



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES
Week 21: Understanding the Rise of the Antichrist, Part 3
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Review:

- We are presently studying the rise of the antichrist, and in doing so, we're laying down some foundations for the things we need to understand and build upon.
- As such, we are looking at global events and dynamics which the Bible lays out to describe future times during the antichrist's rise to power.
- In particular, we are focused on the nation of Israel.
 - First, Israel is the hub of Biblical Prophecy. As Dr. John MacArthur says, "If we get Israel right, we get our eschatology right."
 - Second, there are multiple details in God's Word which affirm that it is the Jewish state, the Jewish people, and Jerusalem which emerge as key factors behind the antichrist's rise to power and prominence.
 - For example, it is the confirmation of a covenant that the antichrist makes with Israel that starts the seven-year Tribulation.
- A.** In the last lesson, we evaluated three possible reasons why Israel might sign a future covenant with the antichrist:
 - **Number one** was the possible motive of FEAR.
 - ✓ The idea is Israel will be so weakened and vulnerable from the many attacks of her enemies by that point that she will seek protection.
 - ✓ However, we saw that this motive and these conditions were not supported in the Bible.
 - **Number two** was the possible motive of FORCE.
 - ✓ Israel will be so powerful by this point, and she will have prevailed in such unlikely fashion over her enemies through several major conflicts, that the world will essentially want to be protected from HER!
 - ✓ This is an intriguing line of thinking, but again, it's not suggested in Scripture.
 - **Number three** was the motive of FOCUS, and by saying FOCUS, I am suggesting that Israel wants something.
 - ✓ She is focused on gaining something through this covenant that she will sign with the antichrist.
 - ✓ I think this is the strongest position and the one the Scriptures back up.
- B.** We learned that the Bible makes the case that Israel will want two main things: INSULATION, and INSTITUTION.
 - We began last week to understand the first of those two things: INSULATION.
 - The idea I presented was that Israel will want to be INSULATED from those things that are going on in the world at that time.
 - Israel will want no part of what the rest of the world is dealing with in this traumatic and eventful post-Rapture / pre-Tribulation gap of time.

- Again, we do not know how long the gap of time is between the Rapture and the onset of the Tribulation, but one does exist.
 - The Tribulation starts with the signing of the covenant between the antichrist and Israel, and for this to happen, the antichrist must rise to power and prominence on the world scene.
 - As well, there must be events that will routinely be taking place that Israel wants no part of.
 - These things will take some time to come together. We do not know if it is weeks, months, or even years.
- C. To help us understand this post-Rapture / pre-Tribulation timeframe, we looked at the seal judgments of **Revelation Ch. 6**.
- In particular, we looked at Seal Judgment #5 which describes the martyred saints.
 - We noted that they are asking God, "How long till He judges the inhabitants of the earth."
 - I suggested to you that these martyred saints do not know where the timeline is at. They have no reference point. Further, they are asking when God's judgments will start.
 - Their question would make no sense if the Tribulation had already started by this point:
 - ✓ Number one, they would know where they are in the timeline. The Bible is very clear about the chronology.
 - ✓ Number two, they would know that God's judgment had already begun. They wouldn't be asking when it would start.
 - My conclusion is these saints are martyred in that gap of time between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation. It is the same conclusion that other scholars, such as Bill Salus, have come to.
- D. To help us understand how and why these martyred saints came to be killed as they were, we backed up one step to look at Seal Judgment #4.
- Seal judgment #4 is about Death and Hades having power OVER one-quarter of the earth's population to kill.
 - They wield tremendous sway and influence over 25% of the earth at this future point to murder many.
 - And it would seem, from looking at Seal Judgment #5, that their focus is on those who follow Jesus Christ. It is this population that they are most murderous against.
 - ✓ **Revelation 6:9** tells us that these martyred saints were "slain because of the Word of God and the testimony they had maintained."
 - ✓ This is clearly a reason these folks were targeted.
 - However, while that is true, I think the bigger picture tells us more. I think Death and Hades are ALSO intent on killing anyone who does not conform to a larger agendamore specifically, to a one-world religious system that will emerge and take over after the Rapture.
 - THIS is one of the key issues that Israel will want INSULATION against. And here's where we pick up from where we left off last week.

