***The Birds Eat the Flesh of Men

RV233-02***

We now move to the subject of "The Battle of Armageddon" in Revelation 19:17-21.

The end of Revelation 19 deals with the climactic events which will be taking place at the end of the seven-year tribulation era. As a matter of fact, when we complete chapter 19, you could jot down at the end of that chapter: "end of the tribulation." After that chapter, there'll be no more information given concerning the tribulation. Things then shift into the kingdom, and on into eternity.

**Armageddon**

So, we are rapidly bringing to an end the final days of the tribulation. Indeed, those days have to be prepared by the days in which we live now. At this point, at the end of the tribulation, the world government of the antichrist will be challenged by a number of nations which are under his rule. These rebellious nations will mobilize their armies, and they will converge on Jerusalem, where the worship of the antichrist is centered. His image has been set up in the Jewish temple in the holy of holies, replacing the presence of God, and is the object of worship. The armies gather in a staging area which stretches from Bozrah in Edom up to the valley to the plain of Jezreel at Armageddon.

**The Birds of Prey**

The birds of prey are called by God to the battlefield, and they begin ominously circling these assembled armies overhead. Jesus referred to this concept in Matthew 24:28 when he said, "Wherever the corpses, there the vultures will gather." Wherever there is dead carrion to be eaten, these vultures are going to come. And the Lord is using this in Matthew in a spiritual sense – that wherever there is false doctrine, that's where false leaders rally.

So, here the scene is set as these armies gather, and the sky is gradually increasingly darkened by the vultures circling overhead, and which are going to become the burial detail of God's army.

**Jerusalem**

We're told in the Word of God, for example, in the book of Zechariah, that Jerusalem itself will be attacked. In Zechariah 14:1-3, the prophet says, "Behold, the whole 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." This is right at the end of the tribulation period: "And the city will be captured; the houses plundered; house-to-house combat; the women ravished; and, half the city exiled. But the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city, because Christ will return to save them."

Verse 3 says, "Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when He fights on the day of battle." So, it has been no secret from the Old Testament prophets that this climactic moment is coming in the history of the world, when the nations of the world are all going to zero in on Palestine (on Israel)), and move toward Jerusalem. This movement is part of a series of battles which form the Armageddon campaign. The climax of this campaign will be the battle on the field of Esdraelon, which is east of Mount Megiddo. Revelation 16:16 has referred to this particular spot on the face of the earth, and it is a real place: "And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Harmagedon." In Hebrew, that means "Mount of Megiddo, because this plain is near the mount of Megiddo, which is immediately in proximity. In Greek, this is called Armageddon. So, the plain of Esdraelon (or Armageddon) will be the scene of this great battle, and it has in the past, in fact, been the scene of military battles also.

**Enmity toward Jesus Christ**

The hatred for Jesus Christ causes these gentile conquerors, who have gathered here at Armageddon, to fight one another, instead to become friends. The reason for this is that they join forces against Jesus Christ, who suddenly appears from heaven with His armies. This is similar to the effect that we read of in Luke 23:12, where Herod and Pilate, who simply did not like each other, suddenly became close friends because they both shared a mutual hatred for Jesus Christ. It is always true that enmity toward the Lord will draw enemies together, but it draws them together for their common destruction.

This enmity toward Jesus Christ is primarily expressed in terms of enmity toward the Bible. People who dismiss what the Bible says, and people who reject the literal interpretation of truth of the Bible, are in fact enemies of Jesus Christ. That is clearly evidenced by the fact that just as they do not accept the written Word, they will not accept the living Word, Christ Himself.

So, this hatred toward the Lord causes these people to come together and to join forces, but the alliance is doomed. Again, in Zechariah 14:4, we read, "And in that day (the Second Coming of Christ), His feet will stand on 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, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north, and the other half toward the south."

