***People will Believe a Lie

RV206-01***

Our text is Revelation 16:1-21, and our subject is "The Seven Bowls." This is increment number 14.

**Frogs**

The sixth bowl judgment in verse 12 has to do with the drying up of the Euphrates River. As John looks upon this scene, he also observes a false trinity out of which proceeds three slimy frogs. The sixth bowl judgment is found in Revelation 16:12. Then it is followed by a brief set of parentheses in verse 13-16 which further expand and explain verse 12. The alliance of rulers from the Orient, which will march their armies across the dried-up Euphrates River toward Jerusalem, is the first signal that the antichrist's kingdom is coming apart near the end of the tribulation period. The kings of the East want to throw off the control of the antichrist, who has dominated them since the middle of the tribulation by a world government. So, they plan to attack the worship center of the antichrist, which is Jerusalem, and the reconstructed Jewish temple there.

**The False Trinity**

John also sees on the Euphrates River the false trinity, which is made up of Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. They seek, of course, to replace the true Trinity: Father; Son; and, Holy Spirit. This is another one of those attempts that the Bible tells us Satan is always up to – he is trying to be like God. But John also observes that from the mouths of these members of the counterfeit trinity come these three frog-like creatures, which are in fact filthy demon spirits, and they are presented as frogs in order to convey some degree of the sense of their repulsiveness.

**False Miracles**

These three demon spirits perform miracles (by Satan's power), which in fact cause people to accept the claims of the antichrist of being deity. Satan and his demons, I remind you again, are fully capable of performing miraculous works, and they will do so extensively in order to deceive people during the tribulation. In fact, the Bible makes it clear that the next explosion of miracles will be the tribulation period. The presence of a miracle, therefore, does not indicate that it is God who is acting, or that it is God's truth that is being proclaimed, or that it is God's messenger that one is listening to.

This is the enormous mistake that the charismatic movement makes. With all the fringes of truth they possess, they're wrong about the one doctrine upon which, as a Christian, you cannot be wrong in the church age. That is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

One day, as I lay in the Irving Hospital, I listen to Pat Robertson on The 700 Club one morning, in the section where he was answering Bible questions. He went through the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, he was wrong on practically every point (maybe 95% wrong). On one concept after another that he was telling millions of people, he was totally wrong, and consequently, dissuading those people (digressing them completely) from the working power of the Holy Spirit in this age.

The tragedy of that, I remind you again, is that Christians who break down in their lives (in any relationship of their lives) are not using the divine power system that God has provided. That system includes, first of all, a knowledge of doctrine, which was true of the humanity of Jesus from His earliest childhood, plus being in temporal fellowship, with all known since confessed – being in fellowship with God the Father. That means being filled with the Spirit, and that means being under control of the Holy Spirit. When you have doctrine guided and motivated by the control of the Holy Spirit, you're a winner. You will avoid sin. You will not be beaten by Satan. You'll be nobody's fool in the religious world, and you'll not be a sitting duck for anything. But if you step out of that system, if you break temporal fellowship, and refuse to retrace your steps back there where you broke it, you'll go your whole life out of temple fellowship. And boy, the tears will ever flow from your eyes as you stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and realize what it meant to have lost your life.

We tried to point out to you, in the last session, and reminded you that biblical miracles historically come only in cycles, as God chooses to confirm His true messengers and their message. The first cycle was the period of Moses. Then centuries went by, and there was not a miracle to be seen. The second cycle was the period of Elijah and Elisha. Then centuries went by, and again there were no miracles. Then the third cycle of confirmation was the period of Jesus in the New Testament era and of the apostles. Following the establishment of the New Testament church, the period of miracles came to an end.

The apostle Paul had had the terrific power of being able to heal people to confirm his message. I mean, they could touch a piece of cloth on him and be healed. But even for Paul, near the end of his ministry, as the gift of healing was being phased out and completely closed down in 70 A.D., he could no longer heal Trophimus, but left him behind at Miletus when they had to travel on. He could not heal Epaphroditus, whom he had told the Philippi Christians, who had sent him to help Paul, "He came near death unto me, and I had a near escape. I almost thought that he was going to die in my hands. How could a man like Paul, whose very garments could exude healing, now come to the point where he could not heal the man sent by the Philippians to assist him? Because the gift of healing had served his purpose, and was being phased out.

