequently upbraid family members for killing rattlesnakes or other creatures.

7. Manson believed he would lead his Family to the desert, where they would wait out the coming holocaust and multiply until they numbered 144,000--a number he got from Revelation, Chapter 7 which refers to twelve tribes of Israel, each numbering 12,000.

8. Manson believed that the entrance to "the pit of the abyss" (verse 1) was a forgotten cave somewhere in Death Valley. Through this cave one could gain entrance to a wonderful land "of milk and honey" lighted by glowing walls and filled with warm spring water.

9. Perhaps most critically, was Manson's interpretation of verse 15: "And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men." Manson saw verse 15 as a prophecy of the imminent Helter Skelter in which a revolt by blacks would result in a killing of one-third of the population. Manson may have believed that he was setting this revolt in motion in August of 1969 when he loosed from Spahn ranch his Family members with instructions to kill.

Sources:

Bugliosi, Vincent and Gentry, Curt. *Helter Skelter : The True Story of the Manson Family Murders*. Bantam : New York, 232-239.

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