

A Biblical View OF THE END TIMES

THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST, PART 2

Week #28; July 19, 2026, 6PM

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Review:

- Last week, we began to study the rise of the antichrist. As I said, this will likely take several weeks. There is a lot for us to consider from many parts of Scripture.
- It is easy to fall into error on this topic if we focus on one or two passages to the exclusion of all others. So, we'll be comprehensive.
- Our **operative** passage last week was **Dan. 9:24-27**. There, we learned we are **presently** in a period of history that lies between the **end** of Daniel's 69th week and the **start** of Daniel's 70th week.
- This is a 'hub' passage for Bible prophecy. There is a lot that pivots around properly understanding it.
 - Daniel has been reading the book of **Jeremiah**. He realizes, from what he reads, that the Jews' captivity in Babylon is a total time of seventy years.
 - Daniel knows those seventy years are almost done, and so he enters a lengthy time of prayer and personal confession. God sends Gabriel, the angel, to give Daniel some insights about what's going to come.
 - Gabriel tells Daniel that 490 years of future history – future to that time he was talking to Daniel – are '**decreed**' or prescribed. They are set aside by God.
 - These 490 years of future history will give **specific** attention to Daniel's "*people and their holy city.*" That means 'the Jews' and 'Jerusalem.'
 - These years are presented within time units called '*weeks.*' The Bible makes it clear these 'weeks' are 70 blocks of 7 years each. That why we hear the phrase "Daniel's 70 weeks."
 - Gabriel said they would all begin with the date of the "*issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.*"
 - We learned that happened on March 5, 444 BC (per our calendar). That was the decree by Artaxerxes to "rebuild and restore Jerusalem." The book of Nehemiah is about this.
 - The first 69 of those weeks, or 483 years, ended **on the exact day** of Jesus Christ's triumphal and prophetic entry into Jerusalem, on the back of a donkey, on the first Palm Sunday.
 - BUT NOW - - there exists a parenthetical gap of time, sovereignly ordained by God, before the **final** block of seven years starts.
 - We are **in** that gap of time now - - it is known as the church age. This is a period that was not perceived in the OT - although the righteous Essene community in Qumran (of which John the Baptist was a part) anticipated it.

- We have learned in previous lessons that the church age is roughly 2,000 years. This conforms to the “two days” prophecy in **Hosea 6:2**.
- As the church age began on or about the original Day of Pentecost in **Acts Ch. 2** (approx. 32AD), it will conclude very soon with the Rapture. Anytime, really....

NOTE: Last week, we looked at various passages which give us clues about the antichrist’s origin. God’s Word intends for us to be **informed** as opposed to **ignorant**.

- Here is a summary of the things we learned last time, and they move us from the big picture to the finer details...
 - First, the antichrist will arise from within the boundaries of what was once the Roman Empire.
 - That’s about the extent of what most people understand. And generally, their conclusion is that means Europe - - or the western leg of the Roman Empire.
 - (But) we learned that the Bible shows the antichrist will rise from that territory which was once the **eastern** leg of the Roman Empire.
 - The eastern leg of the Roman Empire outlasted the western leg by more than 900 years.
 - And then, more narrowly, we learned the antichrist will arise from that **part** of the eastern leg of the Roman Empire which had once been the territory of the ancient Assyrian Empire.
 - And finally, and **most** specifically, the antichrist will arise from that part of the ancient Assyrian Empire which later became known as the Seleucid Kingdom after the Greek Empire was divided into four parts.
 - This smaller area is where a notable despot, Antiochus Epiphanes, once ruled – and he is the most detailed type of the antichrist in all of God’s Word.
 - That area he ruled is north and slightly northeast of modern Israel. Today, we know this region as northern Syria, including parts of Iraq and Turkey.
 - We narrowed down some of the ways the Bible points to this region as being the origin of the antichrist.
 - We learned all this last week. You can review those notes online to see the various Bible references and arguments that support these conclusions.

NOTE: Today, I want to begin by giving some focus to **Dan. 9:27**.