So, what actually happens here is that, while the armies are gathered at Armageddon, the vultures and the birds of prey are circling overhead. Christ returns, and He lands at the Mount of Olives from whence He went to heaven. The nations at that point will turn to mourning, for they see Christ returning with His army, and they know that they are doomed. Tribulation unbelievers will now face the worst moment of their lives.

**Celestial Calamities**

In Matthew 24:29, Jesus described this moment, when He said, "And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened; the moon will not give light; the stars will fall from the sky; and, the powers of the heaven will be shaken." These disruptions will frighten people in an enormous way: "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and with great glory. And He will send forth his angels with a great trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of the sky to the other."

One of the things that the Lord will then do is gather all these people who became believers during the tribulation. They will quickly be gathered together into a secure place.

**The Antichrist's Empire Falls**

So the antichrist's empire falls like a house of cards, and death sweeps the armies of the nations. Once more in Zechariah 14:12-15, the prophet says, "Now this will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who have gone to war against Jerusalem. Their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet; their eyes will gather rot in sockets; and, their tongue will rot in their mouth."

This kind of a description makes you wonder if you're not dealing with radioactive materials. Radioactivity would create just this kind of condition. But be that as it may, God's power is going to literally cause these people to come apart right there as they stand. This is the Scripture which, in the movie Raiders of the Lost Ark, when they finally decided to open the ark and challenge God, that they were so effectively able to portray on the screen as the leaders and the soldiers stood there, and you saw their eyeballs melt, and start dribbling down their face. And you saw their tongues turning into mush within their mouth. And the flesh began to fall off their bodies and deteriorate. It was a very graphic picture. Talk about "Don't fool with Texas:" Don't fool with God! It was a clear picture of what God is going to do in his wrath.

So, Zechariah says that these people have gathered on this field in this 200-mile-long corridor. And the center point (the focal point) is near Mount Megiddo on the plain of Armageddon. God is going to move in as Christ returns, and Christ is going to destroy those armies.

Verse 13 says, "And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the Lord will fall on them. And they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. And Judah also will fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered: gold and silver and garments in great abundance. So, also like this plague will be the plague on the horse; the mule; the camel; the donkey; and, all the cattle that will be in those camps." Whatever animals they have also experienced this destruction. So, the antichrist's empire suddenly will fall.

This is a very shocking picture indeed. People who do not want to believe the Bible say that this could not be true: We deal with a God who is a God of love. He would not do this to people. He would not bring about such wholesale destruction. I mean, there is a good 200 million-plus men in this 200-mile corridor, and God is going to do this to all of them?"

However, this is the fulfillment of Galatians 6:7-8: "Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh (to the sin nature) shall from the flesh reap corruption. But the one who sows to the spirit (the guidance of the Holy Spirit) shall from the Spirit reap eternal life," with all of its accompanying blessings.

So, the truth of God is once more is going to be demonstrated that God is not treated with contempt. You cannot be indifferent to the Word of God. You cannot pretend that God has not said what He has said without eventually paying the price.

We've already read in Revelation 6:15-17, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the commanders, and the rich, and the strong, and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves among the rocks of the mountains. And they said to the rocks and to the mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" And as they will find out, no one is able to stand against the living God.

So, the lesson for us is: do not take lightly the principles of the Word of God, and do not take lightly the purposes and the plan of God for you. God's righteousness is our guide, and we cannot dismiss it without very serious consequences.

**An Angel Standing in the Sun**

In Revelation 19:17-18, we have an angelic invitation. John says, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun." The angel here is apparently actually in the sun rather than just in the sunlight. Of course, for an angel, there would be no problem in standing right there on the sun. The sun is one gaseous hydrogen bomb which is constantly exploding. That's why it is constantly reproducing and renewing its energy. And the angel has no problem standing right there on the sun itself. Because he is there, he will be clearly visible by anybody any place on the earth who can see the sun.

