



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Eschatology

“The Gentiles in the Tribulation”

TRANSCRIPT

Our subject is the tribulation, the third and final one in our series on the tribulation, and we're looking at the Gentile in the Tribulation. So will you turn in your Bibles with me to the book of Daniel, chapter 11, verse 36 through verse 45, and then we want to read a few verses in Revelation chapter 16.

Daniel, Chapter 11. The Book of Daniel is a book in which the prophet seeks to show his readers who the antichrist is. And beginning in the broadest possible way in the second chapter and proceeding on through the twelve chapters, he fills in little details as he goes along concerning the identity of the antichrist. And finally in verse 36, when he says, “and the king”, that's his way of telling us now some -- more specific information concerning the antichrist.

“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: For that which is determined shall be done.

Neither shall he regard the Gods of his fathers, no the desire of women, nor regard any gods: for he shall magnify himself above all.

But in his estate shall he honor the God of fortresses: And the god whom his father knew not shall he honor with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

Thou shall he do in the strongest fortresses with the foreign gods, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gains.

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass through.

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hands, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: And the land of Egypt shall not escape.

But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.

But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore, he shall go forward with great fury to destroy, and utterly to sweep away many.

And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his ends, and none shall help him."

That is a description of a great campaign that is to take place in the day of the tribulation periods.

Now, we turn over to Revelation, chapter 16 and read this chapter, which has to do with the last of the judgments of God upon the earth during that same time. John

describes the seven bowls or vials of the wrath of God. Chapter 16 of the Book of Revelation in verse one.

“And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God upon the earth.

And the first went, and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and there fell a foul and painful sore upon the men who had the mark of the Beast, and upon them who worshiped his image.

And the second angel poured out his bowl upon the seas, and it became like the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the seas.

And the third angel poured out his bowl upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became bloods.

And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, who art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou has judged thus.

For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for their worthies.

And I heard another out of the alter say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.

And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fires.

And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of Gods, who have power over these plagues, and they repented not to give him glory.

And the fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the Beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pains.

And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great rivers Euphrates; and its water was dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophets.

For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, that go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battles of that great day of God Almighty.”

And what “battle” probably means is something like “campaign.” It does not refer to one fight, but to a series of battles which makes up a campaign.

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shames.

And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.

And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, It is done.

And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the Gentiles or the nation fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cups of the wine of the fierceness of his wraths.

And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

And there fell upon men a great hail out of the heavens, every stone about the weight of talents: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hails; for the plague was exceeding great.”

The tribulation, we have been saying, is a vast and extensive subject. Great parts of the Bible are related to it. I said last time using one of idioms of the young people, it's one of the biggies of the Bible. It's tribulation. And there are many passages that deal with the tribulation in general, and there are many passages that deal with Israel's relationship to the tribulation, and there are many passages that deal with the relationship of the Gentiles to the time of tribulation.

I have read just two events that have to do with the Gentiles and the tribulation period. If turmoil among the nations is a harbinger of the futures, then the times of the Gentiles are approaching their bitter, climatic, catastrophic end. In the Psalms -- in the second Psalm, specifically, the psalmist asks, "Why do the nations rage and the heathen imagine vain things?" Well we are looking about today and seeing the raging of the nations, though, of course, they do not understand what is really happening.

There are five important areas of unrest today in the world. You'll recognize them all, I'm sure. There is unrest on the political scene. The battle between capitalism or governments that have a measure of capitalism, such as ours and communism, is raging just as fervently today as it ever has.

We notice in our Western world, particularly, tremendous instability. So we have political unrest in the world and great instability. We have the problem of nationalism, which has begun to infect all of the societies with whom we have relationships. There is the problem of racial tension, not simply in the southern part of the United States, not simply in the United States, but from the United States to Africa and back to Ireland, racial tension abounds.

And as I mentioned last week, I think one of the preminent signs of the kind of age we are in is the vote on Zionism in the United Nations. I made reference to the fact that the ill-named Social, Human, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee approved a draft

linking Zionism and racism. The United Nations voted in favor of that particular resolution by claiming by vote of about 72 to 30-something that Zionism was racism.

I was very happy that Daniel Moynihan stood up in the United Nations and said, "the United States rises to declare before the General Assembly of the United Nations and before the world that it does not acknowledge, it will not abide by, it will never acquiesce in this infamous act." But this is the kind of world in which we are living, and sad to say, very few people want to do anything about it. They do not want to have any difficulties at all. Then there is our economic problem that we have from which all of us are sufferers.

