***God Controls the Wind  
  
RV127-01***

Please turn to Revelation 7 as we begin a new chapter in our study of this book of final events. We begin with the first three verses, and our subject is the angelic restrainers.

John, while in Heaven, in a vision, has seen the Lord Jesus Christ break six of the seals on the book which describes the future divine judgments of the tribulation years. We are ready now to break seal number seven. But before that happens, God the Holy Spirit interjects chapter 7 to stop the whole procedure in its tracks, in order to backtrack, and give us a little perspective on some other things that are taking place during the tribulation period, which are of great importance. In this seventh chapter, before the final seal is broken, we have a parenthesis that shows us the mercy of God in making the gospel information available that people will need for salvation. He makes this available through selected witnesses. After all, once the church was taken out, everybody who was born again has been removed. Everybody who understood the gospel is gone. Now, if this tribulation world is to have anybody that is born again, they have to hear the gospel. That requires a messenger. That requires somebody who knows the gospel to be able to explain it.

What we are going to discover in chapter 7 is that there are many Jews and gentiles who will be born again during the tribulation period. And Revelation 7 gives us some details about that. Revelation 7, in effect, is going to answer the question that was posed at the end of Revelation 6: "For the great day of his wrath has come, and who shall be able to stand?" Who shall be able to stand before a holy God?

Well, only those who are born again can face a holy God, and that's the answer that Revelation 7 has for us. Historically, national disasters are times of very fruitful evangelism. When a nation is crumbling, and people face great personal national disasters, that's when they start looking ahead to what is beyond the grave. That indeed is a time when they begin to take seriously their relationship to God, so that they are ready to listen to the gospel. Well, you can imagine what the tribulation agonies are going to be like, and how many people, therefore, will have an enormous incentive to start paying attention to the witnesses who are explaining the gospel, and they will be ready to respond.

So, beginning in 7:1, we read, "And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." The expression "After these things" can better be translated as "After this." And what it is referring to is the point in John's vision where he has completed viewing the events of the first six seals. The expression "After this" does not mean after the last seal. It doesn't mean after the sixth seal. It just means that after this (all that I have seen up to this point), this is what was shown me. What we are going to find in chapter 7 are events which actually have been taking place during the previous three-and-a-half years that the seals have mostly been covering. So, he does not mean, "Now after the sixth seal, these angels come into the picture and the events of these witnesses that we are going to learn about come into operation." It actually simply means that after all that he has seen up to that point of time, something else is now introduced to him. Actually, the evangelism has been functioning for the whole first part of the tribulation. But after having seen this much, he sees something else.

**Angels**

The word "saw" is our old friend "horao." This word indicates that overall panoramic view of a thing. It is in the aorist tense which stands for a point in time after the sixth seal events. That is when John sees this. It's active. John himself personally sees this again with his own eyes. And we have a statement of fact. What he sees are angels ("aggelos"). Specifically, he sees four angels. These are referring to the spirit beings which God uses as His agents to execute His will. Furthermore, they are the elect angels. They are not the demon angels.

**Standing**

As John looks upon these four imposing figures, he says, "They are standing ("histemi"). This word simply describes the position of a person upright on his feet. It connotes that these people are standing by on call. It is in the Greek perfect tense, which tells us that, at some point previous to what John sees, an order came down from God the Father to these four angels to take the positions that they are in, and to stand by. They are still standing at the point that John sees them. It is in the active voice. The angels themselves are standing at the ready to respond to the next directive from the Father. And we have a participle – a spiritual principle being explained.

