***The Synagogue of Satan

RV45-02***

We are continuing with the letter to the church in the city of Philadelphia. This is segment number 12. This letter is recorded for us in Revelation 3:7-13. This church, as with all these other churches, has an interesting relationship to church history. These churches had local conditions that, in time, reflected a broader picture upon the scene of church history, as the professing local church moved from century to century. This particular church represents a period in history from about 1750 A.D. to the future when the church is raptured (caught up) to meet the Lord in the air.

This was the return of people to the study of the Bible, and to the practicing of Bible doctrine principles. It seems a very simple thing to us. It's very commonplace to us. But you must remember that following the Dark Ages, the Reformation restored the authority of the Scripture. But the Reformation soon fell into incapacity and failing to live up to the truth that it knew. So, it was in this era when there was a great revival of Bible study beginning about 1750, that this modern era, which is characteristic of the Philadelphia church, came into being. As a result of the return to Scripture, societies arose which were based upon the principles of the Word of God, which consequently, provided maximum freedom for individuals and also provided maximum opportunity for material prosperity. The United States, of course, is a classic example of such a society. In these societies, the Bible was viewed as the inerrant Word of God, and it was a divine revelation, therefore, from which there was no appeal. When the Bible spoke, it spoke with authority, and whatever it dealt with was true truth.

In time, the societies that grew out of such an orientation to Scripture themselves degenerated. We live at a stage in our country where the Bible has been abandoned as the inerrant Word of God, and where the revelation of Scripture is no longer the final authority. In most cases, the Bible is not even brought into consideration. Well, this Philadelphia church, because it found itself out-of-step with its society, came under the attack of the forces of liberalism sponsored by Satan. The principles of Bible doctrine always frustrate the expressions of the old sin nature in man. So, the Bible is a book to be attacked, and to be disposed of. With the discrediting of biblical authority, the Philadelphia type believers had little power in the world. They indeed got no respect. The result was that they were held simply in contempt, and they were ignored in anything they had to say. In a world functioning on secular humanism, the Philadelphia fundamentalist believer was simply out-of-step, and he was therefore rejected, and was completely ignored.

The Philadelphia type believer, however, was very dear to the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ. We've read in this letter that the Lord opens doors of opportunity to such Christians for personal spiritual growth; for Christian service; and, consequently, for rewards in heaven. The sovereign authority of Jesus Christ is constantly being exercised in behalf of His royal family, the church. The Philadelphia believer is honored by Jesus Christ because he has (we were told) neither neglected the Bible nor the deity of Jesus Christ.

Those are the two factors that are the problem in society today – the rejection of the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, and along with it, the rejection of Jesus Christ as God. This is what the world cannot accept. It cannot accept the concept that God has spoken to us in the form of a God-man who came into this human scene, and who, therefore, has identified the human problem, and has provided a solution, and outside of Him, there is no solution. You can see if you stand up and say, "Nobody can go to heaven except through Jesus Christ," which is exactly what the Bible says, then you have wiped out the mass of human beings. With that one statement, you have wiped out all possibilities for the overwhelming mass of human beings ever to go anyplace but into the eternal torments of hell. People don't take that kindly, but the truth of the matter is exactly that. The Bible, in terms of what it says, makes it very clear that only the person of Jesus Christ is the way into heaven. That cannot be if He is rejected in His deity. Once you reject His dignity, you have wiped yourself out of all possible contact with the living God.

So, the Philadelphia type believer, who knows that fact and who clearly declares it, is automatically an offense to the society in which he lives. But the Lord Jesus Christ says, "Because you did that. I will honor you. You've been rejected by the world. But you are going to be honored by Me."

Of course, one group who is in strong opposition to the Philadelphia type believers, because of their attitude toward the deity of Jesus Christ, is the Jews. The Jews have been in the forefront of being the persecutors of fundamentalist type Christians because they have rejected Jesus Christ, both as God and as the Messiah. Therefore, all attempts to present Jesus Christ as being the only means of communication and contact with God enrages the Jew to this day.

