***The Seven Kingdoms  
  
RV214-02***

We are studying Revelation 17. Our subject is "Ecclesiastical Babylon." This is segment number 13.

Those of you who are regular attenders of Berean Church are aware of the fact that we hold it to be a basic principle of biblical interpretation that you treat the words of the Bible as literal words; that have literal meanings; and, that have something to say. Early on, in the early centuries of Christianity, there was a philosopher named Philo who came on the scene, and he suggested that the words of the Bible are surface veneer, and that the real meaning of what is to be found in Scripture is hidden underneath the words, and must be sought with a discerning mind. That turned loose a can of worms that's still crawling to this very day – the concept of non-literal interpretation of the Bible.

I need not point out to you that when that approach is taken, everybody interprets the Bible differently, because there is no anchor point. I must also tell you that most people who ever studied Revelation, and in the average church, follow Philo's those concepts. It is their idea that the words of the book of the Revelation do not have to be taken literally. Consequently, they also say that this whole book was fulfilled by 70 A.D., when Jerusalem finally fell to the assaults of Titus and the Roman legions. By that time, everything in this book was fulfilled. And they try to apply the various symbols and the things that take place to historical events and to individual Roman emperors. And they do this with a straight face.

**Amillennialism**

There are seminaries all around this Metroplex area that teach men who are going into ministry with a straight face that that's what these things mean. Now, again, none of them come up with the same meaning of what these Scriptures mean. The position that I'm describing for you is amillennialism. Amillennialism means that there is no millennium at all. "A" the great negative or non-millennial – Christ is never going to reign upon this earth. Therefore, the Scriptures cannot be taken literally that deal with a book like Revelation. All of this must be interpreted as the kingdom of God in heaven and the throne of God ruling in heaven.

However, of course, you'll have a really maddening time as you think back upon the seal judgments; the trumpet judgments; and, the bow judgments. Where on earth are you historically going to fit all that in as having taken place before 70 A.D.?

When I was in seminary, I took a course with Dr. Walvoord, who was the president at the time, and who is recognized as probably the leading interpreter of prophetic Scriptures today. Dr. Walvoord was teaching a class on premillennialism which I had signed up for. When we got to the class, we found that the textbook which was to be used in our study was the book, which had been written by a reformed theologian. He was the leading final voice on defending the doctrine of amillennialism. What we did was that we studied amillennialism. Then we refuted it, and showed step-by-step why what he was teaching was wrong, and why only premillennialism could answer that particular issue and the particular problem that he was dealing with.

At one point in the book, I was startled to read that Dr. Ellis said, "If you must interpret the Bible literally, then the Bible teaches premillennialism,” and he put that out there with one blow – with one word. That was it. He admitted that his position was totally in error unless he could follow Philo's mystical seeking of the meaning beneath the words. Of course, as you have gone through these seal and trumpet and bowl judgments, I mean, those are staggering to the human imagination. I mean, for people to one day wake up and see blood coming out of their faucets because their fresh water supply has been turned to blood by God? That ships at sea suddenly find themselves surrounded with putrefying flesh of marine life, because vast parts of the ocean have been turned to human blood? I mean, people say, "That cannot be," but that is going to be. And if you cannot take the book of the Revelation literally for what it says, word-for-word, as the way of God has of communicating information, then none of the Bible has meaning. At least the liberals are consistent.

When we read the passage in Luke which tells about Mary, a virgin woman, who is going to bear a child, the people who believe in the Bible say that that's literal. He really was born without a human father. Yet, in the same context, in the immediate passage, in the immediate verse that follows, it is also said that He will rule over the house of Jacob. He will rule over His father David's throne, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. At that point, the amillennialism says, "Well, that's in heaven. Jacob no longer means 'Jacob.' The throne of David on earth no longer means 'the throne of David.'" And within the context of one small passage of Scripture, they interpret half literally and half symbolically. At least, the liberals are consistent. They say, "Yes, it's a symbol of a throne in heaven, and there's no virgin birth either." They are consistent in rejecting the meaning of words.

So, I want you to know that you should not be shocked if somebody expresses horror as you might discuss something that you have been taught out of the book of the Revelation, because what you have been taught was on the basis of what God the Holy Spirit put in the words that He used.

Well, why would people resist a literal interpretation of the Bible? Well, because it messes up the future that they see for themselves. One of the things that it certainly does is that it demonstrates that man is a failure. Everything in the Bible indicates that there's going to be a catastrophic end to humanity and to human society. For this reason, we premillennialists are described as being pessimists. The nonsense of that is refuted by the fact that we pessimists who believe that the Bible teaches that man's efforts are going to be a total failure, and that there will be a catastrophic event to society and to humanity worldwide, also say that God is going to clean up the mess by bringing Christ back to rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And what we we're telling people is that there is going to be a real golden age for mankind. That's exactly what's going to happen. It'll be the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ on this earth.