I. **SETTING A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE: (Here is where we pick up from our last lesson).**

- A. The world will be in unprecedented upheaval. The Rapture has taken place and extreme efforts are being made to explain it away by any means other than the truth.
- B. The Holy Spirit's ministry and influence through the church is gone. The Holy Spirit is not gone (He's omnipresent, and His role is still to convict people of their sin), however, the values and the impact of those who are believers is no longer present.
- C. The antichrist has now debuted on the world stage now that the Rapture has taken place. The Bible teaches in **2 Thessalonian. 2:3** that he cannot be revealed until the church is removed.
- D. Now that he HAS been revealed, extreme lawlessness abounds. Not only lawlessness, but deception and lies, wars and conflicts, and all sorts of food shortages and economic disruptions abound as well.
- E. These things will markedly exacerbate after the Rapture. We see the shadows of all these things now, but they will become FAR worse after we are out of here.
- F. As well, this is a time when the fallen angels will return and "*mingle themselves with the seed of men*" according to **Daniel 2:43**. It will be "as the days of Noah" as Jesus warned once more.
- G. I believe whatever form of Nephilim emerges at this future time, might be the 'beasts' of **Revelation 6:8**. The Greek word "therion" is the same word used here as the one used to describe the antichrist as a 'beast.'
- H. I believe a false one-world religion will arise and take over the globe in rapid order after the Rapture. It is discussed in great detail in **Revelation Ch. 17**, and we will be studying this in-depth.
- I. For our purposes today, this false one-world religious system will be a stew of occultic, new-age, evolutionary, and climate control ingredients. It will seek to murder anyone that does not conform to its deceptions.
- J. This is why the saints are martyred in the 5th Seal Judgment. They "clung to the word of God and maintained their testimony." They held to the truth. For that, they paid the price of their lives.
- K. We already see the shadow of this dynamic starting today. Recently, Joe Biden, and some of the liberal leaders, have vented extreme anger against Christians. Some of them have used the word "kill" against those they despise. The left hates God, and the left hates those who follow God and hold to His laws and values.
- L. This situation will become far worse in that period of time after the Rapture, and it will only worsen from there.
- M. Death and Hades will have a field day after the Rapture. It will be legal and encouraged to kill anyone who does not conform to the new world order and the false global religion.
 - 1. As you can see, this whole situation will be a problem for the Jews and for Israel.

- N. We already know from **Daniel 9:27** that the temple will be rebuilt by the Tribulation, and we know from the same verse that the sacrificial systems will be in place and operating by that point.
- O. That is clearly an exception from what is going on in the rest of the world. While the rest of the world is being forced to conform to a one-world false religion, Israel does its own thing.
- P. This is what I mean by INSULATION. Israel will want to be insulated from what is going on in the world around them. She will want no part of the murderous and deceptive events that are swallowing up the rest of humanity. She will want her own religious system.

II. THE ROLE OF DEATH AND HADES IN THE RISE OF THE ANTI-CHRIST:

- A. We saw last week that they are both personified in **Revelation Ch. 6** as two riders on the fourth horse.
- B. The Bible paints Death and Hades (AKA “Sheol” in Hebrew) as having will and intent.
- C. Now we need to shift gears a bit and see that Death and Hades are also personified the same way in **Isaiah 28:14-19**.
- D. It is in this passage where we see Death and Hades (or ‘grave’ or ‘Sheol’) as being two entities that the boastful leaders of Israel will enter into a covenant.
 - 1. Why are they boastful? They have been victorious in several major wars and conflicts.
- E. This appears to be a prophetic passage that has near-far application.
 - 1. In the NEAR sense, it is applied to the Assyrian conquest and the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC.
 - 2. In the FAR sense, it applies also to the start of the Tribulation.
- F. Some people have trouble seeing how this passage could apply to two different situations. Let’s talk briefly about Scriptures that have a “near-far” prophetic application. The Old Testament is full of these kinds of passages:
 - 1. For example, there is **Isaiah 40:3-5**
 - a. This passage was originally given as a word of comfort about the return of the captives from Babylon. That’s the NEAR application. It had relevance then.
 - b. But later we also see it was a word about John the Baptist who would prepare the way for the Messiah (**Cf. Mark 1:2-3**). That’s the FAR application. It also had relevance later.
 - 2. Here’s another example, and it’s found in **Psalms 22**.
 - a. David is lamenting his extreme despair. He feels as though he is being rejected by God.
 - b. He is surrounded by enemies that want to kill him, and a number of his statements have profound near-far application:
 - c. He says in **vs. 1**, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (We know Jesus quoted those very same words on the cross).