So, in Philadelphia, there was a large contingent of Jews who formed an opposition group to the Christians who were operating on the basis of biblical principles. The Jews were actually, as you know, the first persecutors of Christians. In the early New Testament church, the Christians no sooner came on the scene than it was the Jewish leadership and the Jewish community that were the persecutors of early believers, even though they were fellow Jews. The Jews today, as then, claim to be the true voice and representatives of God on earth.

The Philadelphia fundamentalists were accused of blasphemy because they made Jesus Christ God. Of course, Jesus was put to death for this very reason: because he claimed to be God.

So, the Lord is very much aware of the attacks upon His royal family by the Jews who hate Him with such a vengeance. There is not anything that will raise the ire of a Jew as when you press upon him the fact that Jesus Christ is God, and without Him there is no hope. If you ever have a chance to visit the city of Jerusalem, and go to the Wailing Wall, one of the impressions you will receive with an undeniable impact will be that the Jews know that they have a line of communication with God. The truth of the matter is they don't. However, you see them going about their religious ceremonies, carrying the scrolls of the Law of Moses (the Torah); you see them standing at the wall: bowing; swaying; and, praying; you see them putting their little pieces of paper on which they've written prayer requests and stuffing them into the cracks of the Wailing Wall; you see them going through all the rituals; you see the bar mitzvahs taking place; and, you see the whole enthusiasm. The place is crowded, and people are moving around. There is no doubt in your mind that these people think that they are the people of God. The truth of the matter is they are not. If you tell them that, they will rise in indignation.

**The Jewish Perception of the Lord Jesus Christ**

I told you before that one of the things I asked our Jewish guide in Israel on one occasion as we were walking together was, "You're a man of the Scriptures. You know so much about the Bible. I want to ask you a question. What if the Jews were wrong about Jesus Christ?" And the point that I wanted to make was, "If they were wrong, the consequences are monumental to you." And he didn't have to think a second. He snapped right back at me before I had the last word out of my mouth. He snapped right back: "They weren't wrong. They were right." It only evidenced that which was the general attitude of the Jew. He has no doubt in his mind that he is God's person. He has no doubt in his mind that Jesus Christ was a fraud. He has no doubt in his mind that while Jesus Christ was a rabbi and He taught a lot of good things, He made the serious mistake of claiming more than He was in terms of being the Son of God. And, certainly He is not the way into eternal life.

So, in verse 9, this is the issue that the Philadelphia church is facing. And the Lord says to them, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews and are not, but do lie." The word "behold" is the Greek word we had before: "idou." This is what is called a demonstrative particle, and it is used to signal that a divine principle is about to be stated. We have this word four times in this letter. Four times God the Holy Spirit's puts out this official signal word to call our attention to the fact that now something very important is about to be said, and you don't want to miss it.

This word is actually telling you to look closely because it comes from this word: "horao." "Horao" is the word for "to see," but it is the word for "to see" in terms of an overview. It's the word for a panoramic view. So, the word is telling you to take a broad view of an important subject that is about to be proclaimed. The form of this word "idou" is aorist, which means to pay attention now at the point of the declaration of this principle. It is in the middle voice, which means that if you do pay attention, it will be to your great personal benefit. Middle always means benefit to you. And it's imperative, which means that it's a command. So, here is a word from God the Holy Spirit, that says, "Okay, everybody pay attention. Behold. This is a command. This is not optional. I'm about to say something to you that is going to be of great personal benefit to you. Listen."

What He says is that, "I will make." The word "make" is the Greek word "didomi." "Didomi" actually means "to give." That's the basic meaning of this word. It means to give. But it is used here in the sense of giving in terms of making something come about. We have this word used in the same way in 2 Thessalonians 3:9 where we read, "Not because we don't have power to make ourselves an example (to give ourselves as an example) unto you to follow us." There you have the same concept of giving yourself in terms of making yourself into something.

So, here the Lord Jesus is saying that He's going to give something in such a way that He's going to make it become something. The idea here is that Jesus Christ gives to the Philadelphia congregation a response of honor from those who are negative to believers. Jesus Christ is going to cause a very negative crowd to do something someday that they never imagined they would do. As a matter of fact, they would grit their teeth and say, "I'd rather die before I did that."

