***The Persecution of the Antichrist

RV168-02***

Please open your Bibles again to Revelation 13:1-10 as we continue with segment 12 on our subject of "The Antichrist."

**The Bible**

It is clear to all thoughtful people that the Bible is the only source of official information about God and about spiritual matters. The Bible is the Word of God. It does not merely contain the Word of God, as the liberals like to say, which is their way of giving themselves an out for being able to select what parts of the Bible they don't like. The Bible, in its entirety, is the Word of God.

Furthermore, there is no human organization; there is no ecclesiastical organization; and, there is no priestly body on this earth which can speak for God. Those who are untaught in the teachings of Scripture, therefore, will know little about God. The Bible is inerrant, and it is literal in its meaning with appropriate dispensational application.

One of the important facts revealed in the Bible is that man by nature is blind to spiritual truths. Born-again believers, however, are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, who lives in them to give them understanding of Scripture. The unbeliever, however, very confidently operates on the human viewpoint of his blinded mentality, and he ends up in the lake of fire forever, in all of his confidence.

The Lord Jesus Christ left His home in heaven to take on Himself a human body minus Adam's sin nature. He became on the cross the final Lamb of God in death for the sin of mankind. Jesus rose from the grave, and thus confirmed that God's justice against human sin had been satisfied. For that reason, we say that sin is no longer an issue between any human being and God, and that should be put aside. The issue is the acceptance of the provision of grace salvation. For this reason, Christ now offers eternal life as a free gift to all who trust in Him for that salvation. The sinless, merciful, loving Son of God is ready indeed to save all who come to Him.

**The Antichrist**

During the tribulation period, that period of seven years in the future, Satan will, in his final battle with God, bring on the world a substitute Christ. The Bible calls him the antichrist. The antichrist, while on the one hand will be a very charismatic leader, will also be the epitome of evil, and of everything that is vile in the sin nature of man. Satan's power to this man will enable him to become the ruler of the whole world, at mid-tribulation. Satan and his antichrist will be worshiped as gods by all mankind. That is hard to believe, but this man will be so impressive, and he will be so magnificent in what he can achieve, that people without the guidance of Scripture will really believe that this is deity.

**Blasphemy**

The antichrist will share Satan's hatred, of course, toward God, and speak unbelievable blasphemies against Him. The bragging and the blasphemies of antichrist will be allowed by God for three-and-a-half years, and will then be terminated by the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to this earth. The antichrist will use his skill with words to insult; to belittle; and, to vilify God via the communication mediums to all the world.

**The Name of God**

So, now we direct your attention to Revelation 13:6: "He opened his mouth in blasphemies against God." Then, God the Holy Spirit points out that this blasphemy will have a threefold target. First of all, he is going to ridicule with obscenities the very name of God. The name of God, of course, represents all that God is. It represents His attributes. It represents the moral laws which are reflected by His character. And it certainly represents the grace with which He deals with us all.

**Truth**

The thing that the name of God does represent above all is truth, which is expressed as Bible doctrine in Scripture. The antichrist fears Bible truth above all else. So, he tries to discredit the Bible. That is why you will discover that when you get into religious discussions with ordinary people, they express their opinions, and they call upon the authorities of their human reason or of quoting some religious leader, but they shy away from speaking about the Bible as the authority. In fact, if you carry on a discussion, and insist on quoting the Bible, and insist on using the Bible for the basis of your discussion, you will find that they simply close the discussion. The average person is incapable of carrying on a religious discussion if it is based upon the Bible.

Satan has been that successful in clouding the minds on the importance of knowing what is inside the Scriptures. It is the policy of Satan to keep the human race ignorant of Bible doctrine so that people will believe instead the doctrines of demons. If people were not ignorant of the Bible, they would not so readily respond to the doctrines that Satan puts out. The truth of doctrine always destroys the power of Satan, and it will destroy the power of his antichrist.

**Prayer**

Christians today have access to the power of God through prayer in Jesus' name. The Lord made that very clear in John 14:13, when Jesus says, "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." If you are asking in the name of Jesus, then you are asking that which would be compatible with His character as God. You'll be asking that which is compatible with His purposes and His program. This is no small thing to realize that you can talk to God, and you can ask for anything that is legitimate, and you will get a responsive answer immediately. Those of you who have not learned to live in the inner circles of temporal fellowship are not able to relate to this. You do not really know what it is to sit down and have to make a decision, and to be able to pause, and turn the thing over to God, your heavenly father, and say, "Now move me in the right direction. Get my mind thinking on the direction You want me to go, and the thing You want me to do. Open the doors that should be open, and close the doors to keep me out of the wrong place. And I'm standing by."

