***Prophecy Special - 9/11 - The Final Solution of God, No. 3

PS03***

We now go to the third section of the final solution of God relative to human history. God has a plan for the ages. God has a plan for the time of humanity from the Garden of Eden to eternity future. We are currently living specifically in the age, or the dispensation, of the church. That is a period of God's special dealing with humanity that began on the day of Pentecost, and will end at the event of the rapture when all Christians, dead and alive, are taken to heaven. During this period of human history, the church age, God has set aside his chosen nation, Israel, in discipline for its national sin. Yes, that's what God does when a nation is guilty of sin; tolerating it; approving it; and, promoting it. He brings judgment upon the people of that nation.

That's where Israel is now. It happened. It began in 70 A.D. when the Romans came in under the General Titus and sacked the city; destroyed the walls; destroy the temple; burned everything to the ground; and, scattered the Jews over the face of the earth. God has temporarily put aside his people. He has not permanently rejected them. It's very important that you understand that. The Jew is not under God's blessing now. He's only under God's blessing when he is in his land, Israel, in subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ. They are not in subjection to Christ now.

Therefore, the Jews are not under the blessing of God. In fact, they are in terror. They live all the time with the threat of terrorism like what we experienced on 9/11. Why is that? Because they said, when Pilate wanted to free Jesus, "Who will bear the blood of this innocent man?" They said, "His blood be upon us and our children."

So it's important for you to understand that the Jew is under the discipline of God and he is not under God's blessing as a nation, but he is not permanently rejected. I stress that because the reformers, from Martin Luther on down, all made that mistake. They all thought that God was through with the Jew as an earthly people. They thought that having rejected the Messiah Savior, that God was finished with them, and that he had substituted the church for them. That is not true. The church is one thing. Israel is another thing.

The truth of the matter is that God has four unconditional covenants (promises) that he made with Israel: the Abrahamic Covenant; the Palestinian Covenant (relative to the land of Israel); the Davidic Covenant (relative to an eternal royal line); and, the New Covenant (the heart change to obey God, not simply Ten Commandment rules by the old sin nature to try to rise to). At the heart of that promise Abraham was that they would be a nation under the Messiah Savior who would rule the whole world. That has never happened. And that covenant is unconditional. There are no "ifs." God says, "I'll do this for you, but not right now."

Now we live in the church age. God is bringing out a super special body of saints which are made up of both Jews and Gentiles. That's what the Book of Hebrews means when it says that God in this age has broken down the middle wall of a partition. Jews never had anything to do with Gentiles. They were separated. Gentiles were dogs to them. Now they find themselves in one spiritual body with them, and Jesus Christ, the head of that body. In the future, the church will be Christ's bride--the most intimate relationship imaginable.

Now, near the end of this church age, which is when the church is caught up in the rapture, God will begin moving mankind toward a world government as all humanity begins to unite in order to try to find peace and prosperity worldwide. I've been reminding you that the people of the world don't understand what happened in the 9/11 terrorist attack because they don't have a biblical perspective. They do not have the frame of reference of what God revealed to Daniel, and then revealed in greater detail in the book of the Revelation. God has a plan. What is happening now here at the end of the church age is moving that plan into high gear.

**World Unity**

We have desperation that you hear everywhere. We have hopes that this terrorism can be controlled here. It hasn't been controlled too well in Israel, and they've been at it for years. This imposes a fear upon people--the realization that tomorrow I might be gone. So, wait a minute. Do I want to leave unprepared to face the Judgment Seat of Christ? Do I know where history is moving? Do I see how close things are? The Bible reveals that in that culmination near the end of the church age, God will begin moving mankind toward a world unity. It will eventuate in a world government where all humanity will unite for the single purpose of peace and prosperity. You listen to the news reports, especially coming out of the United States. It's talking to this nation and that nation. We want you to work with us. You'll work with us. We'll give you money for your poverty. It is union to try to secure peace and safety.