This angel who is standing there in the sun is kind of an ironic thing, because in Nimrod's religion of Babylonianism, which we have looked into extensively, you remember that the sun is what was worshiped as God. People saw that the sun was the source of all life to the earth and its creatures. If you didn't have the sun, you wouldn't have any crops, and you could grow any food. The sun was the source of all nutrition. In Nimrod's religion, it was therefore made the deity, but the deity represented Satan. The sun represented Satan, who was the one that the religion of Nimrod actually worshiped.

So, this star-god is used by the Creator God as the base for a momentous announcement against Satan. I love God's style. Here is the star god of Nimrod (the sun), being used by the God who really made the sun (the Creator God) as the point of this momentous instruction.

This is not poetic language. Don't fall into that trap. The Bible is a book which is to be read on the terms of what the words mean. Otherwise, we wouldn't know anything. That is made very clear by Jesus. Every time He dealt with the Old Testament Scriptures: what it said – that's what it meant. It was no big secret code that you had to decipher. So, this is not poetic language. This is a future event that is actually going to take place. People will look out there, and there, to their utter amazement, they will see this immense figure of an angel standing in the sun.

**The Angel Cried Out**

This angel cried out with a loud voice. This voice comes thundering so that it is heard all around the earth. This is a dramatic setting of the angel in the sun, and the forceful pronouncement indicates that something important is about to happen in the human race.

People will the feeling like when that emergency system of the radio comes on. The other week or so, I was riding in a car, and all of a sudden, that particular emergency sound that they have when they test it came on, except this time, it was for real. Then they said, "This is an emergency. We will be making an emergency announcement immediately. Then shortly, they came on and announced the tornado situation that was taking place, and what people should do in those immediate areas. But the moment that sound came on the radio, I was alerted that something big and important was about to happen.

So, it is when people see this angel and hear the voice, they will know that this is an announcement of great significance.

The angel addresses the birds of the air: "Saying to all the birds which fly" in midheaven." "In heaven" refers to the first heaven. The Bible tells us that there are three heavens. The first heaven is the atmospheric heaven that surrounds our earth, in which the birds fly. There is the second heaven, which is the interstellar spaces. And there is the third heaven, which is the throne of God.

So here, the angel speaks to these birds which are flying in our atmosphere. Specifically, the angel addresses these scavenger birds – these birds which feed on carrion (feed on dead things). If you've ever been down a road (sometimes a country road), at night, animals get run over by vehicles, and things get killed. And you will notice that the vultures come, and while you're driving along, there they are, cleaning up the highways. They work for the highway department. Their job is to eat up whatever has been killed the day before. That's their job. They eat the carrion. They eat the dead stuff, and they clean up the highways. You come back a little later, and sure enough, everything's gone. The place is clean. And then they sit up on their perch, and they wait for the next dead delivery of what's going to be on the road, and they start again. I've seen that many times, especially in national parks where things get killed. There are a lot of animals, and then it's kind of quiet. So, these birds are all over the place, cleaning up.

Well, that's what's going to happen here. They're going to be feeding on dead things. And the angel's message to them is, "Come." This word "come" in the Greek language is a command, and it says, "Come. Assemble for the great supper of God." They are to come, and they are to assemble themselves. The Greek word for "assemble" looks like this: "sunago." "Sunago" means to gather together at some point. Here it is at some point on the face of the earth; specifically, the battlefield of Armageddon. This is in the passive voice, which means that these birds are moved by the angels. The birds don't get together and say, "Well, where we going to eat today? I hear that there's going to be some good stuff at Armageddon. Let's go down there." They are simply moved by instinct, as were the animals when it came time to get on Noah's Ark. Suddenly, something was triggered in these animals by a divine action, and they all for the safety of the ark.

So, these birds are suddenly going to be moved by God, and it is in the imperative mood in the Greek, which is a command. These birds are commanded. They cannot disobey. This is a divine command, and they're going to move forward, and go for what? Of all things, they're going to go for the supper. The Greek word that is used here is "deipnon." "Deipnon is the word that you use for the main meal of the day. So, it is truly what we would call a supper – the supper of God. What an image! It's the great supper of God. What does it refer to? It refers to all the corpses of the multitudes that are to be slain in that 200-mile corridor that ends up at the field of Armageddon.