When you are in the inner circle of temporal fellowship with all known since confess, you will have a very awesome experience. Chills will run through you as you see, having used your access of prayer, everything falling into place – the directions coming, and you moving in the right capacity. When you lack the ability, and when you lack the physical needs, when you are in that inner circle and you turn it over to Him, you *will* get results.

So, the name of God is the name of our access to His omnipotence. It is no wonder then that Satan wants to blaspheme the name of God, and that he leads the antichrist to do that. It is the name of God which has defeated Satan.

Please note James 4:7, which says, "Submit therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you." What is James saying? James is saying, "Submit to everything that is represented by the name of God, as it is portrayed in the doctrines of Scripture, and you'll beat the devil at his game every time. It will not be just 50:50, and not just most of the time. You will clip him, hands down, every time, and he will abandon you.

Romans 10:13 says, "Whosoever will call upon the name of God will be saved. Those who are willing to accept grace salvation, and who come to God and call upon Him to fulfill his promise by trusting in Christ as Savior, will be saved.

Acts 4:12 says, "And there is salvation and no one else. For there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." It is no wonder that Satan wants to blaspheme the name of God, and that the antichrist wants to blaspheme the name of God, because that is the name that leads people into eternal life.

**The Tabernacle of God**

The next thing that John is told that the antichrist will blaspheme will be the tabernacle of God. This is the Greek word "skene." This is the word for a tent. It is referring here to God's sanctuary in heaven. Satan, as you know, we have learned, at this mid-tribulation point, has been permanently kicked out of heaven. He can no longer return to accuse the believers. He has furthermore been engaged in a vast outer space battle with the angels of God under the leadership of Michael. He has been defeated, and therefore he has been cast down to this earth, and now he can go nowhere else but the earth. He cannot move beyond this earth. He is now earthbound completely. He is now a truly low class loser.

Satan, therefore, in his rage, seeks revenge by cursing God's holy temple in heaven, the place of ultimate worship of God, and the place which was represented here on this earth by the Jewish tabernacle. Ephesians tells us that this is the place where we are seated in the heavenlies. When it says, "You are in the heavenlies," it says that you positionally are in God's temple, because you are entitled to walk in the temple as the people of God. Satan is not.

Revelation 21:3 tells us that someday this tabernacle of God will be here on this earth among the people of God. The temple, and all the temples that the antichrist has created, such as the multiplicity of Mormon temples, are doomed. So, he maintains a constant, belittling, blasphemous barrage against the house of God in order to discredit that place.

**Those who Dwell in Heaven**

The third thing John is told is that Satan would be little and blaspheme all those who dwell in heaven. The word "dwell" looks like this: "skenoo." "Skenoo" here means "to pitch a tent." It's a very significant word – that God the Holy Spirit would use this. As most of you know, ordinarily, when a person puts up a tent, this is a transitory dwelling place. You put up a tent because you're out camping. You're going to be in it temporarily. You're on the move. It is a temporary shelter.

So, here we have people who are tenting in heaven. This is their continual residence. Now, whose is tenting in heaven? Obviously, this is all the believers who have died and gone on to be with the Lord. They're in a temporary dwelling place in heaven. The reason the Holy Spirit uses this word for tenting is because they're not going to stay there. They're only camping out in heaven, so to speak, for a while. They're all going to be coming back someday with the Lord at His Second Coming. The place in which they are residing in this manner is, of course, specified as heaven. It is referring here specifically to the church, which is in heaven; to the Old Testament believers, which are in heaven; and, to the tribulation martyrs which are in heaven.

We have had a reference to these previously in Revelation 7:15: "For this reason they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple. He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them." He is speaking here of believers who are in heaven, worshiping before God, in God's temple – this temple that Satan curses, and the people in that temple whom Satan blasphemes.