Satan is going to engineer this effort of world unity. It will climax after the rapture of the church, when we're all gone, in the acceptance of the satanically indwelt man that the Bible refers to as the antichrist. He will be the ruler of the world. The period of the antichrist's career will be that era of seven years that were unfulfilled of God's revelation to Daniel. Daniel said, "The 70-year captivity that you predicted is over. What now, Lord? When will you fulfill your covenants (all these promises), and make Israel the leading nation of the world? The Messiah Savior here will be here as our king ruling all the world, and we under him as a leading nation." Gabriel came back and said, "490 years. In 490 years, Daniel, all the promises will be fulfilled. All over the world today, there are regional unions being formed. Countries are coming together in little groups. These various regional unions will make it easier to unite all the world under one government, and eventually under one leader--the antichrist. We currently face the Islamic terrorists (and that's who they are). This congregation is informed. You should be pleased to know that you should be grateful for it. We're opening up to you what is really out there.

On one of the talk shows, with the master of ceremonies here in the metroplex area, they were saying that Islam does not teach the things that these terrorists did. They said that these were extremists. Then a caller came on and he said, "I have studied Islam quite extensively, and what you're telling us is not the case. May I read something to you?" And then he proceeded to read a number of verses out of the Koran, written by Muhammad under Allah's guidance. It was delivered by God's guides through Gabriel. Muhammad did not write these things. He just received it already written. But in Mohammed's teachings, he proceeded to say, "I have revelations from Allah," from the Medina era of his career. This man on the radio read one verse after another that said, "Kill the Jews. Kill the Christians. Anybody who will not submit and become a convert to Islam, do not tolerate him; destroy him; and, take what he has." He went on and on, one verse after another. Every verse was worse than the one before.

**Peace and Safety**

Well, what did the master of ceremonies say? Did he say, "Well, I didn't realize that? I must be wrong." No. He said, "Well, that's extremism. People don't follow those things." Tell that to the grieving families of the thousands of people killed on 9/11. Yes, that is the teaching of Islam. Yes, those 19 men that united to give their lives in order to go to paradise with this jihad act of war for Allah, they did believe these things. So all over the world today, there are unions coming together to unite under the antichrist. What is happening in the terrorism in the United States is driving nations to join up together because they want two things: they want to achieve peace and safety. If you listen to the news, you'll hear those words repeated: "What we want is peace, and to live our lives in safety."

However, the apostle Paul, in speaking about future events and their culmination in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 said, "While they are saying peace and safety, then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." Wait a minute! The apostle Paul is telling us about the time that the world's leaders and the world's organizations have said, "We have united. We have established means of protection and safety. Peace and safety will be ours," and everybody will take a deep sigh of relief. Are you telling me that God is saying that's when the roof is going to cave in on you by divine judgments? That's exactly what the Scriptures are saying. When the leaders of the world think they've brought peace without the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ, that's when it's all going to come to a terrifying end.

However, notice verse 4. This is speaking about you Bereans: "But you, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you like a thief." If you are in darkness, there's only one reason for it. It's because you do not enlighten yourselves with the Word of God taught here. If you do, you are above and beyond even many circles within Bible church groups. You are above and beyond enlightened. But it's all up to you. Verse 5 says, "For you are the sons of light and the sons of day." We are not of the night or darkness. But if you do not get instruction in the Word of God, you're as much of darkness as anybody else.

So this is this picture. The world is being acclimated to accept a strong political religious leader who can finally restrain the suicidal religious fanaticism of the world. This man is going to be powerful. One of the indications of that is that the Bible tells us that when he takes over, the church is out of here; the rapture has taken place; things are set up; the final seven years of the 490 years of world history begins ticking off, then this man is able to control all the Arabs and all the Islamic beliefs, and to provide safety for Israel. He tells them, "I'll be your protector. You'll be loyal to me. Go ahead and rebuild your temple in Jerusalem." They will welcome him with open arms.