I do want to remind you also that the kingdom of Christ on this earth, the Messianic Kingdom, is talked about throughout the Old Testament, and talked about in very specific terms and details which have never been fulfilled. So, the amillennialist says, "Well, God changed His mind because the Jews killed their Messiah. Had they accepted Him, all those things would have been fulfilled, but now the church has become the new Israel." You don't find any place in the Word of God where the church is now the new Israel. Some of you people look very Jewish, and some of the people act very Jewish, especially with money. But you're not Jews. You're still gentiles (well, actually Christians). And you might as well not try to play loose with words. A gentile is a gentile; a Jew is a Jew; and, a Christian is a Christian. There are three different categories, and they're never mixed.

So, we're swimming upstream, and you need to get your muscles in tune because you're going against the crowd, and you're going against the consensus of the religious world. We're swimming upstream when we say that the Bible is a literal book.

The Bible is also a book of symbols. Right at the very first of the book of the Revelation we were told that we were going to be told about things that were in the past; things that are (the seven letters); and, the things which are to come. Once you hit chapter 4, throughout the rest of the book, you're off and running on future things. You're dealing with the future Millennial Kingdom of Christ. All of these things are ahead of us to be fulfilled in very specific ways. It did say that these are being presented under signs (under symbols). How do we know what the symbols mean? Because they are used elsewhere in Scripture. I've been taking you to various places in the Old Testament where a symbol is used. That gives us a clue, and quite consistently it fits and gives us an indication of the meaning. Of course, God the Holy Spirit also leads us in understanding of these things.

However, sometimes the symbols are used, and then God the Holy Spirit turns around and explains it. And what we're dealing with here in Revelation 17 is just such a passage. Yes, there is a symbol. And now God the Holy Spirit tells John that he sends an angel, and the angel is going to explain it to him. John, in his vision, sees a very strange sight. He sees the harlot religion of Babylon riding on a beast covered with names of blasphemy. This beast has seven heads weaving about, and one of them has ten horns on it. Now, that's quite a sight. What on earth does that mean?

You could really go far afield trying to interpret something like that if you didn't have some divine guidance. Finding other symbols in the Bible will give us some help on this. But this requires a little more divine insight. John himself is astonished by the sight. He doesn't know what to make of it. The angel says, "I'm going to interpret it for you."

The beast in Revelation 17:8, we pointed out, is the Roman Empire. It is dominated by Satan, who is the prince of the abyss, through his man, the antichrist. The antichrist himself, who leads the restored Roman Empire of the future, is going to be sent into the lake of fire. Because he is a man, he too is called a beast. The word "beast" is used for an empire and for individuals. The unbelievers of the tribulation era are going to be deeply impressed with the antichrist and his revived Roman Empire, but those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life are not going to be fooled. They'll have his number, and they will discern who he is.

The Roman Empire, we're told, has existed in the past. Then there was a time when it no longer existed (as today). And then there's a time when it will again be revived and restored, and that's in the future in the tribulation.

So, we direct your attention to Revelation 17:9. In dealing with this strange sight that John sees, the angel says, "Here is the mind which has wisdom." The word "mind" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "nous." The word "nous" may be viewed as one of the functions of the mentality of the mind. We will the brain into two functions. On one side, we have the "nous," and the other side is referred to by the Greek word "kardia," which means "heart." The word "nous" means "mind." The word "nous" refers to what we describe as the perceptive function of the mind. The perceptive function of the mind is the capability of receiving information. Right now, this is what's kicking in on you – your ability to take in knowledge. The perceptive capacity of your mind is what is bringing into your understanding the information which I'm giving you.

**Wisdom**

I'm not going to go through the rest of the whole chart, but divine doctrine is brought in here, and stored in your human spirit. It cycles back up here to the other side of your mind, which is the decision-making, the directive mentality. Out of here is where you make your decisions. Here's where your mind controls your emotions or your will. It is a perfect system that we have gone over in some detail before. But our concentration is upon the "nous." John says, "Here is wisdom for your mind, and here is information that you need." He says that this information will bring you wisdom ("sophia"). The word "sophia" means an insight into the true nature of things. Wisdom is being in touch with reality. This is the discernment of reality – the way things are, and the way things ought to be. That's what it's all about. That's wisdom.