Now, for centuries, we have had no miracles. Anything that seems supernatural is an act of Satan for a work of deception. But indeed, when we come to the next period of the tribulation, we see that God's two witnesses perform miracles by the power of God, and we see that the false prophet, by the power of Satan, will perform great miracles. That will be the next era of miracles. But unless you know doctrine, and are led by the Holy Spirit, you don't know whether the miracle is from God or from Satan. That's the difference.

Any claims today, therefore, in this particular time frame in which we live, performing miracles is a self-delusion. It's something that's created by emotional excitement, or it is an act of delusion by Satan. It is to deceive those who are spiritually gullible.

So, we now come to Revelation 16:14. We have a little further explanation concerning these demonic spirits which John sees coming out of the mouths of the members of the false trinity. John says, "For they are spirits of demons, performing signs (miracles)." And the target of these frog miracles are: "Which go out to the kings of the whole world." These miracles are specifically performed to influence the political leaders of the gentile nations of the world. When it uses the word "world" here, the Greek word looks like this: "oikoumene." "Oikoumene" means "the habitable world." When we think of the word "world," we're more used to this Greek word "cosmos." "Cosmos" refers to the world system. "Cosmos" is the way Satan has organized the world. This is the way his influence has taken over education; has taken over politics; has taken over religion; has taken over business; has taken over recreation; and, has taken over entertainment. Satan has organized his world on a system of evil. He runs every speck of it, and that is what the Bible calls the "cosmos."

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer at Dallas Seminary used to refer to this with the Latin words, the "Cosmos Diabolicus" – the world of Satan. But this is a different word for "world" here. This is "oikoumene." This means "the inhabited earth" where people live, and it is directed against their rulers, and what the rulers do is going to affect the people who are under them.

**Armageddon**

These three demons are going to unite all of mankind with their lies against God. Their miracles go out before the political leaders of the whole world. The purpose of these signs is to gather them for war (really for an extended campaign – not just a battle) of the great day of God the Almighty – the great day of God the omnipotent one. This is the biblical name for what we commonly referred to as the campaign of Armageddon. The biblical name for the campaign of Armageddon is "the great day of God the Almighty." The campaign of Armageddon is, I assure you, immediately on the horizon. You will have a front row seat out in outer space watching this thing unravel, as God has first taken us in the rapture out of this world.

This campaign of Armageddon, which some people refer to as World War III, will be triggered by events that are recorded for us in Daniel 11:40-45. Armageddon is described here near the end of the tribulation. Things are beginning to come apart in the empire of the antichrist. Verse 40 says, "At the end time (that is, at the end of the seven-year period), the king of the South will collide within him (the antichrist)." The king of the south is Egypt, and the king of the south will begin moving toward Israel.

I don't have to explain to you that there's intense hatred on the part of the Arab world toward Israel, and that Egypt as part of that world. The Islamic fundamentalists are trying to take over Egypt in order to make it an Islamic state, which will intensify its hatred and antagonism toward Israel. So, at the end time, the king of the South (Egypt) will move with her African and Asian allies. She will have those, some which will not go into our mention in the Scriptures. They will collide with him (the antichrist). At the same time, a second part of a two-pronged attack will take place, where the king of the North starts moving down toward Israel. One has only to look at a map to see, obviously, that that is Russia. Russia, with her allies, will form the second prong of this attack. The antichrist himself will respond from his capital in Babylon by moving his armies, the Bible says, "like a flood" through several nations as he rushes toward Israel.

So: "At the end of time, the king of the South (Egypt) will collide with him (the antichrist), and the king of the North (Russia and her allies) will storm against the antichrist with chariots, with horsemen, and with many ships." The antichrist will enter countries; overflow them; and, pass through them. It is this event that now triggers what we are reading in the book of the Revelation.

Then verse 41 and 42 expand what is going to happen: "And he (that is, the antichrist) will enter the beautiful." That's Israel. The antichrist enters Israel, and proceeds: "To strike at Egypt and her allies, and many countries will fall. But these will be rescued out of his (the antichrist's) hand: Edom, Moab, and the foremost of the sons of Ammon."