Can you imagine a world leader today who can do that to Islamic countries, some of them with 90%-plus Islamic beliefs? This is going to be a man of such power because he is indwelt by Satan, and he has Satan, who is maneuvering all the people of the world to where he thinks he can set up a millennium without Christ.

Daniel, the prophet, had inquired of God near the end of the 70-year Babylonian captivity, and he asked God what the future held for the Jewish people. Daniel wanted to know about the Jewish nation's return to the land and the rebuilding of Jerusalem--the walls and the temple. Daniel wanted to know when all the promises made by God to the Jews for ruling over the world in a kingdom headed by the promised Messiah Savior would be brought about. The angel Gabriel was sent, and he told Daniel that the answer was that all would be fulfilled in 490 years. This is described in the book of Daniel as a period of seventy weeks of years. So we have 490 years. The counting of this 490 years was to begin from the issuing of a certain decree to rebuild Jerusalem by the Medo-Persian king. We know exactly the day he did that. When that was done, the 490-year period began ticking off.

**The Decree to Rebuild Jerusalem**

So I now direct your attention to Daniel 9. The 70 weeks of 490 years to fulfill all of God's covenant with Israel would begin with the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. This decree, we know, was issued by the Persian ruler Artaxerxes Longimanus on March 5th, 444 B.C. If you are good at calculating, you can sit down and figure all this out yourself. You will find that the 483rd year of the 490 concluded on the day that Jesus came in the triumphal entry into Jerusalem saying, "I am your messiah." We'll get to that more in a moment. If you do sit down to try calculating it, please remember that the Jewish year was 360 days, and periodically they would throw in another month to make up for the days that they should have had for 365 that they fell behind. It comes out exactly on target.

Here's the background that brought this about. In Nehemiah 2:1-8, Nehemiah is in prayer: "And it came about in the month of Nisan, in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes, that wine was before him. And I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now, I had not been sad in his presence." You don't wear long face in the presence of the king. But Nehemiah, for some reason, couldn't help himself. Artaxerxes recognized that there was something wrong with this man, Nehemiah, who was a favorite of his. He was very sad. "So the king said to me, 'Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart.' Then I was very much afraid." The king said, "Why are you so sad looking, Nehemiah? I know you're not sick. Therefore, there's something in your heart (your spirit) that's making you blue." Nehemiah knew that people could be punished very severely for depressing the king by their own sadness.

Verse 3 says, "And I said to the king, 'Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be said when the city, the place of my father's tombs, lies desolate, and its gates have been consumed by fire?'" Nehemiah throws caution to the wind, and he says, "I'll tell you why I'm sad, O king. I'm thinking of Jerusalem. It is in a shambles. The temple has been destroyed. The walls are down. The gates have been destroyed. It's the desolation that was imposed by one of your predecessors, Nebuchadnezzar, when he took us here to Babylon in captivity."

Verse 4: "Then the king said to me, 'What would you request?' So I prayed to the God of heaven." Isn't that interesting? What do you want, Nehemiah? Instead of blurting it out, he goes and prays first. Sometimes people come to me and say, "What can I do for Berean Church?" And sometimes I say, "Let me think about that, because I want to consult with the front office of the Lord, and pray about this and think about this to find priority targets."

So Nehemiah prays very quickly there as he stands before the king. "And I said to the king, 'If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my father's tombs, that I may rebuild it.'" Nehemiah says, "Here's what I'd like you to do: give me a commission to go back to Jerusalem; let me take a group of people with me; order me to rebuild the city; and, give me the supplies to do it."

"Then the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), 'How long will your journey be, and when will you return?' So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time." Nehemiah was so important to Artaxerxes, and so beloved by this king, that he said, "I hate to see you go, Nehemiah. How long will you be gone if I'd let you do this?" So Nehemiah said, "I'll go this long." He gave him a time and he said, "I'll be back."

