Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 23
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 1301-U

I think if I would ever have the privilege of rewriting the words to a song I would change it to maybe morning, maybe noon, maybe evening and I'll show you in just a few minutes why I'll add it will be soon from the word of God. That's why we came tonight isn't it to look into the word of God and see what it says about the second coming of Jesus Christ. So I would invite you to take your Bibles and turn with me to the book of Revelation in Chapter 1.

We've really been treated in weeks past through the preaching of John to climb the hill with that special group of apostles John, and James and Peter and see Jesus Christ in all of his second coming glory and then to look at the model church and I love the book of I Thessalonians and the Thessalonian church and the discover was a church that was truly a second-coming church and marked their service and their labor and their love as they not only had turned from idols to a living and true God, but did so to serve and to wait with that steadfastness of hope until the day He would come.

And so tonight as we turn to Revelation Chapter 1, our purpose is to not tell you all the things that we know or don't know, but my purpose is really just get our minds thinking and in a sense kind of grease the skids or be the warm-up man so when John comes we'll be all set to think of those questions that would be instructive to all of us. But in all seriousness tonight we do want to address the question of where are we in God's plan of the ages? What times is it on God's prophetic clock? Are there signs around us that we can read in the newspapers and in the weekly magazines and those happening in our own community that might give us a hint as to what God's doing in the world in which we live and when will the end really come? No doubt there's not a person in the room tonight that's not got one or more of those questions in his or her heart and I trust that you would find our time together very very profitable.

Every time I come to the subject of prophecy and think of all that's been written and all that's been said I'm reminded of a story I read not too long ago. It's about a little nine-year old body named Danny. He'd been in Sunday school and when Sunday school was all over he came blitzing out of the room and he was wide-eyed and just wildly looking through the crowd for his dad. Could not wait to find Dad and tell him all the wonderful spiritual truths that he's learned. And finally he spots Dad and he rushes up to him and interrupts the conversation and says, "Dad, you've got to hear what I learned in Sunday school today." Dad says, "Man I can't wait if it's that exciting." He said, "Tell me Danny, what did you learn? Where were you in the Scriptures?" He said, "We were in the book of

Exodus. and we learned how the Jews escaped from Egypt." And Dad says, "Lay it on me. Tell me how it happened." And he said, "Well Dad, it was like this." He says, "The Jews escaped and on their way out they didn't think they were going to make it so they grabbed their walkie talkies and they called in the Israeli Air Force and they came in and strafed all the Egyptian armored personal carriers and then they got to this body of water and they thought they were going to get trapped and so the Israeli Corp of Engineers came in and built a pontoon bridge and they got across that pontoon bridge and fully escaped from the Egyptian army." Well by this time Dad is utterly shocked and he's saying, "They couldn't have taught it to you that way in Sunday school, Danny. Is that really the way they told it?" He said, "No Dad, but you know if I'd told it to you the way they told it to me you'd never have believed it."

I just might add parenthetically Danny does not go to Grace Community Church. He did not learn that from our children's division. But the story only really goes to illustrate one of the real problems we deal with biblical prophecy and I call it the problem of newspaper prophecy and that is we feel like we have to so jazz it up and so garnish it with all of the headline events in the newspaper and we do it because we believe if we don't nobody's every going to believe what we've told them. And yet as I go back to the word of God and I go to those great prophetic sections in the prophets and in the gospels and the epistles and the book of Revelation, the writers just told it as it was in very plain simple language as the Spirit of God moved the writers to write.

Tonight our purpose is not really to jazz up that that God has made complete for us and put it in such exiting terms and infused with current events that you'll go out and be sorely disappointed if it doesn't happen by Wednesday, and yet at the same time while that's an error at one end of the spectrum in extremism, at the other end would be the error of neglect of prophecy and that would be the mindset that says prophecy is so difficult. And the terms are so mysterious nobody's ever known it in the past so why should we study it today? It's of absolutely no value. And yet we would say tonight that the study of prophecy is very very valuable and that the word of God urges you and me to look in day by day to learn some very very important things.

And yet I'd be the very first person to admit and make these disclaimers and that is at times prophecy was so confusing that even the prophets were confused. You can read about it in I Peter 1:10-11. It said the prophets could not unravel the confusion of the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. They just did not know how a Savior or a Messiah could both suffer and be glorified at the same time. Utterly confused until history showed them that there would be a time distance between the first coming of Christ when He suffered as our Savior and the second coming of Christ when He will come in all of His majesty and all of His power to rule and reign on the throne of David in Jerusalem.

And not only was prophecy confusing to the prophets at times, but prophecy was even hard for some of the apostles to interpret. Peter tells us in II Peter 3 that some of the things that the apostle Paul wrote were very hard to understand. And listen if Peter had problems with what Paul wrote then we

know we're in good company, don't we? Because we have a hard time understanding all that the apostle Paul had to say. And yet as we come back to the Scriptures in Chapter 1, let's look in at Revelation 1:3 and see what the introduction to this most most important prophetic book tells us.

It says, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy and heed the things which are written in it for the time is near." And while prophecy at times might be confusing, and while prophecy at times might be hard to understand John is given to him by God is trying to say we need to read it. For read these things and we need to hear it. And I think the idea of hearing it is hearing it with understanding that we might pursue to know what it means and how it impacts our life. And in so doing making that commitment to heed the things that are written in it. And that is to so order our life that we brought it into conformity with the whole counsel of God and we really can say, "I'm expecting Jesus Christ at any moment and when He comes it will be the greatest time of my life, rather than perhaps the most embarrassing time of my life when Christ comes at that hour that none of us would expect and perhaps finds us in a state or in an activity or in a position or a thought or an emotion that would not bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And while it might have been confusing to the prophets and hard for the apostles to understand and undoubtedly your questions that you've got that maybe nobody could answer I'm thrilled to report tonight that God knows where the world is and it's right on schedule. Isaiah 46:10 says, "That God planned the end from the beginning." That is before He ever created the world He knew how it would all come to pass. And we're right on schedule whether we know all of the details or whether we can be totally we know with microsecond precision just where we are in God's prophetic plan, God knows. It's right on schedule. It's too fast and not too slow and in that you and I can take great great confidence.

Prophecy is knowable and that's why God has told us to read it and hear it and then to heed it. What we really want to do tonight and we're going to look at the overhead in just a moment is to really outline the knowable in a blueprint form. Just give you a skeletal form that will give you a basis upon which to ask your questions and then secondly to fill in some of the details with the questions that you'll ask. And so we'll put the outline up and then we'll begin to color in all of the details as we begin to answer the questions that you'll have an opportunity to ask.

I take great confidences that we would speak on a subject of prophecy and at the same time I come with great fear and knee knocking as did the apostle Paul to many many places to teach, but I take great confidence in knowing that we've got a pattern of fulfilled prophecy. Unlike the Old Testament prophets who looked ahead to the first coming of Christ, and really did not understand in time how it related to the second coming, you and I can look back in time and say Christ has come. And we can look back in the Old Testament and see the prophecies that told of His coming and they said He'd be born in Bethlehem and gave us a hint that He'd be born of a virgin, and why He came to die for mankind and to pay for our sins and to be made sin for us.