- This verse contains very important details concerning Biblical prophecy.
- **Dan. 9:27** essentially summarizes the activities of the antichrist from the start of The Tribulation to the end of those seven years.
- **THIS** is the verse that plainly makes the case the Tribulation begins with the confirmation of the covenant which the antichrist will make with Israel.
 - While it’s popular in some circles to teach – or imply - that the Rapture marks the beginning of The Tribulation, that argument is not supported in the Bible.
 - The clear position that **IS** made in Scripture is that The Tribulation begins with the confirmation of a covenant between Israel and the antichrist.
 - THAT case is made right here in **Dan. 9:27 (READ!)**

“He (the antichrist) will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”

NOTE: In this passage we see that there is coming a time when the antichrist will ‘confirm’ some sort of agreement or terms with “*many for one ‘seven.’*” Contextually, he will confirm a deal with Israel, but as we will see, Israel is not the only other party at the table.

A. I want to briefly consider three possible reasons or motives for Israel coming to the table with the antichrist in the first place (three “F’s”):

1. The first possible motive is FEAR.

NOTE: Question: “Is the nation of Israel so weakened and vulnerable from the many attacks of her enemies by that point that she will look to the antichrist for protection within the terms of this covenant?”

- This is a very popular notion. It’s why we always hear the phrase ‘peace deal’ or ‘peace covenant.’ People make assumptions based on events since 1948.
- This is the dominant view that has been suggested by most pastors and scholars - - but the Bible does not support this angle.
- Instead, the Bible shows that Israel’s proximal and regional enemies (mostly Islamic) will suffer devastating defeat and humiliation in a series of upcoming conflicts **before** this point.
- The conflicts described in ***Psalms 83, Isaiah 17, Jeremiah 49, Ezekial 38 and 39, and Zechariah 12*** are just some of the passages which make this case.
- Israel will emerge from all these conflicts safer, stronger, and more successful. She will have **greater** resources and territory. She will have far **fewer** proximal enemies. We will be learning about all this.
- So, this notion of FEAR, suggesting Israel will be vulnerable, weak, and eager for a ‘peace deal,’ is a tough sell when one responsibly studies God’s Word.

2. What about FORCE? That’s the second “F,” and it’s another possible motive we should consider.

NOTE: Question: “Will Israel’s enemies and the rest of the world pressure Israel to sign the terms of the covenant because they are uneasy about the FORCE and the strength of Israel?”

- (Meaning)....will they see Israel’s string of unlikely victories, and her expansion of territory, and will they become alarmed and want protection **from** Israel?
- Will they see Israel’s surge of economic and military strength, and will they want to be shielded from what they perceive as **her** ambitions?
- It’s an interesting point-of-view, and it has some provocative elements to consider. But again, this is not the core reason the Bible provides for Israel’s motive in confirming this covenant in the first place.

3. (And so) that brings us to the third possible reason Israel would come to the table with the antichrist, and that is the reason I call FOCUS.

NOTE: Question: “What is Israel’s FOCUS?” What does Israel want specifically from the terms of this covenant that **Dan. 9:27** mentions?

- I believe the Bible makes the case that Israel is FOCUSED on a specific objective. Israel is an important enough party by this point to earn a spot at the table, and she has her own motives for being there.
- That said, I believe we can **rule out** two possible motives that Israel might have: (1.) money and resources, and (2.) power and strength.
- Israel is already surging in wealth, power, and influence in our own time. Israel is already a significant and strong nation on the world stage right now. Here are some examples:
 - In the fields of medicine, science, computer technology, agriculture, water technology, cybersecurity, aerospace, artificial intelligence, finance, and defense systems, the contributions of Israel and the Jewish people to humanity have been ultra-extraordinary.
 - Jews today comprise slightly less than 2% of the world’s population, but they have earned a disproportionately high 22% of the Nobel Prizes.

NOTE: In one way of thinking, this is a tangent reminder that God is still fulfilling His promise that through Abraham’s descendants all the families of the earth would be blessed.

