

# The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Revelation - The Most Extraordinary Witnesses Ever

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[ 0 : 00 ] Just a moment, Gary is going to come and read scripture for us. We'll be in Revelation chapter 11, if you want to find that portion in the New Testament. But before he does, I just have a few introductory remarks to the message that is going to follow. And it is remarkable how it ties in with the series of articles recently published in Decision Magazine. And we have made these available to you. Some of them you have already obtained and benefited from, I am sure. Others of you have not received perhaps any of them. And I cannot emphasize how important this content is.

I consider it one of my primary responsibilities to provide information that you really need. And when things come across my desk that I see as being very important and very pertinent, I have a deep desire to share them with you. And that's why we make them available and put them in the literature rack. And even for those who aren't particularly fond of reading, most of these articles are only a couple of pages long. And I trust that you will not find them laborious, but very interesting and very enlightening. Enlightening in connection with not only what is happening in our world today, particularly in the Western world, but enlightening in accordance with what is happening and will be described in the book of the Revelation, which I feel to be much closer than we think.

I know preachers have been saying this for a long, long time, but one of these times it's going to be true. And I'm not interested in setting any dates, but I remain convinced that we are, of course, closer than anybody has ever been. The subject that is really at great risk has been at risk for a long, long time. In fact, it is a subject that has been at risk from Genesis 3 and still is.

Yea, hath God said? The entrance of the lie surfaced way back in Genesis 3 when Satan, incarnated as a serpent, posed that question to our first mother. Has God said that? Did God really mean that? And you know what the problem is, don't you? God doesn't want you to have to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because if you do, then you'll be like him. And God doesn't want the competition. Just a lie as great as all outdoors. And yet, apparently it was believed. Some people are reluctant to believe a small lie, that they'll fall for a big one. And there are a lot of big lies out there that have been circulating and are circulating even to this day. There is even a new word that has been coined as a result of carelessness and recklessness with the truth. Who in the world had ever heard of fake news before?

Well, we're hearing about it now. And all fake news is, is just a blatant lie. That's all it is. And it inundates politics like it never has. Now, we realize that truthfulness has always been given a short shrift when it comes to politics, because every political party tends to put the favorable spin on their own thing that makes them look good and makes the other guys look bad.

[ 4 : 01 ] And we're accustomed to that. But when it comes to just the flat out untruths that we are dealing with today that seem to be so greatly increased, I wonder if we are not a lot closer to these things described here in Revelation 11 than we know. And men have always had a problem with the truth.

Jesus confronted men who would rather believe a lie than the truth way back when he was walking this earth. And I am dumbfounded as I read some of the accounts in the Gospels, and perhaps you have been as well, when Jesus went about doing the miracles that he did.

And nobody ever said that they were phony. Well, maybe the scribes and Pharisees said, well, yes, he's doing these miracles, but he's doing them in the power of the devil, Beelzebul. Well, of course, that was a lie, too.

But on at least one occasion, our Lord confronted the local Jewish establishment by saying, and he pronounced the woe. There were a couple cities, Bethsaida and Chorazin, on the Sea of Galilee, and Jesus spent a great deal of time in Galilee, much more so than he did in Jerusalem.

And he did many miracles there. And folks, these were the kind of miracles that were absolutely undeniable. I mean, Jesus never claimed to heal someone of a liver disease and then send them home and say, I hope you feel better, and nobody ever knows how to think.

[ 5 : 51 ] I mean, these were eyes of blind that had been blind for years that all of the locals knew these people. Stone blind and given sight.

Deaf, given hearing. In undeniable fashion, there's just no gain saying that. How could people actually witness those things?

and still not believe. It just points out the fact that the problem is not evidence.

And the problem is not a lack of evidence. The problem is a lack of will to believe. You'd be surprised how many people don't believe. Not because they don't have sufficient evidence, but because they don't want to believe.

They don't like the implications of belief or where it would lead them or what changes they might have to make if they embrace that belief. And when Jesus pronounced those woes, he said something like this, Woe unto you, Bethsaida, Chorazin, for if the mighty miracles done in you had been done in the cities of Tyre and Sidon, they would have believed.

[ 7 : 19 ] But not you. What do you do with that? That is remarkable. And the most remarkable thing is that Jesus was a Jew.

And the people to whom he was speaking were Jews. Fell as seeds of Abraham. And when he said, If the mighty miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, where was Tyre and Sidon?