But you know if we look at the prophecies of Christ's first coming and we apply some basic rules of interpretation to them we discover how those prophecies will be fulfilled. And we find it verified in history because we can work our way back and say here's how the first coming prophecies were fulfilled and what rules of interpretation would we have applied to the first coming prophecies that would have given us the expectation of a Messiah who was born of a virgin and who grew and was fully God and fully man and fulfilled all of those wonderful prophecies in His earthly ministry, and we would discover a very basic principle and it's called a normal method of interpreting Scripture and that is we come to the Bible as we would come to any piece of literature believing that words made up sentences and sentences paragraph for the purpose of communicating truth that the author wanted you and me to know and to understand.

While at the same time we obviously acknowledge much of prophecy is spoken of in signs and in symbols and as a matter of fact that's exactly what the book of Revelation says in Chapter 1 verse 1. God sent it and gave it to John and it says He communicated it by His angels to his bondservant John. That word communicated in your Bibles might better translated He signified it. He gave it in pictures, almost in cartoon form all of these symbols that would describe in a very vivid and unforgettable way that John could write down with his pen and become an artist with words that you and I have such a tantalizing time with, don't we, trying to imagine all that the book of Revelation tells us.

I want to put an overhead up for you and I'm going to take just a minute to do as we would say in the Navy, rig for overhead projector, if I were to put on an overhead the thing that would best describe the book of the Revelation. I think the picture that I'm going to flash up in just a moment would best describe all that God intended through His angel who gave it to John to describe the book and what it is that you and I ought to learn from it.

There it really is in cartoon form. It's previews of coming attractions. And it's almost like going to the movie theater, only in this sense we're going to read it. I would really challenge somebody who's good in artistry and in the work of cartooning and so on and so forth to put the whole thing together in a visualized form would make a marvelous presentation of the book of the Revelation.

Well enough of cartoons. Why don't you turn your eye over to verse 19 of Chapter 1 with me. It's a real key to the book and with that we'll put another overhead on. You know through the Bible if you were to start in the prophets and work your way through the gospels and the epistles there's a little dab here and a little note here and an idea here and an idea there, but there's no real sense of chronology and there's no real sense of flow through the first 65 books of the Bible until we get to the book of Revelation, the capstone of all of God's revelatory and prophetic material. And in it God in basic form gives us a chronology of the things that are yet to come.

Chapter 1 verse 19 says this: "Write therefore, John, the things which you have seen." And I would take that phrase the things that you have seen to refer to that that just came previous and that is that great picture of the glory and majesty of Jesus Christ that began in verse 12 and ended in verse 18.

Secondly, he says, write down the things which are and I would understand that to refer to the things that were historically present at the time that John lived and would encompass chapters 2 and chapter 3 as Jesus gives seven letters to seven existing churches in the then known day.

And then thirdly, the things that shall take place after these things and that is the things that would occur after God was finished with the church. And in very simple outline form I think it would go up like this and that is to say that you and I today live in the church age, which is described in Revelation 1 to 3. Beyond the church age the word of God would teach would be followed by a seven year period that theologically we'd call the tribulation period, although biblically only the latter half of that seven year period in Matthew 24 is actually called a time of great tribulation like the world has never seen before. In Revelation Chapter 4 all the way through 19 with the coming of the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings and a great white horse and followed by a host of the saints in heaven mark the very end of the tribulation period and usher in what's called the millennium, which very simply means one thousand years.

In Revelation 20 is a unique portion of Scripture for it in the most detail of all of the word of God tells us what will occur during that one thousand year period of time. And it's at the end of that 1,000 years that there's one final attack by Satan in an attempt to force control of the kingdom away from God and it says in Revelation 20 that fire comes down from heaven and immediately Satan and all of those who have joined in his evil band are taken by fire and cast into the lake of fire and the new heaven and the new earth, Revelation 21 and 22 talking about eternity future commend of view and commend of being that that would be forever and ever and ever how long forever eternity could be. That would stretch our minds to the breaking point.

The book of Revelation is very very important to understand and I really think it's the point that we need to come and see that chronological progress of time in God's prophetic clock and in that then to garnish it and add some details that we'll find in other portions of Scripture. That's a really easy outline to look at isn't it? Chapter 1 to 3 talks about the church age, 4 to 19 talk about the tribulation period that seven-year period and then the millennium Revelation 20 and then Revelation 21 and 22 that talk about eternity future.

I want to add to that just some of the details to get our minds going and then answer the question where are we in God's prophetic clock and that'll take us about five minutes and then we're going to go right straight to the question and answer and I think the skeleton that we've given you, the foundation, those basic movements in prophetic history will give us a great great base on which to fill

in many many of the details with your questions.

So why don't we take that off and kind of get a visual of what the book of Revelation is all about and uncapping or an unveiling and put in some of the details that are yet to come. And we would start at the cross with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ and encompassed with all that the day of Pentecost and the inauguration of the church age where God took His very very finally pointed and focused spotlight on the nation Israel and traded in a spotlight for a floodlight and using that light to beam to the entire world the message of redemption through the church and thus entered into the church age where we find ourselves today. And I with real purpose put a question mark here in terms when will be the time of the rapture of the church. I think I found it today in the word of God as I poured through it. Would you like to see it, when the rapture is going to take place? It's in the book of Revelation and I found it in at least six different locations.

Look with me chapter 1 verse 1, it says, "The things that I write about must take place shortly." Anybody asks me when the rapture's going to be. Whatever John says is good enough for me. It's going to take place shortly.

For verse 3 it says, "The things that are written in it are written for the time is near." All the way in the back in chapter 22 as it comes to a great great conclusion John had not changed his mind. God had not changed His mind at all. "For the angel said that these words are faithful and true that the Lord God, of the Spirits, of the prophets sent his angel to show to his bondservants the things which must shortly take place." Same thing in verse 7, "And behold I am coming quickly, said Jesus." Verse 18, it says this: it's not verse 18 it's verse 10, it says, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book for the time is near." And then in verse 20, "He who testifies to these things says, this is the words of Jesus, "Yes I am coming quickly." And I think we have as much right and every reason to believe as did the first century church that Jesus could come before the nights over and if He doesn't come tonight maybe tomorrow. And if not tomorrow the day after and our great design and purpose in life and believers in Jesus Christ is to be ready and to be found doing the work of the Lord and being faithful to what God has given unto us.

And that for sure would introduce the very next event in God's prophetic plan, that would be the next major alarm on God's prophetic clock and that is the rapture of the church of Jesus Christ. I Thessalonians 4, I Corinthians 5, speak most directly of it, but in Revelation 3:10 and we won't take the time now to turn to it but I think Revelation 3:10 is the absolute most clear passage in of the word of God that gives us the clearest indication as to when the time of the rapture will be. And undoubtedly somebody's going to ask a question about that so we'll just hold that until we get to that in a question and answer session, but right now merely to say that the rapture of the church will be pretribulational or just prior to this seven year period that we've called the tribulation period.