In Ephesians 2:6, the apostle Paul says, "And raised thus up with Him, and seated us with Him (with Christ) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." What's he talking about? He's saying that you Christians are positionally already in heaven. Until you die, you are in a disadvantageous position of having your physical body here on this earth. You're still on the firing line, and you're still in the battle. But once you have the opportunity to die and be taken home to heaven, then you will enter this temple, and you will be at the place of rest, and you'll be at the place of joy. As Paul says, "Boy, it's a lot better up there than it is down here."

The process of having your orders cut to be transferred to heaven is entirely in the hands of God. That's why suicide is wrong. You can't cut your own orders and transfer yourself off the battle line into heaven. When God the Father is ready for you to be up there, I can assure you the orders will be cut, and you will be transferred into His presence. What is now only positionally true of you will now become true in your reality, because you yourself will indeed be walking those streets of gold, and you will enjoy seeing the United States Marine Corps guarding those streets very devotedly and loyally, as they have always been known to do. I know that's true because it says that in the Marines hymn.

In any case, this vile man so hates God that naturally he hates the people of God. So, he curses God; he blasphemes God; he blasphemes God's temple in heaven; and, he blasphemes those who dwell in that temple. Those in heaven are hated by Satan, in part because they prove the justice of a holy God. How could a sinner be taken into God's temple? How could a sinner be free to walk into God's heavenly temple? There is only one way. It is because God is just. He does what is fair. He does what is right. He does not violate His own righteousness. Therefore, the fact that you and I will be walking around there, once our orders of transfer are cut, shows that God has covered our sins so that he can, in justice, permit us to enter His heaven. He has imputed to us the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ. It also shows that God is fair in doing what Jesus told us is the plan for Satan, in Matthew 25:11 – that a place has been prepared called the lake of fire, into which Satan, with his angels, will be put for all eternity, and any human beings who choose to take Satan's position of the rejection of salvation that God has offered.

The Saints in Heaven have made a laughing stock of Satan. Up in heaven, Satan is the all-time big joke.

At this point, Satan also knows, while he is moving his man, the antichrist, to these blasphemies, that he only has three-and-a-half years left to defeat God. So, he, first of all, expresses his rage by having the antichrist pronounce these unimaginable, vile blasphemies against God in order to try to discredit Him: to discredit God's holy place in heaven; and, to discredit all those who have been loyal to God, who have died and who have gone on, who are waiting in heaven for their return to this earth.

It will be at the mid-tribulation when the mask is finally torn off the face of the antichrist. He will then be proven not to be the angel of light that he has been imitating as his father Satan does. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 tell us that Satan, and all those who are his agents, always parade themselves as good folks. They always parade themselves as the people of God, and as the people who bring spiritual enlightenment. This is characteristic of New Age people. They parade themselves as the enlightened ones, and they call their demonic leaders (the demons who lead them) "the enlightened masters." It is not accidental that they use that term. It is because they parade as beings of spiritual enlightenment, and those who will lead you to spiritual enlightenment.

**World Government**

In verse 7, we have the world government of the antichrist brought before us: "Once more it was given to him." The word "given" again reminds us that the antichrist is exercising great power which does not come from within himself. He is not deity. He does not have this kind of supreme superhuman power. It is something which is given to him at the midpoint of the tribulation. This is permitted to him from Satan by God. This fits in with God's great plan.

**To Make War**

It is given to this man to do something: "To make war." This word "war" here is war in the sense of a great worldwide persecution of believers. At that point in time, all of the sophisticated modern methods of police work; of interrogation; of surveillance; and of locating people will be put into effect: all that mankind has learned by experience of torture; the agony that will cause a person to break down; and, the agonies that will cause a person to tell where fellow believers are hiding, and to give the information that will bring destruction to other people. All of that is going to be in a refined state of development. These police methods and torture will be used without mercy. A lot of believers are going to break up. They will understandably crack under this kind of pressure, and they themselves will experience the disappointment of giving the information to the enemy. Others, as historically has also been true of believers, will stand firm, and they will die.

**Holy Ones**

These believers are here called saints, which is the word for "holy ones." In the Bible, the word "saints" is a word that refers to a born-again status. "Saint" means that you have been regenerated. "Saint" is not used as it is used in religious systems such as the Roman Catholic Church, connoting somebody who has exceptionally good works and exceptionally good conduct. It does not refer to your conduct. It refers to your personal regeneration. These people who are born-again are going to be the objects of this worldwide persecution. It is the believers in Jesus Christ who are the saints of the tribulation, and will then be the objects of persecution.

