# *The Beast that Was; Is Not; and, Will Yet Come*

***RV213-02***

Our subject is "Ecclesiastical Babylon." This is segment number 11 on Revelation 17.

Spiritual Babylon is a false and morally corrupt religious creation of Satan, and it is extremely intolerant of true biblical Christianity. The religions of the world have all been designed by Satan as expressions of the religion begun by Nimrod in Babel. Those religions, consequently, have an intense hatred for Jesus Christ, for His followers; and, for His churches. The modern expression of Babel religion, of course, will reject the gospel of the grace of God. Salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ as the only road into heaven is condemned and reviled. Increasingly, the public media is holding up Christians as a threat to American society because of their beliefs that they want to impose on all of the rest of society. These are ignorant people who do not realize that biblical Christians are the ones who stand for everything that was in the minds of the founders of this nation, and the people who wrote our Constitution. But modern religion finds an intense hatred for the very foundations of our society because they are based upon the Word of God.

We have pointed out that, over the centuries, multitudes of Christian saints have also become martyrs as they have shed their blood at the hand of the harlot's religion. We have given you some historical background on how extensive the Roman Catholic Church (who has been the preeminent murderer of believers) has been in all of this. The harlot woman of Babel is thus seen by John to be drunk on the blood of the saints who she has murdered – saints that were murdered because they believed the Word of God instead of the word of the religious authorities who are at the head of Nimrod's religions.

The harlot is still donned in her glorious garments and her jewelry, but like dressed-up Hollywood celebrities at Oscar night, she is filled with moral abominations. I've often looked out at that crowd of glamorously-gowned women on Oscar night and the tuxedoed men, and looked at them, and wondered what it would look like if suddenly we could all see the character that resides behind that front of sophistication. How vile that would be! This harlot looks good, but the Word of God says that she is filled with filthy abominations.

Well, as John looks at this scene, his mind is simply blown. It's hard for him to believe that this vile creature, portrayed in this way, is going to be viewed as a representative of God. That was the secret. That's the mystery of Babylon – that someday all the world will take this religion of idolatry, and will consider it the true religion of God. John sees the degree of vileness and brutality that he has never observed, even though he is acquainted with the religion of Babylon in his day. He is simply taken aback that it's going to go this far. It is inconceivable to John that one day all of mankind is going to join the idolatry of the religion of Babylon.

**Why Does John Wonder?**

So, please turn to Revelation 17:7-8. On the scene comes an interpreting angel, and he poses a question to John who is standing there dumbfounded by what he sees. The question is in verse 7. He asks John why he is so appalled, and why he is so amazed by the sight of this harlot woman: "The angel said to me, 'Why do you wonder (why are you so speechless with disbelief) over what you are seeing?'" Well, John sees the outward glamor of the harlot woman. Remember that she was dressed in royal garments, and carried all over her expensive jewelry. This outward picture of this beautiful woman is shattered for John because now he sees the evidence of her inward corruption. When he looks at her, and sees her mouth dripping with the blood of the saints that she has murdered, and he sees her so satiated with the blood of believers that she staggers around like a drunk, he is simply taken beyond what he could conceive – that anything like this could ever happen.

However, any religious system which rejects the truth of Scripture will believe the lies of Satan, and become morally corrupt. Here is a principle of life that you should learn. This is true in any area of life. If you refuse to accept the truth that two plus two makes four, then you will believe a lie about what two plus two equals. Do you understand? If you reject what is true, you will always believe a lie in place of that truth. You don't just say there as a vacuum. Therefore, this was the principle that we looked at that Paul pointed out in the Thessalonians letters. If you refuse to believe the truth of God, then God the Holy Spirit will back off and let you take in what will inevitably replace His truth, and you will believe the lies of Satan. This is true of any believer. You believe what is false. If you refuse to believe what is true, you will believe what is false in connection with that same subject. This is very sobering.