This is interesting, because along the lower part of the Dead Sea, what is now modern Jordan is what these three countries: Edom; Moab; and, Ammon used to form in the old days. This is modern Jordan – north central and southern Jordan. That he bypasses, and he does not bring that under his control. He does not bring that under attack. That is very interesting because in that territory is where Petra is, which is probably going to be the last city of refuge to which the Jews flee now at this final moment.

Satan is not going to let up. To the very last moment, he's not going to let up his desire to kill every breathing Jew on the face of the earth. You understand what that would mean. If he could destroy and kill every living Jew, and especially every believing Jew, there would be no Jews to go into the millennial kingdom, and for God to fulfill this plan. It is not people who have died (who have been born-again), who are raised in glorified bodies, who form the citizens of the millennial kingdom. It is people in their natural bodies such as we have today, and saved such as we are today. The whole millennium begins with everybody in the world born-again. But he has to have Jews and gentiles who are in their normal physical bodies. That's why they can have children. That's why they can have family life. That's why they can continue civilization at its highest level, and in its most intense form. There will be what God always ordained – a minimum of government. As Thomas Jefferson said, "That government governs best which governs least." And Christ will have authority. There'll be a minimal interference with the lives of people. But where it is necessary for righteousness to be enforced, it will be. Government will perform its legitimate role.

So, suddenly there will be great prosperity. The whole millennial kingdom will be a marvelous time. It will truly be the golden age of mankind. You have to have Jews in their normal physical bodies, and gentiles in their normal physical bodies in order to do that.

So, this territory is preserved.

Verse 42 says, "Then he (the antichrist) will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. The antichrist will move down, and he will defeat Egypt for the audacity of striking out against him.

In verse 43, it says, "But the antichrist will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt, and Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at his heels." The antichrist will plunder Egypt as Arab and African allies now move in against the antichrist.

In verse 44, we read, "But at this point in time, rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him. And he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many." Now he gets the word that the Euphrates River has dried up. The armies of the Oriental kings have amassed, and there are 200 million of them. I remind you again that we only had 11 million people in the military service of the United States during all of World War II. 200 million are now coming across, and they're headed for Israel too. He also gets this word about what's coming down on him from the North. So, he moves back very quickly toward his base in Jerusalem. We're told that he pitches his tent between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. He sets up his tent (his royal pavilion) in his headquarters.

Verse 45: "He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful mountain, which is Jerusalem (Mount Zion). Yet, he will come to his end, and no one will help him." At this point, the antichrist will set up his headquarters in Jerusalem with his army bivouacked between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. And in Jerusalem, the antichrist will prepare to make his final stand against his enemies and, in fact, ends up facing the returning Christ at the Second Coming. What he tries to do is to fulfill the millennial role of Jesus Christ as the world ruler with a world religion which worships him from the center in Jerusalem.

Well, what happens is that God, at the Second Coming of Christ, destroys all these nations, which by this time have gathered at the field of Armageddon for killing each other, and they will suddenly see Christ and His army coming from heaven, and they will turn against Him. And Jesus will destroy them, and along with them, the antichrist. At this point, the antichrist is doomed. No one will be able to save him. And the armies of the antichrist will be destroyed at Armageddon in a very destructive way by the power of God. Perhaps this will be by a thermonuclear attack. The Bible tells us that their eyes are going to melt in their sockets. The skin is going to peel off their hides. That sounds very much like a nuclear explosion. But God is going to take all of these nations of the world, and they're all going to be destroyed. That is why the blood will be so enormous that it can come up to the bridle of a horse.

The armies are killed. The victory of God is complete. The antichrist and the false prophet are grabbed by the scruff of their necks; they're executed; and, God casts them into the lake of fire.

**The United States in the End Times**

We're talking about times and space history, so this is what's immediately before the world. And if you know this, this is the end chapter of the story. If you'll keep this in mind, you'll be able to understand why what is happening today is happening. And the most important thing that has to happen is that God has got rid of one superpower in Russia, and He has one more agency to dismiss (to dispose of), and that is the superpower of the United States. You cannot have the United States as a superpower in these end times. The United States has to be down the drain. We are now at a stage in American political life where that is happening daily.