**The Synagogue**

So, he's going to make a certain group which he called: "of." The word "of" is the Greek word "ek." "Ek" means out from within. So, here's out from within a certain group. That group he calls by the term "synagogue." The Greek word is "sunagoge." It comes from two words. This first part, "sun," is a preposition, and it means "together." This last part "ago" is a verb, and it means "to bring." So, literally, this word means "to bring together;" "a bringing together;" or, "a gathering of things." This was, as you know, the official term for a Jewish religious organizational gathering.

For example, in Acts 9:2, this word is used in its official sense when speaking about Saul: "And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound into Jerusalem." Paul desired letters of introduction to the official organizations or the official gatherings (the "sunagoge") – the religious organizations in Damascus, so that they would help him in capturing Christians. The synagogue organization actually developed in Jewish society during the Babylonian captivity. During the 70 years that they were captives in Babylon, their temple back home was destroyed. They had no central place in which to gather for worship, so they gathered in these synagogue units. When they came back to the land after the Babylonian captivity, they just kept up the custom. They gathered on Saturday, on the Sabbath day, for the reading of Scriptures and for discussion of the Scriptures. This was, of course, a great help to New Testament Christianity, because this was the jumping off point whenever Paul came to a new city. He first located the synagogue; walked in there on Saturday; and, anybody could get up and speak. All you had to do was let the moderator know that you had something to say, and they would give you a place to get up and speak. And Paul would do this. That would be his first contact of presenting the gospel to the people in that city – to the Jews first.

So, there's a synagogue group here in the city of Philadelphia. It is identified by Jesus Christ, the greatest Jew of all time, as "The synagogue of Satan" ("satanas"). I've already heard all the screams of anti-Semitism when that remark was made. Here, Jesus Christ is saying, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan." Here's a big synagogue in the city of Philadelphia, and Jesus Christ says, "I know about that place. It's a synagogue of Satan." Here, Jesus Christ is an anti-Semite, isn't He? Isn't he anti-Semitic? People accuse him of being against the Jews. Not so, obviously. The name "satanas" is the name for the fallen angel Lucifer. It is the name which means adversary because he's against God. The synagogue in Philadelphia was dominated by the power and the activity of Satan. Part of Satan's tactic in the angelic warfare is always to take over control of organizations which are claiming to represent God. That is the devil's modus operandi: "Take over an organization that claims to represent God." Many churches today have all the elements of Christian organization, but with no relationship to Jesus Christ, whatsoever.

So, just because some place is a religious organization, that should not be equated with being a representative of God. Just because it's a church doesn't mean that God has anything to do with it. It is amazing how hard it is for some people to understand that. Just because it's a church doesn't mean that God has anything to do with it. Just because it's a great denomination, that doesn't mean that God has anything to do with it. Whether He has anything to do with it or not is determined by their faithfulness to Scripture; and, by their faithfulness, most of all, to the issue of the God-man Jesus Christ and the acceptance of His deity.

Here was a group in the city of Philadelphia (a religious organizational structure) which rejected the God-man Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus says, "That organization is a gathering (a "sunagoge") of Satan ("satanas"). You have to distinguish between what is of Satan and what is of God. Most people think that you cannot clearly identify the two. But the truth of the matter is that you can. It is entirely possible for us to take a denominational group, whose core plan of salvation violates the Scripture grace plan, and you can say, "That group has nothing to do with God."

The Pope is currently making a lot of impact in our world. The Pope is doing a lot of things to help get the world ready for the tribulation. This is one of the most fantastic popes we've had in a long time. He is really getting the religious organizational structure of the world together. But this Pope believes that he goes to heaven on the basis of his personal merits. He tells his flock, the Roman Catholic Church, that. The church's official doctrine teaches that you will not get to heaven if you have not performed certain adequate and acceptable works of merit that make you acceptable to God. Therefore, we can say that the Roman Catholic Church is the church of Satan. All of you thought that the only satanic churches were the ones that had nude women on black velvet altars and burning candles in the dark room. They're only one variation of the church of Satan. The church of Satan includes the Roman Catholic Church. The church of Satan includes the Mormon Church, with its high level of morality, but with its completely antagonistic plan of salvation to the principles of grace.

This is true of the religious systems of the world like Islam. Who could be more powerful than Islam today, and who has the gall to stand up and say that God has nothing to do with Islam? Islam: which praises God; which honors God; and, which gives great sums of money to God – who could stand up and say, "Islam is an organization of Satan?"

