***Prophecy Special - 9/11 - The Final Solution of God, No. 8

PS08***

We now direct your attention to the final solution of God, segment number eight in our special series. The current siege of suicidal and biological terrorism against the United States is laying the groundwork for America's acceptance someday of the antichrist, who will be heading a world government during the tribulation era. This will be done to secure peace and safety. All around us, we see nations being driven into each other's co-operative union in order to try to bring peace and safety.

This hope will prove to be false as Scripture predicts. It will climax in the campaigns of Armageddon under the control of Satan's man, the antichrist. The tribulation world government cannot come into power until after the rapture of the church. When that happens, all spiritual wisdom for resisting the antichrist will be removed from this earth in American society. The Holy Spirit will leave with the rapture of the Christians. Therefore, the Word of God tells us that the restrainer of evil, God the Holy Spirit, will no longer be here. Gradually the United States will descend into a total spiritual darkness and oblivion.

That's probably why we don't hear anything about this country while we hear about all kinds of other countries predicted and discussed in Scripture--but not America. This is probably because Scripture does says does say that to those of us who much has been given, much is expected, and will be required by God. That's a good thing to remember. If you've given been given a lot of time of life, you are really going to be asked to account for that before God. If you've given been given exceptional spiritual talents, skills, and abilities, you are really going to be required to account for what you did with that--with those spiritual gifts that were allotted to you out of the nine potential ones. Those of you who have been prospered with treasures as life has moved along, and all of us as Americans start off prospered. You are really going to be accountable at the Judgment Seat of Christ as to what you did with that. American society has an opportunity in our day, because we are here. Once we Christians are gone, and the power of the Holy Spirit leaves with us, then people will be able to do whatever their sin nature wants, and there will be no holding back. The final preparation for this is taking place in our day.

That's what's happening with the terrorists' movement. For us to be getting contacts from people who are fearful, whether because of what we preach, as our friend in Mid-America said, "The Muslims will not feel very cordial toward Berean church." She said, "I loved that last sermon. I loved that phrase you used the word--that with God, it's the Word and the Word and the Word, nor is it anything else in life." She said, "That's where it is. We get it from you, and we're grateful." Her concern was that biblical Christians who really know what they're talking about are actually going to be the focus of Satan's attack, and she's right.

Exactly what is the antichrist is going to be doing? Well, we have walked you through Revelation 13. The first ten verses describe the nature and work of the antichrist himself. He will head up a restored Roman Empire and a confederacy of ten nations in Western Europe. God views this charismatic leader as a beast. That's what he's called. He's an unsaved human being who is empowered by Satan. His empire includes the features of seven past world empires, which are also viewed as beasts by God. These are the seven heads that are spoken of. The antichrist will sustain a physical wound which should be fatal. But Satan, because of his miracle working power, will enable him to survive to the amazement of all mankind. His survival, of course, will be an imitation of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some Bible teachers think that perhaps this wound is the fact that the Roman Empire, which is supposedly done and gone, suddenly comes on the scene again. That may be possible. The Roman Empire will be revived. It is now fragmented in various nations, but those nations will come together, and Rome will once more be in power. So that could be another feature. All of that will become clear as we get close to it. However, unsaved humanity will be viewing the antichrist as a god, and it will proceed to worship him. This in fact will be worshiping the power behind the antichrist, which is Satan. The antichrist will be viewed as invincible. He will openly blaspheme the Creator God, and particularly direct hatred against the believers in heaven. The antichrist conducts war with all nations. He becomes the ruler of all mankind, over all nations, during the last three-and-a-half years of the tribulation, and all unsaved humanity will worship him.

The decree of God toward dealing with the antichrist has already been passed, and then it will be fully carried out at the end of those seven years. This man of evil will be cast alive into the lake of fire. Revelation 13:11-18 describe the work of the right hand man of the antichrist, the false prophet. The false prophet appears to be an innocent mild religious leader, but he is again portrayed as another beast who preaches the word of Satan. The false prophet exercises authority delegated to him by the antichrist during the great tribulation to lead unbelievers to worship the antichrist.