Concurrent with that will be an event that would be called the Bama or the judgment seat of Christ. In I Corinthians 3, II Corinthians 5, Romans 14:10 would all talk about the judgment seat of Christ or the judgment seat of God. For believers will be evaluated for their works and their words, and their deeds whether they be good or evil and we will be rewarded or rewards will be withheld from believers and that's stopping short of our salvation for that as we've seen from the book of Romans is sure and it's secure in Jesus Christ.

From the church age via the rapture in which all believers on planet earth are snatched away and those in the grave are resurrected is ushered in the tribulation period. It's really divided into two portions of time each three and a half years in length or 42 months or 1260 days. And the Scripture uses all of those terms to describe it.

The key event in the middle of the tribulation period, which is seven years in length and split into two three and a half year periods of time is what the word of God describes as the abomination of desolation. It's a term that was found first in Daniel Chapter 9 and picked up by our Lord Jesus in Matthew 24, the Olivet Discourse, and then amplified somewhat in Revelation 11 in which the anti Christ or the satanic parallel to Jesus Christ the Son of God will set himself up on the altar in Jerusalem to be worshipped as almighty God by all the world. The ultimate desecration, the ultimate abomination in all the acts that have ever been committed and all the religious atrocities through out all of history at that particular point in time. And only to us who are in those final three and a half years of time in which great chaos and great anarchy and despotism reign on the planet by Satan's power through the anti Christ whom Satan has put in that position.

And it's just at the point in time when Satan thinks he's got is and the kingdom's his that Christ will ultimately return and that which is called in prophetic literature the second coming of Jesus Christ. In Revelation 19 tells us just a little bit about that. Christ who comes on the white horse, the sword is protruding from his mouth representing the power of Christ, to conquer and to claim His rightful heir ship to the kingdom and the saints coming with him to rule and reign in all power and all glory. Armageddon will just have been fought as Christ comes to wrest control of the kingdom from Satan and unto himself and at the end of Armageddon they'll be a group of survivors, some of whom will be unbelievers and some of whom will be true believers and in Matthew 25 you will remember Jesus said that, "The goats will be separated from the sheep and the goats will be put to my left and the sheep to my right and the goats will be cast into outer darkness into the fire where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, but the sheep I'll usher into my kingdom."

And thus begins that period of time called the millennium, which will initially be inhabited by all believers and through the procreation of the human race through propagation the believers that initially enter the millennium will bear children and those children just like children born into any other age in human history will be by nature sinners and in need of the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ.

It says during this period of time in Revelation 20 that Satan will be bound. He'll be inactive and Christ will rule and reign says Psalm 2 with a rod of iron and wrath and He'll really mean business when it comes to righteousness. At the end of that period of time Satan will be loosed says Revelation Chapter 20, and he'll make his last attempt to gain the kingdom forever for himself. Out of the world's population he'll gather together a band of men who really want to turn their backs on God again and they'll make their last foray against Jerusalem only to once and for all be defeated by God as fire comes down, destroys the army of Satan, begins to usher in eternity future and it tells us in Revelation 21 that the new Jerusalem appears, that's there'll be a new heaven and a new earth. The world will be purged as by fire, all of the impurities will be burned off, the dross of human sinfulness will be gone. Revelation 22:3 says, "The curse will be removed and we will rule and reign in all of the glory and majesty and radiance of God Himself forever and ever and ever."

As a part of that purging, as a part of that ending of world history as we've known it since the time of creation would be that final act of judgment that Revelation 20 calls the white throne judgment at which time all who have ever lived and have rejected that very gracious redemptive offer of Jesus Christ for salvation full and free will come before God, come before the judge and be judged on the words that they did, the deeds of the flesh and all will be found short of the glory of God. And not having the righteousness that one's required to live forever in the presence of God and two can only be obtained through saving faith in Jesus Christ. It's the only way to get in the kingdom is through Christ by faith, receiving the gift of God. A part from that all who rejected whether actively or passively through all of time will be judged and will join the anti Christ, the false prophet and Satan forever and ever and ever in the lake of fire removed from the glory of God.

Well it seems like we only took a minute but we took longer than that, but I think it's very very important that we set out that basic basic outline so that you and I know where God is truly headed in the plan of the ages. I think with that I probably told you more than I know. I'm going to ask John to come and we're going to be here with two microphones and ask the men who are going to be at the microphones to come and I know that John has a couple of things that he wants to say just by way of introduction and then he'll lead us in the question and answer session.

JOHN: Just to summarize while they're taking their places, I think that what you heard Dick say and what's so important is first of all that we can't know everything, secondly what God wants us to know we can know, thirdly that in determining the meaning of prophecy we use normal language interpretation principles. Whatever it says is what it means. We can see figurative speech and symbols as normal part of conversation and so we see it that way. And the pattern for that is the Old Testament's prophets speaking of the first coming of Christ they spoke in normal language. When they said a certain thing they meant that. It wasn't hidden meanings. It was just a clear normal use of language and we see the same in terms of prophecies related to the second coming and that's why we take what's called a literal view of understanding prophecy, futurist view of understanding the book

of Revelation.

And then a broad outline of the book of Revelation helps you to see the flow. It isn't that hard to understand when you get the whole outline. And Revelation gives us that and then it sticks in there a whole lot of details and maybe that's where the questions are going to come just what are the details. So what we'd like you to do at this point is just get up there behind a microphone somewhere if you have a question and there are microphones in various places. The men will be there to kind of help you articulate that question and don't be shy. We want you to have the opportunity to do this. And I'll just sort of ramrod things and pass them on to Dick when they're over my head. All right? Okay, let's see, maybe we ought to start over here on the right with Chris and Todd over there.

TODD:I guess he trusts me 'cause he didn't ask me what my question was, but what I want to know is in II Thessalonians 4 where they talk about how the apostasy comes first before the rapture. How do you believe that pre-tribulation comes? How do you believe in pre-tribulation when the writer there says about the apostasies?

JOHN: Are you talking about II Thessalonians 2 where it says that the anti-Christ is not going to come, the man of sin is not going to come into full power except there first be the apostasy?

TODD: Right. So how could he come, like right now without the revolt against God.

JOHN: Well let me say this: first of all it's not talking about the coming of Christ. It's talking about the full coming of anti-Christ and that's different, but I'm going to pass that one to Dick since he wrote his dissertation on that.

DICK: I told John I would hold he microphone and he could answer the questions. Todd, I think in response to your question just a couple of introductory comments it might help with some of the other questions. In number one is in I Thessalonians 4 and II Thessalonians 2, there are no time indicators as to when the rapture will be in relationship to other events. So when we come to that passage we'll not discover the time of the rapture. When we do come to the passage in II Thessalonians 2, we do discover something very very significant. We discover that what Paul is talking about is when the man of lawlessness or when the anti-Christ will be revealed or in a sense when's his coming out party would be another way to put it and the language that's used there would point, I'll put is up on the overhead, would point to the midpoint of the tribulation period to the abomination of desolation when the apostasy, which really began in the garden in Genesis 3 reaches its apex or its climax.

And what the Scripture is saying at that particular point in time that the man of lawlessness in verse 3 will follow the apostasy and we'll know who that man is, verse 4, because he opposes and exalts himself above every so called god or object of worship so that he takes a seat in the temple of God displaying himself as being God. And that's a perfect description of what Daniel has earlier told us in

Chapter 9 and Chapter 11 and what our Lord has told us in Matthew 24 would occur at the abomination of desolation when the anti-Christ has his full coming out and attempts to rule and reign on planet earth as though he were Jesus Christ.