I'm happy to say that you people with a knowledge of doctrine can do exactly that. The Lord Jesus Christ is doing precisely that. He was talking about one organization in Philadelphia, but he was talking about it on the basis of their attitude toward Himself. Therefore, we can expand that to any organization in the world today: according to their attitude toward the person of Christ; and, the consequent attitude toward the principle of salvation. You people are small in number and you are weak in influence, but you're on the right track. You've got the truth. Therefore, you should not be intimidated. You should not be coward. You should not be so foolish to think that numbers make right, and that power makes right. It does not. There's only one thing that makes right, and that is true truth. That's what makes right. And there's only one place to find that kind of true. That's in Scriptures.

So, the Lord Jesus Christ is making a very terrible statement here about an organization that undoubtedly was viewed with high esteem in the city of Philadelphia, but which was giving a lot of misery to the believers there. Jesus says, "It's a synagogue. It's a religious organization, but it's a synagogue of Satan and not of God. I mean, it was the same group you see at the Wailing Wall walking around with the copies of the Scripture; singing the praises; and, coming up and pronouncing blessings on people just like the one rabbi did to me at the Wailing Wall. They're doing all this in the name of God, and God has nothing to do with it. That's the lousiest blessing I ever received – that blessing with zero nothing in its value. He just put his empty hands on my ... head and nothing happened. It was zero all around. But he thought he was doing something great for me and something great for the religious world. God says it's an activity of Satan. I stood there, and I looked over that vast courtyard at the Wailing Wall, and that's what came to my mind: the synagogue of Satan, right before my eyes. Here it is, operating in living color.

And why are they this? Jesus says it's even worse than that: "They are the synagogue of Satan who say." The word "say" is the Greek word "lego." That's the word for communication with emphasis upon what is being said. The reference here is that they are making a claim. This is in the present tense. They constantly make this claim. The people who are doing it are these Jews in the synagogue. It's in the participle, so a spiritual principle is being stated here. They are claiming something that they are. The word "are" is "eimi," the verb for status. Again, it is present tense. They are constantly claiming something. It is active. The Jews themselves are claiming this for themselves. It's an infinitive, which is a way of indicating what we call indirect discourse. It's the Greek way of actually quoting what they're saying.

What they're saying is, "We are Jews" ("ioudaios"). This is actually an adjective. It means Jewish. It's used here as a noun, meaning Jew. They are the Jews in Philadelphia. This was a very proud title. They said, "We are Jews." Meaning what? "We're God's chosen people." This is why the Jew is so proud of the word "Jew" today. To call yourself a Jew means that you're God's chosen people. You're His favorite. You're special with God. There are a bunch of crazy Christians in the world today that get intimidated when they get in the presence of Jews. They just start talking very softly, and their voices get hushed. They get all impressed because here are these chosen people of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is going to make it very clear here in a minute that these people are falsifying a claim – that they do not even bear the title of Jew. The Lord is going to tell them that they are calling themselves Jews, but they're not Jews. They considered the Christians a fraud, but in point of truth, the Jews were the ones who were the fraud.

**Liars**

Jesus says, "They call themselves Jews, and are." Again, we have the same word "eimi." They are constantly claiming this status for themselves: "And are not:" "Behold, I'll make them of the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews, and are not." This means that they're claiming something that is absolutely not true about themselves. Then we have the word "but." The word "but" is "alla," introducing the contrast; that is, what is really true about themselves. The Lord uses a terrible word that people get awfully mad about if you call them this. He called them "pseudomai" (liars). That's not a very nice way to talk about people who are your favorites. If you're God's chosen people, it's not very nice for them to go about calling you a liar. "They do lie." That means to deceive by lies. This is present tense. These Jews do this all the time. It's present tense. They are always liars. It's middle voice, but it's active in meaning. They have this quality all the time. It's indicative – a statement of fact. In other words, their claims to be Jews were not true. Jesus says, "They're lying when they claim to be Jews." What did he mean by that?

