***Jerusalem

RV147-02***

Please open your Bibles once more to Revelation 11:3-14. Our subject is "The Two Witnesses. This is segment number four.

**The Rapture**

There is little doubt that the world will be pleased to see the born-again Christians removed from the earth at the rapture of the church. The rapture of the church signals the beginning of the tribulation era, seven years of Daniel's timetable which God revealed to him concerning his dealing with the Jewish people, which seven years has never been fulfilled. Biblical Christians in a society that is organized by Satan are always a drag on the expression of the evil desires of the sin natures in that society. It's no fun being intimidated in one's vile conduct and vulgar language by the presence of a godly Christian who doesn't think that that kind of stuff is cool.

**Evil**

Once the Christians are removed from the earth, and the restraining presence of God the Holy Spirit leaves along with them, the remaining tribulation world of unbelievers will not feel inhibited in indulging their violent passions and the most corrupt conduct. It will indeed be a period that will be very similar to what existed just before the Noahic flood, where in effect, you had hell existing on this earth. However, God always has His witnesses in the darkest eras of human history, and He will have them in the tribulation as well.

**The Two Witnesses**

For a period of three-and-a-half years during the tribulation, we have found that God will communicate the truth of salvation and a judgment to come through two witnesses. They might possibly be a resurrected Moses and a returned Elijah. These two men testify along with 144,000 Jewish evangelists and other Christians to the tribulation world. The ministry of the two witnesses will receive worldwide attention through TV, because while these two witnesses are hated, people will discover, during this three-and-a-half year period, that they cannot be killed, even by the antichrist. And that's going to make nightly news. We found that anybody who does attack the two witnesses are going to suffer death by fire which proceeds out of their mouths. We're talking about human beings who had this kind of awesome power.

The two witnesses confirm their claim that they speak for the living Creator God by performing miracles in nature which bring death to millions of unbelievers in the tribulation. Therefore, the two witnesses undoubtedly will be feared very, very much.

However, when these two witnesses have completed their divine mission, God then permits the antichrist to kill them, much to little delight of the world. The antichrist is indwelt by Satan who is the source of his power. Therefore, the antichrist is described as being from the pit of hell itself.

**Death**

This enormous amount of death, which will be existing in the tribulation world, will naturally cause people to wonder about what happens on the other side of death. What is the consequence of dying? That is a very reasonable question in the minds of people today. So, we have been summarizing the doctrine of physical death. We have thus far covered 26 points. We have a few more to finish up this summary.

1. **The Resurrection of the Unbeliever in the Second Resurrection**

The unbeliever will be resurrected as part of the second resurrection to be reunited with his soul, and to be judged at the great white throne. This is taught us in John 5:29: "And the dead shall come forth: those who did the good deeds, to a resurrection of life; and, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. The unbeliever is going to be brought back to life. The good deeds spoken of here are deeds which are performed by the power of God the Holy Spirit, and therefore, they are divine good, which only a born again person can do. The evil deeds are what the unsaved person by nature is able to perform. So, it makes that distinction in that way. ...

Another important verse on this principle is Revelation 20:5. At this point, the saved people have been raised in the first resurrection, and the unsaved people have not been touched: "The rest of the dead (these who are unbelievers – the lost) did not come to life until the 1,000 years were completed." ... The unbelievers do not have part in the first resurrection. They are not raised until after the millennium –, 1,000 years. Then they are raised in what is called the second resurrection.

**The Book of Life**

Revelation 20:11-13 adds this: "And I saw a great white throne, and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne." These are unbelievers who have been raised now in the second resurrection at the end of the millennium. They stand before the great white throne on which Jesus Christ is seated: "And books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds." The book of life is opened. They go down alphabetically and find this person's name, and they see that indeed, when he was born, his name was entered into the book of life as a potential benefactor of the eternal life that Christ has provided.