Strictly speaking, this is my own private opinion. This is not in the Scriptures anywhere, and I want to assure you that I speak only as an amateur, but as I have looked at the economic situation, it seems to me that what our government has been doing is systematically stealing from us over a period of 30 or 40 or 50 years. That is exactly what they have been doing.

And, again, we do not do anything about it. We go to the polls and elect the same numbskulls that we have been electing all along [laughter]. And they just smile in Washington as they continue to take our money away from us, because they know that we haven't got enough intelligence to know what they are doing. I do think that occasionally it gets out of their hands, and they don't know what in the world is happening either, but, nevertheless, that is actually what has been happening. It is one of the saddest things that you can possibly see. But it's happening, nevertheless.

Then there is the religious problem. What can we say about the religious problem? There is chaos in theology today. It's a striking thing that in our theological world, in our Protestant theological world, there is total chaos. Actually, what we have is a kind of smorgasbord of theology. And so if you are interested in theology, then you go in and select one of these theologies to be your theology, just as if you were selecting something at a smorgasbord.

We have, for example, theologies like these. We have the death-of-God theology, which is dying itself now, but, nevertheless, [laughter] there are a few who still hold to some of its ideas. We have process theology in which it is taught that God is a god who is changing, he is dynamic, and he's not the same the next moment that he is now. He's improving right along or else he's getting worse all along. Process theology.

We have the theology of hope, which is really the theology of revolution, which has been authored by and largely fostered by Jurgen Moltmann, another German theologian.

We have linguistic analysis, philosophical theologians who are interested in not so much the content of the theology at all, but whether we can even make religious statements, whether we can even say and mean anything like the term, God. We have different types of secular theologies. We just have all kinds of theologies. And the difference -- in addition to the old liberal and modernistic types of theologies, who still have a few adherents.

There are probably ten or twelve different systems of theology that are about today, and you can, literally speaking, if you are interested in theology generally, just pick your own.

Now, that's not to mention the chaos that exists in Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholicism is in a chaotic condition, too. There is a tremendous struggle going on in that great religious organization. And I do not speak about the tongues movement, which exists within it, but the debate going on over two of their greatest theologians, Karl Rahner and Hans Kung, over the nature of the Pope and his infallibilities. Professor Kung has asserted that the Pope is not infallible, and Professor Rahner, who was his teacher, has asserted that if he continues saying things like he's saying, he is really a heretic.

I even heard from a friend of mine who is a Roman Catholic that he had heard that the Pope was praying for an early death, in order that he might die a Roman Catholic,

but I think that's just rumor [laughter] But, nevertheless, it expresses -- it expresses the fact that there is tremendous change going on in Roman Catholicism.

And in evangelicalism, where we are supposed to hold to the theology of the holy Scriptures, there is tremendous chaos there. And we are tempted to be followers of what has been called recently horizontalism that is so prominent in evangelicalism. That is, we are not interested enough in the social and cultural matters of the Christian faith. And we ought to be involved also in the concerns of the world. And this, of course, is a natural thing for Christians to be concerned with the concerns of the world and, surely, all Christians are interested in justice and equity for all peoples. This is something that we should be interested in.

But so far as the church as a whole is concerned, when you look at holy Scriptures, the primacy of the church's commission is directed toward the preaching of the gospel in order, not simply that the bodies of men might be blessed, but that the spirits of men might be saved from eternal destructions. And this horizontalism, in which we are interested more in the relationships among men than in the relationships of men with God, is permeating evangelicalism and leading many who know the gospel away from the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are certainly living at an amazing time, and we are seeing amazing changes. And one of the interesting things I think is the concurrence of the decline of the West and the rise of the East, for the Bible says, in effect, that the prophecies of the last days cannot be fulfilled until the East becomes again prominence in the affairs of the world and in the light of the absence of mention of the West, we would probably be reasonably correct in assuming that the West must decline. And we are living in a day of the decline of the West and in the rise of the East.

And we are, I say, living in chaotic days. We are living in days in which all of these great problem areas exist with us, and if we are analyzing the trends correctly, what

we are seeing are trends that are leading up to these events of the last days which we know as the time of the tribulation period.