This is exactly what John sees happening here. This woman and the society that she has influenced has rejected the truth of Scripture. So, there's only one other place to go, and that's to believe the lies of Satan. That is clearly what is happening in our country today as our citizens are being led away from the Word of God. They're being willing to listen and to believe that which is false.

The angel offers to interpret the symbols that are in John's vision. Of course, the symbols do need interpreting. The principle that we enunciated at the very beginning of the study of the book of Revelation is that the symbols that are used in the book of the Revelation are used elsewhere in the Bible. So, you go back to how these symbols were used, and that's your clue to what they mean at this point. It is not an unknown book. Many times, as in this passage here, God simply says, "Here's what it means," and He interprets the symbols. Now he causes this angel to do that for John.

He says to John, "Why do you wonder? I'll tell you the mystery of the woman." Here we again have that Greek word "musterion," which means "a secret." This refers to a divine secret about the harlot religion which God is here revealing to John. This secret deals with the symbolism of the woman, and of the beast that she rides: "I'll tell you of the woman, and of the beast that carries her." This word "beast" is the same word we've had several times, and it refers to both the antichrist and to his government. The word is used for both of them because they're closely connected.

Furthermore, she says, "This beast I'm talking about is one that is identified by previous pictures we have had of him." This creature has seven heads weaving about from his neck. He also has, on one of those heads, ten horns. Such a creature only adds to John's bewilderment. So, he needs the angel's explanation. Here's this woman sitting astride the back of this beast – this beast which is waving about with seven heads, and on one of those heads is 10 horns. She is riding, indicating that she is in complete domination and control of this beast. We have seen that this beast is both the religious system of Babylon and the political system. What she is riding is the government.

**The Abyss**

So, the description as a beast is a significant term, but it is used in a variety of ways, but it all connects back to Satan. Please notice, for example, the use of the word "beast" in Revelation 11:7: "And when they had finished their testimony, the beast that comes out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them." Here, the beast is described as coming up out of a place called the abyss. The abyss is the abode of Satan and his demons, and it is located in the center of planet earth. That is the abyss. That is the domain of Satan and of his angels.

Here, we're told that someone (and really it is referring here to a human being, so that poses a bit of a problem) comes up out of this domain of Satan. Luke 8:31 gives us a little reference to this on the occasion where Jesus was casting out the demons from the man at Gadara. Verse 31 says, "The demons were entreating Jesus not to commend them to depart into the abyss." What was he talking about? The demons were afraid that Jesus was going to send them back into their domain and force them to stay there. They didn't want to stay down in the abyss. They wanted to be free.

Matthew 8:29 also gives us a little reference to this abyss idea: "And behold, they cried out saying, 'What have we to do with you, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before our time?'" What these demons were afraid of was that Jesus was going to send them into the abyss. To them, that is a torment: to be locked up in there so that they do not have freedom to move out.

So, here you have someone who is coming out of the abyss, where Hades is located, along with the Tartars compartment for a special class of demons from the Genesis 6 incident. The abyss is the domain of Satan, and it is the place from which he operates with his demon angels. We have that indicated in Revelation 9:11, where we read about these creatures that come out of the abyss (one of the plagues), and it says that they have a king over them: "the angel of the abyss." You know who the angel of the abyss is. The head man of the abyss (the angel) is Satan, the archangel. His name in Hebrew is "Abaddon," and in Greek, he has the name "Apollyon." Abaddon means "destruction." Apollyon means "destroyer." These are very fitting names for Satan, the king of the abyss. Everything that he has to do with is in his role as destroyer, and he leaves a trail of destruction behind him.

The abyss, while it is the domain of Satan, is also going to be used by God as the place in which Satan will be imprisoned during the millennium. During the millennium, temptation will come from basically the old sin nature in a person. There'll be very little temptation from the world, because Christ will reorganize the world on a godly basis. There'll be no temptation from Satan, because he will be incarcerated here in the abyss. We have this in Revelation 20:1-3: "And I saw an angel coming down from heaven having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for 1,000 years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him so that he should not deceive the nations any longer until the 1,000 years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short time."