So that's what the passage is about, but it will not give us a hint as to the time of the rapture and cannot be used by anybody whether we're pre, post, mid, partial, two-thirds, one-third, or whatever we are to decide when the time of the rapture will be. And what we've got to do then is determine the time of the rapture a part from the Thessalonian epistles and then come back and say ah ha I now I know where that event occurs, will occur, in relationship to the time of the rapture that I've discovered in other passages.

You might want others. A number of pieces of literature that you could get, I've done a little booklet called Snatch Before the Stormin which I've attempted to show when the rapture will occur in relation to all other prophetic events and I came to a very very strong conclusion that it occurs here ending the church age and just preceding the introduction of the tribulation period so that with confidence knowing that II Thessalonians 2 points to this period of time I then can say the rapture will come before that. But that's the process you've got to go through. John, maybe you've got ---

JOHN: Well there's a lot that could be said about this whole passage. The point here is that the apostasy, the falling away comes not before the coming of Christ, but before the full revelation of the man of sin and obviously in Scripture the man of sin doesn't really reveal himself until he's got the world suckered. In other words, the attempt is not to show himself to be the evil man that he is and go into the temple and abominate the place and to devour the whole world and so forth. That waits a while.

What happens is Daniel 9 says this man comes along and everybody believes he's the Messiah and so Israel makes a pack with him. And if you look at it in Revelation 6 you see that he's a conqueror on a white horse with a bow with no arrows. In other words he comes and conquerors without war and he makes a pack with Israel and everything's going along great and he allows them to worship and in Revelation 17 he kind of goes along side the false church. He allows it to have its day and then halfway through the week he cracks down, devours the false church, sets himself up as God, begins to persecute the people of Israel, wipes them out, two-thirds of them are slaughtered, and then we find out who he really is. The apostasy then that happens before that can happen in the first three and a half years of the tribulation and that's the real falling away.

I think there's an apostasy going on now and there always has been apostate element, but I think in the tribulation in the first three and a half years there will be a massive apostasy. The true church is gone, all that's left is apostasy and when that happens and we may be seeing the preliminary elements of that right now in the liberalism and the apostasy that we see even in the name of Christianity. But that's not going to come to full-blown reality until just before the anti-Christ is

revealed halfway through the tribulation. All right?

And I think, let me answer a question you haven't asked that's implied there: I think the world is getting ready for antichrist. I think Satan is always trying to do that. I think that he's always offered people to be the antichrist and I'm not sure that there's any specific individual that's sort of waiting in the wings. God knows who it is, but I don't think it's the idea that this guy is going to be born who's sort of a demon-man kind of thing. I think what Satan is looking for is an available man who can become utterly and totally demon possessed that he can take control of the world. I think he tried to do it a lot of times in the past. I think he tried to do it with Anticas Ephiany. He tried to use him to wipe out the people of God. I think he tried to do it with Hitler. I don't know if you know this but Hitler was demon possessed. The people who knew him well said when he spoke in public he had a totally different voice than the voice that they knew that he had. He was totally up to his ears in consultation with Tibetan monks who were into the occult. He worshipped Satan. They held Lucifarian mass. He was inducing the demons constantly into that German situation. Nazism is literally replete with demonic influence and occult from the East.

And I think today he is endeavoring to do that. You picked up the LA Times not many months ago and you saw a little deal that said full-page ad that Christ is already here. I think Satan, and now they say it's a Pakistani guy living in South London who won't reveal himself yet because the time isn't right. I think if Satan can find the right man in which he can infuse the demonic power that it takes to do what that man wants to do that he'll do it at any time and I think it could happen right now. I think we're living in a time when it could be antichrist's world.

One interesting thing came to my attention today as I was kind of studying this, it says that the antichrist will control the world. He'll control everything, buying and selling, economy, religion and everything, and there's a guy who's recently done a study and they've come to the point with computers now where they are talking about what they call chip implantation.

Let's say an attorney wanted to go into a court of law and you got into a hot case while you were in the courtroom and you wanted to draw on your resources. They're devising systems where they could plant a chip in your physical body by surgery which was linked by some kind of electronics to your brain and they can make chips compatible to the brain in terms of its stimuli. And there you could be in this place on, in a trial where you needed resources and my manipulating, however the mechanism works, you could draw into that chip implanted in your body all the information out of the local law library available on the same compatible kind of computer stuff and feed it to your brain and you'd have it instant like that.

DICK: We could have used that tonight.

JOHN: I didn't tell you, Dick, I've had it for years. It's called the Bible. Never let it get an arm's length away. But the point is we're living in a time when antichrist well could come and of course if you've been reading about the new age society and you've been reading about all the things that are going on around our world, there's a linking up of all these organizations.

As one attorney, who studied this, says, everything from Amnesty International to Zero Population Growth and 3,700 organizations in between that ostensibly are for political improvement, antinuclear stuff or poverty, for hunger, for all this are really interlinked in a tremendous massive organization run by demonic forces to capture the whole world, to provide a platform for antichrist to take over. And it's all happening right before our eyes. It's always happening because Satan is always trying to bring about the overthrow of Christ and God. So that's a very important area. Yes.

DON: Hi, my name is Don. I was reading recently in Ezekiel 40 and I had a question about the reason there will be sacrifices in the millennial kingdom.

JOHN: I'll tell you that's a very important question and it's often asked. In Ezekiel 40 to 48 you have a description of the temple that's going to exist in the millennial kingdom and you also have a rather interesting description of some sacrifices that are going to be taking place there. And I'm not going to spend time to go into all the detail.

There are some distinct differences from the old sacrifices, but nonetheless there are those sacrifices presented. I believe that they will have there the same significance that the Lord's Table has now. It's a point of remembrance and I think that when we enter into the kingdom it is going to be a time when we as the church share the Lord's Table. Jesus said, "Do this till I come and I do it together with you in my kingdom." Remember that? So I believe in the kingdom we'll carry on the celebration of the Lord's table as a memorial feast and I believe also that in the millennial kingdom Ezekiel is showing us that there will be memorial as well to the great testimony of God's covenant-keeping power and grace in the Old Testament and that'll be the remembrance of that through the sacrifices of the Old Testament.

DICK: Well I think the only thing I could add to that is Ezekiel 40 is not the only place that that's taught. Many many people think that's the only place in the Old Testament it's taught, but it's also taught in Zechariah 14. You can find it in Jeremiah 33:18 and Isaiah 56:7. Just a reference to those memorial sacrifices that will serve in that time with the bread and the cup does today.

JOHN: And even the Feast of Tabernacles of course Zechariah 14 says is going to be a part of it as well as castle rule remembrance. Okay.

CHARLES: I have two questions. When does the battle of Ezekiel 38 occur in relation to the rapture and John would you repeat your remarks on II Thessalonians 2:1 about the ____ are gathering

together unto him as it relates to pre-tribulation rapture?

JOHN: Let's just take one of those questions first. The first one relative to where Ezekiel 38 fits, the Armageddon passage. The debate is whether it's at the end of the tribulation or the end of the millennium. Do you want to take that one?

