

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Revelation - Are these things Real? Actual? Literal?

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 0 0] Continuing our exposition of the last book in the Bible, the book of the Revelation, and we have already delved in to Revelation chapter 8.

But I do feel that we have been deficient in satisfactory explanation of the contents of that chapter. So it is going to be necessary for us to return to that, at least for this present session, and then we will attempt to move on.

My goal originally was to attempt to take a chapter a week, but that is not materializing, and I think you can understand why. But perhaps there is no question that surrounds the book of Revelation more than how are these things to be interpreted?

What is to be the chronological order in which the events are going to transpire? And maybe there is an even greater question as to the book, regarding the book, that would exceed that of the chronology, and that is, as indicated in the bulletin this morning, are these things real?

Actual? Literal? Are these descriptions that are given really accurate as to what is going to occur?

[1 : 3 6] Or is it all just figurative language? And because this is such a vital, important subject, we're going to spend a little more time on it.

Hermeneutics is the art and science of interpreting the Bible. And as has often been said, you can make the Bible say anything you want to. It's all in how you interpret it. So we are going to emphasize the need for approaching the Scriptures in a literal manner.

And as I've said before, of course, this does not mean that you take everything in the Bible literally. And by the way, that is the charge that is often laid at the feet of evangelicals.

They take the Bible so seriously, they take everything it says literally. And as I've said before, that's complete nonsense. I don't know anybody who does that. But there is a very real need to take a literal approach to the Bible.

And we'll get into more of that even in the morning session. And I do hope that we'll have time for a Q&A.; And I will also mention that in connection with the subject of hermeneutics, the art and science of interpreting the Bible, I think we began that in volume 28 or 29 of Christianity Clarified.

[3 : 0 0] Anyway, they are on the table in the rear. And if you're interested in pursuing that, and everyone ought to be, because biblical interpretation is where it is.

If we say we really accept and respect the authority of the word of God, then we owe it to the God who has given us that word to know how to approach it and how to understand it.

And it's a lot simpler than what a lot of people would make it. And the reason for that is because God wants his word to be accessible and understandable.

It is not a book filled with riddles and puzzles and conundrums. It is a book of declaration, of revelation, of exposition.

And that's what we want it to be to use. So, if you haven't already, would you turn in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 8 and follow along as Gary reads the portion. And then we'll give you some hermeneutical aspects of it as we move on through.

[4 : 10] Revelation chapter 8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 2. 3. 3. 4.

4. 5. 5.

5. 5. 5. 5. 5. 6.

6. 6. 6.

6. 7. 7.

[5 : 43] 7. 7. 7. 8. 8. 9. 9. 10. 10. 10. 10.

11. 10. 11. 12. 13. 11. 13. 14. 14. 15.

15. 16. 18. 15. 16. 16. 18. 16. 16. 17.

15. 17. 18. 18. 18. 18. 19. 20. fell from heaven, burning like a torch.

And it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The name of the star is called Wormwood.

[6 : 41] And a third of the waters became Wormwood. And many men died from the waters because they were bitter. The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it and the night in the same way.

Then I looked and I heard an eagle flying in mid-heaven saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.

To say the least, this is a very extraordinary and sobering account that is given.

So much so that it is understandable that many people in reading this just cannot bring themselves to accept the literality of it.

And they feel that it is a literary exaggeration. That this isn't talking about a real world and real things that are going to happen.

[8 : 11] This is just a poetic kind of expression about good winning out over evil. And that's pretty much the way they leave it.

But I think that that is a tremendously deficient way of approaching the scriptures, especially given the fact that God is quite capable of saying exactly what he means and meaning exactly what he says.

It is true. There are great and numerous examples of figurative language in the Bible. And we will be noting some of that.

But I hope you will get this indelibly implanted in your brain. And that is this. By far and away, the vast majority of the Bible makes perfectly good sense when you take it at face value, just the way it was intended.

The book, inspired of God through 40 different penmen, was never intended to be esoteric, mysterious, so deep that you can't search it out.

[9 : 32] A riddle, obfuscation, none of those things. The Spirit of God through these human authors was capable of using and did use in the vast majority of cases great plainness of speech.

For the simple reason that the intent of the one who inspired the Word and those who wrote the Word were giving it, providing it to people for their understanding, for their comprehension.

You cannot intelligently respond to anything that you do not understand. You have to understand what is being written before you can fashion a response.

Even if it's a response of disobedience, you have to have some idea of what it is you are disobeying. So, that is why we are committed to the idea that even though the Bible does use beautiful, poetic, and figurative language in a lot of places, Old and New Testament, still, it makes perfectly good sense when it is taken at face value just as it seems to come, as it does come.

There is a verse in Habakkuk 3 and verse 2 and the writer prayed that God would in wrath remember mercy.

[10 : 57] In wrath remember mercy. I have no question that God does that. He tempers His judgment with mercy.

And that means that God withholds at least some portion of what is due when He doles out punishment.