So, when John talks about this beast coming out of the abyss, he's coming out of the inferno of Satan, and it is the place of Satan's domination. The time will come when Satan himself is incarcerated for 1,000-year millennium in his domain, and he himself will be a prisoner there.

You must understand that when you have false interpretation of the prophetic Scripture, you come up with some ludicrous ideas. The amillennialists believe that Satan is bound today. I grew up in such a religious system, and as a teenager, I was in catechism class in which I had talked of Satan being bound someday by Christ when He returns to have His Millennial Kingdom. And the minister said, "No, there's not going to any kingdom on this earth. The kingdom is all in heaven, and Satan is bound up today. And in my smart-alec teenage way, I said, "He is? Well, I wonder who's doing his work so well then." That is not a very nice way to speak to your minister. But it was so ludicrous to say that Satan is bound up today. What he meant was that Christ has conquer the devil on the cross, and the devil has broken his hold on humanity, but that isn't what this means. This means that this creature is not going to be able to roam the world doing his dirty work anymore – planting his religion of Nimrod any further.

So, this Scripture here in Revelation 11:7, speaking about the beast coming up out of the abyss, indeed does refer to the antichrist. It is viewing him, obviously, as coming up out of the abyss, because he is indwelt and empowered by Satan, the king of the abyss. He is the representative of the king of the abyss. He and the king are one and the same, because Satan indwells him. So, the Scripture actually says, "The antichrist, in effect, has come right out of the domain of Satan." The antichrist is so united to Satan that he is simply spoken of as being, in fact, the incarnation of Satan from the abyss.

The word "beast" is also used in Revelation 13:3: "And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal was healed. And the whole earth was amazed, and followed after the beast." Here, it is used to describe the beast, one of whose heads receives a deadly wound. The beast here is portrayed as having seven heads, and as we have pointed out to you, these seven heads represent the seven empires (from Egypt on) that have ruled the world, and have been the propagators of the religion of Nimrod. One head, the Roman Empire, seemingly has received a fatal wound. That means that the empire was just simply destroyed. All of a sudden in the tribulation, what should happen, but this head comes to life again? In the tribulation, the Roman Empire is in full swing. The legions are there; the trumpets are there; and, the banners are there. The whole imperial majesty of Rome once more is restored. The beast, in this aspect, in the revived Roman Empire, is ruled over by the antichrist.

So, here the beast is referring to the empire, but also to the antichrist who is the emperor. Here again, you have these two so closely related – the beast as the emperor and the empire such that they are viewed as one. Then in Revelation 17:8, our passage that we are looking at in this session, we have again a reference to the beast ("the beast that you saw"). Here it is described as a political entity. We will look at that in more detail later.

So, the word "beast" is used in a variety of ways, but (I'm trying to point out to you that) all of them come back to Satan. They all come back to Satan. He's the ultimate beast. It can be expressed as the revived Roman Empire; it can be expressed as the antichrist; or, it can be expressed as a combination of those two, but the beast ultimately is always Satan, but he always has the representative to whom that terms also is applicable.

So, in verse 7, John is amazed. The angel comes up and says, "Why are you so dumbfounded about this? Let me explain to you the secret about this woman that you see who is dominating this political entity – a beast which has seven heads and ten horns on one of those heads.

Then in verse 8, we read, "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come." The beast is the political entity. It has three historical stages.

**The Beast Was**

First of all, it was. This word means that the empire of Rome once existed. Rome was begun in about the 8th century B.C. It continued from its founding until 476 A.D., when the final barbarian tribes on the outer perimeter of the Roman Empire broke through, and the Roman legions could no longer hold them back, and could no longer defend the Empire. So, officially in history, the date 476 A.D. is the date when Rome fell, and it ceased to be an empire. At the time that John was writing, it, of course, was in full bloom in its imperial form. So, "was" refers the first of the time before the empire fell.