A lot of people have information, but they do not have wisdom. Let me give you one example that is a big battle in our political field today. People have knowledge, because of past experience, that any time a nation raises its taxes, it decreases the prosperity of the country; it reduces the income of revenue to the government; and, it slows down the economy. Raising taxes has never, in the history of the world, enabled a country to produce prosperity, or to pay itself out of its indebtedness. That's a known fact. That's information.

Now, wisdom says, "I'm not going to do that." Wisdom says, "That's the result of raising taxes, and I know that the reality is going to be disastrous." During the years when our country has reduced taxes, and has reduced the rate that people have to pay, people take that money, and they become entrepreneurs. That's why during the 1980s, the rich were paying more than they pay today; taxes were lowered; and, revenues were rising. Gradually, the country's indebtedness (the national debt) was getting smaller, and the deficit was being reduced. The deficit was coming down. Each year, the government had more money, so it was paying its bills. If the government could have only restrained itself in its spending, it would have balanced out.

Why was that possible? Well, it was because people knew that reduced taxes let people keep their money, and they will create jobs. Jobs were created, and we had the longest period of prosperity, consistently, in the history of this country. This was for that simple reason.

So, wisdom, "sophia," is taking information, and having a contact with reality so that you use it in the right way.

The perceptive mind is receiving true information about what John sees. The interpretation is not self-evident to him. God the Holy Spirit has to come into the picture here and give some clarification to John on the meaning of what he sees – this woman riding this beast. So, into the perceptive mind comes the divine viewpoint wisdom. God kicks in, by the power of the Holy Spirit, "sophia." Into that mind suddenly comes clarification to John to an understanding of what it is that he's viewing.

Wisdom does not come from to anything you learn; from any relationship that you have in life; or from anything that comes from any of the opinion-makers of our world system. You cannot learn anything from any part of our society. You do not get wisdom from any of the institutions of our society. You're not going to find wisdom on the nightly news. You're not going to find wisdom in political pronouncements. You are not going to find wisdom in secular educational institutions. You will not find wisdom from evolutionary scientists. You will not find wisdom in liberal churches. You will not find wisdom in the religions of the world. You will not find God's wisdom from your neighbors and your friends. You will not find wisdom from business and your employment associates. And I'm sorry to tell you that you will not find God's wisdom from the entertainers of our society.

One of these entertainers recently was on the Larry King Live show. She was bemoaning and berating over the whole studio about people who have certain needs. She said, "Now, I mean that this condition is so bad that it exists all over our country in all 52 states." And she just carried on about this. So, Larry King, trying to be a nice host, wanted to throw out a lifeline to her. He said, "Now, you're talking about the states and the District of Columbia, and what other entity do you have in mind?" She didn't get it. She's just a stupid entertainer who's got big money. She said, "Well, I'm talking about the 52 states, and we've got to do something about these things." So, he went on.

Now, that's just an example of a statistical error that probably any child in this room that's been to school a few days knows better, but the rest of the things they say are just as stupid. Why in the world do they bring these authorities in? They brought Meryl Streep into a congressional committee when they had the alar scare with the apples. There was nothing wrong with alar. It's as safe as anything can be. It never caused any problem, but because some character said something, along comes this actress being a parrot, and saying something she didn't know anything about. That tells you about our society, doesn't it? If somebody in the entertainment world speaks, they think they get wisdom, and they believe them.

This is the reason a guy like Bob Tilton can amass millions for a very luxurious lifestyle. As you listen to him on TV, you shake your head, and you say, "I can't believe this. Nobody out there is listening to this. Nobody is going to send money in." But you're wrong. He knows the charismatics, and he knows that if he shovels this stuff out about prosperity, and all the other things about miracles and so on, that they're going to send the money in. And he rides high because he knows his crowd.

So, these are the people of the world and the entertainment industry. The liberals know they if put an entertainer up there, that person can speak, and our society is so benighted now, because of its loss of contact with God, that it will believe these people. You will not find divine viewpoint wisdom from entertainers. You will not find it from the unsaved or the carnal members of your family. I don't want to say this too loudly, but you will not find divine viewpoint wisdom from the Pope. You will not find it from feminist groups. You won't even find it in college students. You won't even find it in your children. And worst of all, you will not find God's wisdom at your barbers or at your bartender. Those are two of the great sources of wisdom: your barber; and, your bartender. They are the citadels of information and wisdom when you want to get to know something. But you will not find God's wisdom there.

I hope I have impressed you that the area of securing God's wisdom is a very limited area. Who can secure it? Only you people who are born-again believers who are well trained in Bible doctrine. Only you can be a source of divine viewpoint wisdom in this world, because you got it from the Holy Spirit.