- Israel’s economy, despite all the conflicts she has endured the past several years has remained remarkably strong.
- Investors have retained confidence in Israel’s long-term ability to service debt, even while they recognize the risks of regional wars and all the challenges that go with that.
- Further, the GFP Index (Global Firepower) for 2026 ranks Israel in the top 15 of all nations in the world for military strength. Israel is renowned for her intelligence expertise and her superlative abilities in combat.
- (Now, back to **Dan. 9:27**): With various prophetic victories over her enemies behind her, I firmly believe Israel will emerge stronger, more successful, and more prosperous than she was before.
- This partly explains the posture and statements of various nations – including America (more on this in a future lesson) – during the prophetic ‘War of Gog and Magog’ (**Cf. Ezek. 38 and 39**).
- These ‘standoff-ish’ nations will ask the massive armies that will invade Israel, *“Have you come to plunder? Have you gathered your hordes to loot, to carry off silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods and to seize much plunder?”* (**Cf. Ezek. 38:13**).
- The point is clear in this passage that Israel, at this future point in time, will be regarded as wealthy and prosperous. So, it is highly unlikely that Israel will be FOCUSED on needing more resources or power as a reason for confirming this covenant with the antichrist.
- That brings us to the **most** likely elements of FOCUS that Israel will have as she considers the terms of this future covenant.

NOTE: I think Israel's FOCUS is a two-fold one. There are two main outcomes that Israel wants from this deal, and I will call them INSULATION and INSTITUTION.

- These two elements, INSULATION and INSTITUTION will create a couple of rabbit trails for us – but it's important information we need to explore

B. Let's start with the first of those two: INSULATION. By INSULATION, the idea is that Israel will want no part of what is going on in the world at that time.

- Keep in mind, this is **just before** the start of the Tribulation. Israel will want to be her own island - - she will want to be separate and apart.
- Israel will not want to get involved in what's going on in the world - she will not want to preoccupy herself with those catastrophic trends and events that are overwhelming the globe.
- She will want to be INSULATED from them. She will want to be quarantined from them.
- And so, the natural question arises, "What global events could define those times? What could be going on that Israel would want INSULATION from?"

NOTE: This is where the first rabbit trail starts. We are studying the rise of the antichrist, and there is a reason he is the main broker at the table here regarding Israel's concerns.

NOTE: To understand these issues, we need to begin exploring the conditions of the post-Rapture / pre-Tribulation timeframe - - and I know (and I respect) that some of you struggle with this idea that there is a gap of time between the Rapture and The Tribulation.

- I know many of you have come to feel that there is very little time - if any - between these two points.
- I also understand that there are many commentators and authors who have held this view for a long time.
- But in my own studies, I have concluded that there exists some gap of time between the Rapture and the onset of the Tribulation.
- I'm not the only one to conclude this – Bill Salus and others see this the same way. I am sensing that more prophecy scholars are gradually coming to this view too.
- I don't know how long this gap will be, but there are a series of things that need to take place within that timeframe.

NOTE: My appeal to you today – and as it will be for the next few lessons - is to keep an open mind to the things I am sharing with you.

- **(NOTE:** I need to say this again). I will never **willfully** teach you anything I know is false.
 - There are plenty of pastors and teachers that are brash enough to teach what the Scriptures patently do not declare or support. I am **not** one of those.
 - There are also plenty of pastors and teachers who **choose** to believe things that conform to their personal preference rather than conform to God's Word.

- Again - those kinds of postures do not describe me. Rather – I pray often to be **BRAVE** enough to say the things that few people are willing to say.
- At ALL times I look to the Scriptures for my support and counsel, and when I find the truth there, I will share it with you as clearly as I am able to do.
- All that said, I remind you – once again! - to “*be as the Bereans*” (**Cf. Acts 17:11**). Seek these things out in the Bible for yourselves to see if they are so.
- Come to your own conclusions as the Holy Spirit guides you. Meantime, I am teaching what I – through my own due diligence and reverence for God’s Word – have come to believe.