And as I say, one of the key things is that if the prophecies are going to be fulfilled, there must be two or three things happen at the same time or be true at the same time: One, there must be the rise of the East; two, there probably must be decline of the East, since they are not mentioned in the prophetic word to speak of; and, third, there must be the survival of the Jewish nation. And all three of these things seem to be true at the present time. We surely may well be living in extremely critical times.

So let's take a look now at our tribulation period and specifically with reference to the times of the Gentiles and their relationship to the tribulation period. So Roman 1, the overall view, the times of the Gentiles.

And for a few moments, I'd like for you to turn back to Daniel chapter 2. This is one of the very famous and very important prophecies in the Old Testament. Someone has said if Revelation is the X, Y, Z of biblical prophecies, Daniel chapter 2 is the A, B, C. It is the chapter in which we are -- we are given details concerning the times of the Gentiles. We are told in this chapter the major events that will transpire between the time of Nebuchadnezzar's reign in Babylonia when he took the city of Jerusalem from the time of Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC on to the time of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. This period of time is called in the Bible, the times of the Gentiles.

Now, the reason it is called the times of the Gentiles is because the Gentiles have world power during this period of time. It rests in the hands of Gentile rulers. So now, you see, for twenty-five hundred years, roughly, Gentiles have been in authority. And this great prophecy here is a prophecy of this overall period of time.

Now, you know the story, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, dreamed a dream, and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep went from him. He had a case of what one Bible teacher has called, royal insomnia. And all of his sleeping tablets were misplaced, and he was unable to have any kind of sleep other than a fitful sleep.

Evidently, Nebuchadnezzar, like most men who ruled great countries and kingdoms, was very much disturbed over the security of his people. And so he was thinking about the future of the kingdom over which he was king. Well, he had a tremendous vision of an -- a great image of tremendous size. And so when he came to the conclusion of this kind of nightmare visions, he called in all of the astrologers and interpreters of dreams and magicians and all of the rest of the Chaldeans, and he told them to tell him the dream that he had and to give him the interpretation.

Now, these royal -- these royal magicians and astrologers and sorcerers and Chaldeans were just exactly like the Hare Krishnas and the Jean Dixons, and the Ed Cases, and all the rest of the fakes that say they can tell us what the future holds, but cannot. And so they did the very same thing that you would do. They said, You tell us the dreams, and we'll tell you the interpretation.

But Nebuchadnezzar wasn't king for nothing. He had plenty of intelligence. He knew that if he told them that vision that he had, they could make up some interpretation. So he said, You tell me what the vision was, and if you tell me what the vision was, then I will believe the interpretation that you give.

And, of course, they couldn't do it, and so he was angry with them. Evidently they had -- he had decided already that they were a bunch of fakes, and so he decided that he would execute all of them, and that included Daniel, of course. And word came to Daniel, and he asked for a little time. And so he went about it the divine way. He called Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah together. And he said, Let's have a word of prayer. And deciding that was a whole lot better than the method of astrologers.

And so, as you know, the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven, and he spoke of the God of heaven as the one who changes the times and the seasons, who removes kings and sets up kings, who gives wisdom unto the wise and knowledge to those who know understanding. He reveals the deep and secret things. He knows what's in the darkness and the light dwelleth within.

And I imagine that this was a real prayer of thanksgiving because his life depended upon it when he said, "I thank Thee and praise Thee, O thou God of my fathers who hast given me wisdom and might and hast made known unto me now what we desired to be, for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."

So Daniel went in. And he said, I do know the dream, and I know the interpretation of it. And he says in verse 28 of chapter 2 that there is a God in heaven who revealeth secrets and maketh it known to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream and the visions of thy head upon thy bed most likely probably are these.

No, he doesn't even insert anything like that to protect himself. He just says, the visions and the dreams you have are these. He knew specifically what that dream was, and then he goes on to declare the dream. And I'm going to read these verses beginning with verse 31, "Thou, O King, sawest, and, behold a great image."

This great image. It must have been an impressive figure that Nebuchadnezzar had seen. And, mind you, this is Nebuchadnezzar's view of Gentile world power. So it's not surprising that he sees a magnificent, impressive image. In the seventh chapter, when Daniel has a vision of the times of the Gentiles, he sees it from God's standpoint. And, of course, there he is given a vision of four wild Beasts for what appears to men to be an impressive vision of Gentile world dominion. Aren't we great? We call ourselves that, you know: Alexander the Great, Charles the Bold, and various other types of names that we attach to our human leaders.