So, this is what John's being told. God says, "John I'm going to kick something into your perceptive mind. I'm going to give me information. I'm going to give you a perspective on this so that you will understand what otherwise you could not grasp. Because this wisdom comes from God, you're going to be smart. You're going to understand what these things mean." Believers with doctrine are actually informed intellectuals, while unbelievers, without doctrine, are mere ignorant intellectuals.

So, as a biblically educated Christian who walks in temporal fellowship, because you have your known sins confessed, you have no reason to be intimidated by the self-confident pronouncements that are thrust at you through the news media and through other sources by the opinion-makers of our society.

John himself is going to be the happy recipient from the angel of wisdom that comes from God as to the meaning of the symbolic scene which he sees before him. So, the angel says that John hears wisdom, and it has come from the Spirit of God. He says, "First of all, I want to tell you that the seven heads you see weaving on that beast are actually also seven mountains on which the woman sits." John says, "Oh, well, that's clear now. The seven heads are seven mountains. Now I understand."

Now, at this point, of course, the Word of God gives us some clues again that help us. These seven heads are equated with seven mountains on this beast. The seven mountains symbolize the same thing as the seven heads. The Bible now comes to our rescue, because a mountain is a symbol which is used in the Bible on many occasions, and it refers to a political entity; to an empire; or, to some royal domain.

Please note Jeremiah 51:25, where we read, "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain." To whom is God speaking? Well, by the context, you will see that he is speaking to the empire of Babylon. So, when he says, "Destroying mountain," he's calling the empire Babylon a mountain. That's exactly how this word is used. It's used of political entities: "'Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, who destroys the whole earth,' declares the Lord. 'And I will stretch out My hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and I'll make you a burnt-out mountain."

Now, knowing that the word "mountain" is the same as a political entity (an empire), and that he is speaking to the empire of Babylon (this world empire), it makes it clear that God is saying to this empire, "I'm going to bring it to an end. And I'm going to make you a burnt-out empire." And that's exactly indeed what God did.

Now turn to Daniel 2:34-35, where we again have this concept of a mountain as an empire. Daniel has been interpreting the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw with these various metals, and verse 34 says, "You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands." A supernatural huge boulder suddenly appears: "And struck the statue upon the feet (which were made of iron and clay), and it crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, the gold (all of the things from which this statue was made) were crushed, all at the same time. And they became like chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

This passage is speaking about Jesus Christ destroying the final vestiges of the kingdoms of this world, and establishing His Millennial Kingdom over all the earth, where Christ will rule as the ruler of all the earth, over a world government situated in Jerusalem. So, here it likens the Messianic Millennial Kingdom to a great mountain which is going to dominate the whole world. This stone supernaturally cut out (destroyed) all of these empires.

Notice Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of those kings (the kings are represented by these seven heads historically), the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people." It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. This is the same thing that we have just read earlier.

One other example. Isaiah 41:15 also has the meaning of mountains as an empire: "Behold, I have made you a new sharp threshing sledge with double edges. You will thresh the mountains and pulverize them, and will make the hills like chaff." Here in this context, God is speaking about how He is going to use His agents to thresh the mountains of the earth, referring here to gentile kingdoms; pulverize them into chaff; and, blow them away. This is the same picture that you had in Daniel, where the stone was crushing it into chaff, blowing it all the way, and then the stone cut out without hands. This stone represents the mountain of the Kingdom of God, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

**Seven Kingdoms**

So, John is told that the seven heads of the beast are actually seven kings which are ruling over seven mountains (or seven kingdoms): "On which the woman sits." The harlot religion of Babylon sits on these seven kingdoms. These seven kingdoms are political entities which have come down historically through history. The kings are equated with their kingdoms. The harlot rides the beast, which is the end product of seven world empires which have come down through history. So, the kings and the kingdoms are very often equated and viewed as one.

**Five are Fallen**

So verse 10 says, "And they (what she sits on) are seven kings." Then it says, "Five are fallen." The word "fallen" means that they have ceased to exist as empires. So, at the time that John is writing, we're told that there are seven of these mountains and their kings ruling them (their emperors). And we're told that five of these seven have now gone out of existence. The empires which dominated the known world is what is referred to here. There were, of course, lesser empires like the empires of China, India, and the Incas. But all political entities on earth are following the harlot's religion, whether they're the great empires or the lesser ones.

In a display which is now to be viewed in Mexico City, as they pass the camera over what they'd found, there were all these grotesque gods. There were all these images and pictures of gods, and I said, "There we are: Nimrod's religion of idolatry." Here it is, south of the border in Mexico, just like it is any place else in the world. Nimrod's religion of worshiping idols instead of the Creator God has gone everywhere.