**The Four Corners of the Earth**

John says that what he sees is these angels standing by "on" ("epi") – the preposition indicating location. And the location is "four corners." The word corners is "gonia." The word "gonia" refers to an external angle. It is actually used in Matthew 6:5 of a street corner. It's the same word. The Pharisees used to like to stand up on the street corners, and show off, and get people to be impressed with them. It's this word "gonia." So, it's a corner concept – this external angle. These corners, we are further told, are on the earth. That is the "ge." The four corners of the earth, of course, does not mean that the earth is flat. There have been, while you may smile at that, some ignorant people who have been antagonistic to the Word of God, who actually have pointed to this passage and said, "Aha, you see how unscientific the Bible is. It talks about four corners, indicating that the Bible thought that the world was flat, and that the Bible teaches a scientific falsehood – that the world is flat."

However, of course, this is a figure of speech which is based on how the earth looks to the people who are on it. We who are on the earth, when we look at it, it does look flat to us, and it does look like it has four directions. Actually, what the four corners refer to are the fact that there are four hemispheres of the earth. There's a northern and southern hemisphere; and, there's a western and an eastern hemisphere. And in terms of that, there are four corners; or, "four points of the compass" is a way that we would refer to it. Actually, we might add here that, in terms of where these angels are standing, we might view them as standing up here at the North Pole and the South Pole; and, on the opposite sides of the equator in the western and the eastern hemisphere. But in any case, the Bible is very explicit in terms of its scientific explanation concerning the shape of the earth, so we might as well clear that up right at this point, in case somebody ever brings this up to you.

**The Earth is a Sphere**

In Isaiah 40:22, the Bible teaches that the earth is a sphere. We read, "It is he who sits on the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are like grasshoppers who stretch out the heavens like a curtain, and spread them out like a tent to dwell in." This is describing again God's supernatural, omnipotent capacity. So, the Bible indeed does say that the world is in the form of a sphere.

Furthermore, we find that the Bible is very accurate scientifically in terms of what the condition of the earth is as a sphere, and that is that it is floating out in space like a ball. Job 26:7: "He stretches out the north over the empty place, and hangs the earth upon nothing." That is a poetic description of the earth floating out in space. So, the Bible is clear that the earth is a sphere, and the earth is in orbit, and placed in orbit by God. Because it has certain gravitational relationships to other objects in space, it is held out there.

Christopher Columbus was a Jew, and as a Jew, he was a student of the Old Testament. You can see that it is obvious that, from the Bible itself, he would have come to the conclusion, quite properly, that the earth was round, and therefore you could circumnavigate the earth by going in one direction and keep going in that direction. Eventually you come back to where you started. There's probably a great likelihood that he got a lot of that information from the Bible itself. In any case, God did use the biblical knowledge of Columbus about the shape of the earth to lead him to discover the Western Hemisphere at just the right point in human history, in preparation for the development of the United States in North America as God supreme client nation.

**The Angels are Holding Back the Winds**

After these things that John has seen, he has an overview, panoramic picture of four angelic beings who are standing at four strategic points on the planet earth, and they are doing something very important. These angels, John says, are doing some "holding." It's the Greek word "krateo." This word actually means "to hold back firmly." It is a holding where a person has a solid grip on the thing. This word is used in Luke 24:16, which says, "But their eyes were holden that they should not recognize Him," speaking about the two disciples on the Emmaus Road. Their eyes were "holden." They were completely restrained from recognizing Jesus Christ.

This is in the Greek present tense, which tells us that these angels are constantly, steadily holding, and the angels themselves are doing the holding. The angels are holding back (as we shall see in a moment) the winds of the earth. It is because angels have such tremendous strength that they are able to do this as well, as other capacities that make them very powerful beings. In Psalm 103:20, we read, "Bless the Lord, you His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word. So the angels, because of their natural strength, would have no problem controlling a force of nature.

The force of nature that we're dealing with here is the wind: the "anemos." This refers to the air currents which are on the surface of the earth, which are created by low and high pressure areas. As you know, nature abhors a vacuum, so the high pressure is going to go pouring over here into this low pressure to fill it up. When it's in the process of doing that, that movement of air is "anemos." It is the wind. All over the surface of the earth, you have these high and low pressure areas which are developed as the result of the sun's energy heating unequally the surface of the earth.