1. (So), with all that understood, let’s take a quick look at the Seal Judgements, specifically Seal Judgment #5 and the ones which lead up to it.

- Seal Judgment #5 is described in **Rev. 6:9-11 (READ)**:

“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.”

- This is a picture of many martyred saints who will come to true faith and arrive in heaven AFTER the Rapture. The facts of **Revelation** make this very clear.
- Notice they are still ‘souls’ – they do not have glorified bodies. This bunch will not get their glorified bodies till the END of the Tribulation (we will learn about this later).
- But right now, these conscious and animate souls are questioning God. They want to know **when** He will start His judgement against those on earth who have murdered them.
- They KNOW a prescribed time of God’s wrath and judgment on earth is pending. They KNOW that is when the Tribulation starts. That means the covenant between the antichrist and Israel has not happened yet.
- And that is why their specific question to God is, “How long till your judgements start?” In other words, “When does the Tribulation begin?”
- The Bible is abundantly clear that the seven-year Tribulation is a prescribed time of God’s ‘wrath’ and ‘judgment’ on earth against those who remain behind after the Rapture and who refuse to believe in Him.
- That is why this question from these martyred souls indicates that they are unable to calculate where things are at in the grand sequence of events.
- I believe it means they were martyred in this gap of time between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation.
- Jesus responds to their question by telling them to be patient. He does not give them a specific answer. He does not put His finger on a calendar and say, “Here is where we are.”

- He DOES tell them that there are events taking place on earth that will see many more martyrs killed as they were killed.
2. My takeaway from this is Seal Judgment #5 takes place BEFORE the confirmation of this covenant that Israel signs with the antichrist which we saw in **Dan. 9:27**.
- NOTE:** The more I read and study this issue – the more I feel this is the most accurate view to hold. I will even tell you that I feel this confirmation in my spirit....
- Further, as I look at this issue, it has become a matter of logic.
 - ✓ I don't want to suggest that those of you which may not see the matter this same way are **not** subscribing to reason.
 - ✓ I am merely saying this view makes the best sense to me. It takes multiple issues into account.
 - ✓ It follows a clear path of reason. It is a position that reacts matter-of-factly to what the fuller counsel of God's Word tells us.
3. This view that the Seal Judgments take place BEFORE the onset of the Tribulation (at least up through Seal Judgment #5) **also** explains something.
- It explains WHY these martyred saints in Seal Judgment #5 do **not have any reference points**.
 - Keep in mind, they would already HAVE these reference points AFTER the confirmation of this covenant that the antichrist transacts with Israel.
 - It is AFTER the confirmation of this covenant that the very clear events of the seven-year Tribulation begin.
 - It is AFTER the start of the Tribulation that the Scriptures give us an abundance of measuring tools to know how long everything will last from that starting point: (i.e. 1,260 days, 42 months, "time, times, and half a time," and so on).
 - The critical point is this: we know it's AFTER the confirmation of this covenant in **Dan. 9:27** that the clock starts ticking with supernatural accuracy. God's revelation of the countdown from that point is clearly known.
 - So - for these martyred saints to be asking "How long?" is a strong clue that they cannot make these assessments.
 - I think the fact that they are asking when God's judgments will start is because the Tribulation has not yet begun.
 - These martyred saints know things are a mess on earth. They want God's wrath to be poured out on an unrepentant world.
 - They know it is perilous on earth for anyone who holds to the Word of God and maintains a Godly testimony - **just the way they had held and maintained**.

NOTE: Their question to God also suggests that they can see / know events on earth as they are taking place. It's a key reason why they ask, "How long?"

- They can perceive – at some level, anyways - what is happening, and they can perceive that Daniel's 70th Week (AKA the Tribulation) is not underway.
- And that's why they want some insight as to "When?" God does not tell them.