DICK: Charles I just would say this and time would not permit us to develop but many many think that it will occur at the end of the tribulation period. I personally think that it's talking not about Armageddon, which Revelation 16 talks about and will occur at the end of the tribulation, but I really think Chapter 38 and 39 are the Gog Magog of Revelation 20 and will occur at the end of the millennium.

And there are a number of hints in 38 and 39 that when the Gog Magog event comes that the peace and prosperity that could have only occurred in the millennium under the reign of Jesus Christ will be prevailing at the time of that element. So I personally would put it at the end of the millennium but would have no hard feelings or would not be mad at anybody who put it at the end of the tribulation period because it is a very difficult passage to understand, but regardless whether it's at the end of the tribulation or at the end of the millennium it is future and does not affect any of the basic things that we believe about future events.

JOHN: Yeah, it's important that it is future, secondly, that it does show the vindication of the people of Israel in God's plan, and thirdly that it does show that the Lord is going to conqueror His enemies. Now there are some who would say there is a Gog and Magog at the end of the tribulation and a greater Gog and Magog and those terms would be symbolic of the antichrist army at the end of the millennium as well. But because we can't be exact about that it's best, as Dick said, to give you an opinion on it rather than to be dogmatic.

DICK: Maybe just three verses I could give you. You could just write them down and look at them later: 38:8 and 38:11 and 38:14 talk about the peace and prosperity and all that comes, all that's existing when the Gog and Magog event come and why I would put it at the end of the millennium.

JOHN: Is that the part that talks about the unwalled villages?

DICK: Right. Exactly.

JOHN: Okay.

QUESTIONER: John, Dick, II Thessalonians 2---

JOHN: That's a popular chapter.

QUESTIONER: ---verse 11, please turn in your Bibles.

JOHN: What did he say?

DICK: Please turn in your Bibles. Please turn your tape to side two.

QUESTIONER: I wanted to say that for years.

JOHN: You want an explanation of 2:11?

QUESTIONER: No that's robbery by the penal code. No the diluting influence sent by God. Now the people that are hereafter we are raptured, which we certainly be. I've heard you make statements in tapes that people who, some people who have received the mark may or will be saved. That's not the question. The people who are here, who are left here, those that we love and love us can they go to our tapes, can they go to our Bibles or will that diluting influence prevent them from doing it.

JOHN: No. I think there will be a diluting influence on those who willfully reject, but I think every individual has his lifetime and, of course, if you read Revelation Chapter 7 and Revelation Chapter 14 you're going to find there that there are so many people saved during the tribulation that they're unnumbered. Revelation 7 says they'll be redeemed out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation and they're going to have to come from those who were under that diluting reality.

Now some people say will they be saved in the first half or the second half and maybe the consensus of folks is that they're going to be, the great revival comes in the second half. I'm not sure we can necessarily say that, but the point is the diluting influence, though it really comes strong in the second half after the revealing of the man of sin, will not prevent those with willing hearts from coming to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now people often ask the question, "Well when the rapture comes everybody's just gone. I mean we just go. Aren't people going to all of a sudden fall on their knees and say, 'Oh it happened," and so forth."' And I've always felt that that's not true. I don't see any wholesale revival taking place immediately in the tribulation period after the rapture of the church. I don't see any great stampede to come to the knowledge of Christ, but because I think there's a reason for that. Satan's got it all set up. Again back to the concept I mentioned earlier.

Ten years ago a young man came to me who had written a rock opera like Jesus Christ Super Star. It was called Elysium 1990. He'd written it by automatic writing. In other words a demon had dictated the whole thing to him and he had written it for the Shermer Music Company. The Shermer's, the husband and wife who headed Shermer Music at the time, by the way a major publisher of church music, were both mediums and in contact with demons and they were a part of the society of the Golden Age or the Mark Age Society, which was part of the new age demonic occultict thing that's

going on today. And he said to me, you know he came to Christ through a tremendously interesting series of events, and he said, "I want to bring a book to you." He brought me a book and I opened it up and it had in there an explanation that someday, it said, in order to usher in the Golden Age, in order to bring in the New Age for Society, we've got to eliminate the bad people who are known as orthodox. And just recently I listened to a tape by this Detroit attorney by the name of Constance Cumby, some of you know about her, she's been studying the New Age movement for years and is amazingly involved in its exposure and she said in there that in one of the books written by Marilyn Ferguson, who is a key articulator of this new movement, she says that one of the immediate plans in the New Age in bringing in the new kingdom, the Dawn of the Golden Era of Human Society is to eliminate again all the orthodox people.

So what will happen is when all of us are gone they're going to claim that we were the bad people and we got eliminated so the Golden Age could come. I mean that's all set in motion so I don't see any stampede coming to Christ. But at the same time I see a numerable number of people being redeemed during that period of time and they have to come out of the ranks of those who were unregenerated when it began.

DICK: Maybe I can just add to that and say that not only is that what they're going to teach, but they're going to go to the word of God for their proof text. They're going to go to Matthew 24. You remember there were two women at the mill, one was taken and one was left and Matthew 13 in the parables they gathered the fish and one was taken out from among the other and cast into the fire and the tares were taken out from among the wheat, which all on our overhead would all refer to this period of time at the second coming of Jesus Christ where the evil ones are taken out from among the righteous ones. But when the antichrist comes he's going to say the rapture was the time in which God took out of the world all the evil ones, which will be you and me that have trusted in Jesus Christ, and it's perfectly in harmony with the word of God and therefore we're the real thing. That's going to be utterly deceiving.

JOHN: Okay. We'll go back to the beginning.

Jerry: Hi John. My name is Jerry Marselino. In the tree judgments on the prophetic plan here, judgment seat of Christ, sheep/goat judgment, and the white throne judgment can you explain which people will be getting judged in each one of those judgments. Will it be the believers in the first place?

JOHN: Yes. The judgment of believers and maybe we ought to put this thing for a moment, which occurs at the time of the rapture were taking up, the reason we believe that is that we go to be with Jesus Christ to receive from Him, II Corinthians 5 says, "the things done in the body," when the Lord takes us to be with Him we're going to receive from Him the things done in the body. I Corinthians 4:3-4, but primarily 4 really details this. It says in 4 that "God will reveal the secrets of the heart and

then shall every man have praise from God." So it's a praise kind of judgment. Bama is the time of reward. An athlete winning a race gets up like at the Olympics on those platform deals and receives the reward. It's a reward time and it's strictly for believers. Strictly for those that are raptured, who are taken out of the earth as the redeemed people of God. They enter into the presence of Jesus Christ and are there rewarded for their service to Him.

Now we will be rewarded on the basis of our works, whether they are wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, or precious stones, but we may suffer loss, loss of reward, but not loss of salvation. That impossible. We may not receive a full reward, that's why John says, "Look to yourself that you lose not the things you have received but receive a full reward." So it's only the question of the degree of reward. There's no negative there. It's all positive. Every man receives praise from God to some degree or another. So that's only for believers.