But when God looks down at our human leaders, and this includes the whole bunch of them, all down through the years, Charlemagne, Genghis Khan, and the rest of them. It includes the whole lot, right down to the present time and Muammar Gaddafi, and the rest, and Idi Amin of Uganda, all the rest of these bums, God looks down and he sees just a crowd of wild Beasts. That's all he sees. Well, anyway, he says he saw this

great image whose brightness was excellent that stood before thee and the form of it was terrible.

"This image's head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thigh parts are bronze. Its legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then were the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole of the world."

Now, this vision has three essential parts. We won't have time to talk about the details in our study, which is so wide-ranging. The three or four important things are these: Daniel is given this vision of this great impressive image, which is made up of four materials. There is gold; there is silver; there is bronze; and then there is iron. And then when the image reaches -- the description of it reaches the feet with the ten toes, there is iron mingled with clay. But the four great metals are gold, silver, bronze or brass, and iron.

Now, these four great metals are designed to represent four great kingdoms. This will unfold in Daniel's interpretation. That's the first important thing. He sees this great image with these different metals out of which it is made. Then he saw, remember, a stone that was cut out without hands, verse 34. This stone -- now, notice it was cut out without hands. It was not made by men. So this stone he saw, secondly.

Now, he will be telling us later on or implying -- he doesn't really ever say this in the second chapter, that this stone is the Messiah himself. And then he says that he saw this stone strike that great image, and the whole image collapsed and vanished so that there was nothing left of the image at all. And as he observed the stone, he suddenly saw

it beginning to grow and expand. And finally he says the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole of the earth.

So we have four metals in the great image vision, a stone smites the image, and we no longer see any remnants of that image at all. And then the stone itself becomes so large that it becomes a mountain and fills the whole of the earth. This, of course, is his way of saying that it is God who destroys the Gentile world power, and he destroys it by the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And our Lord Jesus then institutes his worldwide kingdom over the face of the earth, the Messianic kingdom. So this -- we can learn from this that there are only going to be four great world empires.

Now, we have had four great world empires. We can only have four great world empires. We have had the Babylonian. We have had the Medo-Persian. We have had the Grecian, and we have had the Romans. And we are taught in the Book of Daniel that the last form of dominion will be a revival of this fourth Roman empire.

Well, let's look on at the interpretation in verse 36. This is the dream. I can image that by now Nebuchadnezzar's eyes are bugging out of his head, because here is one of these hated astrologers and Chaldeans who is able to tell him a dream which he has not told them. This is the dream, and we will tell its interpretation before the king.

"Thou, O King, art the king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wherever the children of men dwell, the Beasts of the field and the fowls of the heavens hath he given unto thine hands, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." So Nebuchadnezzar and its Babylonian kingdom is the head of gold.

"After thee shall rise another kingdom inferior to thee." There's a second kingdom. Later on, we shall read that this kingdom is the Medo-Persian empire. "And another kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth," a reference to Alexander and the Grecian empire. "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: Forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: And as iron that breaketh

all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided."

Now, here he launches into a description of the history of this Roman Empire. And we know that this empire has existed now for almost two thousand years. We have seen this division under Diocletian in the year two hundred eighty-five A.D. And the fact that the legs are the longest part of the vision itself suggests also that this fourth kingdom is one that persists to the end. We need not talk about the details. You will notice he talks about the ten toes. And later on in the book of Daniel, he will inform us that these ten toes refer to ten kingdoms which shall exist in the last days of this revived Roman empire. So he identifies then the kingdoms. And this fourth kingdom is the revived Roman Empire.

Occasionally individuals studying the Bible wonder about how we can speak of our Western world as a continuation of the Roman empire. Perhaps we can illustrate it with a simple illustration that might help. Let us suppose, as many of you know, New Amsterdam was the capital of the United States at one time. It's the Big Apple. It was in much better financial shape in those days, incidentally, than it is today. It was the capital of the United States at one time. You remember that when Washington was president, he governed 13 of the states.

Now, let's suppose, for example, that we should have been invaded and the government should be driven out of Washington, driven out of all of its territory, driven to the west as far as what is today Kansas City? Now, we would still call the government, the government of the United States, though they may not have actually possessed any part of the United States by that time. Because a government and a people who's not determined by the land that they possess, but by their common institutions, their common culture, their common governments, their common relationships—these are the things that really make up the essence of a government or a rule or an empire.