4. If we continue the application of logic here, this position makes sense from other vantage points too.
- It means Seal Judgments #1-#4 which (obviously!) precede Seal Judgment #5 are also events which take place AFTER the Rapture but BEFORE the start of The Tribulation.
 - As I've said before, a key thing to consider is the flow of the book of **Revelation**.
 - ✓ For example, the church is seen on earth in **chapters 2 and 3**.
 - ✓ Then, in a type of the Rapture, John is transported UP to heaven in **4:1**, and from that point through **Ch. 5**, we see the church in heaven.
 - ✓ There, John also sees the preparations of the Seal Judgments. He sees the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David ("Jesus Christ") preparing to open the scroll and set in motion the events it contains.
 - Then, in **chapters 6 and 7, and up through the first verse of chapter 8** are listed the various Seal Judgments:
 - ✓ There is the debut of radical globalism, and the beginning ascent of the antichrist in Seal Judgment #1.
 - ✓ The rider of the white horse represents the forces of a one world governing system, and that rider is a "conqueror bent on conquest."
 - ✓ The antichrist is beginning his career with Seal Judgment #1, and his rise starts gradually with "political" ambitions.
 - ✓ We also know from what we've learned in **2 Thess. 2:5-9** that the antichrist cannot be revealed until AFTER the Rapture.
 - ✓ So, we can responsibly conclude that, by Seal Judgment #1, the Rapture has **already** occurred.
 - ✓ Also, in **2 Thess. 2:5-9** we learned "the Restrainer" - who is the Holy Spirit acting through the church, and who holds back the antichrist and His agenda - is taken out of the way in the Rapture.
 - ✓ Keep in mind, the Holy Spirit is omnipresent, so He is still around, but His direct influence through multiple millions of people is now removed. The "salt" and "light" is gone - a spiritual vacuum is created.
 - ✓ And so, globalism surges - uninhibited - onto the world scene in Seal Judgment #1, and with that - the political rise of the antichrist begins.
 - Seal Judgments #2 and #3 unfold in their own logical order, and they reveal a world that is deteriorating rapidly. Extreme lawlessness flourishes AFTER the Rapture and BEFORE The Tribulation.
 - ✓ Seal Judgement #2 is open war and conflict - not just between people and ethnic groups, but between nations (more on this later).
 - ✓ Peace is taken from the earth in a grand melee of chaos, corruption, and conflict.
 - ✓ It may be in this judgment that some of the regional wars in the Middle East that the Bible describes takes place. In fact, I think so....
 - Seal Judgment #3 introduces extreme famine and economic ruin on a worldwide scale.

- ✓ The Bible says the common folk can't meet their basic needs, but the rich folk still have all their luxuries.
- ✓ This is a picture of turbo-charged global socialism. It's a graduation of everything we've already seen in history when socialism takes over.

NOTE: Venezuela was once the world's 4th wealthiest nation. South Africa was once the beautiful jewel of Africa. Both nations were once prosperous.

- Today however – both have become poster children for the effects of socialism and the chaos that come from abandoning law and order and sensible socioeconomic policies.
- We don't seem to learn from history's many examples. The sinful condition of man is an obstinate and foolish dilemma.
- Keep in mind that socialism IS the system that many young people in our own country want.
 - The Cato Institute, in a 2026 study, found that among Gen Z'ers (18-29), 53% viewed socialism favorably, and that number is rapidly climbing.
- This socialism – which is **always** a precursor to communism - is also what many leaders within the progressive liberal ranks want. Look at the slate of recent political gains by the DSA (Democratic Socialists of America).
- These folks rabidly WANT globalism, they WANT socialism, they WANT open borders, they WANT collapse and chaos, and they WANT a one-world leader.
 - ✓ What they DON'T want is Christians. What they DON'T want is law and order. What they DON'T want is any appeal to common sense.
 - ✓ They DON'T want God's values or any systems of governance which are based on personal effort and responsibility, and upon Judeo-Christian values.
 - ✓ That's why the left has been viciously attacking **true** conservatives – and everyone who wants law and order.
 - ✓ It's why the left has a special venom, hatred, and rage against Jesus Christ, against **true** Christians, and against all those who want moral standards based upon God's Word.