When you come then to the sheep and goat judgment you will have there both believers and unbelievers because you're going to have Jesus then coming and when He comes to the earth He's going to find believers and He's going to find unbelievers, right? And He's going to take the goats and separate them out, that's the unbelievers sent into judgment and hell. He's going to take the believers and send them into His kingdom. "Come ye beloved of my Father. Inherit the kingdom." And so you have both there. The believers are sent into judgment, the unbelievers are sent into judgment, the believers enter into the kingdom and they're the ones that propagate and have children and populate the millennial kingdom.

Then at the end of that kingdom is the white throne judgment and again I believe that's only for unbelievers and they call all the dead from all over the world and they're brought before the Lord and the books are opened and all of those people are then judged according to the books.

So the first judgment is believers only. The last judgment is unbelievers only and the one in the middle involves both. Okay?

JERRY: Thank you.

DON: Hi my name is Don. I have two questions. One of them is an opinion question. There are scholars that are teaching in Revelation 17 of the false Christ, false church, that's the great harlot is the Roman Catholic church. I want your opinion on that if you want to give it. And the other question is in the millennium. Oh okay.

JOHN: Let's try that one first. Revelation 17, the reason that people believe that this has reference to the Roman Catholic church as the false church has to do with several things. Verse 4, arrayed in purple scarlet color, bedecked with gold, precious stones and pearls, and all this kind of stuff and, of course, they see in that the richness of the Roman Catholic church and they are rich. I mean they are

rich. They are very rich. I think, are they the leading land owner in the world? I think that's true. The Vatican ---

DICK: It's either first or second.

JOHN: They're either first or second in terms of owning land in the world. I think they're first. They are wealthy beyond imagination. There's even a bank, I don't know if you've ever heard of it in Vatican City called the Banko de Spiritu Sanctu, the Bank of the Holy Spirit. I've been there. I didn't go in, but I saw it and I mean the Holy Spirit that they've got in their system has got a lot of money, so that's part of it. That's part of the reason people see this as the Roman system.

And then also when you see verse 6, the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, they go back to the atrocities of the Roman system and the Inquisition and whatever other things caused the death of the true saints. And then when you see the final system coming together and you go down into verse 9 you have these seven mountains and everybody knows that Rome is the city built on seven mountains, and so it seems as though there is a rather apparent connection, at least in those terms.

But let me say this: People ask me, "Do you believe that the Roman Catholic Church is the harlot?" The answer to that question in my mind is no. I do not. I believe the Roman Catholic Church as a system may be at the very core in some organizational way, but as I see the harlot it is a comprehensive worldwide form of apostate religious worship that is left when Christ takes the true church. Look at it this way: there are only two religions in the world, the right one and what the wrong ones, and the wrong ones come in all kinds of packages, but they're all basically spawned by the same system. Now you remove the true church and Satan is going to be able to link up all of the false religious systems. It may be that Rome will sit at the seat of control in that regard and let's face it what other system in the world has such world wide appeal.

We watch the Pope as he travels around the world and we're astounded at the way people fall at his feet and respect and honor the man. He's like a god. So it may be that the Roman system is at the core of it, but I think it is a worldwide extensive system and I think the key to understanding that is the concept of Babylon because Babylon is a by word for evil and was originally spawned by the Babylonian mystery religions. It came out of the East really. I just think that Rome will be in it but so will liberal Protestantism be in it and so will all the other apostate and false religions of the world.

DICK: I can only add to what John has said. I personally believe that what we're seeing worldwide in a very general way is the stage being set by God for the events that are yet to come and you and I, in a sense, sit in the theatre of life waiting for the curtain call and we'll go up and those will be left in the audience are those that are unbelievers.

But I do see something happening in the world today in the last decade that has never occurred in all of world history that perfectly fits the scenario that the word of God says will occur in those last days and that's a global mentality. Today there's global transportation, there's global communication, we'll be able to service this worldwide empire of Satan, there's a one world mentality that's being spawned by the New Age movement that John just talked about, there's a one world religious system at least in place in Roman Catholicism that could easily be adapted to a world system for the antichrist. And I think al of that will be linked together experientially and emotionally by a growing one world experience, which will be speaking in tongues and apparent healings that will find its ultimate culmination in the signs, wonders and miracles done by the antichrist. And all of that comes together to make a very convincing and appealing to the unregenerate mind or the mind that's not taught by the Spirit of god.

JOHN: and what happening in religion, and I think that's true, what's happening in religion is the sublimination of doctrine and the rise of experience and experience is now the _____ of religions. So everybody talks about experience and you have this common charismatic experience that is occurring. Mormons speak in tongues, Catholics speak in tongues, Protestants speak in tongues, the people in the New Age who contact demons have had that same phenomena. You can go back to the Deltic Oracles when mediums and demons spoke so people in ecstatic languages and all that and it's a common thread that can tie them all together experientially. Okay we'll go on to the next group and we'll just move as fast as we can.

QUESTIONER: Hi John. I was just wondering, I know all people are sinners, but when Peter talks about being spotless and blameless I just want to know what he's talking about there.

JOHN: Well I can sure answer that. There's only one way you can ever be spotless and blameless and that's to be covered by the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And what Peter is saying in II Peter 3 is this: if you know all these things are going to come to pass, if you know all of these events are coming, if you know that the heavens are going to melt with the fervent heat and the elements are going to pass away, and if you know the day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night, and if you're aware of all of these things and where history is going, then boy you'd better take a look at your life and you'd better be ready for that day and the only way to be ready and avoid the judgment is to be spotless and blameless. And the only way to be spotless and blameless is to be covered by the righteousness of Jesus Christ and that's the way you get ready for the second coming. Okay.

BILLIE: My name is Billie. In Revelation 7 the tribes are listed for the sealing of the 144 thousand. Is there any reason that you know Scripturally that the tribe of Dan is omitted?

JOHN: Do you know the answer to that? I'm not sure.

DICK: Billie I think the answer to that question is this: if we look back at the book of Judges at the very end of the book of Judges Dan, the whole tribe falls into a very apostate and an abominable state and if would seem if we couple that together with what it says in Revelation 7 that God has in a sense left them out at this point in time in history as a punishment or retribution because of their utter sinfulness all the way back thousands of years ago. While the book of Revelation doesn't teach that exclusively that becomes the tension why is there an absence. But that is the very best answer we have in light of what we know in the word of God based on their very very overt sinful state early into the Promised Land and the history of Israel that God has left them out at the end.

JOHN: And I would just add to that, Billie, this footnote and that is that I believe we see Dan brought back into the ultimate blessing on the nation of Israel, but they're excluded from service. The 144 thousand are 12,000 chosen out of every tribe to minister during the tribulation to be used as evangelists. Dan loses out on the opportunity to serve but is included I think ultimately in the covenant blessing as God brings His people back.

KAREN: Hi, I'm Karen Talbot and I'm interested in how nuclear warfare and the threat of it fits into prophecy and revelation.