**Persecution**

The purpose of persecuting the saints is, in part, to discourage people from turning to Jesus Christ. You must remember that three-and-a-half years have passed, during which time the judgments of God have been pouring out upon the humanity of the antichrist. The seal judgments have passed, and the trumpet judgments have passed.

As a matter of fact, you must remember that we are in an interruption here. We're in an insertion of information that is being given to us before the seventh trumpet blows. We are now at the point where the seventh trumpet is going to blow. When it blows, out of it will come the final judgments of God in the form of the seven bowls. This will take place probably during the final months of the tribulation, because they will be worse than anything else. Talk about tearing up the earth and its ecology – these bowl judgments are going to do exactly that. So, they will be at the end, such that, when God finishes, this earth is finished, and it is going to indeed have to have the renewal that Christ has promised: a new earth; and, a new heaven.

At this point, the antichrist is fully confident that he can whip God, and he is out to persecute the people of God. This persecution will be at the midpoint of the tribulation. Things are bad enough now. Now, when you pass the midpoint of the tribulation, you are coming down toward the final bold judgments, and the persecution is in effect. And people who have suffered (even all these unbelievers) who have suffered this much, are beginning to have some second thoughts. They're beginning to wonder about this, because the Bible makes it very clear, as you have seen, that they know who is bringing these judgments. They know that there is really a God up there, and that he really is doing these things to them.

That doesn't make them love him. By and large, they curse him, but some of these people are going to have second thoughts because they are elect, and they are going to start putting things together. Satan does not want these people to change their minds and turn to Jesus Christ.

**The Antichrist's Persecution Overcomes the Saints**

So, this persecution is going to be severe and intense. It will be Satan's last effort to destroy everybody who trusts in Jesus Christ. Born-again Jews and born again gentiles will have been enlightened about the antichrist from Scripture. So, the Holy Spirit will enable them to resist. The antichrists is going to be extremely successful in this persecution, because John is told that it is given to him by the power of Satan, and the toleration of God, to persecute the saints (the believers) who are live on earth in the tribulation. The result is that he is going to overcome them. The Greek word is "nikao." "Nikao" means "to have a successful campaign." The persecution will be enormously successful. He will be victorious in general. In the grammar, this is in the infinitive mode, which indicates that this is the purpose of Satan, and it is permitted by God. It is God's intention to let the believers be exposed to this persecution.

Now, this persecution and conquest of believers by the antichrist was indeed revealed to Daniel the prophet. Way back in Daniel, 7:21, Daniel was told that this man of sin (this little horn, as he's described in Daniel) is going to do this very thing. Daniel is told, "I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them." Daniel symbolically saw this horn waging war against the saints, and defeating them.

Isn't it amazing, concerning these evidences that we have, how the pieces tie together, because God the Holy Spirit is the author of the book such that here Daniel is given exact, precise details, and hundreds of years later, it is fulfilled in exactly that way.

**Death has no Power**

So, we may expect that a majority of the saints of God will be martyred by the antichrist. However, I must remind you, as these people undoubtedly will remind each other, that for those of us who are born-again, death has no power. Hebrews 2:14: "Since then, the children share in flesh and blood (we Christians, we believers, we children of God are still flesh and blood), He himself (the Lord Jesus Christ) likewise also partook of the same, that through death (His own death on the cross), He might render powerless him (Satan) who had the power of death (that is the devil), and might deliver those who, through fear of death, were subject to slavery all their lives."

It is characteristic and understandable, in the realm of human beings, that they fear death. This is the one thing you can't beat. Almost anything else that happens in life, you can do something about it; you can still survive; you can still carry through; and, you can still make it. But once you stand in the face of death, this is when you are helpless, and you cannot do a thing about it: the greatest, and the most insignificant; the most powerful, and the weakest; the wealthiest, and the poorest; and, the highest class, and the lowest class. When death hits, you will go down. What is on the other side, and what happens after you die has always been a cause of great concern and of fear for the human race.