We have a government which cannot wait to put women in combat roles of leadership in the military service. We have a government that has spent its initial strength and efforts in bringing the homosexuals and their diseases into the military service. Every possible act of madness is being performed. Every attempt is being made now to expand the national debt by deliberately paying off the big city mayors for their service in the political campaigns. Can you believe that we would spend money to give some city a nice new swimming pool, or to add a recreational center? And as Pat Schroeder, a representative from Colorado, says, "Why should we object to paying for a swimming pool for some city that needs it? The Senate has a swimming pool, doesn't it?" And I said, "Oh, thank God for the wisdom of Pat Schroeder to help us get straight on spending our tax money." This is destructive of the United States economically.

As we get down to Revelation 17 and 18, those two chapters deal first with the world destruction economically, and the world destruction politically. It just has this sad picture of the political rulers sitting at their desks with their heads held in their hands, saying, "How could this economic collapse happen? How could it have come apart? How could this take place?" And every day, they're making sure that this is exactly what will happen – the bankrupting of societies.

Well, this is happening. This is going to happen. But I want you to know that God is not making this up as He goes along. Move back with me to the Old Testament once more to Zechariah 14:1-4. What is it that is moving the gentile nations at this point in time to this kind of a mass confrontation with one another, and eventually with God? Who is it? It's God Himself. Never make the mistake of not thinking that God is not on the throne. Yes, fools run the nations of the world. These are human viewpoint creatures who know not where they go. They are the blind who lead the blind, and who put them in authority over their lives. The gentile nations are moved toward Armageddon by God Himself. And Zachariah has pointed that out to us in Zechariah 14:1-4: "Behold, a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle." That's what we're reading about in Revelation: "And the city will be captured, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished, and half the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle."

Here comes Christ at His Second Coming. Historically, verse 1 and 2 have taken place. This is exactly what's happened to the Jewish people and their nation. Then God comes in the picture with Christ in verse 3, and fights against this nation. He fights on the day of battle: "And in that day, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives," which is in front of Jerusalem. This is where He will touch down at His Second Coming. This is from whence He left at His first departure. He will come to the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the East: "And the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley." That may be the valley that is called, at this time, the Valley of Jehoshaphat. We have no clear identification where the Valley of Jehoshaphat is, but it will be the valley in which the soldiers will gather for the great battle that leads down to the field of Armageddon:

"So that half the mountain will move toward the north, and half toward the south." The nations are moved to mobilize for war by the frog demon spirits who are carrying to them the message of the false trinity. The nations act upon these lies from the demon spirits, so they move toward Jerusalem, toward Armageddon, and toward their deaths. This is what is so amazing. These people have been given the truth again and again. They have people who are sounding forth – people like 144,000 Jewish evangelists who are immortal. They cannot be killed. They stand on the street corners, and they shout the message of God, and they shout the warnings, and people pass by and hate them and spit upon them and throw things at them. They cannot be injured. They are immortal.

**People will Believe a Lie**

So, these people are not going to be without information. I remind you of the principle we looked at a couple of sessions ago: When you get a bit of truth from God, when doctrinal truth is brought to you, and you do not act upon it, then God will let you believe a lie. In fact, He opens the door wide to your destruction. Do you want to know why your marriage tore apart? Because you believed a lie. Because someplace along the line, you would not believe the truth. Do you know why things are coming apart in your relationships with people? Because you believed a lie. Because you refuse to believe the truth. Your family life is being torn up because you believe a lie. You refuse to believe the truth, so you were led to believe a lie.

I told Mrs. Danish that some Sunday evening, I'd like to have a discussion here at Berean Church, and ask you to think about the doctrinal principle that Jesus enunciated: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these material things shall be added unto you. Do you realize how many Christians do not believe that? How many of George Orwell's 1984 people do we have among us who use double-speak? "Oh yes, I believe the Word of God." But I'd like to spend an evening having you tell me how to apply that doctrinal principle. Where do you apply it, and how much spiritual gutsiness and fortitude does it take to say, "I don't put anything that has to do with the things of God, and my Christian service, and my feeding upon the Word of God, behind by some material pursuit? Nothing gives priority over my relationship to God." Why? Because he said, "I'll get what I need if I play the game that way." I can assure you from years of personal testimony, that you will not lack for material things when you obey that principle of putting the things of the kingdom of God first. That's not an easy thing to start doing. It takes an enormous amount of Christian spiritual maturity before you are capable of doing that. But once you're on it, boy, you don't want to do it any other way. It is so easy. It is so relaxing. It is so terrific.