- d. David further mentions those who hurl insults at him. He says he is *“poured out like water...that all his bones can be counted and they are out of joint....that his garments are being divided....that his hands and feet are pierced...and that he is suffering extreme thirst.....etc.”*
- e. We know all of these specific elements were part of Jesus’ crucifixion experience as He paid the ultimate penalty for sin. Again, we see the NEAR-FAR application. *There are many other OT passages that have a near-far prophetic application, and I believe this same dynamic is what we are seeing in **Isaiah Ch. 28.***

G. Let’s pull all this together. I want to underscore several points here as we move forward:

1. First, I think it’s important for us to give consideration to the premise that Death and Hades of the Fourth Seal Judgment in **Revelation 6:7-8** are likely the same Death and Sheol mentioned in **Isaiah 28:15, 18.**
2. And if we can accept that reasonable premise, then we must also consider the fact that Death and Hades, while not being specifically mentioned in **Daniel 9:27**, are factors in the confirmation of the covenant that STARTS the 7 years of the Tribulation.
3. Within these three passages lie some common threads and related themes. For example:
 - a. There is the ratification and annulment of a future covenant.
 - b. This covenant is made with Death and Hades.
 - c. This covenant is also made with boastful and scoffing Jewish leaders that rule Jerusalem.
 - d. This covenant is confirmed by the antichrist.
 - e. This covenant ends up being a lie – a deception.
 - f. And, for Israel, this covenant addresses something called *“the overflowing scourge.”*
4. Putting all these connections together mean that Death and Hades are the likely perpetrators of this “overflowing scourge” that is mentioned in **Isaiah 28:15.**
 - a. So, getting back to the issue of Israel’s FOCUS as being their motive for entering this covenant - - I feel this overflowing scourge is what Israel wants to be INSULATED from.
 - b. **IMPORTANT:** Let me be very clear; I believe this *“overflowing scourge”* mentioned in **Isaiah 28:15** is one and the same with the *“power which is given to one-fourth of the earth’s population to kill”* mentioned in **Revelation 6:8.**
 - c. And so, this role of Death and Hades at a future point in time leading up to the start of The Tribulation is a role that is very distressing to Israel.

- d. It is something Israel wants INSULATION from, and it's something that motivates Israel to become a participant in this future covenant which is based in lies.

NOTE: Now, it's time to examine these matters of Death and Hades more closely.

5. I want to tell you where I am at with my thinking as I study the greater counsel of God's Word.
 6. As I do so, I want to pull together various elements from our study up to this point.
- H. First, as the topical point, I believe Death and Hades in **Revelation 6:7-8** represents an expression or function of a one-world religious system that has massive sway and influence at this future point in time.
1. This massive sway and influence is represented as being OVER, or IN CONTROL OF, one fourth of the world's population.
 2. As we know from previous lesson points, this will be a future iteration of the fourth, and final, Gentile Empire: the Roman Empire.
 3. That's how God sees it. There is a direct connection between the Roman Empire of Jesus' First Coming, and the Roman Empire of Jesus' Second Coming.
 4. More on that later....
- I. I feel this one-world religious system will emerge from foundations that were already laid and in place before the Rapture.
1. It will rapidly impose itself upon the entire globe immediately following the Rapture.
 2. One of its chief goals will be to explain away the Rapture.
- J. I believe this one-world religious system will be heavily infused with the display of occultic supernatural miracles, entities, and wonders which will result in a "powerful delusion" according to **2 Thessalonians 2:11**.
1. It will be a "seeing is believing" situation.
 2. It will be a situation which will see the inhabitants of the earth interacting with fallen angels "as it was in the days of Noah" according to **Matthew 24:37**.
 3. These fallen angels and dark spiritual entities will directly "mingle themselves with the seed of men" according to **Daniel 2:43**.
 4. The inhabitants of the earth at that time will embrace the role of these fallen angels and deceptive entities as being one that has mankind's best interests at heart.
 5. Mankind at that time will buy into the notion that they are the lucky ones for having missed the Rapture. It was the fuddy-duddies that were taken out of the way so the rest who remained could evolve.
- K. It makes perfect sense to me that this one-world religious system will not tolerate dissenters or anyone that does not want to conform to its belief system and to its lies.