NOTE: These people may not know they WANT the antichrist and his agenda – I feel some DO know that. But, as believers we should discern that God is already preparing a complexion of variables that will be unleashed upon the “*earth dwellers*.”

- ✓ So, the Seal Judgements (particularly #1-#5) describe conditions that we see early shadows of now – but which will gain much fuller effect after the Rapture and leading up to the start of The Tribulation.
- ✓ These are some of the conditions that will be marinating the world as Israel sits down at the table to negotiate this covenant that we read of in **Dan. 9:27**.

C. That brings us to Seal Judgment #4. It might feel like I'm going backwards here, but I'm developing a point. I want to get a good foothold on this issue in this session today.

NOTE: Let's set some background:

1. Seal Judgment #4 is found in **Rev. 6:7-8**. That passage reads as follows:

"When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, 'Come!' I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth."

- Like Seal Judgments #1-#3 before, we see a horse. This is a pale green horse.
 - But unlike Seal Judgments #1-#3, we see **two** personalities riding this horse.
 - With the white horse, red horse, and black horse before, there was **one** entity riding that horse, and that entity in each situation represented a specific dynamic, or a specific situation or effect on earth (i.e. globalism, conflict, economic ruin, and so on).
2. With this fourth horse - a pale green horse which suggests the image of death and decay – there are two entities riding it, and they are "Death" and "Hades."
- "Death" is easy to understand here. It means "death" just like it says. It means no more "life."
 - "Hades" is not as easy to understand. Again, some English translations may say "Hell" instead of "Hades," but "Hades" is the better translation.
 - "Hades" is a Greek word. We've learned about Hades already. It's the same as the Hebrew word "Sheol." It describes the realm of the dead – it is the state of souls after the physical person dies.
 - We studied this very issue in depth a few lessons ago – so, no need to go through it again.
 - ✓ But Hades here implies real conditions that – literally – "follow" death, and it is personified as one of the two "riders" of this pale green horse.

NOTE: "Personified." Wisdom is personified in **Proverbs Ch. 8** as a woman who calls out trying to get people to gain what she offers. That's personification. It's applying human-like qualities to a non-human source.

- ✓ That's the situation with Death and Hades here, they are personified – they are pictured as human-like with will and intent.
- ✓ They are both associated with this fourth horse, and with this 4th Seal Judgment, and they will BOTH have a role to play.
- ✓ (So) as we consider the conditions of the world that Israel will be contemplating when the covenant is confirmed in **Dan. 9:27**, Death and Hades will impact the decisions of Israel's leaders then.

- ✓ Death and Hades represent broad conditions and events in the world that Israel will want to be INSULATED from - - going back to our outline.

3. Now, it's very important to see that Death and Hades are "*given power over a fourth of the earth.*"

- Traditionally, it is taught that a quarter of the earth will die here. I once taught that and believed this is what it is saying. I know better now...
- This is very different wording than – say, **Rev. 9:15** where we are told "*a third of mankind is killed,*" or in other texts where we read a third of the trees are burned, a third of the water turned bitter, etc.
- Here, Death and Hades are "*given power over a fourth of the earth.*" One fourth of the earth is **empowered** to kill. Four means of killing are defined:
 - ✓ Sword – this represents all forms of direct violence
 - ✓ Famine
 - ✓ Plague
 - ✓ Beasts of the earth (this is "*therios*" – same Greek term used for the antichrist; likely a reference to non-humans; Nephilim entities).

NOTE: So, at this future point in time, Israel will be dealing with a situation where one-fourth of the earth's population is granted some sort of power, right, and opportunity to kill. It's why Seal Judgement #5 which immediately follows presents all these martyred saints. Next week, we learn what Seal Judgement #4 has to REALLY say about the antichrist's rise.



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The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don't pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don't teach what is NOT there. Don't force a passage to mean something it really doesn't.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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