**The Beast Is Not**

Then it says, "And it is not." This is the strong negative "not." After 476, the Roman Empire, in effect, ceased to exist. Today, there is no Roman Empire; there are no Roman legions; there are no banners; there are no trumpets; there is no fanfare; and, there are no imperial ceremonies. Rome is dead. For centuries, that has been true, because Rome has fragmented into individual sovereign nations. The beast, in its imperial majesty, is gone.

**The Beast is About to Come**

So, the beast that you saw was, in the past. It is not. But it is about to come up out of the abyss. Here is the unbelievable future. It is about to come up, which means that the voice of the Roman Empire is to be restored once more on the earth. That's the secret. As part of this secret, the mystery of Babylon – that the political entity represented by Nimrod's religion is going to come back to power. The time will come when this earth will be dominated once more by the Roman Empire, which was a world ruler. This empire, we're told once more, to identify what it is, comes up out of the "abussos." The "abussos" refers to Satan's domain, the abyss. This empire that is coming on this world once more, to reign over as a world government, comes up out of the abyss.

Notice that it is going to be a world government, and it's going to come right out of the domain of Satan. Everything that is happening today all over the political world that is driving us toward world government is coming up out of Satan's domain. President Bush stood up and said, "We have now introduced a new world order." Everybody who knows anything about that term historically knows that it is used to refer to world government. Through Christians, there should have been a cold chill, if they would remembered this verse – that world government comes out of the abyss. And he has no knowledge of what he speaks. But the world government to which he refers is going to be the world government of the antichrist. It is going to come up to be restored once more on this earth during the tribulation, out of Satan's demonic stronghold. Satan is the one who's going to come up with a plan to revive the defunct Roman Empire.

**Environmentalism**

Everything today in America is being driven toward world government, and toward uniting the United States in some political union with the rest of the nations of the world. This, for example, is what environmentalism is all about.

**The Ozone Problem**

This past week, I was amused to hear that the rabid environmentalists have said, "We have now solved the ozone hole problem." They said, "We have stopped (all over the world) the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) – these things that make your hair spray come out, and these things that keep your air conditioning working in your house, and which keep the air conditioning in your car, which I think President Bush did us the kindness of saying that we cannot use after 1996. You will be replacing all those air conditioners in your car, because the stuff that they're going to try to use will not work in your system, and it is so highly corrosive that, after you have spent $500 putting your new air conditioner in, three years later, you're going have to replace it, because it's all going to be eaten up by the best of what they can come up with as a coolant now. All of this is to protect the ozone hole.

Well, do you know what's happening? These ignorant environmentalists now have so much information coming from incompetent scientists who say that you have no evidence that there's a hole up there, and you have no evidence that there's an ozone problem up there. The sun creates tons of ozone by the hour that it pours out there. It thins out sometimes, and it fills up, and there's no hole. These people now are trying to back out. They're trying to say, "It's all fixed now, but it's fixed because we got people to stop using those CFCs," when they haven't stopped using it that much.

Have you noticed that the ozone problem has now come down to the earth? Your meteorologist weatherman tells you, "The ozone rating today is pretty high." Have you noticed that? Have you wondered why we're hearing about the ozone state all the time? Well, what they've done is substituted the word "ozone" for the word "smog" or "smoke." It is mixed with the environment and the atmosphere. The stuff that they have in Los Angeles, where they sit in that basin, and where the exhaust of automobiles and industrial pollutants combines with the air, and it can't blow out, so it settles down and creates a smog condition.

Well, what they're talking about is what smog. Have you seen the smog in Irving? Every time they say, "We have a 50% ozone problem today," I run outside and I look out the window, and it looks the same to me. Even when it's 75%, it looks the same to me. When they say, "Be careful. Do not go outside and breathe today." Now, can you try to move around this campus between the buildings while not breathing, as slowly as I have to go, and with the amount of energy I have to put out to move? I mean, that's very difficult. But when I hear that ozone warning, boy, I quit breathing. That's the ozone problem.