Verse 7: "And I said to the king, 'If it pleases the king, let letters be given me for the journey for the governors of the provinces beyond the river (that is, beyond the Euphrates River), that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah (that is, to move on south from Babylon into Judah), and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make the beams for the gates of the fortress, which is by the temple, for the wall of the city, and for the house to which I will go.' And the king granted them to me, because the good hand of my God was upon me."

Nehemiah, like any servant of the Lord, as those of us who are always in that business, are aware of the fact that carrying out the work of God's people and the work of the Lord needs funds to do it. So he said, here's what it will take. He tells the king, this is what I need. The king understood that he can't have a good servant who is capable of carrying things through if he doesn't give him the logistical means to do it. He has to have the funding. So he gave it to him.

And this was the background for the king Artaxerxes Longimanus signing decree on March 5th, 444 B.C. to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple. And the prophetic clock starts ticking. One year after another, the time was in motion.

So Daniel 9:25 says, "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree (now you know the background of that decree and who did it) to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince" becomes the ruler of all the world. That is what we call the Second Coming of Christ. They didn't know that then. "Until Messiah the Prince, there will be a division of time. First of all, seven weeks, and then a period of 62 weeks." Well, "Messiah the Prince" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, and this period from the Persian king's decree to Jesus Christ as the anointed ruler of the world ends at his Second Coming when he establishes His millennial kingdom on this earth.

This 490 years will be broken up, first of all, into 49 years. It says in the 49-year period, "Jerusalem will be built again with the plaza (that is the streets and moat), and even in times of distress." From 444 B.C to 395 B.C., Jerusalem was rebuilt. The temple was rebuilt. All of this was fulfilled.

**The Triumphal Entry**

Then came another period of time: 62 weeks. How long is 62 weeks? 62 weeks of years (seven times 62) is 434 years. We've had 49 years, and now we have 434 years in these 2 eras of time. During the 434 years, life has gone on in Israel. The people married, and had families and children. Then this makes 483 years, and then everything stopped. The day that it stopped was March 30th, 33 A.D. This has been calculated to the very day. What happened on March 30, 33 A.D.? We call it Palm Sunday. It was a day when Jesus Christ finally made his official presentation after His three years of ministry. The Bible said that He would be identified in a very special way coming into the city of Jerusalem--riding on a little donkey that had never been ridden before. It says that you will identify Him by that act as the Messiah Savior, apart from all the other things that he had done in his 3 years of ministry.

So, we have 483 years. You can see that from Daniel's 490 years, we have 7 years left before Israel has a kingdom that rules the world. But now it is Palm Sunday, and Christ is going to make His triumphal entry to identify Himself. The Jews were very well versed in the Old Testament Scriptures, so they knew Zachariah 9:9, speaking of the identification of the Messiah Savior. It says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion (Israel). Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you. He is just and endowed with salvation. Your Savior Messiah king is here, humble and mounted on a donkey, even a colt, the foal of a donkey (a baby donkey)."

When Jesus came riding into Jerusalem on this donkey that had never been ridden before, the mother donkey probably walked along with them. But He didn't ride the mother. He was riding the offspring, exactly as Zachariah had predicted. Notice in the New Testament, Matthew 21:4-5: "Now, this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Say to the daughter of Zion, behold your king is coming to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." Jesus was welcomed in Jerusalem. Jesus pointed out that when this would happen, it was the fulfilling of Scripture--His coming into this city in this way.

Well, this was a triumphal entry. This was the final official presentation of Jesus Christ to the nation of Israel as her messiah. And the people welcomed him. Luke 19:28-40 is an extended passage, but you need to have this as the background to notice what happened to Jesus Christ and what the Jews did that was so very foolish: "And after He had said these things, He was going on ahead, ascending to Jerusalem (Jesus). And it came about that when He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples saying, 'Go into the village opposite you, in which as you enter, you will find a colt tide on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, why are you untying it? Thus, shall you speak: 'The Lord has need of it.' And they were sent went away and found it, just as He had told him. And as they were untying the colt, its owner said to them, 'Why are you untying to colt?' And they said, 'The Lord has need of it.' They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their garments on the colt and put Jesus on it.