And when we look at it in this way, I think we can see why, Scripturally, we are still living within the Roman Empire, for our institutions are largely Roman. Our culture is largely Western, derived from Romans. Our language even, has a great relationship to the language of the Romans, so that our cultural ties, our ties that really make us related to one another in the Western world go back to Rome. And we are living still in the shadow of the ancient Roman Empire. And we are taught in Daniel and other places that that kingdom shall be revived.

The kingdoms are installed. And we read in verse 44 and verse 45, "And in the days of these kings" -- that is the ten kings of the last days -- "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." Incidentally, you will notice that it is not the church that brings in the kingdom. It is God who brings in the kingdom. And the kingdom is called the kingdom of God because it is God who brings it in.

Now, how many years did you sit in the congregation and hear ministers in the pulpit as I did for many years talk about bringing in the kingdom or about the kingdom? The kingdom is something that God brings in, and it has not been brought in yet.

So, "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter" -- and you will notice -- "and the dream is certain, and the interpretations is sure.

Now, in effect, then what we have been told in this great vision is that there are going to be four great world empires from 605 or 6 B.C. to the time of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. The Babylonians, the Medo-Persians, the Grecians, the Romans, and the revived Roman Empire.

These four great world empires, or five if we include the last as another form of the four -- these four or five are going to be the entire number of worldwide kingdoms. And the kingdom that shall last will be brought in by God himself.

Now, then, that's the overall view. Let's look for a few moments at some of the details. So will you turn with me to Revelation chapter 13, for here we have further details about the ten-nation confederacy, and, particularly, represented by the ten toes of the image vision of Daniel 2 together with some very interesting information about the man who shall be the head of this ten-nation confederacy.

Remember this, the program of God succeeds because of the eternal Trinity. There is an unseen Father. No one has ever seen the Father. As far as I can tell, no one shall ever see the Father. Then we have, secondly an, incarnate Son, the Lord Jesus. At a particular point in time, he took to himself human nature. He came down here, accomplished the work of redemption. He has ascended to the right hand of the Father. He's coming again in his Second Advent to establish his kingdom, the second person of the Trinity. And the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit who is the executive of the God-head that the work of God is done. Even the Lord Jesus performed his mighty works in the power of the Holy Spirit while he was here. So it is by the eternal Trinity that God accomplishes his tasks.

If we can think of the Trinity as likened to a giant United States corporation, we could think of them as the board that operates the organization. The chairman is the Father. The chief executive officer and president is the Holy Spirit, who is responsible for carrying out all of the wills, all of the directives of the board. And so God accomplishes his work then through Father, Son, who has accomplished the work of redemption, by which everything is done, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now, Satan knows the doctrine of the Trinity better than most Christians, because most Christians probably could not express the doctrine of the Trinity theologically accurately. I think I'll just ask three people. You wouldn't be too happy about that,

would you? Now, many of you could, of course, but you might not express it to my satisfaction. It would be very interesting if you just put out on a piece of paper how you conceive the doctrine of the Trinity to be expressed, and then just give it to me without your name on it and let me check it. And I will just drop out here next week, and you can come by and pick it up, put it in your pocket and see whether you put it together correctly or not.

Now, Satan knows a great deal more about the doctrine of the Trinity than the saints do. So he knows if he's going to accomplish anything, he has to have a Trinity, too. So he has a fake Trinity. His Trinity is not the eternal Trinity, it's the infernal Trinity. And he's the dragon. He's the unseen dragon you read through the Book of Revelation. You read about the dragon. He's the unseen dragon. And then there is the Beast, the first Beast of Revelation chapter 13 that we're going to look at here in just a moment. He is the antichrist. He stands over against the incarnate son. He's a man, and he has even a supernatural experience that is like a death and a resurrection. It's described here. And then there is the unholy spirit, the False Prophet. And just as the Holy Spirit leads men in the worship of the Son of God, so he leads the world in the worship of the Beast.

So the image is set up and everybody is called upon to worship the Beast, and he, as lieutenant, leads the worship. He's like the minister who stands in the pulpit and leads the worship of the congregation. So we have the infernal trinity right here in Revelation chapter 13. Now, he says in verses 1 and 2, "I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns" -- notice the ten horns. These tens are suggestive of those ten feet back in Daniel chapter 2 and refer to the ten-kingdom form of Satan's kingdom of the last days -- "and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name of blasphemy. And the Beast which I saw was like a leopard" -- Daniel chapter 7 -- "his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth was like the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his thrown, and great authorities."