**The Book of Works**

However, because he died without accepting Christ as Savior, his name is there rubbed out at that point. When they see his name rubbed up, they go to the other book. This book contains all of his good deeds. And this is what he has to offer God to get into heaven. How good was his lifestyle? Our Works Many a person is going to be sadly and eternally burdened by the concept that how you live determines where you spend your eternity. Someone told me about visiting a church recently. In fact, he was at a funeral where this minister spoke, and he pointed out (concerning the dead person) what a wonderful individual this was, and that the destiny had been heaven because this person had spent a life doing good works. And he said, "And that's how we get into heaven." He couldn't have said it more clearly, and he couldn't have said it more falsely. That is not how you get into heaven.

Here, when the book of life sees that the name is not there, then they look in the book of works, and nobody can produce enough works to merit eternal life. And if you're not a believer, you can't even produce one divine good work. The only works that are here are the human good works produced by your sin nature, and that is contaminated by evil as well. So, at this point, people are going to discover that not only am I here because of the evil of my sins, but I'm here because of the evil of my good works. Remember that the more sin you are guilty of, the greater will be your punishment in hell. And the more human good you have performed as an unbeliever, the greater will be your punishment in hell for that evil.

Verse 13: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were them." Hades is a weigh station (a holding station) before the unsaved are placed into the lake of fire. Now they're all brought together. These are all unbelievers, and they were judged, every one of them, according to their deeds.

This is indeed an awesome picture. Millions of human beings are standing before Jesus Christ one-at-a-time. What can they plead for their justification? They can only plea with all of those shoddy human good works. And the Lord Jesus Christ says, "Guilty. That's not enough – the lake of fire." And there's silence here, because nobody can argue. Now they all have the picture, and this is a mass of human beings in total silence. So, this principle is a very sobering one. The unbeliever is going to be resurrected. He'll be brought physically back to life as part of the second resurrection. He will be reunited with his soul, which has been residing in Hades. And now, in his resurrected soul and body, with his dead human spirit (that's his problem), he will come before the great white throne of Jesus Christ to be judged.

In the early days of Berean Church, we used to have a song book that was printed by a major denomination. It had a song in it, the first line of which said, "I want to stand before the great white throne." Now, I know that whoever wrote that song did not understand what the great white throne was all about, because if you ever find yourself standing before the great white throne, I want to tell you right now that you are in a lot of trouble. That's the one place you never want to be.

1. **The Resurrected Unbeliever will be Punished Forever in Hell**

The resurrected unbeliever will be punished forever in the agony of the lake of fire. Matthew 25:41 teaches us that. Jesus is speaking, and He says, "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." The lake of fire was never prepared and never intended for human beings. It was a place which was prepared for the devil and his demon angels that rallied to him and supported him in his rebellion against God. But human beings who reject Christ as Savior will spend their eternity in this lake of fire as well.

We have more information given in Revelation 20:10: "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet (the antichrist and the false prophet) are also, and they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever."

Verse 14: "And Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death (the lake of fire). If anyone's name was not found written in the book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. So, unbelievers who will be resurrected will be punished forever in the agonies of the lake of fire.

1. **Death is the Last Enemy of Mankind to be Overcome by God**

The last enemy of mankind to be permanently overcome by God is death. God is going to handle death in the human race in a very interesting way. He is simply to reverse it. Everyone who has ever lived is going to come back to life. Every baby who was ever aborted will be brought back to life, in spite of his murder. The one advantage that that baby will certainly have, is that, having been covered by the grace of Christ, he will go to heaven. So, while we grieve 25 million murdered babies in the United States, at least, we do find satisfaction that they're all going to heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:26 says, "The last enemy that will be abolished is death. Revelation 21:3-4 summarize all of this: "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people. And God Himself shall be among them (speaking of believers here). And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes,'" including the tears that were generated by what they discovered about themselves in their great eternal loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ: "And there shall no longer be any death. There shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain. The first things have passed away."

1. **The Significance of the Death of Others to the Living**

The final point is the significance of the death of others to the living. When you hear that someone else has died, when a friend passes on, it is a point at which you should learn something. It is God's purpose that the death of other people reminds you of certain important things:

* 1. **Life is Short and Fleeting**

First, it reminds one that life is short and fleeting. Before the canopy of water that once surrounded the earth in the original creation was collapsed at the Noahic flood, there was an enormous filtering out of ultraviolet rays, so people did not age as quickly, and they lived for hundreds of years. Furthermore, scientists now believe that that canopy that surrounded the earth also maintained a pressure that was something like two or three times the 14.7 per square inch pressure which is on the body now. That canopy actually retained the pressure, and that caused the body to be able to nurture itself, and even to heal itself. So, if a person cut a finger one day, the next morning he woke up, and it was healed. The whole process of healing and restoration was enormously improved.