**The Five Fallen Empires**

What are these five empires that have fallen? First is Egypt. And please remember that every one of these carries the religion of Nimrod. They are all idol-worshipers, and they are all against God the Creator. They all reject anything that that Creator has to say. They don't like His Word. And they also are against the Jews. I need not explain to you what Egypt did to the Jews. Assyria was the second empire that replaced Egypt on the scene of world history. Babylon overcame Assyria as the third empire. Medo-Persia conquered Babylon as the fourth empire. And under Alexander the Great, Greece did in Medo-Persia, and Greece became the fifth world empire.

So, the seven heads that once existed, that are now fallen, are these empires: Egypt; Assyria; Babylon; Medo-Persia; and, Greece. All of these empires were in rebellion against God. All of them supported and transmitted the religion of Babel. And the harlot religion of Babel has been seducing each successive empire, and it has been used to persecute the saints of God. That's the thing that's important about these empires. They have all consistently shown that Satan is indeed the ruler of these empires, and that he has brought them to this antagonism toward the saints of God.

Please notice, for example, Isaiah 52:4: "For thus says the Lord God, 'My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there. Then the Assyrian came and oppressed them without cause.'" Egypt oppressed the people of God, as did Assyria.

Notice Isaiah 10:24: "Therefore, thus says the Lord God of Hosts, 'O, My people, who dwell in Zion, do not fear the Assyrian who strikes you with the rod, and lifts up his staff against you the way Egypt did.'" Did you get that? "The way Egypt did." Egypt came first as the world empire oppressing God's people? Then came the Assyrians doing the same thing.

Notice Isaiah 27:13: "It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who are perishing in the land of Assyria, and who were scattered in the land of Egypt, will come and worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jerusalem." This is a word of hope. While these empires persecuted the people of God, the people of God are also told that the time will come when these very oppressors from Egypt and from Assyria are all going to go to Jerusalem to worship the God of the Jews whom they oppressed and whom they rejected it. You may add to that that for your own Hosea 11:11 and Zechariah 10:10-11 – oppressors who are going to be brought down.

**The Roman Empire**

So, Revelation 17:10 says, "And they are seven kings. Five of these empires have fallen, and one is." One of the kingdom heads and his empire existed in John's day. This is the sixth empire, which was, of course, the Roman Empire, which was also another idol religion. Rome drank very deeply from the harlot's cup of filthiness and abominations. Rome was, as the previous empires, the enemy of God. God is the Creator, and Rome was the enemy of His Word and of His people Israel.

**The Image of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream**

The statue of Daniel 2, which represented the world empires, also revealed that the Roman stage was going to divide into two legs. As you know, the image stood there upon its two legs. It began with the golden head representing Babylon. It went down to the silver chest, which represented Medo-Persia. Then it hit the territory of bronze, which represented Greece. Then it went into iron mixed with clay, which represented Rome. Then it went down to the feet, and these two legs also represented what was going to come about in this kingdom. Historically, this took place in 395 A.D. when the Roman Empire could no longer hold itself together, and it was split in two. It was split into an eastern portion and a western portion. The capital of the western portion continued to be Rome. That was one of the legs. The capital of the eastern portion was Constantinople, named after Constantine, the emperor. Today, Constantinople is called Istanbul. It was the other leg. The Western Roman Empire was dominated by the religion of Roman Catholicism. The eastern Roman Empire was dominated by the religion of the Greek Orthodox Church, which was centered prominent in Russia before the revolution. And finally, the eastern part was, of course, conquered by the Muslims.

So, these two legs have represented the final stage of the Roman Empire before the whole thing collapsed in the fifth century at both ends. The two legs did develop distinctively different cultures. In time, these two legs are what divided into all the nations that are on the face of the earth today.

**The Revived Roman Empire**

So, "the one is" refers to the Roman Empire as it existed until it ceased to have a form of existence. Then it says, "The other has not yet come." This refers to a kingdom which is still in the future, and which would be number seven. This future kingdom is the Roman Empire now in its restored or revived state in the tribulation era. It comes back now upon this earth as an imperial ruling power. And when the seventh empire comes in, we are told that: "When he comes (here connecting the ruler and the empire), he must remain a little while." The "he" here refers to the antichrist himself. When this seventh empire comes, actually the seventh one is going to have a lifespan of only the first part of the tribulation period – three-and-a-half years. The previous world empires lasted for a long time.

So, the great world empires come on the scene successively. But the thing to remember is that the harlot religion of Babylon rides each one of them. Idolatry is at the heart of every one of these empires, and all the heads (the rulers) drink eagerly from the harlot's cup of abominations and spiritual filthiness. The empires love the harlot's religion, and they serve her diligently. Today we call it the New Age religion, or the New Age movement, and society still loves the harlot's religion, and they still worship the ultimate idol, which is the deifying of man himself.