It is ironic that, from the star-god, the sun, comes this invitation (this command of God) to the birds to feast on the slain sun-worshipers. From the star sun-god comes the direction (the order – the command) to start feeding on the sun worshipers. God had previously, in Revelation 19:9, given another invitation. This invitation, in Revelation 19:9, was, "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." These people turn their nose up at the marriage supper of the Lamb. They did that because they didn't like Jesus Christ. They hated Christ. They were indifferent toward Him. They turned their back upon the invitation to salvation, and thus they turned their back upon the invitation to the supper celebrating the marriage of the Lamb – Jesus Christ and His church. Instead of to that joyous occasion, they now are brought to another invitation to become the meal (the feast) that the birds eat. These unbelievers are now invited to become the menu at the great supper of God.

The preparation of this supper is described for us previously in Revelation 16:13-16, where John says, "And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs." John sees three filthy demons which look like frogs: one coming out of the mouth of Satan; one out of the mouth of the antichrist; and, one of the mouth of the false prophet.

Verse 14 says, "For they are spirits of demons performing signs (that is, miracles) which go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the war of the great day of God the Almighty." These three demons perform miracles by the power of Satan before the political leaders of the nations of the world. This influences these leaders to join the invitation to assemble in Israel for the war of the great day of God Almighty, which is the biblical name for the campaign of Armageddon, which is in a stage of battles. The original purpose of these kings is that they have decided to rebel against the world government of the antichrist. This is now near the end of the seven-year period. The antichrist, since the middle of the tribulation, has been the world ruler. These nations now mobilize their armies, and move toward Israel in order to confront the antichrist, and to break his hold as a world ruler. Well, actually, they are not acting like that on their own. It is God who is moving them to go to this self-destruction.

Verse 16 says, "And they gathered them together to the place the Hebrews call Harmagedon." It was these demons who deceived believers, and Satan is behind this, because Satan knows that something is about to happen. Satan doesn't have to have a computer to figure out that his time is almost up. At the middle of the tribulation, he had the battle with Michael and the angels of God out in outer space. Michael won, and Satan was then thrown out of heaven. He could no longer go into God's throne room to confuse believers. He could never come into the presence of God. He was sent to the earth, and he was in a hopping rage. From that time on, he knew that he had three-and-a-half years. Well, he's been keeping track of that time. He's near the end of that three-and-a-half years, so he knows that he's about to face the return of Jesus Christ and the armies of heaven.

So, he's bringing these nations together under the influence of these three filthy demons, and these kings (political leaders of the earth at that time) think that they're making the decision, but God is moving them. Satan knows his time is running out. He's desperate. So, he's going to do anything that he has to do to take one more chance of defeating Jesus Christ.

In Revelation 19:18, we have the menu of this great supper. The birds are told to gather at the Armageddon site: "In order that (for the purpose) they may eat the flesh." This is the Greek word "sarx." The word "sarx" can refer to the flesh on the physical body, or the body of an animal. Also, in the Bible, it is used to refer to the sin nature. So, they are called. Here, it refers to the physical remains of living creatures. It is the menu to be served up to the birds. It is called the great supper of God. It is produced by the enormous carnage at Armageddon, which will be caused by Jesus Christ at His coming. As we've shown you before, the blood is on the garment of Christ, but it is not on the garment of His army, who follow also in my like garments, because they are not engaged in the combat. Only Jesus Christ, by His spoken word, destroys these enemies on this field.

Those in the tribulation who have followed the leading of their flesh, or their old sin nature, must now have their flesh (or their physical bodies) eaten by the birds. So, there's a play here, back and forth. Do you want to befoul your flesh in terms of your sin nature? Fine. Now your flesh (your physical body) is going to be food for the birds. They rejected the invitation to the marriage supper of the Lamb. So, now they become supper for the vultures of God. This battlefield is cleaned up by the burial squad of the birds.