Tyre and Sidon was over on the Mediterranean coast, and they were Gentiles. They weren't Jews. They were Gentiles. They didn't have Jehovah as the one true God.

They were a bunch of pagans. And yet Jesus said, If I had done among them what I've done among you, they would have believed. And they aren't even Jews.

And of course, the principle is, Unto whom much is given, from him shall much be required. And no one had been given the evidence, case after case, undeniable, one after another, like the Jewish people.

[ 8 : 25 ] And yet, they catered to unbelief. Now, I say all of that to say this. This is what we're going to see in Revelation 11.

And it is going to come about because of the virtual death that has taken place in Western culture regarding moral absolutes.

I've been beating this drum for a long time. I'm not going to stop now. If you're tired of hearing about it, that's too bad. You're going to hear a lot more about it because it is at the very essence of the chaos and the moral depravity that we are dealing with now.

Moral absolutes and moral relativity is at loggerheads. And it is moral relativity that is winning.

And what do I mean by that? By way of definition, let me just say this. What becomes morally right and morally wrong is left to the dictates of the individual so that each person decides for themselves what's right and what's wrong.

[ 9 : 48 ] Do you realize what kind of latitude that provides for a society? It's like the days of the judges when we are told in the Old Testament that every man did what was right in his own eyes.

And when you deny that there is an overarching umbrella of morality that has established good and evil, acceptable and unacceptable behavior, when you eliminate that, when you take divine authority out of the picture, you have nothing left but human authority.

Then everyone becomes their own little god. Everyone decides what's wrong or what's right for themselves by themselves. And no one has the right to force their opinion upon anyone else.

That's where we are. When you adopt that kind of thinking, you have just opened the floodgate to any and every kind of immorality that is amazing.

Listen, if there is no such thing as moral absolutes, why not homosexuality? If there's no such thing as moral absolutes, why not same-sex marriage?

[ 11 : 09 ] If there's no such thing as moral absolutes, why not abortion? If there's no such thing as a creator who is behind this all, who has started everything in motion and has provided plan and purpose and destiny and meaning and value, if that doesn't exist, you are hard-pressed to make a

case against any of those things I've mentioned.

That's where we are. Do you understand what's taking place? This is how we got here. It started perhaps as far back as the 70s with the book by Joseph Fletcher and that was a groundbreaking kind of thing and nobody thought too much about it at the time but apparently it caught on.

And what becomes right or wrong, the individual is the arbiter. In other words, you are your own authority. There is no overarching authority that establishes right and wrong for everybody.

It doesn't exist. That's where we are with the subject of truth. That's where these issues are. This, the war on truth, destructive lies the world believes.

You're going to see this coming out in spades in Revelation 11. Lies about creation. This is at the base of it. If we are not created in the image and likeness of God, then you have no rational basis at all for opposing any of those things that have for centuries, in fact, for thousands of years, have been considered as wrong and immoral by decent people everywhere.

[12:59] And once you eliminate these premises that there is no God, we are here as a biological accident, you don't have a case. You have no reason to oppose any of these things.

Like I said, why not homosexual? Why not same-sex marriage? Why not sex with animals? By the way, that's coming. That's coming. It's already taking place. Why not?

If each one determines their own right and their own wrong, that's where we are. And that's where people are going to be in Revelation chapter 11 when the power of these two witnesses descends on this world.

The opposition against them is all going to be coming from a position of moral relativity. Now, I've asked myself, Marv, do these things really tie into what you're preaching or are you just making them tie in?

And I've thought long and hard about that. I'm not making anything. It's there and it's there in spades and it'll become very obvious. Lies that lead to death.

[14:24] The lie sweeping a generation. My body, my choice. If moral relativism is the standard, you do not have any valid basis at all for approaching the idea of doing away with abortions.

None. None whatever. And lies about gender and marriage. Now, one thing further, and Gary's going to read scripture. I just want to say this. I really hope that when you get these articles, you won't just read them and throw them away.

I hope you will read them and file them away. Because, listen, you're going to need these. I don't know how long it's going to be, but you're going to be referring back to these in light of what will be happening in your life and in your community even as these depicted.

They will be tremendously helpful, not only now, but perhaps even more so later on. So, all of this ties together with what we're doing right now in the Revelation.