And if chapter 8 is an example of God in wrath remembering mercy, I cannot imagine what it would be like with wrath without mercy because this is really something.

As you read this content where it talks about a third of this being destroyed, a third of mankind dying, and so on, this is all unspeakably horrendous.

It is conflagration beyond all historic proportions for human comprehension. Now, before we look to the text, I have some propositions that I want to insert here so that you can get these at the frontal lobe of your mind and be thinking about it as we move through the chapter.

[12 : 14] We stand aghast at the description that clearly depicts a loss of life beyond any time ever recorded in human history.

And that includes all of the world wars. In fact, this includes all of the world wars combined. In fact, this includes all of the world wars and all of the other wars, not world wars, combined.

And what is to be our reaction to all this? Well, it's certainly not glee, not gloating, not enjoyment in any sense, but I want you to hear me carefully now because this is not going to sound right, but I'm convinced that it is.

As we read these things and realize who is bringing this destruction on humanity and why it is being brought upon humanity, as I've said, we cannot be happy about it.

We cannot gloat in it. There is no enjoyment in any sense, but hear me well when I say, neither should there be any great regret.

[13 : 33] Now, I know that sounds like a very cold and hard position to take, but I am satisfied that it is not only completely merited, it is required.

And the reason is simple. how can we regret the divine, perfect, and justly deserved outcome of it all?

That's what this is going to result in. It is going to result in the divine, perfect, justly deserved outcome of what mankind has been accumulating for the past several centuries.

This conflagration in Revelation 8, as well as those that are going to follow in this book, they are all expressive of the utterly righteous wrath of a perpetually offended God.

We need to keep that in mind. this will be planet earth's population experiencing and suffering long overdue righteous indignation of the deity.

[14 : 55] This coming seven-year event, called the tribulation, is unparalleled in all human history. believers will not be able to feel remorse or sadness at the human devastation because to do so would equal charging God with unwarranted vengeance and he will have none of it.

God is not going to bring unjustified wrath upon an evil world. It will be fully justified. And we ought to be able to see it from that perspective.

Even though there is something within our being, just from the sake of the milk of human kindness, that finds this kind of thing kind of abhorrent.

It offends our humanity. And in a very real sense, I should think that it would offend the sensibility of all decent humanity.

But we need to keep in mind that the source that is providing this judgment is providing it solely on the basis of a precise and deserved retribution.

[16 : 21] In other words, the long and the short of it is humanity has a coming. God's wrath will be ameliorated by God's mercy.

The earth's inhabitants will suffer what they do because they have earned and deserved it. Humanity, generation after generation, has stored up wrath unto themselves to be recompensed on the great day of God's wrath.

This is what this book called The Revelation of Jesus Christ is all about. That plus the reality that righteousness will prevail over evil.

The descriptions given throughout this book are often hard pressed to find lodging in our intellect. Why is this? It is because these events as they are described are so unlike anything we have experienced.

It is hard to accommodate things that are utterly foreign to our demand for processing. In reading the events that will transpire as depicted in these pages, many have sought to take refuge, even comfort, by persuading themselves that these events are surely not literal.

[18 : 00] It doesn't really mean that. Unable to deal with the literality, the actuality of what is spoken, many have concluded that the entire affair of the Revelation is merely hyperbole, that is, an intentionally exaggerated account that dramatizes just one thing, and that is the ultimate triumph of good over evil, and it goes to the extreme found herein in order to express it.

Well, there's no question, but what it is a depiction of the final triumph of good over evil, but you need to understand that the methodology and the events that are going to transpire in order to reach that end are very literal and very real.

Compounding the confusion is the reality that the Bible does make frequent use of figurative language, wherein expressions are not to be interpreted literally, nor were they ever intended to be.

We began exploring the science and art of hermeneutics on Christianity Clarified, volume, I think it was 29, which if you haven't heard, you should, if you are serious about understanding what the Bible means.

Understanding that most of the Bible, Old and New Testaments, is to be approached from a literal point of view because most of it was intended to be taken literally.

[19 : 40] And we also understand that the Bible frequently utilizes figurative language, not to be taken literally. The Revelation employs both literal and figurative.

The task, the challenge, is to determine which the human writer of Revelation, who was the Apostle John, under the inspiration of God, is utilizing.

So how are we to know when we come to these descriptions? Now, is this does it really mean that? Does it mean what it says it means? Or is it couched in just a poetic, figurative language that was never intended to be taken literally?

And some have come to that conclusion. Matter of fact, I would even almost go so far as to say that probably is the majority opinion. thing. We have already and frequently noted that John uses the figure of speech called simile in many of his descriptions.

And by the way, that was one of the figures that we covered on Christianity Clarified. And the figure of speech called simile, from which our word similar is also taken, always utilizes one of two words.

[20 : 59] And John uses both of these words repeatedly. It is the word like. when he sees something and he describes it, he says it is like.