You will note, if you count, that in verse 18, the word "flesh" is used five times. When God the Holy Spirit does that, it is stressing again and again that he's talking about these human bodies. Any animals that are there, they too will be eaten. Five specific classes of human beings make up the menu of God.

**The Flesh of Kings**

First of all, we have: "The flesh of kings." This refers to the political leaders of the nations. The people today who control the lever of the powers of the government are what is in mind. These are often sophisticated, human-viewpoint rejecters of Christ, and they certainly reject the divine institution of nationalism, which is based on independent nations existing under an economic system of private property ownership, free-enterprise capitalism. That's the system of the Word of God. That's the system which the leaders of the world today are trying to destroy. When you do that, you are fighting against the will of God. And these people have brought this to the epitome of tyranny. So, they are among those who will die on the battlefield.

**The Flesh of Commanders**

Then, we have: "The flesh of commanders." This is actually "chiliarchos" in the Greek. These are officers who command a group of 1,000 men. But it refers basically to military officers. They will die, and their flesh will be eaten.

**The Flesh of Mighty Men**

Then there is: "The flesh of mighty men." This word "mighty men" refers to men who are men of great influence. They're strong people. It is true that it does refer to the fact that they're physically strong, but they're also strong in their influence. And these men will be known characterized by a smug arrogance. They will be spiritually benighted opinion-makers, and they will be drained of all their arrogance, along with their blood, on this occasion. These men have been made mighty by the power of Satan, and now they go down with him.

**The Flesh of Horses and those who Sit on Them**

Then there is: "The flesh of horses and those who sit on them, and the flesh of all men." The flesh of the horses and those who sit on them" refers to the soldiers in the ranks. These are those who sit on the horses, which is here a mobile striking force. And the horses die. They're also eaten. Whatever animals are there, they're eaten along with these soldiers.

**All Men**

We also have: "Of all men, both free and slaves, small and great." "All men" refers to civilian elements that are often associated with military groups. So, everybody associated with the antichrist's enterprise is going to die there. "Free or slave" indicates their social levels. That they are "small and great" Indicates that they are people who are well-known or people who are unknown: famous; and, unknown. The point is that they all become bird feed.

**The Democracy of Death**

This is called the democracy of death. There is something very democratic about death. It makes everybody equal. Here will come to pass, in a very vivid way, what all rational people and thoughtful people should always keep in mind – the statement of Hebrews 9:27, which points out that: "Inasmuch as it is pointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment." It is appointed unto men to die, and then comes the judgment. For the Christian, that is a sad moment in certain respects, but it is not a tragic moment (to die). For the unbeliever, it is not only a sad moment, but it is a moment of terror, and it is a tragic moment in the experience of that person.

The relationship of a Christian to death is a very passing, short-term thing. It seems long to us. But I can assure you that the person who dies suddenly finds himself in the presence of all those people who have gone on that they have known as believers. And very shortly, the rest of those that they have known will join them. The other side is a very real place.

In the case of Lazarus and the rich man, the rich man did not take this seriously. He thought this was a bunch of foolishness. So, he did not make provision for the acceptance of a Savior, and he found himself in the tragedy of the suffering of Hades.

Hebrews 9:27 is for real, and you will go to one place or the other.

**The Order of Battle**

Then there is one other thing. In verses 19-21, we have the outcome of the battle. Here's the order of battle. In military terms, the phrase "the order of battle" tells you who's in there. John says, "And I saw the beast" (that's the antichrist). He sees the antichrist present at the Armageddon assembly. He has come to Israel with his loyal supporters to defend his world government. John says, "I see the kings of the earth." Here, the political heads of the gentile nations are present at Armageddon. "Of the earth" indicates that the whole earth's national leadership is there. These national leaders have come to Armageddon, furthermore, with their armies. So, the armies are there. The antichrist and these kings are tyrants. They have no hesitancy to spill the blood of their soldiers and of their civilians in war to gain their ends. One has only to look at the history of communism.