The writer of Hebrews is saying that once Jesus Christ rose from the dead, it made it very clear that there is now a human being alive in heaven, and therefore, we too can live as human beings in heaven. What it has declared to us is that Satan, who could once bring people down with the fear of death, and who could hold this club over their heads, is now helpless, because even if he were permitted by God, say, as a sin unto death – that God lets Satan take your life, you're going to go to heaven, and you'll be glad you're there. And in time, your body will be restored, and you'll be victorious over death. Death cannot beat any Christian anymore.

However, the antichrist will have victory over so many believers, that he will be putting to death, will reinforce his delusion that he is winning his battle against God. He will be quite wrong in that.

**Power and Authority**

Then we're told the extent of this persecution: "It was given to him to make war" (to carry on the persecution against the born-again people of God, and indeed to do it successfully, and to win out victoriously. Now, authority has been given to this man. This world "authority" is the Greek word "exousia." The word "Exousia" means "power to control." This is the power which is given to the antichrist by Satan. So, it is superhuman, and he is capable of controlling everybody on the face of the earth. He is able to defeat anybody who resists his will. It is the kind of thing, I'm sure, that a man like Hitler dreamed of.

Just imagine what it would have been like, had you been Hitler, and had you had these great scientists, including the great, jet propulsion, ballistic missile scientist, Wernher von Braun, who knew what he was dealing with. He knew what they were doing in the secret laboratory at Peenemünde. They had developed jet propulsion on the principles (of all things) of Robert Goddard, an American who is the pioneer in jet propulsion. When Robert Goddard went to the United States government and said, "I have got the principles worked out of jet propulsion. If we develop a missile by jet propulsion, we will be invincible. We can hit any place on the face of the earth. Nobody can stop us." Do you know what the United States government did? They said, "That's nice." Goddard had been working on this since the 1920s. They said, "We need you to work on naval ship propellers. You're a good scientist. You know math. We need to have propellers that are made right so that the boat goes through the water. That's what he was doing.

When we captured the scientists, Wernher von Braun among them, and we interrogated them about the principles of science behind jet propulsion, the scientists (looking at one another) finally asked the question of their interrogators, "Why are you Americans asking us these questions when we were telling you what we have learned from your own Robert Goddard?" That's how dumb the American government was.

This capacity of jet propulsion is the thing that would have given Hitler the capacity to rule the world. If Hitler has listened to von Braun (who, incidentally, became a Christian before he died), Germany would have won the war, even without the atomic bomb. They would have had the capacity to move missiles anywhere in the world, and nobody could have stopped them. But God interfered and did not permit this.

**The Authority of the Antichrist**

However, when the antichrist comes along, he will have at his disposal all the greatest weapons; all the greatest technology; and, all the controls, and nobody will be able to stop this man. Any leader of any nation that opposes him will be brought down, and he will be supreme because he will have "exousia" – superhuman authority.

**All Races**

Where will this extend to? Please notice: It is in this verse that we realize that world government is going to be realized on this earth. It is at this midpoint in the tribulation that this comes about, because that's where this verse fits in. He will have this supreme control over every tribe. The Greek word for "tribe" there is "phule." The word "phule" refers to a clan of people. It refers to people who are closely related as a race. So, this word is racial. That is, the antichrist will control every race on the face of the earth.

**All People**

Secondly, he will control all people. That is the word "laos." "Laos" refers to the different social levels of society. So, people at every degree of wealth, education, and culture will be totally controlled by the antichrist.

**All Tongues**

Furthermore, every tongue will also be under his control. This is the Greek word "glossa." This word "glossa" refers to spoken languages here on the face of the earth. So, people of every language group, no matter how insignificant that language group is, will be under the control of Satan.

**All Nations**

Finally, he use the word "nation," which is the Greek word "ethnos." This refers to national entities. So, every nationality or ethnic group, which is where we get the word "ethnic" (from "ethnos"), on the earth is going to be under the control of the antichrist.

**World Government**

What does this fourfold enumeration of people indicate to us? It indicates that the control of the antichrist is going to extend to the whole world. This is God the Holy Spirit's way of helping us to understand that there will not be the smallest little group of people, under any conceivable division, that will not be under the control of the antichrist. He will have conquered the whole world, and he will have set up a world government.

Yes, David Rockefeller wants a world government. Yes, the Rothschilds want a world government. Yes, the international bankers want a world government. Yes, the government political leaders want a world government. They want exactly what the antichrist will himself eventually be able to set up.