And I'm just amazed how it comes together. I'm confident that is not coincidental. So, Gary, would you come and read for us, please? Good morning.

[16:05] This morning we'll be looking at Revelation chapter 11, the first 13 verses.

13. Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff, and someone said, Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it.

Leave out the court which is outside the temple, do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations, and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.

And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.

These are the two olive trees in the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies.

[17:26] So if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying.

And they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every plague as often as they desire.

When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them and overcome them and kill them.

and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb.

[ 18 : 45 ] And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate, and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

are not but after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.

And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, come up here. Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.

And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

heaven. Honestly, now, isn't that about the most bizarre thing that you have ever heard or read?

[ 20 : 09 ] That is beyond weird. The question is, of course, what does this really mean?

I'll tell you what it really means. it really means what it really says, line for line, word for word.

I know and fully agree it sounds completely bizarre. It sounds unthinkable. It sounds fairytale-ish. It sounds fantastic.

It sounds like something Hollywood would cook up. it sounds like anything and everything except taking it at face value, and I am satisfied that is precisely the way it was intended and the way we are supposed to take it.

This is not something that is fraught with hidden and mystical meanings where you are required to try to read between the lines to see what it really means, because this is a book of revelation.

[ 21 : 22 ] It is a book of disclosure, and like all of the remainder of Scripture, it was never given to obfuscate anything. It was never given to puzzle. It was never given to mystify.

It was given to communicate so that people would understand what is written, and this we take at face value. we have already made a case, I think, several times, and I will continue to make it, that once the church is removed in the translation of the saints, which could take place at any time, commonly referred to as the rapture, the plan and program of God will dramatically shift gears and will resort to an earlier day that is called the dispensation of Israel that is kingdom oriented in contrast to the dispensation or the administration of the church age, which is the body of Christ of which we are members.

These are two entirely distinct entities, and when that spiritual body of Christ consisting of all believers has been removed from the earth, then God reverts back to complete unfinished business with the nation of Israel, and they are going to be the key figures during this time.

This is why it is called the time of Jacob's trouble. Jacob is simply another name for Israel. It is the time of Israel's trouble.

Israel will be the centerpiece during this time. And by the way, it seems almost obvious that Israel today is becoming more and more a world player, and more and more eyes are focusing on Israel, and now I do not know whether this is going to come about or not, but there is talk that President Trump is going to move the U.S.

[ 23 : 35 ] embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, thus indicating that he and that the United States considers Jerusalem the historic and the legal and the official capital of the state of Israel, not Tel Aviv.

Of course, both are Jewish cities, but there is enormous significance historically, theologically, with Jerusalem. And for a power like the United States to put our embassy in Jerusalem, would speak volumes to others in the world, particularly to the Arab bloc, Muslim dominated nations, whose goal and objective is to completely eliminate the state of Israel.

They will not appreciate that. I do not know whether President Trump was going to do that or not, but that is a possibility. Previous presidents have simply been too wary, too afraid to do that.

But we know that there is a man of a different stripe in the White House now, and I'm not sure he fears anything but his wife. So we will see where this is going to go.

Anyway, in Chapter 11, we have these two witnesses, extraordinary individuals, and their identity is not known, but we read in these first few verses, and I do not propose to have a handle on these first couple of verses at all.

[ 25 : 18 ] Nothing that satisfies me, that troubles me somewhat, but I haven't been able to arrive at any kind of a real significant meaning, other than it is one more indication that God is making a clear-cut distinction between Jew and Gentile.

And by the way, that is characteristically the case under the Kingdom Israel dispensation. Those distinctions between Jew and Gentile are very, very much in force.

Very much. But, with the body of Christ consisting of Jew and Gentile on the same footing so that there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, Jew nor Gentile, you are all children of God by faith in Christ.

That distinction is done away. In the body of Christ, there is no Jew or Gentile. They are all blended together. But that is not the case under the Kingdom dispensation. Israel maintains a very distinctive place apart from all the rest of the world, which is Gentiles.

And sometimes the word in the English that is used is just nations plural. And it always means Gentile nations. It means everybody else but Israel.

[ 26 : 35 ] That includes France and Ireland and the United States, everybody but Israel. We comprise the nations. Israel is Israel. They are alone.

So, it was given me a measuring rod like a staff, and someone said, rise and measure the temple of God. Now, he's seeing this in a vision. These are not literal things.

