



Big Idea: The pattern of deception compels us to repent.

-- The vision in today's text paints a picture of the physical destruction and death that inevitably results from Satan's deception on earth.

1.) God is in CONTROL (v. 13-16).

-- The fact that this voice comes from the altar emphasizes again that this judgment will come as God's response to prayer (v.13).

-- The Euphrates River was the place from which trouble came, and whenever it was breached, bad things followed (v. 14).

-- God is entirely **SOVERIGN** over every event of the earth (v. 15).

-- The demonic power to be unleashed is astonishing in its scope and its strength (v. 16).

-- Satanic torment only goes as far as God allows, and it will come to a swift and at the very moment he has decreed.

2.) IDEAS have consequences (v. 17-19).

-- The smoke, fire, and sulfur coming from the mouths of the horses symbolize the wicked lies and deceptions of Satan (John 8:44).

-- The snake-headed tails of this demonic horse army seem to represent the **FOLLOWERS** of false teaching.

-- Major conflict, war, and strife on earth always begin with false ideas.

-- Ex. – Marxism/Communism, Islam, Secular Humanism

-- Ideas move the world, because every philosophy has consequences, for better or for worse.

3.) Deception is **SELF-DESTRUCTIVE**

-- Although the demonic power of Satan is dangerous and devastating, it is always restrained (v. 5, 10, 13, 18).

-- Satan's demonic power on earth is limited because God says so.

-- Satan's attacks inevitably destroy those who seek to advance them.

-- Satan's power is inherently limited, because he rules over a kingdom that is **DIVIDED** against itself (Matthew 12:24-25).

-- People and societies who embrace false philosophies will find themselves promoting the very ideas that will destroy them in the end.

-- Ex. – Marxism/Communism, Militant Islam, Secular Morality

-- It is spiritual foolishness to live for the lies of Satan, because to let him in is to begin the process of your own self-destruction.

4.) Look around and **REPENT** (v. 20-21).

-- People everywhere are blind to reality.

-- Rather than looking to the Creator and praising Him for salvation in Christ, the world still trusts in senseless, powerless, worthless idols.

-- Even though the people who rebel against God are the very people who are tortured most by the deceptions they herald, even still they refuse to see the warning God is revealing in the **SELF-DESTRUCTIVE** pattern of false philosophies.