It is like the face of a lion. He doesn't say it's the face of a lion. He said it is like the face of a lion. And the reason John is using these words like and as is because what he is seeing, he has never seen before.

He cannot call it by a familiar name. Because what he is viewing in the revelation that is being given him, he has no reference box for.

He's never seen it before and he cannot explain it. So the best he can do is give you a description of what it reminds him of. It looks more like this than anything else I can think of.

And he does that over and over again all through the book. and the two words that are similes, the word as, it was as such and such.

[22 : 10] It was like such and such. It doesn't say it was, but it was like. But it reminds me of. Simile is always expressed the same way with those two words.

You visit the book of Revelation and if you want an interesting study, just start reading Revelation chapter 1, verse 1, and every time you come to the word as or like, make a note of it.

You'd be surprised what you'll end up with. Today, here in Revelation chapter 8, we will explore the problem that results from abandoning the use of the literal meaning usually because we perceive it as being too extreme.

Well, it can't mean that. You talk about destroying, you talk about the loss of life of a third of the world's people.

That's crazy. Do you know how many people there are in the world? We are at six billion, that's with a B, six billion plus.

[23 : 26] You're talking about two billion people dead? That's crazy. It could never happen. Well, it's going to happen.

It's going to be very literal. In my library, my shelves are lined with numerous friends that I have.

Some of them go back to the 1600s. Some of them are more recent. And if I were to tally up all of the commentaries and references that I have regarding the book of the Revelation, I'm sure they would number in excess of a hundred.

And there's very little agreement among many of them books. They are all over the map. They take all kinds of positions. Some we would consider really far out, some fanciful.

And I'm going to give you some examples from one of my favorite authors, particularly in connection with this book of the Revelation. and out of all of those that I have in my library, I've poured them over and checked a great many and I've been doing this for the last almost 50 years.

[24 : 50] And I have arrived at two. And I suspect that there are more that I probably haven't examined as thoroughly as I might have. But there are two that seem to be more consistent and more on track and more logical in their approach than any others.

And I've already referred to one of them to considerable degree. That was Dr. Henry Morris. I introduced him in an earlier chapter and referred you to his credentials regarding engineering.

He taught hydraulic engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute for a number of years. He is a man with impeccable scientific credentials. He is a thoroughgoing believer. He has written an excellent commentary on the book of Genesis and on the book of Revelation.

He has in a wonderful fashion pointed out the connection, the undeniable connection between the first book of the Bible and the last book of the Bible, which is certainly not a coincidence.

And do I agree with everything that Dr. Morris has said? No, of course not. What's more, Dr. Morris has been with the Lord for quite some time now, and he would not agree with everything that he wrote either now.

[26 : 12] But he thought it made pretty good sense at the time. I've often said, I've never read a book apart from the Bible that I agree with 100%. And even if I were to write a book myself, probably 10 years from now I would find elements in it that I would no longer agree with.

But that's just the nature of humanity, and that's the way it is. What Dr. Bollinger has contributed in his examination of the book of Revelation, I think, is quite remarkable.

E.W. Bollinger, he's an Englishman, 19th century, and I'm going to give you some of the excerpts that he has included regarding Revelation chapter 8, and I want you to get a feel for how important it is to be consistent in our approach and interpretation of the scripture and approaching it from a literal standpoint, and I'm also going to give you some examples of what happens when you don't.

And that will be quite enlightening. So we're going to start with some comments that he has regarding verse 5, because as we read these things unfolding in the Revelation, this by human standards, by earthly standards, this is all really far out stuff.

I mean, this is, I am not a Star Wars fan, but some of this stuff can approach that, and it gets pretty weird, particularly when you bring into play angelic beings and supernatural events that are going to play a very direct and emphatic part in these last days.

[28 : 08] And it is going to be something the likes of which humanity has never been exposed to in the past. And yet, it is almost going to be commonplace during this great tribulation period. It is remarkable. It is going to be, it is going to be dropping planet earth into a completely unfamiliar venue where it has never been before.

And the angel took the censer and filled it from the fire of the altar, and he cast the fire into the earth, and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

Dr. Bollinger says, we have a similar scene in Ezekiel 10.2. I'm not going to stop and look at these references because we simply don't have time, but they will be in the recording and they'll be available for anybody who at their leisure wants to look up the references, and I suggest you do that and make an excellent study for you.

We have a similar scene in Ezekiel 10.2 where the fire is taken from between the cherubim under the throne and scattered over the city of Jerusalem in token of its destruction.

[29 : 22] So here, that on which the fire falls is to be consumed and destroyed. This is the answer to the prayers which had been so solemnly offered.

These are the prayers of the saints who were under the altar, who asked the question, how long before our blood is avenged, how long before those who martyred dust are going to get their comeuppance and that is the purpose for the hurling of the fires from the censer onto the earth.

You can consult Ezekiel 39 and verse 6, Ezekiel 38 and verse 22, Hosea 8 and verse 14, and compare Deuteronomy 32 and verse 22.