The greater the difference between the low pressure and the high pressure areas, the faster the air moves, and so the greater the velocity of the wind. The sun, of course, is the ultimate source of the earth's energy, and the effects of its heat, and of the evaporation of water, creates the weather conditions that we have on the earth. Plus, various topographical conditions such as oceans, mountains, deserts, and forests, all affect the way these masses develop and their temperature.

The currents of the air are created on the earth, furthermore, by the fact that down here at the equator, we have warm air. Warm air always rises. When it gets up here to the poles, you have cold air, and it swings right back down again. Then it swings down to the other pole. It gets cooled off, and comes back up, and you have this current back and forth across the surface. So, you have that creating wind conditions.

Furthermore, you have the earth rotating on its axis, and that deflects these moving masses of the air, so that it creates wind forces in that way.

The movement of wind is the critical thing in weather. It is the movement of wind that causes the storms, and that creates the fog; the rain; the tornadoes; the hurricanes; the snow; and, the droughts. It is the movement of the air that affects this, brought about by the sun as it shines on various topographical types of surfaces on the earth.

**God Controls the Weather**

It's obvious that man has no control over the formation and movement of the weather. As a matter of fact, the Bible makes it very clear that the weather is in the hands of God. Whatever weather you and I experience, it is an act of God. In Mark 4:35-41, we have the story related of the experience of Jesus and His disciples going across the Sea of Galilee. When a storm suddenly arises, the Lord Jesus is up in the bow. He has put His head on a pillow, and He has falling fast asleep, trying to get a little rest as they're crossing that sea. The disciples, we read, rushed to the Lord, wake Him up and say, "Master, don't you care if we perish? And He rose and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, 'Peace. Be still.' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Just like that! The Scripture says, "They feared exceedingly, and said to one another, 'What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" Well, the manner of man that he was, was a God-man, and that's why He had control over the weather.

So, the weather indeed is a factor that is under the control of almighty God. And man has very little to say about it, and can only seek to prepare to meet whatever weather is coming.

Weather disasters throughout history are, as a matter of fact, divine decisions in response to various human decisions. It is the weather that often is the movement of God to execute His plan in the face of what man's negative ways are doing, or his positive ways are doing.

What John sees, then, is these four angels controlling the mighty engine of the circulation of the earth's atmosphere, which is created by the sun and the rotation of the earth on its axis. These angels have been commanded to keep the engine of the weather idling. John says, "These angels are standing on the four corners of the earth. They're holding the four winds of the earth from the four directions in firm control that." The word "that" is the Greek word "hina." This is a conjunction that indicates to us the explanation of why they're told to do this. It is for the simple reason that the wind should not blow. It's just the simple Greek word "pneo," which is the word for the force of moving wind. It is present tense, so the angels are constantly to hold the winds in check to keep them from moving. It is active. The angels actually had the capacity and force to hold the wind back, and they do. It is subjunctive in mood, indicating a potential calamity is being delayed.

We are told that this wind is being held back so that: "It should not blow on the planet earth, nor on the 'thalassa' (which is the word for ocean bodies), nor on any tree." The Greek word for "tree" is "dendron." This is the word for trees like trees in the forest. So, in Revelation 8, you will discover that the four angels release the winds which they are now restraining. When that happens, we will see in chapter 8 the great disasters that befall the land, the sea, and the forest areas of the earth as divine judgment. God uses wind to create weather conditions to express His wrath and His judgment against evildoers.

That is beautifully expressed in the short book of Nahum in the Old Testament. In Nahum 1:2, Nahum says, "God is jealous, and the Lord of avenges. The Lord avenges, and is furious. The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked. The Lord has his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and in the clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebukes the sea, and makes it dry, and dries up all the rivers. Bashan languishes, and Carmel, and the flowers of Lebanon languish. The mountains quake before Him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at His presence; yea, the world and all that dwell in it. Who can stand before His indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of His anger. His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who trust in Him. But with an overrunning flood, He will make an utter end of the place, and darkness shall pursue His enemies."