So here we have then a picture -- I won't -- we don't have time to deal with the details, of course. But what we have here is a picture of the Beast who is empowered by the dragon, the antichrist, empowered by Satan himself. And we also have reference to the fact that he is related to the ten-kingdom form of the empire of the last days because he has seven heads, and he has ten horns.

Now, then he is described further. Verse 3, "And I saw one of his heads as though it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the Beast."

You know we have a wrong idea about the antichrist. I think I made reference to this before. The antichrist is not an evil, vile-looking person. He's the kind of person who will fool most of us if we did not have the Holy Spirit. We are not going to be here of course. But the saints who are here are going to be in danger of being deceived. They cannot be deceived about him, but they could be if it depended upon the attractive, charming nature of the antichrist. He's an Albert Schweitzer kind of person.

Or suppose, for example, John Fitzgerald Kennedy had risen from the dead. Do you think that he would have had some followers in this country who might have thought that he was half-God? Why of course. A man who is able to speak and influence people, a man who had charisma, why that's the kind of man the antichrist is. He has a mouth speaking great things.

Now, we read in verse 4, "They worshipped the dragon who gave power unto the Beast: and they worshiped the Beast, saying, Who is like the Beast? Who is able to make war with him? And it was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

Now, notice he has a universal dominance. So he reaches the place where he is the world ruler. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the worlds." In other words, he finally reaches the place where he has authority over this ten-kingdom confederacy. He himself becomes its head, and, furthermore, he is worshipped as God by the whole of the earth and the religion of the tribulation period is the religion of the worship of the Beast.

What is he trying to do? Well, back in the Old Testament, in Isaiah chapter 14, we read a chapter that has to do ultimately with the fall of saints. And originally you will remember that Lucifer in the midst of his exalted position before God, as chief over all of the angelic hosts says in his great five-fold, I will: I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation on the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. And in Isaiah 14:14, he says, "I will be like the Most High." And ever since that time when God cast Satan from his position as a fallen angelic Beast, he has been seeking to regain his position of ascendancy.

And now through the Beast he has gained a worldwide dominion. So his final goal is to fulfill Isaiah chapter 14, verse 14. Scriptures tell us, of course, that even in the midst of all of this working of Satan, God is working. And in the seventh chapter in the Book of Revelation, we are taught also that in the midst of the tribulation period, God, through the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, accomplishes the salvation of a multitude which no man can number.

In other words, right in the midst of the time when Satan appears to be rising to the peak of his influence throughout the centuries, throughout time, God is saving untold innumerable multitudes of people.

Now, finally the end, the destruction of Gentile power. Will you turn over to revelation chapter 16? These are such great topics that we ought to spend a year on them to deal with them in detail, but we're just trying to hit the high spots.

Revelation chapter 16. Israel, it seems from the Scriptures, sufferer from the activities of the antichrist principally, but the Gentiles judgment comes from these great devastating judgments described in the Book of Revelation that take place during the tribulation periods. Believing Israel is largely protected throughout the tribulation period. Isaiah chapter 26, verse 20 and 21 describes the protection of believing Israel in the last days. They do not undergo the great judgments that call out upon the earth to the extent that the Gentiles do.

First of all, let me just give you a brief overview of Revelation 5 through 16. Remember, as you read the Book of Revelation, there are three great series of judgments. These great series of judgments, the seal judgments; the trumpet judgments; and the bowl judgments. The bowl judgments described here in Revelation 16, are three great series of judgments that increase in intensity throughout that seven-year period of time known as the tribulation period. Remember when we studied Daniel chapter 9, we saw that the last week of his seventy weeks was the tribulation period. At the beginning of that time, the antichrist makes a covenant with the Nation Israel for the restoration of the ancient worship of Israel. In the middle of the week, he breaks the covenant, at which time there comes good tribulation over the earth.

These judgments begin at the beginning of that seven-year period of time, particularly the seal judgments, do not conclude until the seven years are up. These now are intense judgments, and they are designed to express the judgment of God, primarily upon the Gentiles and the unbelieving Jews. And the vials, or bowls, of Revelation chapter 16 are the most intense of the three series. And they are reserved for the last hectic days of the period of the tribulation. They are called in the first verse the bowls of the wrath of God upon the earth.