I remember when my sons were in college, they were faced with earning money, and the Dallas seminary men worked down at the freight docks. So, I said, "Why don't you guys check the freight docks? They were young guys, just in their first year college. So, they went. In fact, I went first to check on the thing, and the man down at Gordon's freight said, "Sure, bring them in." It was John. He didn't know what he was getting into. So, this kid comes home from college, and he walks in there, and Jimmy Hoffa had set things up for him with the teamsters with a big salary. Here was this joker kid, in his first year college. Boy, he walks in there, and he's earning money hand over fist on the freight dock.

When he went in, he said, "Now, look. I don't work on Sundays. You can call me, because I'm on call, and I'll break off in a minute. But I don't work on Sundays. One Sunday morning, a call came, and John was asleep, and I answered the phone, and the man said, "We need him down here right away." I said, "Well, he's not available right now. His understanding is that he doesn't work on Sundays." The man said, "Well, if he doesn't show up, he doesn't have to come here tomorrow." I said, "Well, I'll give him the message." He didn't go in Sunday. And when he walked in Monday, they handed him his time card to punch in.

They weren't about to get rid of some guy that was doing a good job for them with some integrity because he said, "I put the things of God first, and I'm not going to be there on Sunday, but I'll break my neck for you the rest of the time." This is a hard decision to make. But once you make it, you will win every time.

It is a dangerous thing to know a doctrinal principle, and to treat it as a lie, and not act upon it. If you do, God may say, "OK, I'll give you a lie. I'll let you deceive yourself that this is the way to go." And the next step will be just a little easier for you to step away from God. We have people who are so prosperous now that they're not even in this congregation anymore. They're just making money hand-over-fist. They don't need God that way, and they don't need to be instructed anymore. I know what's happening. Those of you who are discerning Christians know it too, but your concern is for yourself. Never get tripped up by the devil because of the blessings of God.

So, these nations are acting upon the lies of these demon spirits because they would not believe the witnesses of God. God uses lying demon spirits to perform His work. So, that's what I'm saying.

**Ahab and Jezebel**

We have a classic example. Turn to 1 Kings 22:19-38. Here is how spiritually insane one can be. The prophet is Micaiah. Micaiah is a true prophet of God. He speaks the truth. The King is Ahab. Ahab and Jezebel are in the palace. They're in charge of the nation. They're running the programs. Ahab wants a military confrontation, and when he consults with his with his prophets, they are false prophets. They tell them, "Go ahead." Ahab doesn't like Micaiah, and he has thrown him in prison. Jehoshaphat, the king of the south, from the southern kingdom, is up there visiting. Ahab says, "Jehoshaphat, let's get together, and we'll have this fight with Ben-hadad. He needs to get his ears boxed down. He's giving me trouble." Jehoshaphat says, "Well, I'd like to consult with the prophets, whether God is in this." So, that's the background of what they're doing here.

So, the prophets are brought before Jehoshaphat and Ahab in the throne room, and they all say, "Go for it. You're going to win. There's no problem about it." But Jehoshaphat is not comfortable about this. Finally, while the false prophets are saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper, for the Lord will give it into your hand," Jehoshaphat would like to hear from Micaiah. So, they sent for Micaiah, and the people who go to pick up Micaiah, who is under this incarceration, say to him, "Tell the king to go to war. Agree with the other prophets. Play ball with the team. Tell him that if we got up to Ramoth-gilead to battle, we'll win." And Micaiah says, "I'm going to tell him the truth. What God tells me is the situation is what I'm going to tell. I'm not going to lie just so I can be with the rest of the prophets."

So, Micaiah was asked, "What is God's will in this matter? Do we go to war or not?" In 1 Kings 22:19, Micaiah said, "Therefore, hear the Word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him ('host' means the army of God), on His right and on His left. The Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said this, while another said that." Now, you can imagine Ahab sitting up there on his throne, and he's listening to Micaiah who says, "I've had a vision from God. God has had a counsel. His great leaders are gathered around Him at His throne. And God says, 'I'm going to bring Ahab down to destruction, and I need somebody who will lead him to destruction. How are we going to do that?' And one angel suggests this, and another angel suggests that."