***The* War**

We are told that they are assembled. They have been gathered together. This is the Greek word "sunago." The word "sunago" means to mobilize: here, in terms of these armies. This is in the tense in the Word of God that indicates that this mobilization was done in the past. How could it have been done in the past? It was done in the past because it was in the plan of God. It was as good as done in the past. God decided, at this point in time, that these armies were all going to move toward Israel. It is passive. They're carried along (they're motivated – they're controlled) by Satan. They think they're making their own decisions, but this is always the problem when you're out of sync with the mind of God. Negative volition toward the Word of God brings down that individual the consequence of being a passive sitting duck. So, like ninnies, they all move toward this assembly point, and they're assembled for the very specific purpose of making war. And in the Greek Bible, it says, "*The* war," because this is it. After this, there is no more war. This is *the* war: "He will assemble them to make *the* war, which is the war of the final phase of the Armageddon campaign.

They have assembled in a 200-mile corridor down to Armageddon. They have been assembled by Satan through deception to have a military showdown with Jesus Christ and His army of heaven. At the First Coming of Jesus Christ, Satan, as you know, rallied the religious and political authorities against Him, and the result was that they crucified Him. We read about that in Acts 4:24-29. Satan brought these forces together, and they crucified Christ. But the crucifixion was actually permitted, the Scriptures point out, under the sovereign authority of God, to pay for the sins of mankind. Man was not in charge.

Here's the way this is stated in Acts 4:24. The Christians have been under suffering from the Sanhedrin. They are filled with the Spirit: "And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord, and said, "O Lord, it is You who did make the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and all that is in them; who, by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David, Your servant did say, 'Why did the gentiles rage, and the people devise futile things (quoting Psalm 2). The kings of the earth took their stand, and the leaders were gathered together against the Lord and against His Jesus Christ (this future event in the tribulation). For truly, in this city, there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You did anoint both Herod and Pontius Pilot, along with the gentiles and the people of Israel." Satan got them all to team up against Christ:

"To do me whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur." Whoops. Wait a minute. Who's in charge here? Satan is moving these people: the gentiles; the rulers; Pilate; Herod; and, the Jews. They all think that they're ganging up on Jesus Christ. Yet, verse 28 says, "God is in charge." He had determined this.

Verse 29 says, "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond servants may speak with Your world with all confidence." These believers reminded themselves that God is in charge.

So, the crucifixion was permitted, and out of it became the basis for the salvation of all mankind. And this proved to be a great defeat to Satan and his cause. At the Second Coming, you have Satan up to his same old tricks, bringing groups together. Here, it is these vast armies to gang up against Jesus Christ when He comes:

"I saw the beasts, kings of the earth, and their armies assembled to make *the* war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army." He who sat upon the horse, of course, is Jesus Christ. The army of saints from heaven is viewed actually with contempt by the antichrist and the kings.

It is interesting to wonder what kind of a speech the antichrist makes at this point, because they have come to fight him, and now he wants to bring them together to fight Jesus Christ. One writer, John Phillips, in his commentary exploring Revelation, on page 248, envisions it this way – that this perhaps is the way the antichrist would approach these leaders: "Gentlemen, we are at war. We have been at war with one another. The time has come for us to unite in a common cause. The things which you notice now are far more important than the things which divide us. It is no longer a question of which of us will rule the world. It is the question of common survival. The time has come for us to take final counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed. He has put Himself in our power. He has dared to appear on earth. The last time He came, we crucified Him. This time, we shall cast His bands asunder, and cast away His cords from us forever. We have tried uniting for peace. It has not proved a durable bond.

"Now let us unite for war. Let us deal with this invasion of our planet once and for all. Let us deal with this invasion of white-robed psalm-singers. Let us show them how men, freed of all religious opiates, can fight. Let us hurl our defiance in their teeth. Time and again I have given you proofs of my mighty and supernatural powers. The dread lord of darkness whom we serve has defied these heavenly host for countless ages, and is more than a match for them all. Come. Let us rid the world and its atmosphere forever of these unwanted chanters of hymns."