There are some who do not think that we should speak about the wrath of God. They rather think that we should speak about the love of God only, but they have not read much in the Book of Revelation, because he is presented here as the God who pours out his wrath upon mankind in the last days. "God is love," Professor Warfield asserted, "But it does not in the least follow that he is nothing but love." God is love, but love is not God. And the formula, God is love, must therefore be inadequate to describe God.

We should never, never fall into the habit of speaking of God as only a loving God. We should always point out that God is a just God as well as a loving God. Spurgeon says that he used to say to himself when he was just a little boy, "If God does not punish me for my sins, he ought to do so. I felt," he adds, "that God was just, and that he knew that I did not wish him to be anything else but just. For even my imperfect knowledge of God included my recognition that he was a just and holy God. If I could have been certain of salvation by any method by which God would have ceased to be just, I could not have accepted even salvation on those terms. I should have felt that it was derogatory to the dignity of the Most High that it was contrary to the universal laws of right."

Hugh Martin has written an outstanding book on the atonement, and he said some words very similar to this. And I think this is something that we all need to think about, because, you know, we are living in days in which universalism is permeating the Christian church. Right down the street – I do not know the doctrine taught at the end of this street – but I mean just as close to us in our Christian churches there is taught the doctrine that all men are to be saved. There is no such thing as hell. This is common. This is taught in our theological seminaries.

Now, I don't mean unbelieving seminaries in the sense that there might even make professing -- don't profess any Christianity. I mean, those that profess Christianity. It's taught in our Presbyterian seminaries. It's taught in our Baptist seminaries. Not all of them, not the Baptist ones, but it's taught in many of the Presbyterian seminaries. It's

taught in almost all of the Episcopalian seminaries. These -- these seminaries teach everybody is going to be saved.

Listen to Hugh Martin. He says, "If God comes to me, a guilty transgressor of the law, and tells me that he means to let me off, that he means to let my sin pass, that he cannot find it in his heart to inflict upon me the vengeance which he threatened. And so without any more ado, I pass away free from judgment, free from terror, I soon begin to question whether I am so greatly indebted to the divine beneficence as in the first rapture of my escape, I fancy. I begin to consider whether, after all, it's any great token of God's love to me that I've just obtained. And I argue that if it was at God's option as his mere option to cast me into hell or save me from it, without any expiation of my sin or any satisfaction to his justice, if it was in his power to free me from wrath and woe without any claim of justice in opposing to object or needing to be met, if there was no imperative call of righteousness demanding my condemnation to eternal death, but God can free me simply if he chose and no interests of righteousness be endured -- be injured by his doing so, why then instead of arguing any wonderful benevolence on his part toward me that he puts forth with infinite ease his will and power to save, the wonder would be that he should abstain from doing so. I cannot possibly recognize any peculiar stand or signature of marvelous divine mercy in the act which frees me from a faith which no demands of justice assign me to. So if we have a salvation, which was something that God could just give us at his will, and it's not worth much more than a whim itself."

These tribulation judgments conclude with the final battles of the tribulation period. There are really in Scripture several passages in which lengthy descriptions are given of the great campaigns of the tribulation periods. There is Ezekiel chapter 38 and 39 -- a description of a campaign with army -- with an army that comes down from the north. It may be Russians. There is the description in Daniel Chapter 11 of the campaigns in the east in which the antichrist wars with the king of the north and the king of the south. And there is in Zachariah chapter 14 the description of how finally the

armies of the antichrist are gathered around the city of Jerusalem besieging that city. And in the last hour the Lord Jesus comes in order to rescue his people and establish his kingdom upon the earth.

The tribulation and its rationale with respect to the Gentiles is that it is a time of judgment in which he brings retribution upon the world for the crucifixion of his son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me [indistinct] that you're here tonight, and you have never believed in our Lord Jesus, do you realize the terror of the days into which we may be soon heading. And do you realize that in Scripture, we are taught very specifically in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 that if you have heard the gospel in this age, that Christ died for sins and that he was raised again on the third day and that forgiveness is given to men of faith, if you have heard that message and you do not respond, do not go up to meet the Lord in the air, you will pass into this period. And Scripture tells us in 2 Thessalonians 2 that you will believe the lie during that time. There is no hope. May God speak to your heart concerning the Son of God. Let's bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the teaching of holy Scripture. We thank Thee for these great warnings in the word of God, and we pray that Thou wilt deliver us from indifference, deliver us from indifference to the things that concern the future.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.