The false prophet has power from Satan to perform miracles as signs of proof. For example, he makes fire come down from heaven. These things that the true province of God did in Scripture, this man is able to do. Do not be fooled by the charismatics' claim to miracles. It's not entirely a false claim. When there is a genuine miracle, most of them are fake and false. It's the power of Satan that's working, not the power of God. The satanic miracles enable the false prophet to rally the whole world to set up an image of the antichrist in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, and to be worshipped as such.

The false prophet with his satanic powers we've seen, will cause the antichrist's image to appear to be alive and to actually speak. The believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, however (and there will be believers who are saved then), will not be fooled. So they will refuse to worship the antichrist, and they therefore will be murdered. Martyrdom will be widespread. But somehow the image will seem to speak. Of course, that will be very easily done simply by a demonic spirit, and it does happen today.

Every person still alive in the great tribulation will be given a mark on his body as a sign of his allegiance to the antichrist. The mark will either be on your right hand, or it will be on your forehead. When you take it, it will be an act of worship. This is another imitation of what God does. Every one of us as Christians is what? Sealed. There is a divine mark upon us. It is the mark of God. God the Holy Spirit is that mark. When God looks upon us, He sees His stamp upon us, and He knows we are His. We are marked before all the universe to be His. Satan says, "Well, I'll have a mark, too." Of course, when the mark of the Holy Spirit is put upon you, you can't reverse it. You are forever saved. Likewise, when the mark of the antichrist is put upon, you can't reverse that either. You are forever loss. So this accepting of this identifying mark of allegiance is pretty serious. The antichrist prevents anyone without his mark, however, from being able to buy or sell. Thus people will have trouble getting food, getting shelter, and getting clothing. It will be a terrible time. But believers will be helping believers secretly one way or another.

The mark of the beast will consist of the antichrist's name or number. His number is 666. Six is the number short of perfection. The number seven is the number of perfection in the Bible. The number 666 may be referring to the falling short of divinity and of deity of the false trinity: Satan; the antichrist; and, the False Prophet. God's number (seven) would be 777 because it is the perfection of God, the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They are deity. What that number will mean will become very clear to the people at the time. Up to then, it's speculation. What is the end of this man--the false religious leader to whom all the world will follow? The lake of fire. He is thrown into it alive.

**The Tribulation Period**

What I'd like to begin in this session is to take you through the times of what is going to be happening in the tribulation period. It is, as you know, a period of seven years. It is the seven last years of Daniel's 490 years predicted that were remaining in human history. That countdown stopped on the day of the first Palm Sunday when Christ was officially rejected, to the very day that the 483rd year ended. There are yet seven years unfulfilled. That's what's happening in our country today and around the world. The preparation for the terror, the horror, and the nightmare of the tribulation years, and the helplessness of man.

These are portrayed under a series of three pictures. First there are seals; then, there are trumpets; and, the third are called bowls. The first are a series of seven seals. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is qualified to break those seals, and He breaks one seal after another. You must think about this as a scroll that is rolled up. They put a seal there. It is rolled up more, and they put another seal there, and so on. You break the seal and you reveal what's in it. So you come to the seventh seal, and when that seal is broken, it opens up a series of seven trumpet judgments. When you get to the seventh trumpet judgment, it opens up a series of bowl judgments. These are horrendous beyond any human imagination.

These bowl judgments, as you will see as we go through them, will destroy all mankind. So you couldn't have a millennium and you couldn't have anything. Therefore, we suspect that they are within the last weeks or months of the tribulation era. These things that you will see in the bowls could not go on with people still surviving. When you get to the fourth bowl judgment, you're probably at mid-tribulation. These others go on. Then they pick up speed in the second part, the last three-and-a-half years, and it's all near the very end, and it's going at record speed, launch speed, or rocket speed right down to the end.