Well, the apostle Paul dealt with the same subject and explained the same problem in Romans 9:6, where Paul says, "Not as though the Word of God has taken no effect, for they are not all Israel who are of Israel." They are not all of the nation of Israel who happened to be born into a Jewish family physically. In Romans 2:28-29, he explains that: "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." Paul says that there are a lot of people who are going around who are born in a Jewish family, these men with the ritual rite of circumcision that they esteem so highly as being their covenant claim with God for God's blessings, who are indeed no Jews at all, because the circumcision that counts is not the one that's in the flesh, but the one that's in the heart – the circumcision that is the result of being born again so that the old sin nature flesh is cut away from its dominating influence in your life. That is the circumcision that counts. So, a true Jew is one who is descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and who also trusts in Jesus Christ as Messiah Savior as did Abraham.

**Christians are not the Israel of God**

Now, I did not say that those of you gentiles sitting here who have received Christ as Savior are the true Israel of God. That is a terrible thing to say. It is very wrong. It leads to a lot of deception in the Word of God. The whole amillennial concept toward the end times is a direct result of calling Christians the Israel of God. The Bible never refers to Christians as Israel of God. Now, preachers often do, but you just you just put that in your mind and catch hold of that. That is false. You never refer to Christians as the Israel of God. So, in other words, you have not become God's chosen people. You are not the new era of Jews. Some of you look like Jews. Some of you act like Jews. But you are not Jews. Just settle it. You are not the Israel of God. That is a false concept entirely.

However, a lot of people who have the genetic structure of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in their bodies, and who are physically descended from him, are not Jews simply because they're not born again. Only those are true Jews today who are born again. That is what Jesus said is a real Jew.

If they were true sons of Abraham, and that's what they're claiming, then they would act in the same way that Abraham would act. The one thing Abraham would never do is reject Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Jesus almost started a riot one time when He told this to a group of Jews in John 8:39: "They answered and said unto Him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a man that has told you the truth, which I've heard of God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father.' Then they said to Him, 'We are not born of fornication. We have one father, even God.' And Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God. Neither came I of myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand my speech" Even because you cannot hear My Word." He didn't mean they didn't have ears. It means that they did not have spiritual capacity to hear the Word of God.

Then there is that bombshell of verse 44: "You are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it." Do you see what the Lord Jesus is saying? Here in the Philadelphia letter, He's saying, "This is not a synagogue of God. It is a synagogue of Satan. These are not true Jews. They are liars to claim that." And if He says they're liars to claim that, then He is connecting them back to what? To the father of lies, Satan. Because they are a synagogue of Satan, it will be characteristic of the Jews to be liars.

So, the Jewish opposition was obviously very keen in the city of Philadelphia, and they sought to undermine the teachings of salvation through Jesus Christ alone. They were just convinced that their national privilege made them the voice of God in Philadelphia, and not these Christians. But the Lord Jesus Christ says that they were hypocrites, and they really represented Satan.

Since the Jews rejected Jesus Christ as the divine Messiah, they simply had no relationship to God. So, any claim to that was a lie. The deity of Jesus Christ was the issue here. The deity of Jesus Christ was the thing that the Jews were so enraged about when the Lord was here. This is why they murdered him. In John 5:18, we have this pointed out: "Therefore, the Jews sought the more to kill Him (that is, Jesus), because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but He said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

Then, in John 10:33: "The Jews answered Him, saying, 'For a good work, we don't stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, make Yourself God." So, it was very clear that the Jews, as they would try to refute what Jesus was teaching them, were attacking Him for the fact that they saw Him standing before them as a human being who claimed to be the Son of God. They said, "That's not true." And for that reason, they finally murdered Him.

The apostle Peter, in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:36, points out that very fact: "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ." You know that the word "Lord" means deity, and "Christ" means Messiah. So, Peter said to this crowd, after he delineated what had happened to them historically, "And now Christ has been raised from the dead. God has made it clear, whether you like it or not, that Jesus Christ, the God-man, is God, and that he is the Messiah." Well, God the Holy Spirit used that particular point to strike the hearts of these hearers. So, verse 37 says, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and they said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'" Great conviction came upon them because they suddenly realized that they had indeed killed the Messiah they were waiting for all these centuries, and that He was indeed not just man, but that He was a God-man.