They have run experiments where they've done this with plants under pressure situations. It is unbelievable what a tomato plant will produce when it is put under three times the normal atmospheric pressure. It immediately reflects why the vegetation was so prolific on the earth, and why the food supply was so great such that huge animals like the dinosaurs were easily supplied with all that they needed to sustain them.

However, this fleeting life will soon end because we don't have that much time now. We live under conditions where our life span is shortened. The Bible makes it very clear, as a matter of fact, that God says, "I'll basically promise to give you 70 years. After that, we will take it under advisement from year-to-year as to how long you continue after that. And we will take it under judgment as to whether we will give you protection from diseases to cut you down, or whether we will give you the physical capacity to carry on beyond that span. So, don't make the mistake of thinking, because you happen to be young today, that life is very long. It goes faster and faster, I assure you, when you approach 70.

Job 14 says, "Man, who is born of woman, is short-lived and full of turmoil." When somebody dies, you should remember this statement in Job.

In Psalm 39:5, we read, "Behold, You have made my days as handbreaths, and my life is nothing in Your sight. Surely every man at his best is a mere breath."

Then James 4:14, in the New Testament, adds this thought: "Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." So, the first thing we should learn when somebody else dies is that life is very short, and it's very fleeting, and now is the day to start living in terms of eternity.

* 1. **The Short-Term Value of Fame and Fortune**

The second thing that we should be reminded of is of the short-term value and satisfaction to be found in fame and fortune. It is natural for us to think that the pursuit of fame and fortune is the main goal of life, and it's a lot of fun to do that. Suddenly, somebody who has gotten fame and fortune checks out and dies. At that point, you have to stop and think to yourself (and should think): how worthwhile was it? Job 21:13 says, "They spend their days in prosperity, and suddenly they go down to Sheol." "Sheol" is the Hebrew for "Hades," the holding pen of the dead before the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was the holding pen of the dead for believers and unbelievers before the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Ecclesiastes 5:15, Solomon observes this: "As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so shall he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand." That is true in terms of taking with you the material prosperity that you have accumulated. However, for a Christian, It is not true that you cannot take the benefits of your prosperity with you, because that is what Jesus clearly taught as storing treasures in heaven. The more you invest of your material treasures in the Lord's work, the greater amount you take out there with you as heavenly rewards. It is quite true for the Christian that you can take it with you.

There's one more verse that we should look at in Mark 8:35: "And whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it. But whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" You may have that word "life" translated as soul, but you should know that it's exactly the same Greek word which was translated as "life" in verse 35. The word "soul" is not a good translation. It should have been translated as "life," because he is talking about the lifespan of a believer.

Verse 37: "For what shall a man give in exchange for (again) his life? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels. So, to be ashamed of Christ now; to be reticent the servant; and, to be reticent to be identified with him as a Christian is going to someday make the Lord Jesus Christ ashamed of you when you stand before Him to be judged for the life that you've lived at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

* 1. **The Death of Other People Reminds us of our Own Impending Death**

The death of other people also reminds one of the need to prepare to meet a Holy God. This is true both of believers and unbelievers. Unbelievers, of course, should see that as a very important time – to consider meeting that holy God for their own destiny. But even a Christian should realize: "I'm going to meet a holy God. I can con myself, but I never con Him. He knows very well what I did with my life, and the records will be very accurate up there. I'm going to meet this holy God, and I will say, 'Here's what I did with what You gave me.'"

2 Corinthians 6:1-2: "And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain." Don't waste your life: "For He says, 'At the accepted time, I listened to you, and on the day of salvation, I helped you.'" God has given us the assistance: "Behold, now is the acceptable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation." So, if you're not saved, now is the time to get saved. If you are a Christian, now is the time to get your life connected with God's great plan of service for you.