I don't get the impression that John could walk up to this temple and knock on it like this, and it is material substance and would respond like this does. He's seeing this in a vision, and he is writing what he is seeing.

Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it, and leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations. Nations. Gentiles. And they, Gentiles, nations, will tread underfoot. That's an expression for complete domination.

[ 27 : 40 ] Israel is going to be underfoot. Jerusalem is going to be trodden down and trodden upon. Well, there's nothing new about that, because that has happened multiple times over thousands of years.

There is no piece of geography on the globe that has been so beaten down and so trampled over as the tiny little state of Israel.

And Scripture refers to it as being the center of the earth. God refers to it as being my land. And it's the only land in all of the Bible that God calls my land.

And we think, well, doesn't the Bible say that the whole earth is the Lord's? Yes, the whole earth is the Lord's. But not in the way that Israel is.

Israel, he calls my land. That's very significant. And geographically, it is at the center of the earth.

And if you look at a map, you'll see that it is central to Africa, Asia, and Europe.

[ 28 : 48 ] And plotted right there in the middle of all of them is this tiny little state of Israel, no bigger than the state of New Jersey. Tiny little place.

So the distinction is made here between the Jew and the Gentile. And they will tread underfoot the holy city. That is, they will completely dominate the holy city, which is Jerusalem, for 42 months. Very specific time frame. Sometimes it is referred to as 1260 days. Same thing. Do the math. In the Bible, there are 12 Jewish months.

30 days each. 360 day year, as opposed to our 365 and a fourth, because they are operating, of course, on a different calendar. And this 1260 days is equal to 42 months.

It is also equal to three and one-half years. It is also equal to a time, times, which is two, and a half a time, which is three and a half.

[ 30 : 04 ] All of these designations are used indicating the same period of time. It is three and a half years. And we are told in verse three, I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy.

That means preach. They will warn, they will preach, they will proclaim, they will admonish, they will scold, and they are going to be very, very formidable.

They will do this for twelve hundred and sixty days, three and a half years, clothed in sackcloth.

What in the world is that? Sackcloth was a garment that Jewish people wore that was designed to make you very uncomfortable.

it would itch, you scratch, it's not the kind of thing that you would want in your wardrobe. When you wear sackcloth, you are expressing grief, repentance, anger, all of these things.

[ 31 : 24 ] When Job was going through his several trials, he clothed himself in sackcloth and sat on a pile of ashes. How comfortable would that be?

scraping his boils and his sores with broken pieces of pottery. That's pretty bad. These two witnesses are going to be proclaiming a message of judgment and of forthcoming doom that the world is not going to appreciate.

Shut those guys up. who do they think they are? Kill them! And every effort will be made to do just that without any success until certain individual comes on the scene and he will be successful and that will open for him a wide door, a carte blank for his activities that will follow.

these are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth. We're not going to take time to go back there now, but if we need to, we can during the Q&A.;

Zechariah mentions these two olive trees. And we've told you before how important it is that we use the Bible to interpret the Bible because one passage of Scripture sheds light on another passage and we are not left to just speculate and try to figure out what these things mean.

[ 33 : 00 ] We try as best we can to allow the Bible to explain itself and it does that with parallel passages because all of the Bible is connected to all of the Bible.

And sometimes the connection escapes us, but there is one. And Zechariah talks about these olive trees and that they're actually representing two witnesses and he clarifies that in verse four when he says these are the two olive trees.

That is, these two witnesses are the actual meaning of the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies.

Now, wait just a moment. Since when do human beings come with built-in flamethrowers?

Is that what this is saying? Well, or there is this possibility that the fire which will come out of their mouths is the word, their words.

[ 34 : 23 ] I'm not prepared to say which it is, whether this is literal or not, but I do want to remind you of this, and this is really, really important. we pointed out to you in time past, and we will reiterate it all the way through the balance of this book, that the revelation, like no other book in scripture, is given to the supernatural in a way that no other part is.

Now, we find the supernatural most prominently, apart from the revelation, revelation, in the book of Exodus, with the miraculous deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, with the plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea, the manna from heaven, all of those things were visible, demonstrable miracles that nobody was prepared to deny, and nobody did deny.

Very dramatic and very obvious. miracles. And we see a certain number of miracles performed during the days of Elijah, and one of them will be replicated here, because one of the dynamic things that is going to impact this three and a half years is that the earth is going to undergo an enormous drought.