1. We already have ample evidence of this kind of intolerance and hatred now from those who set up fraudulent governments, who believe in climate change, who embrace socialism, and who want a one-world government.
2. If you speak the truth about any of these things today, you are flagged, censored, and shut down.

IMPORTANT: I believe this one-world religious system will behave in the future the same way it has already shown tendencies to behave in the past. We will see this to be the case, in fact, in **Revelation Ch. 17** when we study that passage.

- L. I see the character and tactics of this one-world religious system will be one the Bible calls an *“overflowing scourge.”*
 1. It will persecute and kill anyone who does not embrace its goals, its lies, and its mission.
 2. Its ambition is not to encourage unity, but to force conformity. Again, we see these tendencies in our own time from those who have rejected God and His laws.
- M. I believe this one-world religious system will cultivate a specific hatred against anyone that has trusted in Jesus Christ for their salvation, much the same way it has before.
 1. Death and Hades will advance a message that runs contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 2. Truth will not be welcome. It will be shut down and silenced at all costs.
- N. This is why I believe the martyred saints in the 5th Seal Judgment of **Revelation 6:9-11** immediately follow the introduction of Death and Hades in the 4th Seal Judgment.
 - a. As I see the flow and presentation, one quarter of the world’s population is influenced by Death and Hades to martyr these Christians.
 - b. As the Bible says, they have stood for the Word of God and they have ‘maintained a righteous testimony.’ They will be hated for this.

NOTE: These are some of the issues which – when considered carefully, help us to understand some of the content of this false covenant that the antichrist confirms with Israel.

- O. I need to take a side note here and briefly introduce the second motive under Israel’s FOCUS. I do not believe it is FEAR or FORCE that compels Israel to enter into this false covenant.
 1. It is their FOCUS on gaining something, and the picture for us is now getting clearer:
 2. The first thing Israel will want to gain is INSULATION from the role, the agenda, and the impact, of Death and Hades.
 3. The role of Death and Hades is, quite simply, **religious intolerance**. It’s a hateful prejudice against any spiritual view apart from this future false one-world religion.

- a. This religious intolerance will greatly concern the Jewish people, who at that same time, will be wanting to build the Third Jewish Temple and reinstate Mosaic Law and the sacrificial systems.
- b. The second Israel will want to gain from their FOCUS, is an institution.
- c. Their first goal is INSULATION, and their second goal is an INSTITUTION.
- d. This is not hard to comprehend. We see those passions aflame now in the Jewish people. We see early efforts underway to build The Third Temple ASAP and return to Judaism and their Old Testament sacrificial systems.
- e. Most people that are authorities on this specific subject, feel that enough preparations have already been carried out so that The Third Temple could be built in a few months once a green light is given.
 - Some of you might have heard recently about the five red heifers that Israel has procured.
 - There has been a huge effort over the past number of years to find red heifers that conform to Mosaic standards. They now have done that.
 - You might have also heard about Israel's state-of-the-art rail system and terminal which now connects Ben Gurion Airport with the Western Wall at the Temple mount.
 - Since 2020, some of Israel's leaders are planning on this being a means to bring 70 nations to worship at the new Temple.
 - All the implements and materials to build the next temple are now accounted for. They are ready to go.
 - We are seeing so many specific signs that the end is encroaching upon us.

P. What about Islam's control of The Temple Mount?

NOTE: I believe this question requires us to take full account of conditions at that future point. When Death and Hades carry out their unholy war against true believers, there will only be three major religions left in the world.

1. Bill Salus develops this critical point in his book, "Apocalypse Road: Revelation for the Final Generation."
2. I agree with his position. Here are the high points he makes:
 - a. First, there is the false religion of the Harlot.
 - This is the one-world religion that is supernaturally-enabled in a post-Rapture environment.
 - We've talked about this one a bit today. It will be a deceptive religion steeped in occultic powers, climate delusions, and evolutionary myths.
 - It will be an intolerant religion, and it will be infused with false miracles and wonders.