So, nations willingly rebel against God, and they eagerly worship these dumb idols organized by the religion of Babel.

Verse 11: "And the beast which was (the Roman Empire as it once existed, and which came to a point where it was now out of existence), is not, is himself also an eighth." Aha, out of the seventh is going to come another phase of the Roman Empire. He's one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. What this is referring to is that, at the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist finds that the world situation has suddenly created an enormous power vacuum. The Bible tells us that a power from the knowledge (that we suspect will be Russia) and her allies come sweeping down toward Israel to take that fair land. And the antichrist, who is Israel's protector, moves forward from his base to protect Israel. And before he can come to grips with the power from the north, God destroys that power Himself.

Suddenly, he's the only kid on the block. He's the only act in town. At that point, he very quickly consolidates his position, and declares himself the world ruler, and his empire becomes a world government. At that point, he finally shakes himself loose from the harlot which has been riding him. This religion of Babylon is cast off, and he forms a new religion. It's a variation of the harlot of religion, but he himself is now the one whom they worship as God. He's the ultimate one. He has a false prophet to sustain the religion. But all the world must now worship this one man. This is the ultimate expression, of course, of Nimrod's religion.

So, the Roman Empire is revived in the seventh stage during the first half of the tribulation, and in the last three-and-a-half years, it has an eighth phase which is all the world worshiping the antichrist; and, he under a total world government. This is what's so impressive in our day – that everywhere we look, world government is on the scene. Everywhere we look, the leaders of the world can't move fast enough to bring us into a world government situation.

This phase of the antichrist's career is what we read about earlier when he becomes the world ruler in Revelation 13:5. This will make a little more sense now: "And there was given to him (the antichrist), a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and the authority to act for 42 months was given to him." That's three-and-a-half years – he last three-and-a-half years that the Bible calls "the great tribulation."

Notice verse 7: "And it was given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. That's the basis upon which we say he becomes a world ruler. No one (no nation) now escapes his domination.

Finally, the politicians of our day (and the international businessmen) are going to have what they're itching to get. They're going to have their world government, and they're going to have the world economic system. This is going to be the final form of the gentile world powers with its Babylon religion, which is going to be destroyed by Jesus Christ at His Second Coming. The antichrist, now during the last part of the tribulation, will be fully indwelt by Satan, and he will be fully possessed. He will be Satan's man to the complete extremes.

Verse 11 tells us that what is going to happen to the antichrist is that he is going to go to destruction. That's that Greek word "apoleia" that we have looked at before, which is a reference to the lake of fire. This refers to the beast as the antichrist emperor. Specifically, this is spoken of in Revelation 19:20, where it says, "And the beast (the antichrist) was seized, and with 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 were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns as fire and brimstone."

The Jehovah's Witnesses don't like that verse, because it talks about a place known as "hell" that burns with fire and brimstone. The Jehovah's Witnesses say that there is no hell. Everybody who rejects God is going to be wiped out of existence. They are amazingly fearful of hell. I had a Jehovah's Witness knock on my door some time ago. This is what they do. They go around trying to sell their literature, and to get you informed on what the Jehovah's Witnesses believe, in order to bring you into their cult. This lady spoke showed me her piece of literature and I said, "Well, I'd be very interested in that. Just a minute. I have something that you might be interested in."

I went and got one of our evangelism brochures, which has this picture on the front of the flames of hell on one side, and the garden of heaven on the other side, and it says, "Hell or Heaven: Which will it be for you? And for a moment, I thought I was playing Dracula and holding up a cross, because I had the book in front of me, and I said, "I'd like to give you this," and she recoiled. I mean, she backed off two feet when she looked and she saw the flames of hell. And she said, "No, I wouldn't want that. I don't want that." I said, "Why? It'll tell you all about heaven and hell." She just said, "I don't want that." Boy, her eyes were fearful, because she is taught in her religion that if she dares to read a piece of literature like this, she's going to be disfellowshiped. And if she is disfellowshiped, she's going to be rubbed out of existence. You don't go to hell. You just get rubbed out of existence.

**Brimstone**

Now, how do you get that? Well, you get that if you can take this verse and not read it in its literal meaning. But what the verse says is that the antichrist and his agent the false prophet are going to be thrown into a lake of fire which burns with brimstone. That means it hurts. Brimstone is burning sulfur. We call it phosphorus. It's a fearful weapon. One of the things in the military that you learn to use is a phosphorus grenade. And to be to have a phosphorus grenade thrown, and to be hit by that grenade is to have phosphorus that hits your skin. It's dry, and it immediately begins to burn its way through. It's a horrifying, painful experience, and very soon, as you see these phosphorus grenades explode in military training, and you see how they immediately set things on fire and burn, you get a healthy respect.