We're going to begin with the seals. This is the first thing that happens. The church is gone. We have joined all of our friends and relatives and loved ones in heaven. Everybody who is born again now has a physical body. Right now, the Christians in heaven do not have their physical bodies. They are in the graves, but they have a temporary body. We'll show you why that is here in a moment. But the first three-and-a-half years of the tribulation will be a time of unprecedented trouble on the earth. This is fulfilling Daniel's 70th week. The antichrist is trying to create a millennium on earth without Christ. His idea is to get things under control. That's what tyrants always want to do so.

So concerning the first three-and-a-half years, we have already seen from Daniel 9:27 that the antichrist signs a seven-year treaty with Israel to act as her protector. He is the head of the western confederacy of ten nations. So Israel, by this act, will be firmly aligned with the West. She is not a friend of the Arabs. She is not a friend of the Eastern bloc at all. The blocs of the other world powers are in a cold war now because Israel is under the protective care of this powerful man. They can't touch the Jew. Israel then feels for the first time secure: secure from the communists; and, secure from the Arabs. Under the auspices of the antichrist, they are permitted to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem. They restore all the rituals of worship that they once had. The means for doing this is already in place. Israel already has created all the instruments of ministry. They've created all the utensils. They've worked out all the procedures. All they need is an altar in the proper place and the temple.

In Revelation 6, the Lord Jesus Christ comes along and takes this scroll that is given to Him, and He proceeds during the first three-and-a-half years to break open these seals one-by-one. This is a series of seals against the earth dwellers--unbelievers. The seals set in motion horrendous events in the first three-and-a-half years.

Please remember that when the Bible was written, about 25% of it was prophetic. It talked about future things. This is one of the ways we can test the Bible as to whether it is a work of God or the work of man like the Koran; the Book of Mormon; or, the writings of the Hindus, and so on. Those books do not carry the stamp of God upon them. One of the things they certainly do not do is predict future events. But when the Bible puts itself on the line with making a prediction, most of these have now been fulfilled, and they have been fulfilled in exact detail.

When it told that a Savior was coming, it told He would be born in the line of David. He was. It told He was going to be born of a virgin woman. He was. It told He was to be born in the city of Bethlehem. He was. And it went right down the line predicting what this Messiah Savior would be like, and the details of his life. It told He would be identified by His miraculous work that he would perform, and his sinless life. It told that the mark of God would be upon Him. He would have a forerunner, who'd be his cousin, who would identify Him also. He would come riding into Jerusalem on a donkey never ridden before, and the people would recognize him and call out to him, "Hosanna," "Lord, save us." By Wednesday night of that week, they had Him on the cross under the auspices of the Roman government to kill him. That was predicted too. One of the Psalms goes into detail of His execution on the cross: the agony; and, what He would feel. There was no such thing as crucifixion when that psalm was written. That was a Roman technique brought in centuries later.

So the scene is set. Christ has been rejected. He is now in heaven at the Father's right hand. The church has been taken out. They're all in heaven. Don't ask me whether we will have a monitor in heaven to watch the scenes on earth. I hope so, but I don't know.

**The First Seal**

So here we go. Revelation 6:1: "I saw when the Lamb (Jesus Christ) broke one of the seven seals, I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, 'Come.'" The four living creatures are cherubim angels, a special class of angel, they're the ones with wings, who stand around the throne of God as a holy honor guard. They yell, "Come." Some manuscripts add the word, "See." "Come and see."

Verse 2 says, "And I looked. The seal was broken, and I saw a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." This rider on the white horse at this point in this revelation is not the Lord Jesus Christ. He will come from heaven on a white horse as the true rider of righteousness. However, this rider is the antichrist. He comes on a white horse. He is a false Christ, and he comes to conquer to bring peace to the world.

You will notice that he has a bow, but no arrow. This signifies this is a peaceful conquest. And he has a crown. This is not the crown of a ruling monarch. This is the crown of victory. We know that from the Greek words. This is the "stephanos" crown. It's a crown of victory which is given to him to be able to bring peace to this earth.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 also deals with this: "While they're saying, 'Peace and safety.'" When will they say that? Right here at the beginning of the tribulation. The antichrist is going to bring them peace and safety. Why will that be so big? Well, because of 9/11 and other events that will be happening eventually all around the country with biological terror. People are uneasy. People aren't going out to entertainments. They're not going out to restaurants. They're not buying things because there is no peace and there is no safety. There is fear.