Verse 21: "And then a demon spirit came forth and stood before the Lord and said, 'I'll entice him.' And the Lord said to him, 'How?' He said, 'I'll go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then he said, 'You are to entice him and also prevail. Go and do so.'" God said, "OK, you do that. Ahab has rejected Elijah. He has permitted Jezebel to kill the prophets of God, and he has established the worship of Baal within My temple. The time has come for Ahab to understand what it means for a political leader to break the laws of God."

So, He sent this demon spirit to speak through the prophets to give a lie to this man who would not believe the truth. Do you get the principle? When you do not believe the truth of doctrine, and when you do not believe the truth about what you are told on true authority, God says, "I will let you believe a lie. Your volition (divine institution number one one) will not be overridden by God." If you want to believe a lie, God says, "I'll open the door wide for you:"

"Now, therefore, behold, the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of these your prophets. And the Lord has proclaimed disaster against you." This was the greatest thing in the world. Here Ahab is told by Micaiah, "The reason these prophets are lying to you is because of the evil spirit that God has sent them to do this (to deceive you)." Ahab should have recoiled and said, "My God, don't tell me that that's where I've come to." He should have turned in repentance immediately, but he doesn't.

"Then Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, came and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, 'How did the spirit of the Lord pass from me to speak to you?" This is the false prophet saying, "How come the Spirit of God has gone from me to you?" Once you get into this business of believing a lie, you are so spiritually arrogant that you are appalling to look at and to listen to. Here's this character who is representing himself as the voice of God, and is slapping the true prophet of God on the face.

Micaiah said, "Behold, you shall see on that day when you enter an inner room to hide yourself." Micaiah is a cool dude. He said, "I'll tell you. You'll know when you're shivering in fear, and when your life is collapsing around you, and you're sniveling and whimpering, and you're hiding in some inner room, then you'll know how it happened that God spoke the truth to me, and a lie to you."

"Then the king of Israel said, take Micaiah, and return him to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, the king's son, and say, 'Thus says the king, 'Put this man in prison, and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return.'' And Micaiah said, 'If you indeed return safely, the Lord has not spoken by me.'" He said, "Listen, all you people." And that's where I get the principle that the day is going to come when we're going to find out who's right and who's wrong: disagreements between individuals; between religious groups; and, between truth and non-truth. The day is going to come. Never fail to know that it's not just going to be passed over, and you can just say, "Oh, well, I was mistaken." You're going to find that you are not only mistaken, but the price you pay you will live with for all eternity. Micaiah said, "If you return safely, then that settles it, and I am a liar."

"So, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, went up against Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'I'll disguise myself and go into battle, but you put on your robes.' So, the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle." Ahab says, "I'm going to disguise myself so they won't know that I'm the king, but you wear your royal garments, Jehoshaphat." I can't believe that Jehoshaphat was this dumb to do a thing like this. I mean, that makes him a sitting duck. Everybody sees, "Oh, there's the king's chariot," because Ben-hadad said, "I don't want you to fight any of the Israelites. I want you to go after one guy. You get Ahab. If we kill Ahab, his troops are going to flee. You look for the royal chariot. He's the guy with that little high banner on the top. Get that chariot. Go right in on him. He's the one you want to zero in on. If we bring him down, everything collapses."

"Now the king of Aram had commanded the 32 captains of his chariots, saying, 'Do not fight with small or great, but with the King of Israel alone.' So, it came about when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat that they said, 'Surely it is the king of Israel.' And they turned aside to fight against him. And Jehoshaphat cried out." Now Jehoshaphat finally makes the connection. He finally finds out the plan, and all of a sudden, everything comes together for him.

"Then it happened when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him." The grace of God saved his hide, because the soldiers were true to their mission. They knew their orders. Once they recognized this was not Ahab, they had no orders to kill Jehoshaphat. They quickly backed off, and moved in a different direction.