This very scene is prophesied in similar words in Psalm 18, verses 4, 6, and 8. The floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God. He heard my voice out of his temple and my cry came before him even into his ears. And then the earth shook and trembled.

[30 : 41] The foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils and fire out of his mouth devoured.

Coals were kindled by it. Now, this is a poetic expression that is assigning this kind of response to the deity, but it is also an indication of what had already happened historically about the fire, the foundations, and so on.

In verse 6, and the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made themselves ready that they might sound them. The prohibition of 7-1 is now about to be removed.

Twice the sevenfold enunciation is given and the reproach of Psalm 89 verses 11 and 12 is about to be rewarded sevenfold in answer to the prayers which had been offered.

Now, all of these scripture verses I'm giving are nothing more than an indication that all of this stuff is connected. You understand everything in the Bible is connected to everything in the Bible.

[31 : 56] There is an interconnection between everything. It is all one grand revelation from Genesis to Revelation but within that everything belongs to everything else.

There is an undeniable connection between everything in the Bible. As I've often said, everything in the Bible is connected to everything in the Bible. This heavenly vision is a vision showing what will one day literally take place.

If they are symbols, they are symbols of solemn realities. If they are figures, they are figures not of speech but of facts.

Just as the judgments of God at the top of heaven's plague was hail and fire mingled with the hail. Exodus 9 verses 22 through 28 and plants of the earth were smitten verses 31 and 32.

Here blood was mingled with the fire and hail. Now this really gets bizarre because we look in vain to find something to compare it with and it's difficult but there are some comparisons that can be made.

[33 : 17] Follow me if you will. Dr. Bollinger says we are aware that a majority of interpreters maintain that the results of this first trumpet are not literal.

They seem as anxious to get rid of the miraculous and the supernatural from interpretation as the rationalists are to eliminate it from inspiration. But why unless the plagues of Egypt also were not literal plagues we cannot understand.

Again we ask why should not these be literal judgments which are to come on the earth? what is the difficulty? God has said concerning the events of the day of the Lord Joel 2 and verse 30 God has said I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath blood and fire.

Now how he will do this we are not told here. But we are told that he will do this. To explain this away is to manifest a want of faith in the power of God and in the word of God.

Such things have taken place on earth. Why should they not take place again? Cicero Roman historian tells us that word was brought to the Roman Senate on one occasion that it had rained blood and that the river Atreduus had flowed with blood.

[34 : 54] Well now they called it blood. Was it blood? Or did it look like blood?

Because you must understand one of the other principles of the Bible is that it uses what scholars call phenomenal language. And that means it addresses things according to appearance science not in accordance with scientific accuracy.

But it addresses things from the standpoint of the way they seem to be. And we do this all the time. And nobody thinks of it as being inaccurate. We talk about the sun setting.

Well, now, really, you need to be corrected there. Don't you understand that the sun doesn't actually set? That it is the earth moving in its 24 hour cycle and it looks like the sun as well.

Nobody is going to quibble about that. We know that scientifically the sun doesn't set. The earth moves. But we talk about the sunset and the sunrise. This is what we mean by phenomenal language.

[36 : 01] And the Bible does the same thing. It very often states and calls things as they appear rather than trying to delve into a scientific explanation thereof.

And for some, this is, for them, it is an occasion to critique or to ridicule the Bible because it isn't scientifically accurate.

Well, it doesn't try to be scientifically accurate. It just tries to express things truthfully from the way they appear to man. On August 17, 1819, now that's before us all, but it was included in a time when they were keeping records of some sort.

August 17, 1819, Dr. Seiss tells us that Captain Ross saw the mountains at Baffins Bay, covered for eight miles with blood-red snow, many feet in depth, and Saussure found it on Mount St.

Bernard in 1778, that Raymond found it on the Pyrides in France in Summerfield, and Summerfield in Norway. Why may it not be seen again?

[37 : 15] Now, we are not suggesting that it was actual blood, the kind that contains red and white corpuscles from the human body, but that it looked like blood, and from appearances you would call it blood, blood-red.

The historical interpreters differ so much among themselves that we may well ask, which one of them are we to believe? It is this very diversity which has caused so many earnest students to put the apocalypse, that's the book of Revelation, aside in despair.

And you would be surprised how many great exegetes of the Word of God would not provide an exposition of the Revelation.

Our object in writing is that they may take up the book again with hope, asking them only to believe God. It will be better to err in such simplicity of faith in the word of God than to adopt the most plausible scheme based upon the opinion of man, and which differs not only from God, but from every other human interpretation.

For example, Eliot says, that's a commentator, says that this first trumpet denotes the wars of Alaric the Goth and Radegeis the Vandal against the Western Roman Empire.

[38 : 40] Well, you can get that, can't you? Don't you see that connection with the first trumpet? Isn't that obvious to you that that's what it's all about? It's the wars of Alaric the Goth and the Radegeis the Vandal against the Western Roman Empire.