But while they're saying, "Peace and safety," the great antichrist brings it all together for them, "then destruction will come upon them suddenly, like birth pains upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." So this is seal number one, peaceful conquest. He becomes a victor in the eyes of people.

**The Second Seal**

The Lord Jesus Christ then breaks the second seal and unrolls the scroll in verses 3-4: "When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creatures saying, 'Come,' and a red horse went out. To him, who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another. And a great sword was given to him." The rider on this red horse, the horse of war, is the antichrist. Around the world in various places, war breaks out. The peace in the tribulation world is always unstable, and it always has to be maintained by the force of power because of the old sin nature of man. The U.N. always tries, as it will then, to stifle these conflicts, but without any great success. You'll notice that this man has a great sword. That means that he has a powerful military establishment and a means of maintaining control over nations.

**The Third Seal**

Then Christ breaks the third seal and unrolls the scroll. Here we have a rider on a black horse. "When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, 'Come,' and I looked and behold a black horse. He who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand." What do you need scales for? To weigh out things, and to get evaluations of the worth of something. "And I heard, as it were, a voice in the center of the four living creatures, saying, 'A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and the wine." A denarius was the amount of a day's wage. For a day's wage here in the tribulation period, inflation will take hold in a horrendous way, and a person will work all day long for a quart of wheat--one good meal, but not for many people. Or if he buys cheaper grain, like barley, he can get three quarts for his day's wage, and he can get three less nutritious meals.

There will be a conflict of inflation. Consequently, for poor people, the high cost of buying things will result in tremendous hardships. But it says, "Don't harm the oil and the wine." They can't touch it. But the rich people, they'll be able buy the oil. They'll be able to buy the wine. They'll be able to buy the good things because they have the means to do it. These are the luxury items. The rest will have no money to buy. This is a socialist society that will be established, and it will already be breaking down. It'll be impossible for the antichrist's government to be able to provide the means of feeding these people.

**The Fourth Seal**

So we've heard from three of the living creature angels. Now, the fourth one comes on the scene in the fourth seal in verse 7: "And when He (Jesus Christ) broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come.' And I looked and behold, an ashen horse (some of your Bibles may have 'yellowish green' or 'pale' horse). And he who sat on it had the name of death and Hades (where dead unbelievers go) was following with him, and authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth to kill with the sword; with famine; with pestilence; disease; and, by the wild beasts of the earth."

When this seal is broken, out comes the horse of death. There is famine and death everywhere. This is now at least the middle of the seven-year tribulation period. This sword, which is given to the antichrist to conquer over all those who resist him (and there will be people who do that). The result is that a fourth of the world's population dies. We're told that the world's population is now over 6 billion. What's 25% of that? One-and-a-half billion people are going to be killed in something like three-and-a-half years. That's an enormous number of people. That's approaching the midpoint of the tribulation. Now you have one-and-a-half million people killed. If you plan to be here during the tribulation, go into the mortician business. You're going to be buying the wine and the oil--the good stuff, because you're not going to run out of business.

Things are really getting out of hand for the antichrist. This is prophecy, folks. This is true. This is what's going to happen. Any prophetic Scriptures in the Bible have always been fulfilled. It is something you can count on.

This is where the expression comes from, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." Apocalypse is another name for the book of the Revelation. Apocalypse means "future" because that's what the Greek word is--revelation. When University of Chicago had a football team in earlier times, one year they had four tremendous football players. They could do no wrong. They could do nothing but win. When those four men were on the team, the Chicago newspapers used to start referring to them as the four horsemen of the apocalypse. That was a time when people knew more about the Bible, and they knew what the term referred to. But the four horsemen, when they got on that football field, nothing could stop them. They brought destruction to the other team all around them.