That's a beautiful description of the fact that God, at a certain point in time, while slow to anger, will then express His anger and His judgment upon evildoers, and that He will do it through the forces of nature. He will use the whirlwind to accomplish His will.

**The Famine in Egypt**

Well, history is replete with awesome examples of the power of the wind in God's hands when He proceeds to execute His plans, and to put in motion certain elements of His will. We have, first of all, some of those, obviously, in the Bible. In Genesis 41:6, the wind causes the drought and the famine in Egypt: "And behold, seven thin ears (of corn, that is), and blighted with the east wind, sprung up after them." Verse 23 identifies the east wind as the agent again: "And behold, seven ears, withered and blighted with the east wind sprung up after them. Verse 27 does the same thing. So, what we are told is that there is a prolonged scorching east wind which struck Egypt, and destroyed the crops in Pharaoh's dream. Seven years later (just as Joseph predicted, interpreting the dream by God's direction), the east wind hit the land of Egypt in a prolonged way that caused the drought, and destroyed its food supply – that of Egypt and the surrounding nations.

The result of this was that Joseph's position of authority in Egypt was created. He became second in command – second only to the Pharaoh himself. And it was the act of God through the weather that put Joseph in that position, because it was this dream that caused him to be released from prison to interpret the Pharaoh's dream. This in turn then, when the famine did come, resulted in the Jewish family of Jacob (that is, Joseph's family), still living back in the land of Canaan, to be brought to live in Egypt for 400 years – there, as a matter of fact, to become slaves, but at the same time, to become a great nation numerically.

So, this was done through the weather, and it was done to fulfill the prediction of Genesis 15:13-14, which the Lord made to Abraham: "And He (that is, God) said unto Abraham, 'Know of a surety that your seed shall be a sojourner in a land that is not theirs (that is, the land of Egypt), and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them 400 years. Also, that nation whom they shall serve, I will judge, and afterward, they shall come out with great substance."

So, 70 people went into Egypt, the family of Jacob. 400 years later, they came out as a great nation with something like two million people. And they did indeed suffer through the agonies of slavery, but they also did go out with great substance, just as God predicted that they would. So, God used the wind to create the drought which set into motion the events which brought Joseph to a position of power, so that through him, the people of Israel would come to live in the land of Egypt, to become a great nation, so that they would bear worldwide influence.

**The Plague of Locusts**

In Exodus 10:13, you have another example of God executing His plans through the use of wind in weather. This is the plague of locusts: "Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night. And when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts."

Verse 19 says, "And the Lord turned a mighty strong west wind which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea, and there remained not one locusts in all the border of Egypt." So, the punishment upon the Egyptians on this occasion was swarms of locusts, which, of course, stripped their vegetation and killed their food supply. God used an east wind to bring the locusts in. When Pharaoh knuckled under temporarily, then God reversed; took a west wind; and, cleared the locusts back out.

So, God again demonstrated his command of the weather. Furthermore, He demonstrated his superiority to all the idol gods of Egypt.

**The Parting of the Red Sea**

Of course, one of the most dramatic examples of God using wind in the Old Testament era is that of the escape of the children of Israel through the Red Sea when they were being pursued by the army of the Pharaoh. In Exodus 14:21-22, we read, "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."

The Jews, who had just recently finally been released from 400 years of slavery in Egypt, are heading out toward the Promised Land. And, lo and behold, the first major barrier they run into is the Red Sea. Pharaoh's troops are bearing down upon them, and they turn to God: "What's the solution?" Of course, the Lord told Moses what to do with his rod. And, again, when he did that, a powerful east wind created a corridor through the sea so that they went through it dry shod. Then at the appropriate time, God withdrew the restraining wind. When God can turn it on, and God can turn it off. So, the pursuing Egyptian army was drowned.