John 3:18: "He who believes in Him is not judged. He who does not believed has been judged already, because he does not believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Verse 36 says, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life. But he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him."

These verses make it very clear that if you're not a Christian, you better not die, because what you face there will be horrendous.

* 1. **Invest in Eternal Rewards**

We have one more very important point that you should learn when another person dies. It reminds the Christian: to invest his life daily in God's service: to earn eternal rewards; to glorify God; and, not to waste his short lifespan. We have been saved to serve. Notice 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad (whether divine good or human good)." So, we're all going to account to God for what we did with our lives at the Judgment Seat of Christ. To be judged for our destiny of heaven and hell? No, but to be judge about our rewards, for how we lived.

2 Corinthians 2:10 is even more explicit: "For we (that is, born-again people) are His workmanship." We're a product of God's free grace:" Created in Christ Jesus." For what purpose? "For good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." This is not for human good works, but for divine good works produced by God the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, these are specifically the ones about which God said, "Here's where I want you to serve, and I'm equipping you with the spiritual gifts necessary to do that particular service.

At the end of the Bible, in Revelation 22:12, we read these words of the Lord Jesus: "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done." It, couldn't be plainer, could it? God is going to evaluate, and judge, and reward, according to what you do with your life in His service.

**Rewards in Heaven**

John 15:8: "By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples." I recently had a man who took issue with me over the fact that the name of the game in the Christian life is to earn rewards in heaven. And my point to him was that if Christians are not earning rewards, then God's work is not being done, because when His work is being done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then you will be rewarded for what you do. He said, "Oh, I think," and he quoted the old catechism statement, "that man's chief end is to glorify God." And I had to point to this verse – that the way you glorify God, which indeed is our chief end, is by bearing the fruit of our good works. It's easy to talk about glorifying God; rolling your eyeballs up into your head; folding your hands; doing all of that beautiful stuff; acting so holy and godly and impressive; and, showing that you really have your heart set on things above. But God says, "None of that counts. What counts with Me, if you want to glorify Me, is that you have been a productive Christian with your life in My service.

So, please, when you go out this week, and you do your work for your employer as unto the Lord, do not forget that He is aware of that, and our Father is keeping records to reward you for how you go about earning your livelihood, which frees you to serve Him. When you go about those Christian service activities, and you've done it so often, and you become so used to it, don't discount that as a trivial little nice thing that you do. It's not just a nice thing you do. Your whole eternity is being affected when you walk into that Sunday school class; that Training Union group; or, that club meeting. Maybe you understand why I get a little fanatical and a little upset when we have parents who do not take the trouble to see that their children are here for these occasions that are so crucial. You have to really be a wacko to think that there's something better for your child when we are teaching a class in Sunday school; Training Union; or, some club activity. You're out of touch with the real world, and it's a pity that both you and your children in eternity will have the opportunity to grieve over that. It is no small thing that you do when your life is invested in eternal things.

That concludes the summary of the doctrine of death. We come back now to Revelation 11:8-10. I've entitled this "The World Wake." Verse 8 is a street scene. The unbelievable has happened. The antichrist has launched a military action against the two witnesses. This may be taking place in the middle of the tribulation, or it may be now near the end of the tribulation. It's a little hard to pin this down. I'm inclined to think it's probably near the end – the second half. In any case, God now permits him to kill His two witnesses because their mission in life is completed.

**The Two Witnesses are Dead**

So, we read, "And their dead bodies." The bodies of the two witnesses are dead. The corpses of the two witnesses are lying in the street. These two men of God are really dead, and they are on the street. Their bodies are lying right out there in the open on the pavement. The TV cameras are grinding away, transmitting this scene to all the world. The bodies, because they will be in a warm climate, since this is the city of Jerusalem where this is taking place, are going to decompose, and people will enjoy watching that happen. They will take ghoulish delight in the conquest that they believe the antichrist has now achieved – he who is their God.