**The Fifth Seal**

Well, now we're down to the midpoint of the tribulation, moving over to the second part which the Bible calls the great tribulation. The fifth seal is broken. Verse 9: "And when he (Jesus Christ) broke the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained." Here are people who are in heaven. They're under the altar, the place of security, the place of the blood of Christ. They are here because of the Word of God. This is referring specifically to people who did not leave in the rapture. This is referring specifically to people who now have trusted in Christ. They're back on Old Testament ground. They'll never be part of the church, but they are believers, and they are born again. Martyrdom will almost inevitably be their destiny.

Verse 10 says, "And they cried out with a loud voice saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true will you refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" "Those who dwell on the earth" is a technical term for unbelievers. "There was given to each of them a white robe, and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed, even as they had been, should be completed also." God has an orderly progression of a certain number of martyrs who will lose their lives in the tribulation period. God says, "Be patient, dear people. I know you're indignant for your righteousness and your loyalty to Jesus Christ. You have been killed, and others are going to follow, but there good times ahead for you, and you're going to find that it was all worth it indeed for all eternity." These are the cry of the martyred remnant--believers slain here on earth during the tribulation. They had a common experience because of their testimony for Christ.

How were these people saved? Who was giving them the information? Well, it's true that there are 144,000 Jewish evangelists--12,000 from each tribe. They're proclaiming the truth, and they're immortal and invincible. The antichrist can't kill them. They go about proclaiming what's happening. They're telling people that this is what Scripture told us was coming. They're proclaiming salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. People are believing that. But they can't be everywhere. How are these people going to be saved? Well, because of Bibles that have been left behind; and because of Berean evangelism booklets that have been left behind in as many languages as we can perhaps get them into, and that are circulating from hand to hand. They'll be left behind for people to read. People will be saved from things like Berean written messages and audio recordings, and the Word of God that's on them.

Can you imagine what it's going to be like for you then regarding your treasures in heaven? You'll still be accumulating and accruing them for people who are saved then. People write us these humbling letters of their gratitude for the Word of God that they've come across on a Berean message or and audio recording, astounded by the information that they cannot believe that this is what is real in spiritual things. "Why haven't I heard this?" Because you went to a big church that had a program, but didn't have an expository preacher in the pulpit. So the voice of truth was silenced for you. So there will be all kinds of things left behind that will be the means that people will secretly study. If they're caught studying it, yes, they'll be killed, but they have an opportunity to learn. They're told to wait patiently until God's vindication is complete.

You'll notice in verse 11 that there is given to each of them a white robe. This is a garment signifying their righteousness. It's not a garment that they prepare for themselves. There is another garment in other Scripture that says we will wear it when we come into eternity. That is a garment that you do make for yourself. That's the garment that you make out of your divine good works. That's the garment that you have made out of cutting the pattern of your time, your treasures, and your talents. That garment will be what you wear. That will be given you. But here, the point is that a spirit cannot wear a garment. It has to have some support.

When I go down the street to Kroger, they have a huge witch there right in the aisle with a conical pointed hat, a scythe in her hand, and a skull face looking down. Well, demons are spirits. Halloween is all about spirits. I looked under the under the robe. It was no spirit. It's made up of wires and support. If its spirits, you can't put a robe on it. Isn't that interesting? Christians in heaven don't have their bodies now, but Paul says they do have a temporary covering. On that temporary covering--a body-like covering, you can wear a robe. It has a substance on which it will hang. So we know from that that there is something in heaven that carries us through.

**The Sixth Seal**

We're down to the sixth seal in verse 12. Here you have havoc in nature. What can be more frightening than that? I've never been through a tornado or a hurricane, but I remember one time being very near tornadoes hitting around us, but not hitting us. The sky literally was a pea green color as the clouds rolled around. We had a school full of children that we were having to try to decide how to protect. When the rain hit, some of those spots that you see down in the library on the floor were caused by water driven from one floor and one roof down to the next, one way or another, and water was dripping in the library. Havoc in nature can be really frightening.