Plains the nose on your face. What does that call for? It calls for a really active imagination and a lot of creativity to get that out of it.

Dr. Bollinger says, we should never have guessed this ourselves. I guess not. There is nothing about this or even like it in scripture. John saw one result. Mr.

Elliot gives two. John saw the blood-bred rain of hail and fire from heaven. This gives human blood on earth. One says trees. Now, this just goes to show you what you open yourself to when you depart from the plain, simple, ordinary, literal sense of the text.

Westean says, trees mean fortified cities. Well, of course. How could I not see that?

[39 : 54] Now, I'm being facetious, of course, but isn't that preposterous? This is the extent that men will go to to escape the word of God saying what it means and meaning what it says.

We just can't accept the literality of it. It just can't mean that. So, what do the trees really mean then? Well, the trees mean one says trees mean princes and great men and grass, you know, the kind you have to mow in the summer.

Grass means men's power. glory. Don't you get the connection? Of course you don't. Neither do I.

You really have to work at it. But do you know something? If you take it at face value, there isn't much work to it. It's just a matter of believing it and accepting it because the source is unimpeachable.

Others say by trees are meant apostles and great doctors. By grass, common Christians.

[41 : 17] Alfred holds that it appears rather to indicate a general character of the judgments than to require any special interpretation in each particular case. To all this, we have one simple remark to make.

We prefer to believe God's own special interpretation of his own judgments in the plain literal sense of the words. 8.8 The second angel sounded his trumpet, and as it were, a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea.

I don't know about you, but I've never seen anything like that. A great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.

Now, I do not know for sure because the text does not say, but my suspicion is that the sea that is in question here is probably the Mediterranean. After all, that's where these things are all centered.

And a third of the sea became blood, and there died a third of the creatures which were in the sea which had life, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

[42 : 27] It does not say it was a mountain. John uses simile. He doesn't say that it was a mountain. And if you look at the text, he uses that word, and as it were a great mountain.

It was like a great mountain. This shows us that it was not to be taken literally as well as what is. It was something which resembled a mountain.

John does not say he saw a volcano, as some assert. What John saw was a fiery mass like a mountain cast into the sea and turning it into blood.

Now this cannot be literal, exclaimed the interpreters. But again we ask, why not? In one of the plagues of Egypt it is written that Moses lifted up his rod and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.

Exodus 7:20. In Psalm 105, verse 29, it is written, he turned their waters into blood. So, Psalm 138, verse 44.

[43 : 55] The poorest and humblest reader can understand this. You know something? That's the person for whom the Bible was written. It wasn't written for the intellectual elites.

It was written for the ordinary, everyday, average guy. that's the one for whom the Bible was written. We would call him the common man, not the expert.

It does not require education in order to believe God. All it needs is a spiritual understanding and a childlike mind. So say John, 1 John 5:20 and 1 Corinthians 2:14.

It does not require wide reading to understand God. It requires faith. To follow what man says, it requires only credulity. Which are we to believe of the following interpretations?

Now I want you to understand that the scholars who have offered these interpretations are head and shoulders above the average individual in their learning, in their understanding of original languages, in their intellect, in their education, and everything.

[45 : 03] These are generally considered by the world to be genuinely brilliant people. not your ordinary everyday plow pusher.

These are the educated elite. One interpretation asks us to believe. The fiery mountain means Satan. The sea means the nations.

The dying of the fish denotes the persecution and slaughter of Christians. the wreck of the ships denotes the extinction of congregations.

Now we look at that and we say, how do they get that? How do they arrive at that? The way they arrive at it is by first of all saying it can't be literal.

It can't mean what it says. It's got to mean something else. There has to be a hidden underlying meaning which only the really astute can arrive at.

[46 : 15] And this is what they arrive at. Another system says the mountain was generic with his vandals forced by the Huns from their native seat.

The sea was their plunging through France and Spain into Africa settling themselves in the conquered territory. Is not this a perfect example of the foolishness of humanity rejecting the wisdom of God?

And we see it all, hey, we are immersed in this kind of thinking in our world today, in our culture today, where by and large there is nothing but contempt for the spiritual.

What else has changed? The destruction of fish really means their depredations on the neighboring islands and shores of the Mediterranean.

A third system tells us that the sea is the church with its baptismal waters. You've got to get baptism in there somewhere. The mountain is some great heresy.

[47 : 26] The blood is the corruption by deadly air. The destruction of fish is the destruction of souls. The wreck of ships is the overturning of churches. Another system is that the sea is the sea of Galilee, but for Palestine, the mountain is emperor of Espatian.

The fishes are the Jews. The ships are the cities of Palestine. The fifth scheme says, no, no, you guys have it all wrong. What it is, the sea is pure doctrine. The mountain is the pope.

The fire is Episcopalian ambition. The blood red waters means the introduction of false doctrine. The fishes are the monks and the ecclesiastes.