Exodus 14:27-28: "And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared. And the Egyptians fled against it. The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea, and the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the hosts of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. There remained not so much as one of them." And as the children of Israel stood on the shore of the Red Sea, they saw the dead bodies of the Egyptian soldiers floating in to the shore. That's always a very sobering sight in a battle in the presence of the sea – to see the dead who are floating up to the beach.

So, here, God preserved His people, through the use of wind, from destruction, and preserved, furthermore, their new freedom.

**Jonah**

Then another great example of the use of the power of the wind is, of course, our old friend Jonah. Jonah 1:1-4 tell us about how God wanted Jonah to take the message of the gospel to Nineveh to preserve it. Jonah would not do it. Instead, he headed out in the opposite direction of Tarshish, which is probably Spain, and he's on board ship in the Mediterranean. Verse 4 says, "But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was in danger of being broken." Jonah refused to take God's Word to Nineveh to execute God's direction. So, God creates a huge wind and a fearful storm. It threatens to sink the ship. Finally, Jonah is forced to confess to the rest of the crew that he is the object of the divine wrath, and finally forces them to throw him overboard, though they were reluctant to do it.

Jonah, as you know, is immediately swallowed by a large fish. Three days later, he's regurgitated on dry land. At that point in time, Jonah changed from negative to positive volition very quickly, and he proceeded to execute God's will, and the result was that the city of Nineveh, part of the great Assyrian Empire, was preserved for another 125 years. So, here again, God's will is executed through the wind.

**The Pilgrims**

Now, it isn't only in the Bible that this is true. One of the marvelous, great examples of this is, of course, in our own American history. We have only to look to the early days of the founding of the nation in the landing of the pilgrims at Cape Cod. The pilgrims were a very godly people. They were the fundamentalists of the day. They were a biblical people. They believed in doctrine. They believed in coming to church, and sitting there for a three-hour sermon. They also believed in having people pay attention to the sermon.

They had people (the wardens) walking up and down the aisles who had feathers at the end of a long stick to tickle under the chin of a lady who was dozing, to wake her up. And they also had a stick with a point on it to jab the men who were falling asleep. Occasionally, they'd have somebody who was sound asleep who would get jabbed. There was one occasion that they were doing this, and the man thought he was stung by a bee. He forgot where he was (in the middle of a church service). He jumped up and struck at what he thought was a bee sting, and said something he should not have said in the presence of the congregation. Then he was embarrassed when he discovered where he was. So it didn't pay to fall asleep in the Pilgrim church services. These people were serious about the Word of God, and they came over to this country, and applied it to create a nation for God.

The amazing thing was that, of course, they were coming, first of all, to North America, which had a 1,000 mile stretch of Atlantic seaboard which had been untouched by colonization of the Catholic world. All of South and Central America had been absorbed by Catholic Spain, and then later by Portugal. The Catholic French tried to move into the upper part of North America (the northern parts of this hemisphere), and they were frustrated. The Spanish tried to come in, and tried to move down. But every time they tried to absorb the Atlantic seaboard, as they had in South America, they were stopped dead in their tracks. That was no accident. Obviously, God was preserving that part of North America for a nation which would come out of the Protestant Reformation heritage. And He brought a people (in the pilgrims) who were uniquely fitted and prepared to create such a nation.

Now, when the pilgrims came, they received a charter from the New England company, and this company had jurisdiction over the previous colony area of Virginia. The pilgrims came across the Atlantic, and finally got started after many problems and reduction of their numbers. They had something over a two-month voyage. Finally, they find themselves in a new world. But what should happen? Lo and behold, but terrific winds and storms that they had encountered had blown them 300 miles north of the Virginia colony. They found themselves actually at a place called Cape Cod, a little hook of land that comes out from the state of Massachusetts. They were now completely beyond the territory of their charter. Well, the captain said, "No problem. We will sail south and take you to the mouth of the Hudson River," where they were supposed to disembark.