Meanwhile, there's a soldier in the back ranks. A certain man drew his bow at random; let an arrow fly; and, struck the king of Israel in a joint of the armor. The king moves; the leaves of the armor open up slightly; and, of all things, that arrow hits right in there, and hits a vital organ. Ahab is dying, so he says to the driver of his chariot, "'Turn around, and take me out of the fight, for I'm severely wounded.' And the battle raged that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot in front of the Arameans. And he died at evening, and the blood from the wound ran into the bottom of the chariot."

While Ahab was propped up, the Armenians thought he was still alive and fighting. So, the battle went on. Once the Israelites realized Ahab was dead, then they fled: "Then a cry passed throughout the army close to sunset, saying, 'Every man to his city. Every man to his country.' So, the Israelites ran, and the battle was over. So, the king died, and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria."

Now here's how right Micaiah was proven to have been: "And they washed the chariots by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood. Now the harlots bathed themselves there, according to the Word of the Lord which He spoke." When had God spoken this? Back when he took the vineyard from Naboth, the Jezreelite, through Jezebel's conniving, and using government powers and forces to get her way. God said, "The dogs would lick up the blood of Ahab, and the dogs would eat Jezebel," which is exactly what happened to her. And I must say to you that a dog in biblical times was not the domestic animals that we keep that are our little pets. A dog was a very vile creature. They were roaming bands. They were vicious. They were vile. They were looked upon as filthy creatures. And to be eaten by a dog was a consummate insult.

So, here, as if it wasn't enough that the dogs are licking up her blood, they're looking it up at the pool where the prostitutes bathed themselves after their nefarious actions. So, much for a royal exit.

In the same way, the lying spirits that come from the mouths of the false trinity are going to lead the gentile nations in the very near future to their destruction at Armageddon to fight God. Satan's thinking is so perverted from reality by his own sin, as our sin nature perverts our thinking from reality, that he still thinks that he can defeat God with the armies of the world that he gathers together on that field. And God regularly turns things around, and uses the sin-corrupted wisdom of men to lead them to their own destruction.

It is a dangerous thing to be out of temporal fellowship: where your mind is not the mind of God; where your will is not the will of God; and, where your emotions are not the emotions of God. Those are the three facets of your soul, so your soul is completely disoriented from reality. You are then on self-destruct and into spiritual insanity, and I'm talking about believers. Thus, God is moving things in the tribulation to destroy Satan's evil world system. But He is never going to forget His people who, at that time, will now rise to face the worst time in their history. The Jews of the tribulation are going to be saved from total destruction. That is going to happen. Finally, at the last moment, for those who have managed to stay alive under all the attacks of the antichrist, Zechariah 14:4-5 tell us that, at the Second Coming of Christ: "And you will flee by the valley of my mountains." Perhaps this valley is between the split Mount of Olives, which is probably where the Valley of Jehoshaphat is: "For the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel. And you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. Then the Lord my God will come and all the holy ones with Him." That is the Second Coming of Christ.

Then verse 6 tells us that: "And it will come about in that day that there will be no light. Luminaries will dwindle," and so on. But Christ will come, and the response of the Jews will be to look upon Him and to realize what their forefathers had done in putting to death their own Messiah. In Zechariah 13:6, we read, "And one will say to Him, 'What are these wounds between your arms' Then He will say, 'Those which I was wounded in the house of My friends.'" They will recognize those wounds.

Then in Zechariah 12:10, we read, "And I will pour out on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication, so they will look on Me, the whom they pierced" – this one who was pierced in the house of His own friends and His own people: "And they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. And Israel shall be born in a day."

In the tribulation, the unbelievers are going to welcome demonic powers in response to the miracles of the false prophet. In the tribulation, there will be lots of false prophets, Matthew 24:24 tells us, and lots of false teachers (2 Peter 2:1.) They will abound, but they will abound as messengers of Satan, and what they will be teaching, 1 Timothy 4:1 tells us, will be the doctrines of demons.

So, what we read here in Revelation 16, in this little interlude between verses 12 and 17, is that these spirits of demons are gathering the nations of the world together for the war of the great day of God Almighty. This has been in God's plan for a long time. And the way He's going to bring it about is because people will not believe the truth. And if you don't believe the truth, you will believe a lie. I don't care what the doctrinal principle is, you can never set it aside and say, "In this case, I'm not going to act on this one. This is a little irritating. This would be interruptive to my plans." If you will not believe the truth, you most certainly will believe a lie.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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