The man who owned the colt, by divine information, was alert and understood what was happening when they said, "We're getting the colt for the Lord." He said, "Oh, okay. This is the fulfillment of Zachariah."

And as he was going riding on his colt, coming into the city, they were spreading their garments on the road. This is what they do for a king. You take your garment off and you lay it on the road, so the king walks across it. "And as he was now approaching near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice, for all the miracles which they had seen." The people remembered the authentication of Jesus' miracles which also were predicted in the Old Testament: "You'll know the Messiah. He'll be a God man. He will perform miracles that only a man of God could perform." Jesus didn't use his deity to perform miracles. He acted in his humanity, like Paul or Peter with their miracles. But it was God the Holy Spirit, empowering Him to do this. So the people remembered the miracles and they were saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

Why were they saying something like this? Because they knew that the Old Testament said, "You'll know your Messiah Savior by this act of riding on a colt into Jerusalem, and He will have confirmed His claim by the miracles He has performed."

"And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to Him, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.' He answered and said, 'I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out.'" The Pharisees said, "Do you hear what they're saying? Do you hear what they're calling you? They're calling you the Messiah. They're calling you the Lord God. Tell them to stop it." Jesus said, "If I told these people to be silent and they were, all these rocks along the road would burst out with praise in speaking of me and saying what they are saying." Nobody can silence this powerful presentation that Jesus Christ was Lord of Lord, King of Kings, and now ready to set up the kingdom.

In Psalm 118:25 says, "O Lord, do save. We beseech you. O Lord. We beseech you. Do send prosperity. O Lord do save. We beseech you." That phrase, "O Lord, do save" in the Hebrew is "Hosanna." "Oh, Lord, do save" is "hosanna." "Save us. We pray." This psalm is directed to the Messiah, meaning the one who is going to be the Savior. The people were saying, "Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna. Hosanna." That's what bothered the religious leaders. "Do you hear what they're saying? They're calling him the Lord God to bring them salvation." They were doing it because they saw the mark of riding on that little donkey.

Matthew 21:9 records the same incident--the entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Jesus was on the little colt, and a multitude was going before Him. "And those who followed after Him were crying, 'Hosanna to the son of David.'" They knew that the Messiah had to come through the lineage of David. That had also been predicted. Jesus was through the line of David, the greater son of David. He was the greater King. "Hosanna. Lord, save us. Lord, save us. Bring us salvation. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." Isn't that interesting? It is exactly what the psalm said that people would say when the Savior came, to identify that Savior.

**The Prophet**

Psalm 118:25: "O Lord, do save us. We beseech thee." Matthew, 21:10-11: "And when he had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred saying, 'Who is this?'" Remember that the city was crowded for the Passover feast. They said, "Who is this? And the multitudes were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee. *This is the prophet.* Did you hear those words? These are very important words. It's another identifying mark--the prophet. And who's in the background? Satan is listening, and saying, "The prophet? You're identifying Him by the technical term, 'the Prophet.'" Why is that important?

Well, we have to go back to Deuteronomy 18:15. Now it's Moses this time to be told how to identify the Savior, which is to come promised to Abraham, that all the world, through a descendant of Abraham, would be saved. Notice Deuteronomy 18:15: "The Lord your God," Moses told, "will raise up for you a prophet like me, from among you, from your countrymen, and you shall listen to Him." It is from that passage that the Messiah was identified and called by the term "the Prophet." When people said, "Oh, that the prophet would come," they were praying for the Messiah Savior to come.