The ships are the bearers of the gospel. The sixth says, the mountain is Rome. You see, all of these so-called experts, they all vehemently disagree with each other. But there is one thing that they all agree on.

Can't take it literally. Isn't that amazing? Isn't that amazing? You can't believe it literally, but you can take what they say it is and take it to the bank.

[48 : 33] Isn't that amazing? William Kelly would have us believe him. He says, the second blow supposes a great change. It falls on the sea and so refers not to that sphere which is under special and settled government, but to that which is or will then be in a state of confusion and anarchy.

And again, the mountain burning with fire represents a system of power itself under the judgment of God and the occasion of judgment to others. Again, we ask, is it not better to simply believe God?

Is it not easier to understand what he says? But you know, some just cannot bring them. They feel that they are lowering themselves to an unacceptable level to just believe what the text says.

I'm smarter than that. God help us. All Bible readers and commentators believe that waters were turned to blood in the plagues of Egypt.

Why not believe that they will be so turned again? If God had said ink instead of blood, we would believe him. All things are possible with him. Indeed, it is quite recently that we were told that this had happened or something like it.

[49 : 55] The Daily Express, published in London, May 19, the year 1900, says, great consternation has been caused at Santa Cruz by the sea turning suddenly black.

and given an extract from the San Francisco Examiner, which says, there are many theories as to the cause of this remarkable change.

One man thinks it is due to the tides. Another says the turbid waters are the result of a submarine upheaval in the blue mud of the channel. A third believes the water is full of animal culi, the whale food.

Still another states that a storm from the ocean has muddled the water and talks wisely too of marine earthquakes and the like. They all agree that the whole bay was never before like the sea of ink it is at present.

In our day, the sea can be turned black, why cannot it be as easily turned red? Have you ever heard of a red tide?

[51 : 01] It's a very deadly thing. It doesn't occur real often, but when it does, it is curtains for marine life because it cannot survive in it. It is toxic algae that just kills everything that it comes in contact with and it has a mysterious reddish hue to it and it's called the red tide and it's occurred right here in the United States multiple times over the years and there are plenty of records of it.

In the manner, and this is one I want to leave you with, in the manner, cleaving in two of the Mount of Olives, in Zechariah 14 and verse 4.

And I'm going to turn to that because that is too important to pass up. It's in Zechariah, and yes, eventually we will get to it because it is, this passage in Zechariah 14 is connected to Revelation.

that should not surprise us. And we read, where am I? Verse 4.

And in that day, in that day, and that day refers back to verse 1 when it says, Behold, a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you.

[52 : 31] It is that day that verse 4 is referring to. In that day, his, that is Christ's feet, will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east.

And the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north, and the other half toward the south.

And you will flee by the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Ezel. Well, what do you think of that? This is a content here to keep you until that I won't.

I didn't want to mark the book up, but I probably should have done some underlining, and it's not.

Okay. In like manner, the cleaving in two of the Mount of Olives in Zechariah 14, 4, is regarded by most commentators as being quite beyond a literal interpretation.

[54 : 08] And yet, a few years ago, the illustrated London news gave some interesting drawings of the scene of the great volcanic eruption in the North Island, New Zealand.

It will be remembered that the outburst of volcanic energy began by the explosion of Mount Terawara, a mountain which had no crater upon it, and showed no signs of recent activity.

Terawara was split in two by the sudden opening of a great chasm, or line of craters, four miles long, five hundred feet wide, and in many places, four hundred feet deep.

Wow. This is rather recent. What happened in that case may easily happen again, not that we require or ought to require any such aid to our faith, for we believe that God means exactly what he says in this and in other prophecies.

I want to give you one more before I open it for Q&A.; The third angel sounded his trumpet, verses 10 and 11.

[55 : 25] And there fell from heaven a great star, burning as it were a torch. Did you get that? As it were a torch. It didn't say it's a torch, but John says that's what it looked like to me, more like a torch than anything else.

And it fell upon a third of the rivers and upon the fountains of waters, and the name of the star is called Wormwood. And the third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter.

The stars should fall from heaven is the subject of prophecy, 613. And here is one special star, smaller evidently than the burning mountain. When we are distinctly told it was like a torch, there is no occasion to introduce the idea of a comet, as Dr.

Sice does, or a meteor, or anything else. As a torch, it was burning only at one end, and not burning all over as the mountain was.

This is quite clear as it stands. It requires no explanation if we believe what is written. On the other hand, the ideas of historical interpreters are in wild confusion and mutual opposition.

[56 : 42] As to the star, the interpretations include Muhammad, Simon Magus, the magician in the book of Acts, Montanus, Arius, Serenthus, Pelagius, among Ecclesiastes, those who hold it to be a military person, some say it was a Jewish leader like Eleazar or Josephus, others bring in poor old Genseric again, he gets blamed for a lot, or Attila, and a long series of wholesale murderers.

But a few questions will dispose of them all. What was the heaven out of which they fell? What was their fall? How did they burn? How did they embitter the fountains and rivers and make them bitter like themselves?