And it will be as it was in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up, interestingly enough, for three and one half years.

And there's going to be a great deal of deprivation, inconvenience, and perhaps even death that will be the result of this drought.

[ 36 : 12 ] These two witnesses are going to be virtually indestructible. Now, I want to make a clarification of something that I had said earlier, and apparently I was incorrect, and I want to change that, just because it was wrong, and I think I misled you.

And that has to do with the 144,000 that surface in Revelation 7, 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel, and they will figure again in Revelation chapter 14.

13,000. And I think I took the position that these 12,000 or 144,000 were indestructible. And I've had to change my thinking about that.

And what I think I based that on was the fact that they had the seal of God in their foreheads, and the demonic locusts that were released, and by the way, this was all in chapter 9, I believe, the demonic locusts that were released during this time were not permitted to inflict the 144,000 with their stings or with their bites like they would everyone else.

And because they had the seal of God in their forehead, they were providentially protected from assaults by the demonic locusts. But that does not say that they were indestructible.

[ 37 : 38 ] And I'm not at all convinced that some of those 144,000 may not be martyred during this period of time. And it could be that all of them are, and this is just an item of speculation, and I want it to be understood.

I'm not saying this is the way it is, but I say this, I would not be surprised if it were. These two witnesses are never identified. I know some think they're Elijah and Moses, some think they're Enoch, and so on.

But when the scriptures do not say, it's best that we remain silent because we just don't know. But wouldn't it be something if out of 144,000 witnesses, 143,998 of them were martyred, put to death. And there are two survivors, and here they are. I do not know this to be the case, but I'll say this, I wouldn't be surprised if it were, because these two are indestructible until a particular time comes for a particular individual.

So let's read on, and we'll get that. If anyone desires to harm them, and the implication is that there will be those who will, fire proceeds out of their mouth.

[ 39 : 12 ] If that is their spoken word, that is like fire that consumes, much in the same way that the Lord spoke in the Old Testament, I think it was to Isaiah, when he said, it's not my word like a hammer that crushes a rock.

And what God means there is that his spoken word can impact and hit like a hammer on a rock, because that's the power of the word of God.

And sometimes words are spoken to, or spoken about as fire that consumes. I do not know which is the case here. I do not know if this is some kind of literal fire.

If it is, of course, it is obviously very supernatural. Or if it is simply their spoken word. And we see these emblems, and we'll see it surfacing in the Revelation when Christ returns, and we are told that there is a sharp sword that proceeds out of his mouth.

Well, what does that mean? Christ is riding on a white horse, and he has a sharp sword in his mouth? Well, we use that symbol, and we see the sword as being indicative of the spoken word of God.

[ 40 : 33 ] Hebrews 4.12 tells us that the word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword, and it is the sword that is given the believer the word of God as our only offensive weapon.

And that's in Ephesians chapter 6, where the sword of the spirit, and it's not talking about a literal sword bladed, but it's talking about the spoken word which cuts like a sword either way.

So there is some symbolism here, and there is some literality here, and I am not competent to be able to tell you exactly which is which. But at any rate, I know this gets the job done.

That's for sure. These have the power to shut up the sky in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying.

And they are going to be recognized as being responsible for this. The world is not going to take to that kindly.

[ 41 : 43 ] They are going to develop a tremendous amount of animosity and hatred against these two witnesses because they are going to recognize them as being responsible for the heavens being shut up.

And, of course, they'll try to eliminate them. They have power over the waters to turn them into blood, whether that means literal blood, such as blood would be the result with a tremendous amount of loss of life, blood contaminating waterways, or whether it is red looking like blood, as we see here in our own United States sometimes when there is this thing called the red tide that occurs frequently throughout the world, and the water looks like blood, gives that impression, whether it is that.

it harkens back perhaps to one of the plagues that was pronounced upon Egypt when it was turned to blood. Spite the earth with every plague.

This is as often as they desire. These two witnesses are going to have some kind of full total authority over earthly conditions to bestow or to withhold.

Not in and of themselves of course, but it is going to be given to them, delegated to them, so that they will have this at their disposal, and they are going to use it in accordance with the will of God.

[ 43 : 28 ] And the world is going to be a pretty rugged place for conducting life. When they have finished, their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them.