Daniel 7:23: "Thus he said, 'The fourth beast;'" that is, this revived kingdom of ancient Rome under the antichrist will be a fourth kingdom on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms: "It will devour the earth, let it down, and crush it." It will be a conquering kingdom. So the martyrs of the antichrist's persecution will come from all the world. That's the point that the Holy Spirit is making. The martyrs are going to be from every conceivable group of human beings on the face of the earth.

We have already seen this group of martyrs referred to back in Revelation 7:9-17. In these verses, we're told how these people are standing there, and, incidentally, it is exactly how it is described in the same way – by these four categories. John said, "After these things, I looked, and behold, a great multitude looking up into heaven." He sees a great multitude: "Which no one could count from every," and there you have the four categories again: "Of every nation; all tribes; and peoples; and, tongues, standing before the throne (before the Lamb), clothed in white robes (indicating their absolute righteousness), and palm branches were in their hands, indicating their position now of peace and of worship of Christ. And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' And all the angels were standing around the throne, and around the elders and the four living creatures." The elders represent the church. The four living creatures are these cherubim angels who stand as an honor guard around the throne of God. They fell on their faces before the throne, and they worshiped God."

Here's an enormous occasion of worship taking place in heaven. And John must have been really thrilled to watch that scene: "Saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power might be to our God forever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying to me, 'These who are clothed in white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?'" This elder raises the question for John to consider: Just who are these people who are worshiping God in this way?

"And I said to him, My Lord, You know.'" John said, "I don't know, but I know that you know. Tell me." These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. He's talking about those who are up there as a result of Satan's persecution. And you can see that this is the great tribulation. The term "great tribulation" refers to the last three-and-a-half years.

"For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them." Again, we have the temporary words for the tent. Mind you that these people are here. They're totally happy. They're glad they're there. But some of them went into heaven because they had their bodies chopped to pieces. They had themselves shot up. They had themselves mutilated. They had themselves on a torture wreck. They were abused by antichrist. But that doesn't matter. It's all behind them.

Verse 16 says, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore, neither show the sun beat down on them, nor any heat. For the land in the center of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life. And God shall wipe every tear from their eyes." Yes, they had tears, but God is going to wipe those all tears away. The time for tears is over.

The world government of the antichrist is going to be an attempt to imitate the Millennial Kingdom promised by Jesus Christ. During the great tribulation, the world is going to rapidly degenerate into unrestrained indulgence of the sin nature. That's what's going to make the antichrist attractive – indulge the sin nature. What's the result going to be? A jungle of evil and of violence. The conditions then will be similar to the society that existed before the Noahic flood.

Genesis 6:11-12 and Matthew 24:37-38 – all of these verses indicate to us that the conditions before the Noahic flood was totally evil. Every exercise of the human mentality was to figure out how to do something vile, and there was violence on the earth. Once you remove yourself from the authority of the Bible, and the laws of morality of the Bible, you cannot control human beings.

John Adams was very perceptive, after the Constitution had been written, when he said, "This is a splendid document, but it can only work for a religious people," by which he meant "a Christian people." The Constitution is no longer working in the United States, because we have wild beasts, by and large, in large parts of our society, that have been turned loose from the restraint of the Word of God. They have no guidelines.

So, Matthew 24:37-38 say that when Jesus comes, people are going to be just like they were in the time before the flood came: ignoring God; rejecting His Word; and, doing their own thing right until the day that the flood came: "For the coming of the Son of Man (when Jesus returns) will be just like the days of Noah, for in those days, which were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and were marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark." Noah was standing up there and saying, "Prepare for the end. God is returning," and they laughed at him. They made fun of the boat he was building. But there finally came the day when the flood burst on them. The day will come, in the tribulation, when the flood of God's wrath will burst upon them with the Second Coming of Christ.

**World War**

The final stage of the antichrist's counterfeit millennium will be a gigantic world war, which is going to be terminated by the return of Jesus Christ in order to save mankind from destroying itself completely. This is why the Bible tells us, on one occasion, that the tribulation years are going to be cut short. The tribulation time period is going to be cut short. Why? Because mankind will be on the verge of destroying itself.