Well, the captain proceeded to attempt to do that, and again the hand of God came in and hit him with winds. He simply could not make the turn to go down south. So, finally, he told the pilgrim leaders, "I'm going to have to go back out to sea, and make a new tact to be able to break out of this current and out of this wind so that we can go south.

By that time, the pilgrim leaders, because they were sensitive men of God to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, said, "We've been reconsidering this. There have been too many events here for us to consider this accidental. God has moved us to this territory. It is now our conviction that He did it specifically so that we would stay here."

So, they made the decision, after prayer, and consulting with one another, that they should colonize in the Massachusetts area where the winds of God had indeed blown them. It was because they had no charter; no basis of a government; and, no basis of a social relationship, that before they got off that ship, they went down into the cabin, and they sat down, and they wrote that famous Mayflower Compact, which begins in the name of God, and which clearly declares that their purpose is to colonize to the greater glory of God, and to bring the gospel to the people of this new world.

Well, the pilgrims had a boat that they had brought with them. They launched that, and they proceeded to make an exploration along the Massachusetts coast in order to find a place for a settlement. Lo and behold, what should they discover but a big area completely cleared of trees? It was land ready to be tilled and to be planted. And they said, "This is the place." There was a big rock at the place where they reportedly they stepped out of the boat. We call it Plymouth Rock today. And they came ashore. There, indeed, they established their colony, and they called it Plymouth.

**Samoset**

One day, as they were going about their business, and Indian was seen walking into their compound. Their homes were only half-finished. The Indian's name was Samoset. Lo and behold, the first thing they hear is him saying, "Welcome," and they didn't know what to say. Finally, one of them had the sense to say, "Welcome" back. The first thing he asked them for was some food and something to drink. They proceeded to provide that for him. After he finished eating, they questioned him. They discovered he indeed could speak English. He explained to them how he had been in contact with sea captains through whom he had learned the language, and so on.

However, one of the things that they were particularly interested in was that he explained to them why they found this clearing. It was that this clearing had belonged to the Patuxet tribe of Indians. The Patuxets were one of the most furious and murderous tribes on the Atlantic coast. Several other white men, through the ships that had now been passing through, had indeed stopped on this coast. And every one of them that fell into the hand of the Patuxets were murdered.

However, four years prior to the arrival of the pilgrims who, as you know, arrived in 1620, a deadly plague had broken out among the Patuxet Indians, which had this beautiful cleared area, which was their territory, and no other tribe come into it. Well, the result was that this plague wiped out every last member of that tribe. The neighboring Indians consider that there was an evil spirit in the territory, and so the land area was cursed, and they would have nothing to do with it.

**Squanto**

So, lo and behold, the pilgrims who by an act of God, are blown by gods within 300 miles off-course to land at the very place where the tedious work of clearing a place to live had already been done for them, and it was a piece of land that indeed belonged to nobody. Nobody wanted it. A week later, Samoset brought a friend named Squanto. Squanto, lo and behold, of all things, was a Patuxet, the last of this murderous tribe. He also spoke English as a result of the fact that he had been taken as a slave and ended up in England for several years where he learned the language well. Squanto was the only remaining one of his tribe. Six months before the Pilgrims arrived, he had managed to make his way back to the Massachusetts area with the intention of rejoining his tribe. When he got there, he discovered that the whole tribe had been wiped out by disease. He proceeded then, in a terribly depressed mood, to live some 50 miles southwest of Plymouth with the Wampanoag Indians.