So, any rejection of Jesus Christ or His teachings will make a person an agent of Satan. That's why Jesus says, "That synagogue down there in downtown Philadelphia is not a synagogue of God. It is a synagogue of Satan." The Jews today still have their religious organizations, but God has no dealings with them. The Jewish synagogue was a powerful force in its era, while the Philadelphia church had very, very little influence indeed.

One thing that's interesting (you may have noticed) is that whenever a Christian group goes liberal, and whenever they do the same thing that the Jew does in rejecting the biblical fundamentals about Jesus Christ, the Christian group and the Jewish group immediately fall into fellowship with one another. Anytime that a Christian group rejects the biblical fundamentals, they find great compatibility with a Jewish group. So, you soon discover that they're exchanging pulpits. The Christian pastor is talking at the local synagogue, and the rabbi comes and preaches at the local Christian church. They hold joint church services. They love to have Thanksgiving services that are joint Thanksgiving services. They reject salvation through Jesus Christ alone – both of them. The liberal Christian group would say, "Well, people have different ways of going to heaven. God's going to accept them all." Immediately, when they do that, they find compatibility with the Jewish group.

But the Lord Jesus Christ declares that this is all wrong, and He is not anti-Semitic in doing that. Whenever you tell the truth of what Scripture says about the Jews' attitude toward Jesus Christ, they cry out anti-Semitism. You must learn, as we've been learning in the political world, there are certain words that mean certain things. You must translate them. Anti-Semitism means: "You're telling the truth, and I don't want to hear it about myself." When a pastor said that God does not listen to the prayers of Jews because they do not approach him in the name of Jesus Christ, what was the reaction? The reaction wasn't, "Well, he gets that from the Bible." The reaction was anti-Semitism: "You're against the Jews." Nobody ever stopped to say, "Well, just a minute. Does the Bible say that or doesn't it?" Nobody wanted to talk about the Bible. What were they saying? When they said anti-Semitism, they were saying, "You said something that the Bible declares to be true, and I don't like you to say it because a lot of people might hear it.

We live in a society where we have powerful forces who govern this society: powerful religious forces; powerful economic forces; and, powerful political forces, and they are all governed by Satan. The one thing they cannot afford is for the general public of this nation to be informed. That is why, suddenly, Jerry Falwell is being written up in Playboy magazine. Whoever would have thought that they would waste time on some television preacher? Well, why are they writing them up all of a sudden? Because they feel the hot breath of the indignation of godly morality breathing down their neck, and they're trying now to cut it down and to undermine it. The thing they do not want is for biblical viewpoint to become generally understood by the people of God.

You better pray for President Reagan. If there was ever a man that is up for assassination, it is that man. This country is trembling now with what potentially is happening. I don't want to get off right now into the vast sums of money that the international bankers have at stake. They are not about to give up to a government who says, "No more inflation." When you say, "No more inflation," you are saying no more vast profits to the international bankers. Other men have been in places of authority and have been assassinated for doing less than that. So, you better remember to pray for a country that is beginning to wake up, and is beginning to turn around, and there are forces that are not about to accept it.

I heard a political leader the other day say that, in opposition to everything that the president was recommending, "These are ideas that have never been tried." I'm just a simple little country boy myself. I thought to myself, "If they've never been tried, how does he know they're wrong?" ... Here's something that's never been tried, and he knows it's wrong. He knows it's no good. And I just envy his intelligent discernment. I thought it was really wonderful to be born like that.

Well, anyhow, getting back to Revelation 3, the Lord says, "I'm going to make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they're Jews, and they're not because they're liars." Then again, He tells us something else. He throws in our old "idou" again: "Behold. Pay attention. I'm going to say something important: I'm going to make." This is the word for "poieo." It means "to cause." It's future. In the future, after Jesus Christ returns from heaven with the church, this is going to happen. It's active. It's going to be done by Jesus Himself. It's indicative – a statement of fact. He is, "Going to make them," referring to these Jews in this synagogue, "to come." The normal word for "to come" is "erchomai." But that's not the word that's used here. The word "erchomai" stresses the act of coming.