Now do you see the connection? Have some of you already made it without my pointing it out now? Who was the prophet behind happened on 9/11? Who is constantly referred to as the prophet? Osama bin Laden, in his message to the men who were going to carry out the jihad and who were going to die: "Remember in the name of the prophet. Remember the promise of the prophet that you would have paradise immediately." Of whom are they speaking? They're speaking of Muhammad. He's the prophet. Satan listened to this. Satan said, "Jesus Christ is the prophet?" You want a prophet? I'll give you a prophet." So he took this poor, ignorant, simple Bedouin out in the desert (purportedly, they were not even sure he could read and write), and gave him (in a catatonic type of fit) recitations from the spirit world of Satan that were then written down by his wife and became the Koran. Later, other sayings of Muhammad were recorded in the Hadith, the traditions.

So here is the prophet today. This is a repeated phrase in the mouths of the Muslim clerics: "Blessed be the prophet. Blessed be the name of the prophet." In the 9/11 prayer and remembrance breakfast in Washington in the cathedral, that President Bush very properly organized and connected, a prominent Muslim stood up and greeted them in the name of Abraham, Muhammad, and Jesus. Do you catch the connection that Jesus Christ is low man on the totem pole? He is not God. Allah said that: "He's not God. God has no sons."

Allah used to be known as having three daughters. Muhammad, in a moment of laxness, said, "You may worship the three daughters of Allah. And his fundamentalist followers said, "That doesn't seem right that you're worshiping the daughters of Allah. Allah cannot have any offspring." So then he went back to his other original teaching that Allah has no offspring. He has no son. He has no daughters.

But at that prayer breakfast, the prophet Muhammad was put ahead of the prophet Jesus. So let's get our head screwed on straight. You're not going to get it from the news. You're not going to get it from those people who have public exposure, and therefore, people believe everything they say. They have great wealth and fame and fortune. It's certainly not going to pay any attention to a Podunk, no-account, little, backwater church and preacher as we have here at Berean church. But what we do have is the Word of God. That's why we're ahead of the game, we are in the know, and they are not.

So, what Daniel was told about this important person: "You are to know and discern that from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince is in charge over a kingdom will be seven weeks, and then 62 weeks." Then verse 26 says, "Then after the 62 weeks, the Messiah will be cut off." When did the 62 weeks end? The 62 weeks was 483 years, and it ended on March 30, 33 A.D. It was 483 years to the very day. The Bible is always very exact. It was exact to the very day--Palm Sunday. What did they do with Jesus Christ? Did they accept him as the Prophet that had been predicted to Moses that God would give as a Messiah Savior? They did not. They rejected Him. They did not accept Him. Before the week was out, under the guidance of the religious leaders and the rabbis, they were calling for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

**The Church**

However, we have one week left of the 490 years unfulfilled. There are seven years left to fulfill God's promises to Israel. So what does that tell you? It tells you that something happened. The 69th week would have gone right on to the 70th, but it did not. It was cut off. That tells us that there is a vast period of time between the 69th and the final 70th week (seven years) of God's plan for Israel. It stopped on Palm Sunday, and it has not started again since. It has been almost 2,000 now that the clock has stopped. During this interval, however, in Israel's program, the Lord Jesus Christ inserted something that had never been revealed before in the Old Testament. It was something that had never been declared up to the time that He revealed it.

He was with his disciples. He crossed out of Jerusalem. He was over in Caesarea Philippi on gentile territory. He said to them, "Men, I want to tell you something. I've been rejected. I have not been accepted as the Messiah Savior. Now something new is going to happen. God's blessing is being withdrawn from our nation. It will come under great discipline. Our city and our temple are going to be destroyed. The walls will be broken down. We are going to lose it all. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says, "But I say to you," speaking to Peter, "And upon this rock, I will build my church and the gates of hell (the gates of Hades, that should say) shall not overpower it."