I was sitting in a room and some bleachers one time listening to an instructor give a lecture. I was an Officer Candidate School, and we had learned about phosphorus grenades, and the instructor picked up what we thought was a phosphorus grenade. He was talking about grenades, and what he had picked up, and he pulled the pin on this, and threw it on the ground. What he had picked up was a smoke grenade to demonstrate that. And for some reason, he had said something that led us believe it was a phosphorus grenade, and when he threw that on the ground, you never saw so many Marines clawing the air and flying all directions, and I was leading the pack. I was off that bleacher and away from that thing before it exploded. It was fearful. We all got properly chewed out after that for doing that. But I didn't mind. I didn't mind at all. If he had made a mistake, and really thrown a phosphorus grenade out there, I would have been glad not to be there.

So, you can't play loose with the words of God. Brimstone is phosphorus. It's burning. It's terrible, except it doesn't burn you away, and you feel this forever.

So, the beast, as the final political entity, is also destroyed. His political entity is destroyed by Jesus Christ, which Daniel 2:44 tells us.

In Revelation 17:12, we're told something about what's on the head of one of these seven heads, and that is the ten horns. Again, a horn is another symbol that we can find many times in the Bible, and we find that horns are symbols of power. Horns are used as symbols of royal imperial power. It's for a king: "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings." Aha, one of these kingdoms (the seventh one) is going to be in the form of a confederacy of ten kings. These all reign at one time. The kingdoms are successive, but these ten horns are all there at one time, and they have not received a kingdom, but they will be receiving authority as kings with the beast, and they will rule for one hour, meaning a short period of time.

**A Ten-Nation Confederacy**

Here's where we get (and this is also spoken of in Daniel) a confederation of ten nations. These will arise out of the seventh stage of the Roman Empire, and the ten-nation confederacy itself will be the seventh form of the series of empires representing, in fact, the ten toes of Daniel's image. Who these nations will be I cannot tell you. That's because I'm keeping it secret, but because I don't know.

I do know this: that in 1957, the Treaty of Rome was signed. It was a very important treaty in terms of God's final destruction of the kingdoms of this world. At that signing were France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg – six nations. What they did was formed an economic union to be called the United States of Europe. The Economic Union was the basis for a political union. They're still trying to get a single currency. They do have some political union now. Since they signed the Treaty of Rome, other nations have joined the European Confederacy so that they now total 12. I'm not sure where it stands now. Denmark for a while was pulling itself out. But from this group, perhaps, of these nations around the Mediterranean Sea, which was the basis of the Roman Empire, there eventually will shake down ten nations which are going to come together to be ruled by the antichrist.

When this happens, they will form a huge combined population and a powerful economic bloc. The nations of the European community are today the repository, interestingly enough, of Nimrod's religion. The ultimate idolatry of evolutionary humanism, which deifies man, is in all of these nations. And occultism permeates these nations in a horrendous way: in its schools; and, in its business institutions. Our biblical Christians in these nations are opposed and persecuted.

I just read an article this week where a Christian family with a Bible church group in France has had their children taken away from them because this family is teaching their children that which is considered against the best interests of the state of France. They've been taken and put into state agencies. These Christian parents have been desperately trying to get their children back, and they cannot because they're accused of child abuse.

This is what Russia used to do. This is what communist countries used to do to the parents who taught their children about God, and who taught them Scripture verses. They were accused of abusing children, and their children were taken away from them. It was hard for me to believe that I was reading an article about France that some people love so much. But I'll tell you one thing. If you've ever been in France, it is a godless nation. It is a nation without shame in its moral depravity and in its idealism and what it pursues.

The antichrist is going to be the head of these ten nations. Let me take you back to Daniel once more, because I want you to realize that God has been predicting these things for a long time. And when I tell you that there's a great deal of prophetic Scripture in the Old Testament that has not been fulfilled, here's an example. Either God is lying, or He's going to fulfill what He has said that He's going to do. So, notice Daniel 7:7-8: "After this, I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast; dreadful and terrifying, and extremely strong." This is the Roman Empire. "And it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet. And it was different from all the beasts that were before it. And it had ten horns." This is the final stage.

I will tell you something about this image that Nebuchadnezzar saw on the plain of Shinar that Daniel interpreted as progression of world empires. The details of these empires, from the metals to the characteristics that are described as the book of Daniel progresses were so precise to history, and history followed exactly. When Babylon went down, in came a lesser kingdom in the form of Medo-Persia, but still a powerful thing. And when Persia went down to Greece, it was a lesser kingdom under the Greeks, but it continued all of the Babylon religion. And when Rome came, you had iron teeth government, and you had a powerful system.