Well, it's a lie. 12 to 15 years ago, we were all told to get ready for the new ice age. Do you remember that? Some of you older folks like Kay Newman will remember that. They were telling us, "Boy, the world is getting colder. The ice age is coming. I kid you not. Now they have switched, and the earth is getting warmer. It wasn't getting colder then, and it's not getting warmer now, but people don't know. And I mean, like in a day or two, these jokers (these clowns) up there pass this bill against the CFC use with all the destructive effects, and Bush couldn't wait to sign it. They're just rushing to support this environmental madness. Why is that? Because it gives the government another chance to come into our lives, and to make a rule, and to control. The whole environmental movement is designed to bring controls upon the United States; to bring down its freedom; and, to bring down its prosperity so that we have to join all the other idiot wimps around the world. They're trying to tie us into a treaty with Mexico and Canada so that we can have a union to bring us down economically to the level of those countries.

All of this is part of Satan's revived Roman Empire strategy. He has to move out what's on the scene so that he can come in and say, "Now, folks, I'm going to give you a government that's going to work," because the problems are going to be so horrendous. I mean, this country is going to be in a real tizzy when those air conditioners start going on your car, and you are faced with the horrors of what to do about that. You may decide to keep driving around without the air conditioning, like in the good old days.

Our vice president says, "The most destructive thing to our environment is the internal combustion engine. He wants to reduce the use of automobiles. He wants to eliminate the automobiles, he says in his book, virtually. He wants to go back to the good old days with horses. Do you know what it was like to live in a society where horses by the thousands were all over this city, walking through the streets, and leaving things behind them? Then, when it got real hot, and the wheels of wagons drove over these things, and people stomped through it and pulverized it, and then the wind came, and you just came out in your new white garment on your way to the party, and came covered with dust. Do you remember those dust covers they used to wear in the early days of the automobiles? That was because the horses were still leaving stuff behind, and it was blowing as people were driving in their cars. So, they had these white smocks. Can you imagine how nice it was in the good old days when it rained, after the horses got through with their job, and you were walking through that flush, and you slipped in it, and fell? ...

The liberals don't want you to be able to run around and have access to anything you want because you have a vehicle that you can go in. They want to crimp you down. How can you control a population that can go anywhere? When the communists were in charge of some countries, you couldn't go a distance of more than like three hours from where you lived without getting special permission. When the communists were in charge, you couldn't go away from home longer than three days without reporting in that you are going to be gone. Personal movement (freedom of movement) is at the core of your personal liberty.

So, you have to look behind this madness. Now you have an administration that's devoted to the environment, and to the destruction of everything that enables you to not be dominated by a tyrannical government. The liberals have ruined the freedoms of the United States. Now they are so bold as to be attacking us Christians as the problem in American society today, because we're trying to impose a philosophy upon our country which is not acceptable: a philosophy that made this nation great; a philosophy upon which this country was built; and, a philosophy that gave us our prosperity and our way of life.

So, Satan is devising a substitute for what our current world government enthusiasts are trying to destroy to make way for. The beast of political Babylon, in effect, comes from the abyss to the earth with a full-blown empire to impose upon the earth. The revival of the Roman Empire, as an imperial power in the tribulation, is a supernatural act of Satan. The restoration of the Roman Empire will, in fact, be the climax of Satan's power on this earth. Once, at the middle of the tribulation, the antichrist is the world dictator, and the Roman Empire is in full control of all nations, that's the high point. From then on, things are going to rapidly deteriorate, because at that point God starts hitting all those trumpet and bowl judgments that we've studied, one after another. The antichrist will go crazy trying to make the Roman Empire work, because God is tearing it apart bit by bit, so that man cannot control what he has created.

What's the end going to be? John has seen this beast (this political entity) headed up by the antichrist. It is the Roman Empire which once was; for a period in our day, it was not; but it is about to come back up out of the abyss, brought out by Satan. But he's going to bring it out to what God's plan has for him. And what God's plan has for it is destruction.