Verse 12 says, "And I looked when He (Jesus Christ) broke the sixth seal." He unraveled the scroll, "and there was a great earthquake. The sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood. The stars of the sky fell to the earth as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. And the sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up. And every mountain and island were moved out of their places, and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the commanders, and the rich, and the strong, and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us. Hide us from the presence of Him who sits on a throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come. Who is able to stand?"

These are unbelievers, and they finally have gotten the picture. They realize that everything that these Christians were telling them was true. They had kept blowing off these Christians as being idiots of one kind or another. These people had been enraged at a Christian school that had that put out on its sign, "God bless America," and the ACLU had come after the school because they said that was a divisive statement. This madness of liberal socialism that dominates our country today is going to stand there looking like fools for having gotten in the face of that school. They're all going to, in their desperate pain and suffering and fear now, realize that there is a God up there. He really is there, and He really is in charge.

So here you have the fact that the earth's surface and the very floor of the oceans are all honeycombed with fault lines that can break up and move. No earthquake is an isolated incident. It is part of a honeycomb.

Just outside of Yellowstone National Park several years ago, there was a mountain made of dolomite granite which is the very weakest kind. The face of the mountain began to crumble. The whole mountain came down and came across the river and dammed up the river there. Some people who were camping in that area were simply covered by the debris that came down. It just shook and turned things topsy-turvy--on end. All of a sudden, some of the fountains and the hot water geysers in Yellowstone National Park didn't work anymore. They had been affected by what happened miles away outside the park. This is because there is a honeycomb under the earth, and these fault lines are all connected one to another. So that's what you have here. Geologists now realize that the earth's crust is capable of having fantastic upheavals.

Several years ago, when I was at the Alaska Bible College for 2 weeks of Bible lectures, they showed me the movies of the earthquake in Alaska that had just shortly before that taken place. This man, I don't know where he stood, but he had his camera going on the field as the earth was shaking and the earth was actually making waves. I thought at first that they were on the water, but these were the shock waves, and the earth was rolling across up and down as if you were on waves on the water. It was scary just to watch in that movie. This is the way of the structure of the earth's surface. So a killer quake such as is going to happen here is going to be a nightmarish experience, and these will be common in the tribulation. Isaiah 2:19 indicates that.

The quakes are predicted, and they're a sign of the nearness of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus did this in Matthew 24. This is one of the things you can count on. When earthquakes start mounting up, start adding them up, and start counting your time. In Matthew 24:3-4: "And He (Jesus Christ) was sitting on the Mount of Olives. The disciples came to him privately saying, 'Tell us when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?'" In verse 7, Jesus says, "For nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. In various places there'll be famines and earthquakes."

You tell me: what's increasing in our day? Famines, at breakneck speed. What's increasing? Earthquakes, more violent than ever before. The Lord Jesus Christ says, "The closer my Second Coming comes." This is not the rapture. This is the Second Coming. The rapture is seven years before the Second Coming. So we do have that kind of a signal. The closer the Second Coming comes, the more these disruptions in nature will be taking place. The sun will be darkened. It's talking about camel's hair cloth which is black. The moon looks red like blood. Meteor showers are occurring--stars falling upon the earth. The heaven rolled back in some way. Maybe they even see some glory of heaven. And every mountain and island is moved--upheavals in the earth's crust.

**The Seventh Seal**

Then we come to seal number seven. There is an interruption at the end of chapter 6. You have to go over to Chapter 8. Revelation 8:1-6 introduces the seventh seal: "And when He broke the seventh seal, there was silence in the heaven for about half-an-hour." It is like the center of a hurricane. Things are ominously getting ready to happen. "And I saw the seven angels stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer (a shovel), and much incense was given to him that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the Lord before the throne."

The incense which was burned in the temple ceremony in the holy place was symbolic of prayer. When we gather in prayer meeting, we're burning the incense of prayer to God, and He listens most intently. "The smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints went up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it on the earth. And there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake." From the heavenly temple, ashes off the altar of incense (the prayers of the saints of God) were shoveled and thrown on the earth. Turmoil takes place, "And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them."