We are told that this takes place "On the street of the great city." This great city is identified to us at the end of this verse as the one in which our Lord was crucified, so we know it's talking about Jerusalem. But he compares it with the word "mystically." It's kind of interesting that God the Holy Spirit puts this word in. This word looks like this in the Greek Bible: "pneumatikos." "Pneumatikos" means "spiritually" or "symbolically." The reason he does this is because God intends us to read this book literally. He intends us to take this book as a literal statement of historical events that have passed, and of pre-historical events that are to come. So, when he's going to speak symbolically, he is saying that this city is like two other well-known places, Sodom and Egypt. And he says, "Now, I'm not saying that this city is Sodom, and that this city is Egypt. I'm just saying it's compared symbolically. I'm giving you an analogy of comparison." Therefore, he uses this word "pneumatikos," which means "to spiritualize" an idea.

This is what the amillennialist do to this book all the time. This is what the postmillennialists do to this book all the time. Do you realize that the amillennialist and the postmillennialist say that everything in the Revelation was fulfilled by the year 70 A.D.? They say that none of this book is in the future. All of it took place up to that point in time. Then they struggle to try to apply it to events that happen with the destruction of Jerusalem that fulfill all these terrible things. So, you can see that you can't take the book literally and apply it there. You now have to "pneumatikos" the book. You have to spiritualize it and say, "Well, this is a symbol of that; this is a symbol of that; and, this is a symbol of this. So, if you get a book of 50 commentaries on your desk on the book of the Revelation by somebody who treats it in a spiritualized way, you'll find that no two of them hardly agree on what any verse refers to, because everybody is expressing his own opinion on the matter.

**Jerusalem**

Jerusalem is called by the name of two places in a symbolic sense. The first of those two places is "Sodom." It says that this ministry of the two witnesses (which has ended in their deaths) took place in Jerusalem. I don't that this necessarily means that they only ministered from Jerusalem. They may have moved around the world in their ministry, because all the world has heard their message in one way or another. But now, their death has taken place in the city of Jerusalem. He says the wonderful city of Jerusalem in the tribulation is going to be like Sodom used to be.

**Sodom**

What does Sodom represents? Well, basically, in the Word of God, it represents rebellion against the moral laws of God. Genesis 18:20 says "And the Lord said, 'The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. "What was the sin that God said is so exceedingly grave? A holy God is saying that your sin is really bad. God understands sin, but His Holiness is so extremely offended that these people must have been guilty of something really terrible. They were guilty of every kind of perverted sexual act, culminating in homosexuality and lesbianism.

Look at Genesis 19:1. Lot is being visited by two angels sent from God. These angels look like handsome young men. Lot is being warned that God is about ready to judge this horrible, sinful city of Sodom. They've gone too far, and God is going to destroy it with fire and brimstone from heaven. But since Lot is a godly man who stupidly came to this city and chose to live here, and because of Abraham's pleading, the angels are giving him the warning.

Genesis 19:1: "Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down his face to the ground (in courtesy). He said, 'Behold, my Lord, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet. Then you may rise early and go on your way.' They said, however, 'No, but we must spend the night in the square.' Yet, he urged them strongly. So, they turned aside to him and entered his house. And he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate." These angels looked like human beings. Angels are spirit beings. Spirit beings can eat. These angels, having the covering that made them look like human beings, proceeded to enter this bit of hospitality.

Verse 4: "Before they lay down (before they went to sleep), the men of the city (the men of Sodom) surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter." These men were homosexuals. They have surrounded Lot's house. These are the men who practice the most horrendous kind of debauchery and corruption such that it would be difficult for me to even describe to you in any general way in a mixed audience. What homosexuals and lesbians do is horrendous.

There was a time on TV when there was a board that the television companies had appointed, which were the supervisors of what was put on television, so that every script was read by them, and they blue-penciled anything that crossed the line of morality – basically, American morality as inherited from the Bible. The time came a few years ago where they combined that supervisory board of acceptable material with the board which is responsible for promoting a program. The very people who were responsible to cause a program to be successful on the air, and to get sponsors to buy it, are the people who are now supervising themselves on their moral level of the programing. That is why you have seen it spiraling in the last two years, because they want to sell the programs, and they're not restricted by the vileness that is included in the programs.