**Hell**

Here's a word that we looked at once before: "apoleia." "Apoleia" is a very strong word in the Greek language. It means completely destroyed and shredded, so that there's nothing left. It does not mean rubbed out of existence, but a total loss of well-being. This is the word which is used to describe what's going to happen to people who are not saved. They're going to be destroyed. This political entity, and the antichrist himself, and all that man has created, the epitome of human wisdom, is going to be destroyed. This word "destroyed" is used in the Bible explicitly in connection with the lake of fire. It is a word that deals with hell.

Please notice Matthew 7:13: "Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to 'apoleia' (destruction)." There's the word. It's a broad road. It's easy to get into hell: "And many are those who enter by it." The road is crowded. You'll be encouraged that you're on the right road because there are so many people there: "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life (to heaven), and few are those who find it." Most people go to "apoleia." Few people go to "ouranos" (heaven). Isn't that amazing? In a moment, we're going to find out why so few.

There's a reason why there are so few. Most people by nature are on their way to destruction and the lake of fire. But all of a sudden, a few get diverted. Please notice Philippians 1:28, which uses this word: "In no way alarmed by your opponents, which is a sign of destruction (here it is – 'apoleia') for them, but of salvation for you. And that too from God." Don't be intimidated by the liberals who hate God; who hate the Word of God; and who hate Christians, because they stand in their way. Our opponents should not alarm us because their resistance to our biblical Christianity is a sign that they're on their way to the "apoleia" place, the place of eternal fire. But for us, our destiny is salvation from God.

Notice Philippians 3:18-19: "For many walk, of whom I told you, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ." Boy, do we ever have enemies in the United States today, from the highest echelons on down, who are the enemies of the Cross of Christ?

Verse 19 says, "Whose end is destruction?" There's the word again: total loss of well-being. And here the destruction is again the lake of fire: "Whose God is their appetite; whose glory is their shame; and, who set their minds on earthly things." This is the shamelessness of doing evil, and wanting to do it in public.

The homosexuals had a rally, and the TV news camera locked on it for a while. They gave new meaning to the word "shame," as you saw men with men carrying on: "And they glory in their shame because their minds are on earthly things, because they're headed for their destruction."

You can add to that on your own. You may read Hebrews 10:39 and 2 Peter 3:7, all of which come back to this word referring to the destruction, the lake of fire. So, the antichrist, in his empire, John is being told, is going to be destroyed. This will take place at the Second Coming of Christ, and this empire and the antichrist will be sent into destruction into the lake of fire. This is the Roman Empire which crucified Jesus Christ, the Son of God after pronouncing Him innocent. That's the empire that God, in His wrath, is going to throw into the lake of fire. When he says that, that means that the whole structure, and the whole political system, and the whole educational religious system – everybody acquainted with it is going to go down with this. At the end of the tribulation, God's hour of vengeance finally arrives, because God comes to the end of His grace.

The beast you saw was, is not, and about to come out of the abyss (a creation of Satan) is going to go to the destruction of the lake of fire. Then he says, "Those who dwell on the earth." I remind you that "those who dwell on the earth" is a technical term in the Bible. Anytime you see it in the New Testament, it means unbelievers. These are the unsaved people of mankind. They're going to wonder. We're back to that word again: "thaumazo." This word means to stand in total amazement. Unsaved humanity in the tribulation will marvel at the antichrist and at his empire. This is in the future. It is interesting that it's in the passive voice, which means they won't be able to help themselves. They'll be forced and carried along by the influence of Satan and the events such that they will be impressed by what they see of the revived empire and of the antichrist. The Roman Empire, restored by Satan, will capture the allegiance of lost humanity.

This is how impressed people will be, as was already indicated to us in Revelation 13:4: "And they worshiped the dragon (that is, Satan), because he gave his authority to the beast (the antichrist), and they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast? Who is able to wage war against him?'"