JOHN: You're interesting in how nuclear warfare fits into prophecy. Well the closest thing we can say to that comes in II Peter 3, I mentioned it a moment ago. And it says there in talking about the day of the Lord and the day of the Lord in II Peter 3 I think relates to the final judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ coming at the end of this world age and it says it comes as a thief in the night. How does a thief in the night come? It comes when you don't expect him, suddenly and so forth, and it says in this situation the heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are in it shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved *luo*loosed. Nuclear, and I'm not a scientist by any stretch of the imagination, but I understand that nuclear devastation occurs with an atom is split, it's shattered, it's broken up, it's loosed and some believe that this is a description of that event. The great noise, the elements melting, and that's exactly what happens in a nuclear holocaust, the burning up, and this all happens when everything is dissolved or loosed when the atom is split and fractured.

So it may well be that as God destroyed the earth one time through flood, He will destroy the earth a second time through fire and as He broke up the elements the first time, you remember He broke up the waters of the deep and they covered the earth and the waters of the sky and they came down on the earth, He may break up the very components of the earth itself in a holocaust of atomic devastation that will cause the emergence of a new heaven and a new earth in the eternal state.

I really don't think that nuclear destruction of the world can happen a part from God bringing it to pass. I don't think some little man somewhere is going to punch a red button and blow us all to bits and God is going to go, "Oh." I mean somewhere along the line I lost control of that thing. How did that guy get loose? No, I don't think that's going to happen. Now I do think that when you have in the book of Revelation described in the judgments of Revelation the death of three-fourths of the earth and another occasion the death of two-thirds of the earth it may well be that couldn't happen in such a brief time as it's described in happening unless there was nuclear warfare. So it may well be that some of the destruction of two-thirds of the earth and three-fourths of the earth that happens rather suddenly may well be because of nuclear devastation. But the final holocaust is under the control of God.

KAREN: Thank you.

JODY: Hi, my name is Jody. This summer I've run into some Christians that believe that at the rapture only some Christians will be raptured and they believe that only the real committed Christians will be raptured so it's a partial rapture. And that's the first time I ever heard of it and I wondered what your opinion on that was and if you had any Scriptures I could use to help to talk to them about it?

JOHN: Let me just say this and then I'll throw it to Dick for about a 30 second answer if he wants, but there is no Scripture period to teach a partial rapture. None.

DICK: Two thoughts. Can you top that? The Scripture that they go to are the second coming Scripture where some are taken and some are left and they've misunderstood that it's really the evil ones that are taken and the good are left not the good taken and the evil ones left. And secondly if a partial rapture were true, let's assume it is for just a moment, and the good are taken and those believers who one day will have eternal redemption left to somehow to work out their salvation during the tribulation, it makes the judgment seat of Christ or the Bama utterly nonsensical or a waste of time or effort on God's part. So not only as John said are there no Scriptures that teach it, secondly they misuse Scripture to arrive at it and third in so doing make ludicrous the whole Bama or judgment of Christ.

JOHN: I'll tell you another thing they do too. They set themselves in some kind of spiritual elite and the Bible tells us that God hates a proud heart. And I think that what that's doing is saying that you're the good ones and you're going to get to go and all these other ones are less than you are going to be left. Okay, any more over there? Joe, is that you?

JOE: Yeah it's me!

JOHN: Oh, no I'm sorry. I couldn't see you.

JOE: How are you doing, John? That's because I'm sitting down.

JOHN: Yes.

JOE: No, what I want to know is a lot of people running around especially in this country going, "What's going to happen to the U. S.? What's going to happen to us," which is kind of a weird thing that people in this country do. What is going to happen to us?

JOHN: For all of us I can't speak, Joe, but for you I can speak_____.

JOE: I know where I'm going. I'm going to be walking, but ---

JOHN: That's right. Amen.

JOE: But will we be aligned with Israel or will we be kind of just shunted aside or what?

JOHN: Right. Let me answer the question.

JOE: Okay.

JOHN: The Bible doesn't say. The Bible doesn't say anything about America. Now I've heard so many strange things. Once I used to hear that we were young lions. Did you ever hear that one, that we were the young lions and England was the big lion, but that was when England was really having her day and now England is barely a cat. We're sort of on the way to being about the same.

So, that whole deal doesn't work and then lately there's a guy named Taylor who goes around saying we're the description of Babylon in Revelation 17 and that's us and I think that's a rather narrow perspective as well. I really have to say that in terms of biblical prophecy we have no place in the Bible. We don't see ourselves anywhere, but the redeemed of us will be taken to be with Christ. The unredeemed that remain somehow will line up and it would most obvious to me that we would line up with the West or the revived Roman Empire somehow in the holocaust of Armageddon because our ties are so much with the European Common Market and all that. But as to specifics there really aren't any.

JOE: Thanks.

FLOYD: Yes, my name is Floyd and the question I wanted to ask is what is the relationship between Masac and Tubal and Magog because I heard a statement from a pastor and hope I had not misread him, but he was saying something about Magog and how Magog and his powers would somehow try

to get into the Holy Land, which is supposed to be Israel.

JOHN: Well,

FLOYD: Okay now you may want to correct me at that point.

JOHN: Basically those are geographical terms. They relate to a specific area of land that now occupies the territory of Russia. As to whether or not we can make those into exact, I think what's been done is Magog, or Mishek is Moscow, Tubal is Tolbosk, the old name of Leningrad, but as to, maybe Dick you want to handle that for a minute. But as to how or why they are related to ultimate prophecy I don't think we can take the geographic designation there and feed into that an over abundance of symbols.

DICK: I think the only thing I can add to that we do think we might have some hints as to where they lie geographically, but whether the current political situation such as the USSR, which currently encompasses those places, whether that will be in place when this occurs or not, particularly if it is at the end of the millennium then in fact the USSR will not be in business as we know it today. So we can place it geographically, but in terms of pinpointing their political allegiance at the moment to set up all of these currently dominating powers, Russia coming down from the north and Egypt coming up from the south, and China coming over from the east, it would be impossible to say with certainty that those are the very countries at this very time that these Scriptures speak of.

JOHN: Now geographically it is true that you have the north and that's Gog and Magog. That was the ancient name of that area and the areas of Misheck and Tubal may truly be ancient terms which have become Moscow or Tobaltz or Leningrad. He's saying as to who will possess those lands when that final holocaust comes we don't know, but that area will move down and we know the king of the south will move up. Politically right now Egypt is not the enemy of Israel at this particular juncture, but thing change very fast and then you have the army of the east that sweeps in and then you have the confederated ten elements of the Roman Empire and by the way the European Common Market does have ten nations now. If they get 12 it won't bother me. They're going to have ten by the time they get there. Somebody is going to drop out. But it's all beginning to form and all the pieces are there and it can happen. Keep in mind I believe the church is going to be raptured and then all that stuff really comes together in solidity. Okay?

FLOYD: Thank you very much.

JOHN: And we'll just go with these questions and then we'll stop at this point and make them rather quick if you could.

PAUL. Hi my name is Paul. I have a rather simple question. Where will the people who are raptured be during the millennium and when will we be changed? The Bible talks about us being changed.

JOHN: Well that's easy to answer. When the rapture happens we're changed. In the moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the trump. When the trump shall sound we'll be changed in an instant. And I believe at the rapture that's when we're transformed into that eternal body that I Corinthians 15 describes. We go to be with the Lord. For seven years we're up there. At the end of that seven-year period when He comes back in Revelation 19, at the end of the tribulation sees him coming back and with Him is saints. I think we come back with Him then and then we come down and we reign on the earth with Him for a thousand years. Okay. All right good.