That's pretty good, I think. That's just about the way the antichrist would stand up there. He will call attention to his power. He will call attention to the fact that their master Satan has been fighting in many ways successfully against God over the centuries. The last time Jesus came, they crucified Him. Foolishly, the antichrist is going to appeal to them to what they will do to Him now. They will think that Christ appearing on earth is a mistake. He now places Himself into their hands.

What does God think about this? This is where Psalm 2 comes into the picture again. Psalm 2:4 describes this whole scene: "He sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord scoffs at them." God the Father sits up there and He listens to this rallying cry to which the nations of the world do respond. And God laughs. And He expresses his contempt for these people.

Mankind has been for centuries in league with Satan against God and His revelation in the Bible. They are finally to be brought to justice by the holy vengeance of God. And that's what it is. It is a God who has restrained Himself; who is now angry; who is now indignant; and, who has now come to the end of His time of allowing them to change their mind. Now, they who have opposed Him and His Word are going to be brought to justice.

The story is told of Ingersoll, who was a great agnostic – an atheist, really. He was a man who did not believe that God existed, and who spent his life attacking God. On one occasion, he stood up in a group and shook his hand to heaven, and said, "If there's a God up there, let him strike me dead now, and we'll settle this question." That was kind of dramatic, and it hushed the audience. But the man who was speaking and debating with him pointed out that God has His own timetable. And when God's mercy and grace runs out, He will strike down. And in time, that's exactly what happened to this great atheist of God.

So, it is always a mistake to think that because we do something that is out of the plan of God, and nothing happens, that all is well. The final triumph of righteousness over evil is a great moment in human history, because it's going to bring to an end the rule of Satan on this earth.

Verse 19 now brings us to the threshold of that point in history. Everything is set. Soldiers are on the field. The leaders of the world are there. The antichrist has rallied them together. They've all been hyped up with the high morale. They actually think that they can take care of Jesus Christ once more as they did at His First Coming. And now, the God of creation, and His Anointed One, Christ, is about to show them how wrong they are. You cannot win against God. You cannot win against His word.

It is so important to know the principles of Scripture, and to live by those principles. That's the only life we have. And it is such a great tragedy that most Christians get so little of that kind of instruction. They don't have the foggiest notion of the principles of the Word of God. But we have pulpits filled with pulpit personalities who wow the people who listen to them. They give them lists of things they can do to change their lives. And people go out there and say, "Gee, wasn't that wonderful?" And they don't do anything. They are just as groveling around in the dirt, and the deceit, and the disorientation of their life as they ever were. But when you get hold of the doctrines of Scripture, and there's that great outburst of positive volition to believe it and to act upon it, then God the Holy Spirit transforms us into something we could not dream we were.

So, you can go to God's great joyful supper, or you can become bird food: one or the other. And these people have chosen, in their sophisticated, smug superiority, that which is going to bring their destruction. You as Christians can never be bird food. You can do things which are for the birds, and that will cause a great deal of personal loss in your life. And that's the concern we have – that we should not stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to be evaluated for what we've done with our lives, and find that we have trivialized them. Suddenly, you're going to get a call from God and say, "I want you in heaven." You might say, "Now?" He will say, "Yes." You might say, "You mean me?" He will say, "Yes." You might say, "Well, what about that person? I thought he'd be first in line." He will say, "No – you." You might say, "Well, I'm not really set." You're sad as you're going to be. Now is the time. Now is the appointed time.

If you don't accept Christ now, you may be in a physical condition where you can't accept Him. If you don't invest your life in the things of God now, you'll come to a point where you cannot invest them. And then the reality will set in.

We deal with very real things, folks. And those of us who are wise are not going to blow our lives. We are going to make every moment count for eternity.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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