They are totally impressed with the beast and his empire. Mankind's awe readily leads to the worship of Satan and to his antichrist. The consequence of spiritual blindness is that you believe what is not true. So, because they're impressed with this empire ruled by the antichrist, and impressed with him, they will then worship Satan.

So, where does this come with us today? We have to remind ourselves that there are certain opinion-makers in American society. Americans are not well-versed. You may take lightly that I hand these handouts to you that give you a background on what is happening in our society, and give you perspective, but most Americans need what you're getting. They don't have it. Consequently, they cannot interpret when they hear one of these talking heads on the nightly news give some information. They make a statement, and automatically everybody says, "That's true." Jennings will get up and say, "Dennis Williams is a good ole boy, and everybody loves him." Oh, that's not true, but everybody who hears that will say, "Oh, yeah, sure. Isn't that wonderful?" Every time they see him, they'll think he's a good ole boy that everybody loves. If you had the information (the facts), you wouldn't be deceived like that. That's what is happening in America today. Opinion-makers are saying the most outrageous things: insults to God that are accepted; and, vileness to God.

"NYPD" is the big new TV program (the New York Police Department). It's going to be one of the grossest things on television starting in September. It has scenes of nudity and of vile acts that one could only see on European television. It's going to be on major networks, and people will watch it, and people will be defiled, and nobody will raise a voice to make an objection to it. These are the opinion-makers in American society today. Why are they opinion-makers? Because they are spiritually blind. They are in this category of those who dwell upon the earth. They're lost people. Do you realize that, from the highest echelons of the government on down, decisions are being made for us by people who are going to spend eternity in the lake of fire? They are part of the "apoleia" group headed for destruction. These people are calling the plays that are governing our lives.

So, it says that those who dwell on the earth are going to be tremendously impressed that these people, like people who are spiritually blinded are impressed with Hollywood celebrities or TV celebrities. These are people who specifically are identified as those whose name has not been written in the book of life.

I have to show you this word. "Name" means an individual. An individual person has not, and the Greek word is "ou," which means the very strong "absolutely not." It has not been "grapho." "Grapho" means "to record." I point this out that this is perfect tense in the Greek, which means that at some point here in the past, this decision was made, and it goes on to right where you are here in the present. Someplace in the past, before you were even on the scene, your name was written in the Lamb's book of Life? That's right. There is nothing like the Greek language to tell you what's behind a word. Here, it is speaking of those whose names were not (in the past, when God made this decision) written in the book of life. Consequently, it is in the passive voice, which means that you had nothing to do with writing it in there. God wrote the name in there. God pulled you in. God caused your will to decide to believe in Christ. What a statement of fact.

**The Lamb's Book of Life**

The people who are deceived by the antichrist, and who are made fools by him, are those who dwell upon the earth because they're unsaved, and they're spiritually blind. They are spiritually blind because their names have not been written in the book of life. We have studied the book of life in detail before. This is specifically what is referred to in Revelation 13:8 as the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 13:8: "And all who dwell on the earth will worship Him (all the unbelievers are worshiping the antichrist). Everyone whose name has not been written (here it is again – written) from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain." Here is the Lamb's book of Life.

There is a book of life that the Bible speaks about from which your name can be erased. That is life the book of life that God keeps in which the name of everybody born into the human race, from the point of conception, is recorded. All these millions of American babies who have been slaughtered have their names written in the book of life. But if you do not trust in Christ, and receive Him as personal Savior before you die, then your name is erased from the book of life. But if you do trust in Him, your name is left in. The final version becomes the Lamb's book of life. All of the babies slaughtered by their mothers (by abortion) of course, are covered by the grace of God. Before an age of accountability, they all went to heaven. Millions of American children have been sent to heaven by their murderous mothers, and those children are in the Lamb's book of life.