When were they called by the name Wormwood or Absinthe? There is no reasonable answer to these questions. It is a very sad reflection to think that with so many, these definite and particular revelations of the Holy Spirit may mean anything.

We ourselves might add another interpretation, and however extravagant it might be, men would not mind. Some would probably receive it. But we dare to commit the unpardonable sin of adopting a principle of interpretation which requires us to believe that these things mean exactly what God says, and we are consequently looked on and considered as cranks for doing so.

Isn't that amazing? They can come up with all of these bizarre theories and ideas, off-the-wall stuff, none of which agree among themselves, and yet they say that those who take it at face value literally are to be pitied.

[58 : 28] Amazing. Absolutely amazing. And yet, events somewhat similar have happened.

In the annual register for 1823, page 683, we read that, as a result of a volcanic explosion, showers of sand darkened the sky, and the seawater became thick, and river water assumed the color of beer, and was so extremely bitter as to be unfit for use.

This was in the Aleutian Islands. That's just off the coast of Alaska. And it is quoted by Mr. Govett in his Apocalypse Expanded.

Something like this was foretold as God's punishment of his people in Jeremiah 9, verses 13-15. Behold, saith the Lord, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

Jeremiah 23-15, Lamentations 3-15. The result of one of the plagues of Egypt was that the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river.

[59 : 41] Exodus 7, verses 18-24. That was real and literal, and so will this be. And on and on it goes.

Now again, I want to emphasize, nobody is saying, because of these examples that we have given you, everything in the Bible is to be taken literally. That is bald nonsense.

But everything in the Bible is to be approached from a literal standpoint. And as the old saying goes, when the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense.

By and large, you will find that taking the text at face value is not only the simplest, but it is the most logical interpretation when you bring into focus the remaining, the balance of the Word of God and see how it all fits together.

It is a beautiful thing. And it is just as the Spirit of God intended it to be. It is intended to communicate. It is intended to be understood.

[60 : 46] It is not an obfuscation whereby we scratch our heads and say, I have no idea what this means. That is not communication. The Bible is a book of communication.

And I am so grateful that it is. So we are going to consider chapter 8 as complete. Well, I'm not going to use that word.

But we'll just say adequately treated from this point of view at this time. But it's not complete. We can't complete anything. But we will happily entertain any questions or comments that you may have now.

And if we've got a roving microphone out there, ah, yes, and a pair of young, energetic legs to carry it. Okay. Anybody with a Q&A, feel free. Now, if you folks still start taking advantage of these opportunities, I'm going to stop getting them.

Okay, Ron, Ron Ziltz up here has a comment or a question. You know, there's an old saying among preachers, and that is that when you have an opportunity for Q&A; and nobody has any questions, it means one of two things.

[61 : 53] It means that you have communicated the materials so thoroughly and so completely that you have answered every possible question and nobody has any questions. Or it means that you have so thoroughly confused and confounded them that they can't think of an intelligent question.

Okay, Ron? I just wanted to say, well, in learning, you know, about Revelation and certain parts of the Old Testament and stuff, it always comes to mind, well, what Jesus, you know, when he was on earth and his disciples asked him, what did this proverb mean?

And Jesus said, you know, to them it is not given to know, but for you, you know, he explained. Then, through the Apostle Paul, he said, in reading the Old Testament and, you know, the book of Revelation, there is a veil upon their heart, which veil is taken away in Christ.

So, well, I just wanted to bring this up. Yeah, well, I appreciate that. That adds a lot. It was in connection in the Gospels with Jesus having spoken in a number of parables.

And the disciples, their apostles, came to him on one occasion and said, why do you speak to the people in parables? Now, a parable, a parable is, someone said, a parable is an earthly story illustrating a heavenly truth.

[63 : 35] And that's pretty close to accurate. It's always something that wants to illustrate a spiritual point. So, you tell the story. And it could be a story about, you know, a man had two sons.

And there you get into the prodigal son. There's a story about that. And they came to him and they said, why are you speaking in parables? And, he answered and he said, because, to you, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

But to them, it is not given. Therefore, I speak to them in parables. And you have got to look at that from a dispensational point of view.

And when you do, you will realize that Jesus is dealing with the covenant nation of Israel and that what he was communicating to them was truth that was available only to those whom he would describe as saying, he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

Because many in his audience did not have an ear to hear. And do you know what the parable did for them? It did deliberately obscure the truth so that they didn't get it.

[64 : 49] They weren't able to get it because they didn't have the spiritual key that would unlock the truth for them. it was deliberately hidden from them because they did not have an ear to hear.

And for him to have explained it to them would be the same thing as casting his pearls before swine. God will go to whatever length is necessary to get truth to one who has an open heart and an open ear.

But he will not spend the time of day on someone who has a mind that is closed and bolted shut. And that's where the scribes and the Pharisees, many of them came in.

And this is why the text says that the scribes and the Pharisees rejected the counsel of God. Think of that.

They rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized by John, nor believing John's message.

[65 : 56] They wrote it off. They wouldn't accept John. They wouldn't accept his position or his message. And they wouldn't accept the Messiah that John came to introduce. So, moral of the story is, truth is available to those who have an ear to hear it.

And if you want to pray, Lord, I want to know your truth. I want a mind that is open and as best as I know my heart, I want to know your truth.

Now, here's another important point. If you want to know God's truth, just so it will satisfy your curiosity and that you've got something to brag about, that I know something you don't know, forget it.

It's not available to you. if you want to know God's truth so that you can respond to it with obedience and a willing heart, God will get that truth to you.

That's the kind of God he is. For those who really don't want to know because all it would do is that God is not interested in satisfying your curiosity.

[67 : 09] God is interested in you and me having a willing and an obedient heart and ready to do whatever he leads us to do.

He's more interested in our availability than he is in our ability. So when we come to him in a quest for truth, let us make sure that I want to follow the truth where it leads me and I want to be responsive and obedient to the truth.

Nothing honors God more than that. And when you walk in the truth that God reveals to you, guess what? There's more truth right up ahead. It's just like the proverbial light, you know.

When you start out at night with your automobile headlights, you can only see as far as that light will shine. But when you get to where the light's shining, guess what?

There's more light up ahead. So the way to get the light of God is to walk in the light you have. And when you do, that keeps the access of light open to you.

[68 : 18] And when we become disobedient and stubborn and negligent, then the light stops shining.

The light stops revealing. and we hit a period of stagnation in our spiritual growth. And we do not progress.

We do not move up. It's a step, step, step, step. And that's what spiritual growth is. It is walking in the light that you have. And you know, I say this with all honesty and concern because I've been dealing with these issues for over 50 years.

And I know exactly, I know exactly how it is that people can come into a personal relationship with Christ.

They love the Lord. And they're going to be in heaven when they die. But they never seem to grow or materialize. They never seem to mature. They always seem to be stuck in the same old rut.

[69 : 23] And they're always, they just maintain a status quo. And there's no growth. There's no dynamic. There's no joy. They're just, they're just marking time.

Marking time. And I remember that was one of our least favorite things in the army and the drilling. We'd go out on these marches and everything. And, you know, and the platoon sergeant would say, okay, mark time.

Pull! And that means everybody, everybody just stop. Stop in one place and all you do is this. Well, good grief, that's not going to get you anywhere. You're just standing here.

That's called marking time. You make no progress. You're not going forward. You're not going, you're just, that's what a lot of people do. A lot of people who are Christians are just marking time.

And they do not make themselves available to the kind of content and material on a consistent enough basis that will build them up.

[70 : 28] That's what the principle of edification is. It's the word from which we get the word edifice or structure. and we are supposed to meet together to edify each other, to build one another up, strengthen one another, establish one another.

Just by our interactions and intercommunication, we are to be of encouragement one to another. And all of this is in the midst of taking in the kind of spiritual food that will nourish our inner person, that human spirit.

You do not grow spiritually in your body. You grow physically in your body. You grow spiritually in your human spirit with a spiritual diet.

And frankly, this is why I've always placed so much emphasis upon reading. Reading. It's content. It's understanding that you derive from it.

And why you're taking in this truth. It is building up your spiritual person on the inside. And that will result in stability, joy, peace.

[71 : 48] All of these things come as a result of our spiritual nourishment. But if we starve ourselves and don't get spiritual food, your inner spirit suffers.

sinner and it becomes weak and it becomes joyless. There's so many Christians that don't have any joy.

They just live each day as it comes, just hoping to get through it. The joy is gone. The peace is gone. That's no way to live. But there are Christians who do that.

And yes, they're going to be in heaven when they die. But they're sure not having any fun being a Christian. And I'm firmly committed to one of the principal things that God wants you to do with your salvation is enjoy it to the max.

Nobody should get such a bang out of living than a believer in Jesus Christ. And nobody is more entitled to do so. Well, our time is gone and you didn't take advantage of your time, so would you stand please?

[72 : 57] Father, we are so grateful for what you have been pleased to reveal in your word. And while we are prepared and insistent on approaching this book from a literal standpoint and understanding that you say what you mean and you mean what you say, we know that our understanding is still deficient because in our humanity, we are so flawed and yet you graciously make up for those flaws and you provide for us with things that completely escape us.

We are recipients of your grace in so many ways, many of which we don't even understand and aren't even aware of. But we are just so grateful that you are a patient and a long-suffering God.

And we recognize that as we've been reading this morning, the calamity that is coming upon this world will be one that is richly deserved. It's not one that certainly not one that we rejoice over and seeing humanity reduced to this, but we recognize that justice and righteousness will be at work.

And there is nothing wrong with that. Thank you for being the God you are. Thank you for the grace and the mercy that you have built in to our salvation and we want to rejoice in it as the days go by in Christ's name.

Amen.