But the word that's used here is interesting. God the Holy Spirit uses "heko." The word "heko" is a word that emphasizes the fact of arrival, or the fact of coming. You're here. You're standing before me. The language of Scripture is so fantastic, because the Holy Spirit says, "I'm going to make these people to come." It isn't just that they're on their way. It is the fact of the arrival of standing before you Christians. Remember that we're talking about something that is going to happen to you, because you're going to join these Philadelphia believers in this experience someday. This word means "to be present," or "to actually be on the site." It's used in John 8:42 in the words "came from God." Jesus is actually there on the site – arrived. Hebrews 10:9 says, "I came to do the will of God." There the stress again is this word "heko," meaning "I have arrived. I'm right here in front of you."

Well, this word is future, pointing to the arrival of Jesus Christ at His Second Coming after the rapture and after the tribulation. It is active. Jesus Christ is going to make these Jews come. It is a statement of fact. What's He going to do? He's going to cause these people to arrive in the presence of these Philadelphia believers. He's going to cause them to (our King James says) "worship" ("proskuneo"). Actually, the word means "to bow down" or "to do homage." It's used in this way in Matthew 18:26, for example, which will illustrate it for you. "Proskuneo" is the word that does mean "worship," but it also connotes this idea of bowing down and doing homage, or "respect:" "The servant therefore fell down and worshiped him, saying, 'Lord, have patience with Me and I'll pay the all." Well, he didn't worship Him as God. He fell down and did homage to Him. He did obeisance.

The Jews, who claim to be God's representatives, are going to fall down and do homage before you people who are here today. This is in the future, when Jesus Christ returns. It is active voice. The Jews are going to do it. It's indicative – a statement of fact. Then as if to turn the knife, it isn't enough that God the Holy Spirit used the word "heko," which emphasizes, right there before you, the arrival factor, in your presence. Then he throws in "enopion," which means "in your very presence" – "before you," in the sense of "in your very presence." Then to make it even worse, He describes the nature of the bowing. It's going to be borrowing at your "pous," which is the Greek word for "feet" (the limbs of the body). The Lord's words are reminiscent, interestingly enough, of what the Jews fully expect some day the gentile world is going to do for them.

Indeed, when the Jews are born again, and they once more become God's people, the gentile world will do this for them. Isaiah 49:23 predicted that: "And kings shall be your nursing fathers and their queens your nursing mothers. They shall bow down to you with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. You shall know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed to wait for Me." In Isaiah 60:14 is, again, the same principle: "The sons also of those who afflicted you shall come bending unto you, and all they that despise these shall bow themselves down at the soles of your feet. And they shall call you the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

All these passages in Isaiah are referring to the millennium, when Jesus is ruling as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and the Jews are once more the leading nation governing all the world. The Jews knew these Scriptures. When they had their terrible, hard times and their persecutions, they'd look back and they'd remind their children of these Scriptures and say, "Someday the gentiles are going to fall down, and they are going to lick the dust of our feet."

Here the Lord Jesus Christ, who also has read the Bible, pulls out this background Scripture, which would ring a bell with these Jews who are reading this: "These Jews in the synagogue are going to fall down, Christians. They're going to do homage before your feet." These Jews are saying, "That doesn't sound right. They're supposed to be doing that to us. We're not supposed to be doing that to them. The Lord is ramming home the truth: "You're wrong. When you rejected the deity of My Son, you lost at all. You're not my people. You're Satan's people. The people who are mine is this: My bride, the church."

So, you have this picture of the synagogue of Satan standing here cringing at the feet of the bride of Jesus Christ, doing homage to the church in recognition of the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Someday the Jews are going to turn around, and they're going to admit how wrong they were, and how true and accurate were the Philadelphia type believers. This will be the fulfillment of Philippians 2:10-11: "That at the name of Jesus, every nation should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the Father." The synagogue of Satan will eventually be nothing but the footstool of Jesus Christ (Psalm 110:1).

This condemnation of Jesus Christ, of course, applies to modern Judaism, and to all the powerful forces in the world today. So, you divine viewpoint Christians should not be intimidated by the rejection and the scorn that you are going to receive, because the end of the verse tells us that all of this is designed to make one thing clear that all these people are someday going to understand. They're going to know, and this is the word "ginosko." This is the Greek word for knowing as the result of your experience, not knowing because you read a book and learned something, but knowing as the result of your experience. These people are going to know as a result of their experience of doing homage to these Christians. It is aorist tense: at the point where they're doing that homage. It's active. The Jews of Satan are going to learn this. It is subjunctive tense. That means this is their potential future – unless they turn around and accept Christ as Savior themselves. They are going to learn by experience "that." This is the Greek conjunction "hoti," which points to what they're going to learn.