So, what he is referring here to in this passage is that particular group of human beings who do not have their names in the final version of the book of life; that is, the Lamb's book of life. These people instead are destined for hell. In Revelation 20:15, we read, "If anyone's name was not found written in the Lamb's book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." Got it? If your name is not in that final version of the Lamb's book of life, you go into the lake of fire. You are part of those who experience destruction. We can also add to this Philippians 4:3: "Indeed, true comrades, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle." Paul is speaking about Euodia and Syntyche, who have been aiding Paul as many women in New Testament Times did. They were the mainstay (the backbone) of the apostolic Ministry, the ministry of the Lord, here in the early missionaries: "Indeed true comrades, I ask you also to help these women (who are in this Philippian congregation) who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also (a Christian man that they knew), and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life." He's referring to the Lamb's book of life: "All of these people that have been working with me, and every one of them born-again and going to heaven."

This is why (on the basis of Scripture like that) we are reluctant to go to the unsaved world to ask for help for God's work. We are reluctant to bring the unsaved world in as our fellow workers. That's not the way it was done. Paul goes out of the way here to emphasize that the people that surrounded him, and were the agents of God who worked with him in his missionary endeavors, were those whose names were recorded in the Lamb's book of life.

So, here's a clear declaration in Revelation, in this verse (Revelation 17:8) that there are some people whose names are not written from the foundation of the world. The word "foundation" means that which is laid down as a base. "The foundation of the world" means the created universe. "The foundation of the world" is referring to the point at which God created the universe. Here, he is talking about *before* the foundation of the world – that God has recorded names in the eternal Lamb's book of life.

Ephesians 1:4 points that out: "Just as He chose us (we Christians) in Him (in Christ) before the foundation of the world. Now we're getting back before there's even any creation, and before there's any base laid down for the universe. That's what the cosmos is. The word "world" here is the word "cosmos." Before the cosmos was put together, God has already selected those of you who were going to sit here in this auditorium as born-again believers destined for heaven: "Before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him." We Christians should act accordingly to our calling.

So, John, in this verse, makes it very clear that some people's names are not written in that book of life when they see: "The beast that was; is not; and, will come." Those who dwell on the earth are going to be amazed because they're spiritually blind. They're spiritually blind because their names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life which God composed from the foundation of the world when He created the universe. They'll be awed when they see the beast (the empire and its emperor, the antichrist): "Who was; is not; and, who is going to come, yet in a revised form."

He sees this empire and the beast, and they are impressed. Those who are saved by divine election will not be awed by the revived Roman Empire or its emperor. Christians today, who are knowledgeable upon the principles of Scripture, are not awed by some fool statement that comes down from the United States government, or by some foolish policy or law that's passed, or by some pompous parading. Christians are not impressed. They see through that. These believers in the tribulations are going to see through the glamor of the revived Roman Empire and of its emperor, the antichrist. They're not impressed by its power; its glamor; its wealth; or, anything else. They will spiritually discern the bestial character of the antichrist who reigns over this empire. Those who are impressed are the world's pitiful unbelievers who themselves have no future but destruction in the lake of fire.

So, isn't it interesting that we have to remind ourselves that prominent unsaved personalities today impress the spiritually blinded all about us, who do not see that those prominent unsaved personalities and opinion-makers are nothing but a pile of garbage? They're a pile of moral garbage, but they were nice clothes; they speak well; they look good; they get expensive haircuts; and, they speak, and the world is impressed with a speaking garbage piles. Only the discernment of the eyes of a born-again Christian will not be fooled by that.

Aren't you glad that God has brought you into His family by His election? With that inscrutable choice, before there ever was a universe, God had you in mind to bring you into His family. He never promised you a bed of roses. He never promised you a rose garden. But he called you into a mission of service where, in your service, you bear the sufferings of Christ.

You don't do like these idiots down in Central and South America at Easter time, who walk around beating themselves with their whips so that they can share the sufferings of Christ. When the Scripture speaks about sharing the sufferings of Christ, it means that we do our mission, and we do it under Satan's opposition, discouragement, and resistance. What is your mission? It is a high and holy calling which you cannot ignore, and which you cannot dismiss. Consider yourselves privileged because, before there was a universe, God had you pegged for that slot; so let's do it.

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