This has been so precise in its fulfillment that the liberals to this day say that Daniel was not written by Daniel. They can't prove it. There's no evidence for it. In fact, all of the evidence, external and internal, to this book is that Daniel wrote it, and that it certainly was written at the time when Daniel lived. Why do they want to say that Daniel did not write this book? Because if it was written in Daniel's time, then the Bible is a supernatural book that only God could produce. That is because only God can make prophecy that comes out in such exact detail without a single miss.

That's the reason (I remind you) that no other religious book in the world makes prophetic declarations about the future; certainly, not as the Bible does, hundreds of years in the future. Daniel 7:8: "While I was contemplating the horns (these ten horns), behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it. And, behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts. Who is that? The antichrist, united with the ten-nation confederacy. In comes the charismatic political leader. He comes on the scene of the world, and he comes into the political arena, and he has a military force, and he has a huge following. He's the little horn that attacks three of these nations, and he rips them out by the roots. They cannot stand against him because he is Satan's power behind him. The other seven follow the principle that all courageous politicians follow: if you can't beat them, join them. So, these three quickly join him, and there you have the political faces of the ten-horn confederacy ruled over by the antichrist. That's his base of power and operation.

Daniel 7:24-25: "As for the ten horns, out of the kingdom, ten kings will arise, and another will arise after them (the antichrist). And he will be different from the previous ones, and will subdue three kings. And he will speak out against the Most High, and wear down the saints of the Highest One. And he will intend to make alterations in times and in law, and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and a-half time." The biblical expression "time, times, and a-half time" is a technical expression for three-and-a-half years (42 months). His heyday will be in the last part of the tribulation period.

What we're reading here in Daniel is exactly what you have in Revelation – this combination of ten nations ruled over by the antichrist, who rises up by conquest, and brings them together on his authority.

So, the antichrist is going to begin the tribulation by impressing the world with his ability to get things done. He's a doer. He's an achiever. The antichrist is going to become Israel's protector. As I told you in the previous session, you can see why she needs a protector desperately, and why she's making the deal with the PLO now. They will they will make a deal with him, and they will view him as their messiah. He makes a seven-year treaty with them. He says, "I'll protect you against the Arab world," and he's going to be able to do it. And the Arabs are going to back off, and Israel is going to find a little breathing room. During that breathing room, they will quickly move into Jerusalem and rebuild their temple, and resume the Mosaic system of animal sacrifices.

However, this is going to be just a short time, for they're only going to rule for one hour, which is symbolic of a short period of time.

In verse 13, the antichrist reigns supreme. These kings have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. The antichrist makes war with three nations. The rest join him, and the confederacy is formed. The ten kingdoms gives him their power, which refers to their military forces, and they give him their authority, which refers to sovereignty over these nations. And he acts as the supreme dictator. There is now no one more powerful in all the world. Only up north, there is this power of Russia and the allies that still hold him in control. So, during the first part of the tribulation (three-and-a-half years), he reigns supreme with his Western Confederacy.

**An Assassination Attempt**

This total surrender indicates the great confidence that the kings have in the antichrist. He will inspire awesome loyalty, and this will increase as the first part of the tribulation goes on. You know what's happening – the seal judgments. At one point, somebody comes up and tries to assassinate the antichrist. It looks like on television (the nightly news) that the assassination was successful, and the report is that he is dead. He is not really dead. He is in a very serious state of suspension. Satan is playing his hand, and he is keeping this man alive because a short time later, suddenly he comes back to full life.

This is the old story of having a wake, and the party is getting louder and louder as they do it (which is why I hate them). People forget the poor corpse, and so they have a party out of it. People get louder and louder, and they have more fun, and they're visiting. And I'm saying, "Hey, how about this guy here in the casket?" Well, they have the wake. I finally figured out the reason that they make a noise is trying to wake the guy up.

Now, if suddenly he sits up in that casket, oh, boy, what a party that's going to be. Everybody gets really excited then. The wake, for once, has worked, and it's going to work in the case of the antichrist, who will now appear before the public in a very dramatic way. And the world is going to say, "He is a God. He was dead, and he's been brought back to life."

At that point, at mid-tribulation, he will finally be able to kill God's two witnesses which have been aggravating his kingdom for first three-and-a-half years. People are going to really be happy then. They're going to say, "This is God indeed." They will then readily worship him.

The world's societies will also welcome this man, because by this time they will be reeling from the pain and the shock of the sealed judgments. Shortly after the midpoint of the tribulation, God kicks in those horrible trumpet judgments.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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