When the incense hits the earth, scattered everywhere, out of the seventh seal now come seven angels with their trumpets, standing by, ready to roll. Humanity, in the first three-and-a-half years has been struck with terror, and now what does it want to do? It seeks to want to hide from God as we saw in Revelation 6:15-17. In Matthew 24:4-31, we have the same order of events revealed by Jesus in the events of the seal extending on through the whole tribulation period.

**The Ecumenical Church**

At this point in time, a little past the midpoint of the tribulation, the ecumenical church is going to rise to its power. It will be a supreme agency as Revelation 17:1-6 tell us about the ecumenical church. This is why we are not comfortable with what ecumenicism, even when, for a good reason, the president had the service at the cathedral of prayer and remembrance for the victims of 9/11. There was a Muslim leader and there was a Roman Catholic leader. These who do not preach a true gospel and do not represent the Lord Jesus Christ were getting together to worship God, who says, "No man comes unto me except through my Son." So the ecumenical movement is always religion, and it's always a bummer loser operation. Now it comes to the height of its power under the false prophet.

Revelation 17:1: "And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, 'Come here. I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.'" This is the sign of the ecumenical church. "With whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth (unsaved people) were made to drink with the wine of her immorality. And he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and tens horns." The woman dominates the political scene. This is the old Middle Ages Roman Catholic Church type of situation all over again, where the church dominated the political and the social life of the nations. The governments were under the control of the Roman Catholic Church.

Verse 4: "And the woman was clothed in religious attire, purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality." This ecumenical church tolerates all kinds of immoral practices, not the least of which is the blasphemy of saying, "You all are potentially God's." Mormons say that, and Hinduism teaches that. They teach that, "You are going to become a God eventually. Follow the system." "And upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, 'Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth.'" That's where all false religion began, with the Tower of Babel. I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly."

John was amazed. You can just see John. Here he is. He is the only apostle left. He's up in his 90s. He's on Patmos. He's an outcast. He's saying, "God, that's what's going to happen to your church? This is the future?" John knows that prophecy is true. "Oh, Lord, how could that be?" That's what it means that "John wondered greatly." He was just dumbfounded that people would take the church, with the grace power system of living, and convert it into a degenerate religious system worshiping Satan.

This church dominates the antichrist, with whom she is associated. He made the church organization, and she takes over. The church opposes and kills true believers and witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 17:6 says that she is drunk with the blood of the saints. This is the blood of those who witness for Jesus in the tribulation. The special group of 144,000 Jewish evangelists are given divine protection from the death penalty of the ecumenical church. They can't touch those people. They are secured.

How do we explain the headlines in this era? Well, they're going to have managed news, and they'll going to have censored news. They're going to have to give plausible explanations. All of these good people that were in churches are gone. The churches are empty. Only the unbelievers are left behind. Huge amounts of money are poured into the disaster areas by the antichrist to try to take the pressure off of things. You think of it in your own mind. What if what happened on 9/11 happened 100 times over all over the country? Who's going to be able to deal with that? Who's going to be able to control that? Who's going to be able to meet the needs of people then? It will be a wild jungle.

In the meantime, the great debates will keep on in the United Nations down there on the river in New York City to give the illusion that men are still in charge of what is taking place. Well, the northern confederacy, at the close of the three-and-a-half years, headed up by Russia and her Arab allies, will break loose from the antichrist's association, and they will attack Israel. Ezekiel 38-39 give us the details of that attack. Russia will be destroyed by God. A sixth of them will be able to survive to wander back to Russia. The antichrist is finally able to kill the two witnesses that we read about in Revelation 11:3-13. Up to now, these two witnesses have been invincible. They've been standing there speaking the Word of God and warning people that the antichrist is a false Christ. Finally, they are able to kill them, and they have Christmastime--giving presents to one another because these men's mouths have been silenced.

Things are winding up. The next series of preparations on the part of the antichrist will then introduce the first trumpet, but we need to give you some preparatory insight on the background of what the world condition will be, and where the antichrist stands, because all of a sudden, he's not just a big honcho over the confederacy of the Western European nations. He becomes ruler of the whole world.

Dr. John E. Danish, 2002

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