Now, we saw this surfacing earlier in chapter nine, and it is this beast that will be none other than the Antichrist, and he is going to become earth's hero of the moment.

They have been utilizing everything they know to try to eliminate these two witnesses who have brought so much grief and pain and misery to the world, that when the Antichrist succeeds in doing it, which is something they have not been able to do, he will, for all practical purposes, be put up on their shoulders, elevated, and carried about as their hero, recognized as such, and they are prepared to give him anything he wants.

That's exactly what they will do. This beast will make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them.

Nobody's been able to do this until this time. He will be the first one that will succeed. Do you see how he is going to be elevated in the eyes of the people?

[ 45 : 01 ] evil? He has rid the world of this great nemesis, this duo nuisance that has plagued the world.

He has brought it to an end, and we cannot thank him enough, we cannot honor him enough, we cannot give him enough power to do whatever he wants to do, because he has succeeded in removing them.

And what that means is, what that means is, this one, in his power, is greater than whatever power there was behind those two witnesses.

You see what that's saying? You see how this makes the God of heaven look in the eyes of the average person? It makes them look like this.

My God is bigger than your God. My God is stronger than your God, because the God of heaven is the one that put these witnesses here, and gave them their orders, and gave them their power, and our God is the one who overcame him.

[ 46 : 08 ] That makes our God number one. That's the way they're going to look at it. Now, lest you think this is something new, this goes all the way back to the book of Genesis.

Nothing new about this at all. It is whose God is the biggest, whose God is the strongest. The Philistines had Dagon, the Moabites had Chemosh, different ones had their deities, and whenever one army was victorious over another army, it was taken to mean, in their primitive way of thinking, it was taken to mean, our God is stronger than their God.

It's kind of like kids on the playground. My dad can whip your dad, you know, that kind of thing.

Some men never grow out of that, and this is the way they view it. Now, we look at that today as an enlightened group of believers and we say, well, isn't that about the most ridiculous thing you've ever heard of?

Yes, it is, but let me tell you something. There is no blindness like spiritual blindness. And that passage in 2 Corinthians 4 that talks about the God of this world blinding the minds.

The God of this world is none other than Satan himself, and he blinds the minds of people. What does that mean? It means he keeps them from thinking straightly.

[ 47 : 37 ] He confounds their thinking. He befuddles them. He confuses them. This is how they arrive at some of the cockamamie positions that they have today.

They didn't think this stuff up on their own. It is absurd. We've got a man, Stephen Hawking. I've mentioned him before, and you know who he is.

He's the British physicist. Absolutely intelligent man. Stephen Hawking has an IQ that could buy and sell my IQ five times over and have change left.

And this is the man that says, there is no God because there is no need for God. Because of the law of gravity, the universe is quite capable of creating itself.

What? Oh, yes, anyone with any intelligence can see that. Don't you understand that the law of gravity makes it entirely possible for the universe to create itself?

[ 48 : 44 ] That whereas there was nothing that existed, the law of gravity makes it possible for nothing to become something simple.

This is a great mind. And I'm serious when I say this man is really very, very intelligent. Very intelligent. He is considered the world's leading physicist today by physicists.

And if you know anything about physics, quantum mechanics and all the rest of that stuff that is so far over my head I can't even talk the lingo. He's an intelligent man.

But let me tell you, intellect, sheer intellect is not adequate when it comes to grasping things spiritual.

And they are revealed only by the Spirit for those who are receptive to them. this is just amazing stuff. He's going to succeed in killing them, this Antichrist, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt.

[ 50 : 07 ] And we are told that it is mystically, symbolically. And what it really means is, of course, it's Jerusalem where also their Lord was crucified. And those from the peoples and tribes and nations and tongues will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days.

Listen, CNN and NBC is going to be all over this. Satellites are going to be beaming this stuff all around the world. and here are going to be two bodies decomposing in the Jerusalem sun right before their very eyes.

And the world is going to look on and love it. They're going to rejoice. Oh, isn't it wonderful that those dirty SOBs finally got what's coming to them and our hero is this new guy who came on the scene and he has put an end to them and all of the vile stuff that they have been bringing and all of the punishment and deprivation and agony that they've been bringing upon the world.

And it's going to be one huge cause for celebration. They will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. They want to visually feast upon their demise and continually remind themselves, there they are, they are dead and they're not moving.