It so happens that the homosexual community in this country has now become such a powerful lobbying group that they have an inside track, because the liberal news media are sympathetic to them. They have an inside track of their representatives reviewing programs that are put on the air. So, they can present themselves in a favorable light, and try to dignify what they do. One scriptwriter from "Hill Street Blues" says, "I put every swear word that I can put in, and every off-colored thing into my programs." I've never seen it, but apparently is very crude and very vile in its language. And he said, "I do this deliberately because we are trying to desensitize the American public, so that they will be freer in their moral values, and accept the homosexual.

Here are these people who are no different today in the violence of what they do than they were in Lot's day. They surround his house: "And they called to Lot, and said to him, 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may have relations with them.' But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him and said, 'Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly.'" Lot had no business living in this place. He had no business being associated socially in this way with these men. He goes out there, and he says, "Brothers," because he has lived with them: "And it grieved his righteous soul."

This is like some parent who sends his child into the climate of the secular school, and causes this sensitive child to grieve over the vileness that surrounds him. Unless you have associated with our children, like in the Berean academy, and see how winsome and precious and receptive they are to righteousness, you won't really appreciate what it is to take one of those little creatures and put them into the violence of a secular school system. But because parents are not taught the Word of God, and they're not alerted to this thing, they don't see any need to put their children in a Christian school.

Lott was guilty of the same thing. The Bible says, "It grieved his righteous" – what he saw going on around him. He knew that this was wickedness. And you remember what happened to Lot. His two daughters were reared in that kind of atmosphere while he's reading the Bible to them at home. While he's talking about the Lord to them at home, they're out in school in this climate. They're out associating in their social life with this kind of moral climate. So, the daughters found no problem in getting their father drunk and having sexual relations with him so that they could bear a child. And one bore the Arabian group of Edom. The other bore the Arabian Group of Moab. And they have been nothing but a grief to the people of Israel since.

Verse 8: "And now, behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with men (virgin daughters). Please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like, only do nothing to these men inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof." This is inconceivable – that Lot is saying, "Listen, I have to be a proper host to these men who have come. Hospitality in our day and in our part of the country requires this. I'll tell you what. Do you want to have some fun and games tonight? Why don't you take my two daughters out and have a ball with them?" And if we didn't read this in the Bible, we might suspect that that really wasn't true. But this shows you how far the mentality of Lot had deviated from the reality of sin in this world. You cannot be rubbing shoulders with evil people all the time, and not become like them. If you do not become like them, you will part company with them.

So, you young people, don't be looking with esteem at Shirley MacLaine; at Roseanne; at Cher; and, at all these other slime balls that crawl out from under the rock. They are zilch – nothing. They're going to be among the most agonizing people in eternity, as they enter the hell that they have dusted themselves for. Yes, I know, if you listen to "Good Morning America" and all the morning programs, these are the people that are going to be put before you. These are the hotshots. These are where it's at. These are the influence. You sing their songs; you wear their style of clothing; you look at them; and, you listen to them. You should find that you have an automatic reaction – that you have to grab the control unit and change the station so as not to mess up your mother's rug with your nauseous reaction.

But Lot got so used to vileness that it was not even inconceivable for a father to offer his daughters this kind of horrendous treatment. But they said, "Stand aside." Furthermore, they said, "This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge." And Lot says, "Oh, but I thought you guys liked me. What kind of a thing is that to say to me: 'I'm an alien? I'm not one of you?" Well, you bet he was an alien. He tried to act like him, but down in his heart, this guy is born-again, and he could not easily accept this vileness.

So, the leaders said to him, "'Step aside, little Lot, because we'll treat you worse than them.' So, they pressed hard against Lot, and came near to breaking the door." I mean, they were really going to push this guy aside. But the men reached out their hands (that is, the two angels); they opened the door; jerked Lot into the house with them; and, they shut the door. And then they used their supernatural powers: "And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they were wearied themselves trying to find the doorway." They finally gave up because of the blindness imposed upon them.

This is the kind of a place Jerusalem will be in the tribulation – the city of our Lord, if you can believe it. This place, where the two witnesses have finally now being brought down to death, is going to be a city, in its moral level, just like Sodom.