We have discovered that Saddam Hussein had a lot of nuclear material. Only within the last week or two, has he finally yielded it; turned it over; and, admitted that he had it. Since the end of the Gulf War, he's been moving it around the country, trying to keep it undercover so that it could not be found. Saddam Hussein is not the only tin horn dictator in the world today who has nuclear material. It is popping up in all kinds of countries, and unfortunately, in Muslim countries which are devoted to bloodshed.

What the Bible is telling us is that the time is going to come when, finally, the antichrist, near the end of the tribulation, has so enraged all of mankind that he rules, and that is heavy man has been on, and who have had to worship him as God, that they will rise up against him. Nations will take sides with him and against him. What do you think they're going to use to fight with? They're going to fight with nuclear weapons that they have produced by that time. Our government now is extremely nervous about these countries having these nuclear materials.

The news the other day said that the government of the United States thought that Saddam couldn't come up with a nuclear bomb for ten years. Now they find that he was only one year away. Happy hunting.

In Revelation 19, this terrible world war that ends it all is described for us: "And I saw heaven open, and behold, a white horse. He who sat upon him (Jesus Christ) is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness, He judges and wages war." You can see why the conscientious objectors and the peaceniks hate this verse. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, comes back to this earth from heaven in order to carry on a great military campaign? That's right: "His eyes are a flame of fire. Upon his head are many diadems. And He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with the robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, are following Him on white horses." That is you folks. That's the church. That's the army of the living God, which will come back from heaven with Him. You've been up there for seven years. You've received your reward. You've been analyzed for the quality of your life. Now all of that has been decided. Now you are ready to come back in order to take over the earth and begin ruling it. You will follow him on white horses. Those of you who are shy of horses should do something about that now in order to make your return at that time more comfortable.

Verse 15: "And from His mouth comes a sharp sword." What is that sword? It is His Word: "So that with it He may smite the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron (during the millennium). And He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God (the Almighty God"." He's going to take these nations; take the antichrist; and, take the world that has resisted him, and, He's going to be like a farmer who throws his grapes into a bin and then starts stomping on them in order to squeeze out the red juice of the grapes. And as you do that, the red juice of the grape splatters up on your clothes. That's the image you have of Jesus Christ with the blood red all around the bottom of His garment, because he's stomping upon the human beings that he is executing simply with His Word.

"And on His robe and on His thigh, He has the name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds (which fly in mid-heaven), 'Come, assemble for the great supper of God.'" Do you know what the great supper of God is? The great supper of God is for all those human beings that will have been killed on the field of battle; namely, the field of Megiddo, the battle of Armageddon. They will be there for the beasts of the field and for the birds of the air to feast upon: in order that you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of commanders, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both freemen and slaves, small and great. And I saw the beast (that is, the antichrist) and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him (Jesus Christ) who sat upon the horse, and against His army."

Here, even to this point, now the world's rulers, who have been out to get the antichrist, decide to join the antichrist, and they're all going to turn on Jesus Christ, who they see coming with His heavenly hosts.

Verse 20 says, "And the antichrist was seized, and within him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, and those who worshiped his image. These two (the political leader and the religious leader) were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh." It is Jesus Christ who then finishes this great world war. The beast (the antichrist) and his right hand man, the false prophet (the religious leader of the world) are thrown alive into the lake of fire, which is what we usually refer to by the word "hell."

1,000 years later, you will find that the antichrist and the false prophets are still there alive when Satan is thrown in to join them. In Revelation 20:10, 1,000 years later, the millennium has passed: "And the devil who deceived them." Satan has been imprisoned all this time. Now he is given a short period to be free to gather to him once more the children of these people who entered the millennium as born-again parents. They have children who reject Jesus Christ. They rally to Satan for one last resistance against God.

Verse 10 says, "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet also. And they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever." So, when the Jehovah's Witnesses tell you that God is so merciful that He would never leave somebody in suffering forever in hell, but that He will annihilate you if you do not turn to Him, their lying. You have a clear declaration here that for 1,000 years, the antichrist and his false prophet are in the lake of fire. When Satan joins them, they are still alive, and they're still in agony. Make no mistake about that.

When the antichrist comes, he will claim to be the latest reincarnation of the Christ's spirit. This is at the heart of the New Age religion – the Christ spirit, and the fact that there is a potential deity in each one of us. When the antichrist comes, this will be the basis of his claim. This is why people will foolishly believe that he is deity. The consequences of that claim is what we will look at next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1991

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