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prepared for battle; and upon their heads were what seemed to be crowns like gold, and their faces were as men's faces, but they had hair as women's hair. And their teeth were as those of lions; and they had breastplates like iron breastplates. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running into battle. Also, they have tails and stings like scorpions; and in their tails is their authority to hurt the men five months. They have over them a king, the angel of the abyss. In Hebrew his name is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon."—Revelation 9:1-11.

The star now seen by the apostle John is different from the "great star burning as a lamp" seen falling from heaven after the third angel blew his trumpet. (Revelation 8:10) Who, then, is this "star that had fallen from heaven" that John saw after the blowing of the fifth trumpet? We are helped to identify him, for "the key of the pit of the abyss" was given to him, and he unlocked this place. Also, he is "the angel of the abyss," and he is king over the terrible swarm of locusts that fly out of the abyss. In Hebrew his name is Abaddon, meaning "Destruction"; and in Greek it is Apollyon, meaning "Destroyer." All this plainly identifies the "angel" as picturing Jesus Christ, the Son of Jehovah God.

About a century before John's vision this Son of God had descended from heaven to earth to be born as the man-child Jesus. At his sacrificial death and burial he descended into the abyss. (Philippians 2:5-8; Ephesians 4:7-10; Romans 10:6, 7) On the third day of his death God brought him up from the abyss and gave him the key of the abyss, which here corresponds with Ha'des, the common grave of dead mankind. He thus has power over dead mankind.

This is why, in Revelation 1:17, 18, the resurrected Jesus Christ says that he is now forever alive from the dead and "I have the keys of death and of Ha'des." He is also the "angel" of Revelation 20:1-3 who comes down and binds Satan the Devil and

his demons and throws them into the abyss and shuts them up in it for a thousand years. After the end of his thousand-year reign over mankind, he will destroy Satan the Devil and his demons following their release from the abyss for a little while. In this way he will fulfill God's prophecy in Genesis 3:15. At the approaching battle of Armageddon he will also destroy the earthly enemies who then fight against God's Messianic kingdom. (Revelation 19:11-21; 20:7-10) He will fulfill his name "Destroyer."

Who, now, are the symbolic locusts that he releases from the "pit of the abyss"? Insect locusts do not have a king over them (Proverbs 30:27); but Jesus Christ is king over these symbolic "locusts," for which reason they must be the present-day anointed remnant of his disciples who are joint heirs with him for the heavenly kingdom. That is why upon the heads of these "locusts" there were "what seemed to be crowns like gold." (Revelation 9:7) During the first world war (1914-1918 C.E.) Jehovah God had permitted them to be put by their religious, political and military enemies into the deathlike, inactive spiritual condition like that inside the "pit of the abyss"; but after World War I God used the reigning King Jesus Christ to release these symbolic locusts from this "pit of the abyss." How? By revitalizing them for worldwide Kingdom work foretold in Matthew 24:14 and Mark 13:10.

These symbolic locusts are subject to the glorified Jesus Christ as their King and as Head of the Christian congregation. To point up this fact, the "locusts" are pictured as having "hair as women's hair," although "their faces were as men's faces." Women's hair, being naturally long, is a sign of having authority upon her head or exercised over her. (1 Corinthians 11:7-15; Ephesians 5:21-32; 1:22, 23) As they are followers of the "Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David," the teeth of these "locusts" are "as those of lions." Spiritually speaking, they are able as mature Christians to devour the