What are they going to learn? "That I have loved you." In the Greek, you don't have to put the word "I" separately. Usually it doesn't. It's just part of the ending of the verb. But in this case, the word "ego" is thrown in there. The Lord Jesus Christ is stressing the fact that it is "I, the Son of God" who has this attitude toward the Philadelphia divine viewpoint type believer: that "I have loved ("agapao"). This is the Greek word for love which has to do with mental attitude love. It's a mental attitude. It's the love of the mind, free of all ill will. The result of what? Is it the result of you Christians being so wonderful because you are so faithful in serving the Lord and living for Him? No. It is because He has imputed to us absolute righteousness. And because we have the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ Himself, God loves His perfections. He loves His righteousness, and He has no mental attitude ill will toward us whatsoever. We are His favorite. We are the apple of His eye. The Christian has this special love of God because we are His bride (1 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:25-27). He loves us as a man loves his own bride.

So, all the rejecters are one day going to know how Jesus Christ feels about the Philadelphia type believers. This word "agapao" is in the aorist tense – when we received that absolute righteousness. It's active. It's the feeling of Christ Himself. It's indicative – a statement of fact. There is no greater honor than to be told that Jesus Christ loves you. Just as He adds the personal pronoun for "I," to emphasize Himself, he also adds the personal pronoun "su" for you to emphasize that it is you specifically that He has in mind. For the Christian, there is a day of victory and of recognition ahead. As the unbelieving Jews are going to someday be exposed, so, too, will the apostate churches someday be exposed.

In the meantime, spiritual maturity type believers are to be occupied with Christ, doing their Father's business, and not caring if they are despised. The representatives of Satan are mounting a campaign of terror in this country like you wouldn't believe. One of our number has gone into the Lord's presence. Chester Bitterman is dead as the result of the terror in Colombia, because he was telling people the true truth of the Word of God. He was conveying, with the work of the Wycliffe translators, the Word of God into the language of the people.

This is the same kind of thing that the Lord is referring to here in Philadelphia. The synagogue of Satan is not only made up of Jews, but it's made up of gentiles, and its stock-in-trade is terror. There are groups all over this country that are now being trained to turn terror loose upon this land, and to turn it loose upon the Bible-believing Christians whose principles are being incorporated in our government at this time, as they have not been in a long time. When suddenly that free money stops flowing, and when, suddenly, the availability of something for nothing evaporates, I guarantee you there's going to be violence in the streets.

You better get ready for the fact that right now there's not a synagogue down the street that's hustling for your blood, but there are organizations of Satan that are out for the blood of believers, and our time is coming immediately on the horizon. You're going to learn a little bit of what it was like to live in Philadelphia, and to be under the gun of a powerful force like a synagogue that considers itself the voice of God and the epitome of rational thought, which was indeed the thinking of Satan. Terror in this land is going to be the thing that follows the consequences of what our government is doing today. It is almost inevitable. It will be amazing if we can escape it.

You cannot turn around the devastation that has happened to us in our land over the last 50 years, and bring us back to the biblical principles, without people rising in rage who do not understand what freedom is; what prosperity is; and, what blessing is under the care and the guidance of the principles of the Word of God. The venereal diseases run rampant. The herpes disease, that's now incurable, has the horrible consequence that any baby born to a mother with that disease cannot live. The medical people tell me they are not able to even enable those children to survive. They die.

So, who are you kidding about a God who knows what He's doing and who is patient? You may misinterpret Him to be a God who is weak and indifferent. He's neither. He's just patient. And for those of you who have entered the royal family of God, you're under His maximum love, and you're under His maximum care. And you should stand up and sound off the truth of the Word of God. You should not fear the fact that you're the minority, because you happen to be the only people that are right. The rest of them are wrong. We've got an awfully little ark. The last one only held a few. This one's a little bigger, so most of you can get on. But the world is going down. Thank God that you're not going to go down with it.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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