The background here is that Jesus says to the disciples, "Now you see what the people have done. They rejected me in the procession. God has moved into another track to bring about my crucifixion. In the process, I will bear the sins of all mankind." Then he says, in verse 15, "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ. You're the Messiah and you are the Son of the living God." Muhammad taught that there was no Son of God, because he had a moon God. That's what Allah is. That's why the crescent moon is on top of the Dome of the Rock. Allah was the God of the moon in the Arabian culture.

Verse 17: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father, who is in heaven.'" Nobody ever gets to heaven, including you and me (as splendid people as we are), no one gets to heaven until God the Holy Spirit gives you an understanding to believe the gospel. You will never believe the gospel on your own. Jesus said, "Consider yourself honored, Simon Peter. You have said something that the rabbis don't understand, because God will not reveal it to them, but He revealed it to you. You should consider yourself blessed and honored that you know so much of Scripture and the deep things are the things of God, and that God the Holy Spirit teaches you, and you know how to be in a position where you can be taught." Most church folks don't know this at all. So they work on emotions and trivialities.

Then Jesus said, after saying that to Simon Peter, "I say unto you, Peter." Here the Greek has to come in. You can't understand it from the English. He said, "I say unto you, Pebble." Peter (Petros) means a pebble--a small rock. "I say unto you, Pebble, that upon this rock." And there's a different Greek word. "Rock" there means a monster boulder. What he's referring to is what Peter has just said, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." That is the bedrock confession of the truth. Jesus is the Son of God. He is the Prophet. Muhammad is the false prophet brought about as a counterfeit substitute by Satan. "Upon this rock, I will build my church." They had no idea what that meant. Church? Assembly? What is that? Israel--we understand Israel. What is the church? This was brand new. That's all He said.

Then later on, in the epistles, Paul said, "I was into salvation. At the point of my salvation, I was hustled out of Damascus to save my life. I was taken out by God, of all places, to the Arabian Desert. For three years, the Lord Jesus Christ explained to me the new doctrines of the new age of the church, the body and bride of Christ. This was in the very place where Muhammad got the revelations from Satan. Does that give you goose bumps or what? Satan is a counterfeiter, and if you are not informed in Word of God, and if you do not have the frame reference as you people have, you'll be suckers every time like everybody else in our society is. In the very Arabian Desert where Satan brought his counterfeit was the place where the apostle Paul received the magnificent instruction on the church age. Do you see what it means to know the mind of God through Bible doctrine and the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling you? The Old Testament Saints were never permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. They never had the power of the Holy Spirit to do right; to live; and, to make their lives count for eternity. They did not have grace to carry them along, as you and I do, unless we foul it up and we dig our heels and refuse to go with God.

So here it is. This is the picture. Something has happened. The 70th week was never fulfilled. God inserted the church age, and Israel has temporarily been set aside. In Matthew 21:42-43, Jesus said, "Did you never read in the Scriptures the Stone which the builders rejected? (This is a quote from the Old Testament.) This became the Chief Cornerstone." Who is the stone? Jesus Christ. That's the one they rejected. "This came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes." The stone which the builders of Israel rejected, God said, that's My Cornerstone--the Chief Stone, Jesus Christ. And what they rejected, God built everything on that pertains to you and me as the body of Christ.

Matthew 21:43: "Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruit of it." He was speaking to the Jewish ringleaders: "The kingdom of God is going to be taken away from you. It is going to be given to another group of people who will produce the fruit of it. You folks are the recipients of this majestic blessing of God.

This gets even wilder and more exciting as we get into it, which we'll pick up next time, of the progression now from that interval between the 69th and 70th week, and the final fulfillment of the 70th week. What I'm telling you is that in this 2,000-year period (thus far) between these two, we're right down at the end of it. We're pushing right up against the edge. How do I know that? Because I do know the conditions that will exist out here in the world seven years later. Those conditions are all coming to pass right now. They're getting ready to pop in as soon as we're gone up in the rapture. In the meantime, let's rally to our calling.

Dr. John E. Danish, 2002

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