**Massasoit**

The chief of the Wampanoags was a man named Massasoit. Massasoit proved to be friendly to the pilgrims. As a matter of fact, they made a treaty that lasted for the next 40 years. Here again was the providential hand of God in using the wind to blow them to this point, because Massasoit was the only Indian in the whole territory of that Atlantic Sea coast area who was friendly to the white man. Uniformly, the rest of them had had troubles with the white man (the sea captains and others); capturing some of their people; taking them into slavery; and, being antagonistic. Only Massasoit, of all people, was friendly, and he's the one that came into contact with the pilgrims at a time when they could have easily been overrun and decimated.

Well, Squanto, when he met the Pilgrims and learned of their pitiful condition of trying to survive in this wilderness, found a reason for living. God had prepared this man for this point in time, and had blown the pilgrims into contact with him. Squanto took pity on the pilgrims. He decided to stay with them, and to teach them how to secure sufficient a food supply in the new world. He taught them how to walk out into the mudflats when the tide was low and, knowing where to look, step on the mud, and squish an eel out the other end, which the pilgrims found delicious eating. He told them how to grow corn with using fish as fertilizer, and how to catch cod. In all the time (the months) that the pilgrims had been there – something like four months at this time, they had caught one cod in an ocean full of them. He told them exactly how to go about it, and they could not believe it. They were hauling them in with the devices that he showed them. He knew exactly at what point to put these seine-like objects into the water, and they were scooping the cod out as fast as they could get them out. He showed them how to hunt for deer, and how to use pumpkin; herbs; maple syrup; and berries. Then he told them how to trap beaver, which was a money crop, because beaver hats were very popular in England.

A tremendous series of divine events had led to the pilgrims coming to the one place on the Atlantic seacoast, as a result of the winds of God, where there was a clearing prepared for them so that they could immediately proceed to establish themselves. Don't forget that they arrived on November 11th, and they were faced with the dead of winter. Indeed, by the next spring, half of them were dead, of their 102 or so that had arrived.

But now, with Squanto as their teacher, suddenly everything changed. They had ample food supply, and they knew how to cope with the conditions in the new world. In October of 1621, after bringing in the harvest now that grew so plentifully, when they knew how to fertilize, and how to grow, and how to protect the crops that they were growing against the animals, they invited the Indians to gather with them for a Thanksgiving Day, and that was the first Thanksgiving Day.

Well, when Massasoit and his braves arrived, the Pilgrims almost had heart failure, because he walked in with 90 braves. And they didn't have all that much food. That really would have cut into their supply that was going to take them through the next terrible winter. But fortunately, the Indians had good manners, and they brought with them all kinds of food. They brought four deer dressed and ready to go. They brought berries of all kinds, and pumpkins, and big fat wild turkeys. The pilgrim women, as a matter of fact, we're delighted to take the berries and the fruit that the Indians brought, and show them how to convert that into pies, which the Indians had never eaten. So, that was a real treat on that occasion. In turn, the Indians show them how to take cornmeal and make hoecakes, which the Pilgrim women hadn't done.

So, they had cooking school, and then they had Thanksgiving time, and then they had eating school, and then they had games. They just had made a regular Fourth-of-July type of picnic out of it, especially the younger men. The younger Indians loved to deal with the younger pilgrim men in wrestling with them; foot races; bows-and-arrows contests; and, shooting contests. The rifle-shooting contest was indeed new and strange to the Indians. So, they had a wonderful time.

Well, Thanksgiving Day actually stretched out to three days. Finally, the pilgrims were glad to see them go, because they were beginning to run out of food, and like Benjamin Franklin, in wisdom, many years later said: a house guest is like a fish. It begins to stink after three days. So, fortunately, the Indians followed the wise course of departing. However, that whole tremendous Thanksgiving Day occurred because God had a plan, and He used the wind that He controls to bring it about.

In American history, this is one of the lesser moments. The more breathtaking, awesome moments of God using wind in behalf of this nation, and to execute His will at unbelievably critical points of time just makes you want to speak in whispers as you appreciate being in the presence of indeed the omniscient, impotent God, because He is the only God. Those incidents we will look at next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1984

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