QUESTIONER: Yes John, in the Old Testament prophecies it seems that the reemergence of Israel as a nation is always associated with the beginning of the new age and yet we're still living in the old age and Israel has reemerged as a nation. How soon is the end going to come according to the prophecy concerning Israel and how is that reconciled?

JOHN: I don't think you can necessarily tell how soon the end is going to come by looking at Israel. I think, and this may startle you to some degree, but I think that the regathering of Israel that is talked about in line with the millennium for the most part occurs at the time of the millennium. I don't think that the regathering we're seeing is the regathering, for example Ezekiel 36, the dead bones coming to life and all that, I think that's millennial. I think that's going to happen when the Lord regathers His people into their kingdom. But it certainly is a tremendously important preliminary to see them being regathered now because it tells us that God is still on schedule. I mean the other alternative would be that there was no nation Israel and no Jewish people and then the whole prophecy would be a wash. But the fact that they're there and they're in their land and they're duly constituted as a nation is an indicator that God is still dealing with them as a unique people. And they're there and they're able to be regathered, which will happen in the millennial kingdom. Okay? Yes.

CHRIS: Hi, my name is Chris. Based on Hebrews 9:27 it goes,

JOHN: Speak a little louder Chris.

CHRIS: Based on Hebrews 9:27, "It's appointed for man to die once and after this comes judgment." Now as saved I'm going to be with Jesus Christ, but my father who is unsaved assuming he doesn't accept Jesus Christ, when he dies does he, it seems like judgment is going to be fast right after you die and yet with the question that was touched earlier it looks like the Great White Throne judgment is like a thousand years.

JOHN: Sure. A very good question. The point is this: if a person dies without Jesus Christ they will go into judgment because they go out of the presence of God and whatever you title it or however

you describe it or whatever particulars are used to define it it'll be the absence of God and it'll be judgment. And so when a person, at any point in history from the start of man to today, they die and go out of the presence of God, that's judgment. The Great White Throne is simply the legal, final, eternal sentencing.

It's no different, for example, than when a criminal commits a crime and he's captured by the police and he's put in jail and he's there until he gets his trial. When he gets his trial that is affirmed and solidified for the full duration of the sentence. And that's exactly what happens in this case with unbelieving people. They go into jail, as it were, they go into the prison, they go into the dark place, the place of judgment and torment and they await the final sentencing, which changes nothing but it legalizes everything, and in God's mind no man is going to spend an eternity out of his presence who hasn't had his day in court, as it were, and proven to be guilty. That's the reason.

CHRIS: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hi John. I just want to first say this is exciting, I mean for the believer. I was wondering how Russia fits into all this.

JOHN: Well okay, just in a very brief way the Bible tells us that the king of the north is going to come against Israel and you can read it in Daniel Chapter 11 primarily, but the king of the north is going to come against Israel. Now we know that Russia is to the north and we know the territory of Gog and Magog is described in Ezekiel as described in Ezekiel is to the north and that's the territory of Russia, so it's very easy for us to assume that in the end time Russia is going to come against Israel. Now that wouldn't have been so easy for us to assume a hundred years ago when there was no Israel or 25 or 30 years ago when Russia was not an enemy of Israel.

But today we see the line's been drawn very clearly. Israel is a nation in the land and Russia is, believe me, they are absolutely hostel to Israel, more so than any country in the world. Why do you think they're trying to cut them off? The reason they're taking Afghanistan, the reason they're fomenting all the revolutions in Iran and Iraq and everywhere else, and the reason they work so hard around that Mediterranean area and Eastern Europe is so they can isolate the nation Israel, control the eastern port on the Mediterranean and therefore control the whole Middle East and have the oil glutch. And so, I believe that Russia wants Israel. I think they want them and I think they want them not only because of the economic and political things, I think they want them because they can't stand them. They're irritated by them.

QUESTIONER: Are they going to take over the Middle East or Israel---

JOHN: Well yes,

QUESTIONER: Before the second coming or after the second coming?

JOHN: During the tribulation time I believe they'll come down and this is either the tribulation or the kingdom time, but I see in the tribulation time that the nation of Russia coming down through Israel collecting along with other allies, Arab allies listed in the Scriptures even, collecting power from Egypt, coming back up to conquer Israel, the army of the east comes and at that very point Jesus Christ comes out of the sky and devastates all of them and sets up His kingdom. So I think they're going to try to take the Middle East without question.

Yes, maybe we have time for just this question. Okay?

QUESTIONER: I understand, well I don't understand, but I understand that we have one God who's--

JOHN: You don't understand if you understand is that right?

QUESTIONER: Okay, we have one God, a Trinity, but after the rapture say during the tribulation, the millennial, and the eternal state will we see a trinitarial distinction like the Father over here and Jesus over here and the Spirit over here? Just how much will we know then about their essence?

DICK: I'll be glad to answer that.

JOHN: I've been talking so much I've got to give you your chance. You're getting nervous here.

DICK: I'll take any opportunity.

JOHN: I just want you to be the last one. I want you to be last when we get out late.

DICK: So they can blame me for being late. 15 second answer, Revelation 22 and I think is the ultimate and the eternal state and it talks about both God and the Lamb, those whom we can see and there'll be no need of a sun or a moon because the Father and the Son will illuminate us. And I think the Spirit of God remains in the state in which He's always been and that is of pure spirit and has never, in a sense, been immediately visible to human beings, unless it will be in the eternal state. There will be Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as Spirit, Son, and His human glorified form and the Father in all of His radiant majesty that's been his form of existence from _____.

JOHN: No change, no change in eternity. They'll be what they've always been. Well, that was a great time. I enjoyed that. Did you enjoy that Dick?

DICK: If I can get my microphone off it'll be great.

JOHN: You know I'm drawn to this kind of occasion in my heart so very often because of the apostle's use of dialogue and reasoning out of the Scripture and questions and answers. I think it's so important that we do this. I'm excited about the return of Jesus Christ. He can't come soon enough. There's nothing in this world that I've discovered that's anything to be compared to the glory that's revealed in Him, right? And we kind of get trapped and we say now wait a minute. I don't want the Lord to come yet. I mean I'm not married. See. And until I get married, I mean one of my friends used to say, "Boy if marriage is as good as it is here what in the world is there in heaven?"

So, you won't miss anything or I've got so many plans here. We're going to have this really neat vacation and boy I hope I don't go to heaven before I get to Hawaii. I mean we get really silly about things like that because we have such mundane thought patterns. We ought to be all of us anxious that Jesus come and if you're anxious that he comes it's going to have two effects on you: one it's going to purify your heart because you're going to be ready to face Him, right? "And he that has this hope in him purifies himself." And two: you're going to start to care about the people who don't know Him because you don't want them left behind for the holocaust that awaits.

So when the hope of the second coming really touches your heart and gets past your intellect and your fancy and it grabs your heart it'll have two effects. It'll purify your heart and give you zeal for those that don't know Jesus Christ. So, take your prophetic temperature and see whether you're just wanting to sit back and speculate about prophecy or whether you're really looking for the coming of Jesus Christ. Very important!

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