

Revelation 9:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

Analysis

The locust-army's description employs symbolic imagery to depict demonic forces or divine judgment agents. Horses prepared for battle suggest military power; gold crowns indicate authority; human faces show intelligence beyond mere natural creatures. This apocalyptic symbolism communicates spiritual realities through vivid imagery. Reformed theology interprets such visions as revealing principalities and powers (Ephesians 6:12) that operate in human history under God's sovereign permission. The terrifying description warns of judgment's severity while emphasizing that even demonic forces serve divine purposes, tormenting only those lacking God's seal.

Historical Context

First-century readers familiar with locust plagues understood their devastating power. Military imagery recalled Parthian cavalry, Rome's feared eastern enemy. Joel's prophecy of locust armies provided Old Testament background. This fusion of natural plague, military threat, and supernatural horror communicated judgment's multi-faceted terror against the impenitent.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that even terrifying judgment agents operate under God's sovereignty affect your understanding of evil's limits?
2. What warning does this description give about the seriousness of remaining unsealed by God?

Interlinear Text

καὶ τὰ ὄμοιώματα τῶν ἀκρίδων ὄμοιοι ἵπποις
And G3588 **the shapes** G3588 **of the locusts** **like** **unto horses**
G2532 G3667 G200 G3664 G2462

ἡτοιμασμένοις εἰς πόλεμον καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν
prepared **unto** **battle** **And** **on** G3588 **heads** **their**
G2090 G1519 G4171 G2532 G1909 G2776 G846

ώς στέφανοι ὄμοιοι χρυσῷ καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν
were as **crowns** **like** **gold** **And** G3588 **faces** **their**
G5613 G4735 G3664 G5557 G2532 G4383 G846

ώς πρόσωπα ἀνθρώπων
were as **faces** **of men**
G5613 G4383 G444

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 7:8 (Parallel theme): I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

Nahum 3:17 (Parallel theme): Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org