In Isaiah 3:9, we see that the people of Jerusalem in the tribulation will be like Sodom in defying God, and openly practicing their sex sins: "The expression of their faces bears witness against them, and they display their sin like Sodom. They do not even conceal it. Woe to them, for they have brought evil on themselves." Here, it is speaking about national destruction. Here, God is speaking about what He will do in the future to the people of Israel, and carrying that on to the very end, to the time of the tribulation. These people don't even hide their sin.

There was a time when homosexuality was in the closet. People hid it. They were not proud of it. It was a vulgar and extremely debased and degrading thing. Now, it is openly flaunted. In the Old Testament, it was a capital crime to do that. Anybody who did this was executed. Today, God is still imposing that sentence with the disease of AIDS and other diseases that are imposed on those who practice this evil.

Jerusalem in the tribulation then will be like Sodom of old in its sexual rebellion against God and its perversions.

**Egypt**

Secondly, he compares Jerusalem of the tribulation period to Egypt. Egypt obviously represents enslavement. Is further represents the rejection of the authority of the Creator God. When Moses came to Pharaoh, Pharaoh knew who Moses was. He had been reared by Pharaoh's daughter. Moses himself was treated as one of the Egyptian princes of the court. This was a man of education, substance, culture, and refinement. And he comes to him, and he knew that Moses was not a nut. And Moses says, "I have been in communication with the Creator – the living and the true God. He has directed me to tell you that he requests you to release his people to go out for three days into the wilderness to worship Him. This was God's first stage of breaking them out of slavery into freedom.

What was Pharaoh's response? Exodus 5:2: "But Pharaoh said, 'Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and beside, I will not let Israel go. I don't know who this Lord is, and I don't care if I did know Him. I'm not going to release the slaves." So, the people in Jerusalem in the tribulation will be like Egypt in that they will be totally enslaved to their old sin nature, as Pharaoh was. And they will therefore, like Pharaoh, rebel against God's authority as expressed in Scripture.

Jerusalem will be noted at that time for its acceptance of Satan's world system, and the rejection of God's word. Egypt also was known for something else. Egypt was deep into the occult. The priests had great power. For a while, they could even reproduce, by demonic power, the very miracles that Moses was doing. They could do so up to a certain point, and then God wouldn't permit the demons to do that. So, it is interesting that Egypt was also noted for its occult practices. This will also be true of Jerusalem in the tribulation, because at that time, all the world of the antichrist will be deep into the occult. They will be deeply into contact with demon powers, and exercising demon capacities.

At this point in time, a deluded humanity, then, will view their leader, the antichrist, as having gained a climactic victory over the God of the two witnesses. And the New Agers are going to believe that their triumph over the God of the Bible is now complete. Their god has finished off the God of the two witnesses.

It is a terrible place to die. It is a horrible time to live. But we have lessons to learn. God's sexual rules are absolute. If you break them, you will pay for them. If you persistently break them, and there is no repentance, God will bring you down, even physically in death, one way or another. You do not ignore the limitations that God has placed upon the use of sex. God brings judgment upon anyone who rebels against His authority.

It was the Lord Jesus Himself who told his disciples: "If you sit around and let Me teach you the principles of doctrine, and then you ignore them, you're in for a lot of trouble. It would be better for you not to let Me teach you than for you to ignore what you have learned." I know very well that, in over three decades of the ministry, I have seen people that I know very well, who have come under the judgment of God, because it is so clear that they have been taught principles of doctrine which they don't like. And they have ignored them, and God has brought judgment of one kind and another into their lives.

It is a place like Sodom and like Egypt, with its rebellion against God, and its degrading sexual practices that will have a ghoulish delight over the fact that these two witnesses have been killed.

So, this is the street scene in verse 8. Next time, we will do the second stage of walking in and viewing the body. That's what you do in a wake. You walk in; you view the body; you say something dumb, like: "He looks like he's just sleeping," or something like that; and, then you go on. And this is a respectful memory toward these who are dead.

Well, the world is going to have a wake now for these two witnesses, and it is going to be something else. We shall look at that next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1989

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