- It finds its roots in ancient sources and it is discussed in great detail in **Revelation Ch. 17**, (We are going to spend some time on **Revelation Ch. 17** in upcoming lessons).
- b. Second, there will be true Christianity.
 - We know this because the 5th Seal Judgment martyrs are killed *"...because of the Word of God and the testimony they had maintained."*
 - Separately, in **Revelation 7:4-8**, there are 144,000 identified "from all the tribes of Israel" who will have been saved and sealed.
 - *"After this..."* or after the ministry of the 144,000 (Cf. **Revelation 7:9-17**), there are the great multitudes that "no one could count from every tribe, language, people, and nation" and which *"...came out of the great Tribulation."*
 - It's clear from the greater counsel of Scripture, that many will be saved during these awful times.
 - The ministry of the Holy Spirit will continue to convict them, as He convicts sinners even now.
 - Bottom line: There will be a great revival of true Christianity during the very last days.
- c. Third, there will be the revival of Judaism.
 - We know this is the case because **Daniel 9:27** talks about the temple and the sacrificial system that will be in place.
 - **Revelation Ch. 11** also describes John given instructions to measure the temple.
 - This narrative is presented in the same timeframe as the Two Witnesses, which is in the first half of The Tribulation, 1260 days.
 - It is after this point, after this 1260 days, that the Two Witnesses are killed by the antichrist. The antichrist then sets up self-worship. This is the halfway mark.

Q. So Death and Hades will have a death campaign against anyone who does not choose to embrace the deceptions of their one-world religion.

1. The Jewish people will seek INSULATION from this genocidal campaign.
 - a. They will believe that the terms of the covenant will protect them from the death campaign of this one-world religion.
 - b. According to **Isaiah 28:15**, the Jews will claim, *"When an overwhelming scourge sweeps by, it cannot touch us."*
 - c. However, that same passage says the Jewish nation will have made lies and falsehood their refuge.
 - d. They will believe they are INSULATED, but they are not.
2. The Jewish people will also seek to be an exception from this murderous Death and Hades campaign in order to gain their INSTITUTION. That is, they want their temple and the Mosaic Laws that go with it.

- a. That is why **Daniel 9:27** says that halfway through the seven-year timeframe, the antichrist “*puts an end to sacrifice and offering.*” They got what they wanted, but just for a little while.
 - b. The point is, the antichrist agreed to let the Jews have this as part of the covenant. However, he breaks the terms.
 - c. In addition, if we look at the language of **Isaiah 28:18**, we find that the covenant “*...will be annulled.*”
 - d. Everything the Jews think they got that let them have their INSTITUTION will be unilaterally discontinued by the antichrist. He will put an end to it all.
 - e. In effect, God will bring an end to the system of Judaism and the significance of The Third Temple.
- R. This raises two more dependent issues, and I’ll close with these:
1. I said there were three major religions post-Rapture: the Harlot one-world religion, Judaism, and Christianity.
 - a. Ultimately, there are four religions after the Rapture, but the fourth, which is the worship of the Antichrist, does not fully emerge until the Middle of the Tribulation-period.
 - b. When the antichrist demands self-worship at the halfway point, **Revelation 17:16-18** tells us he and his ten follower kings will destroy the one-world religion.
 - c. That false and deceptive religious system that we are already trending towards today, will ultimately be terminated by the antichrist.
 2. What about Islam? It’s a huge religion today, where is it then?
 - a. I believe the short answer is “Destroyed.”
 - The wars and conflicts described in **Psalm 83, Ezek. 38 and 39, Jeremiah 49:34-39, et al.** are going to decimate the Islamic world and those nations and people groups that form the core of it.
 - God will have His final say concerning the ancient hatred that the descendants of Ishmael have had against the descendants of Isaac.
 - b. The longer answer to “What about Islam?” would be: “Where is it then?” The answer is, “Absorbed.”
 - Fundamentally, it is a false religion inspired by Satan as any religion which does not believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - Whatever remnants of Islam are left after being on the losing end of so many catastrophic conflicts are likely to join forces with the one-world religion which will seek to advance the notion that “*...all roads lead to heaven.*”
 - This, of course, is incorrect. The Bible teaches that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no man comes to the Father except through Him (**John 14:6**).