And we are elated and the world is going to be rejoicing while they're going to hold beer parties. If there's any beer left, they're going to be holding all kinds of parties, celebrating everywhere, all over the world.

[ 51 : 46 ] The world's number one nemesis has been destroyed. Now we can get on with enjoying life and things will return to normal. people. They will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and they will send gifts.

New occasion for gifts. How many people will be receiving flowers because of a couple corpses lying in the city of Jerusalem? I don't know.

Send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. And after the three and a half days, uh-oh, maybe we better take a look at this again as to whose God is the bigger.

The breath of life from God came into them and they stood on their feet and great fear fell upon those who were beholding them.

The celebration comes to an abrupt halt. Oh, no. What does this mean?

[ 53 : 13 ] We thought they were dead. they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, come up here.

And they went up into heaven in the cloud and their enemies beheld them. Watch them on camera. There they go. What is this? Did you see that? Am I seeing what I think? Did you? And there they go. Reminds me of the ascension of the Lord.

They went up before the twelve apostles. They stood there and watched him until he went out of sight. Acts chapter one. And in that hour there was a great earthquake.

This God who is supposed to be second string is still very much in charge and he hasn't been on the bench.

[ 54 : 17 ] He's been in the action all the way. In that hour was a great earthquake. Not just an earthquake. Great earthquake. I don't know what this is going to register on the Richter scale.

But seven is enough to do devastating damage. And this is probably going to exceed that. Tenth of the city fell. seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Now I don't know for sure what that means. One of two things. It means that the rest were terrified. They came to their senses as a result of these miracles and they glorified God as being the one true God.

I would like to think that's what it means. That's what the English text seems to convey. On the other hand it could mean this that they were terrified and they gave credit acknowledgement to the God of heaven.

But that can be a far cry from worshipping him and submitting to him. It just means you blame him for it. We don't know for exactly which it is. But I want to close with this comment because this is so very, very important.

[ 55 : 38 ] In this day and age we operate under a thing that is called justification by faith. That is people are called upon that when they hear the gospel proclaimed, when they hear the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, they are to exercise their will, their volition, and accept and believe the record that the Bible gives regarding Jesus Christ, who he is, why he came, what he did, what it matters, and why it matters.

And you embrace this one as your substitute for salvation. You embrace him as your savior. You do that as an act of your will. You do it deliberately in the same way that you marry the individual to

whom you're married.

You exercised your will in doing that. That's the same way you receive Jesus Christ as your savior. You do it with your will, with your volition. You do it because you want to.

You do it because you can. You do it because you see that it is right, and this is something you ought to do. That's the dispensation of the grace of God, and it is operating primarily on the basis of faith.

And that means, like Thomas, and the Lord talking to Thomas when he said, Thomas, doubting Thomas, he said, because you have believed me, because you have seen me, you have believed.

[ 57 : 05 ] Blessed are they who will believe and not see me. That's us. I've never seen the Lord, but I believe. And faith is being willing and able to believe on the basis of adequate evidence, not conclusive evidence.

we don't have all of our questions answered. The question might be asked, like in the movie, with the case for Christ, or the case for, yes, the case for Christ, when the question was asked, how much evidence is enough?

How much evidence do you need? Do you need all of the evidence that there is to believe? No. God hasn't provided all. He has provided ample evidence for anyone who is willing to believe to be able to do so with great credibility.

And all of these miracles are designed to go even beyond faith so that they are going to be able to see what is happening.

And the principle that seeing is believing isn't necessarily so. Because many people saw many miracles in the past and they still didn't believe.

[ 58 : 35 ] And as many miracles as God performed for the nation of Israel coming out of Egypt, beginning with the plagues and the rescue at the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea and the manna from heaven and all of these things, water from the rock, these were visible, physical miracles that people could see and not deny.

They could see it. They drank the water. They ate the manna. They knew it was true. And what was the principal charge that God leveled against them that would not allow them to come into the land of Israel?

Unbelief. Are you kidding me? Unbelief? In the light of all of those... I was there! I saw that!

I drank that water from the rock! I know it was true! How could they possibly be charged with unbelief? Amazing! That is the depths of depravity of the human heart.

And it's not a pretty thing. This is what is going to be prevalent during the tribulation period. There is going to be one miraculous manifestation after another so that anyone who actually does have a heart and will for the truth will have more than enough to be adequately convinced.

[ 60 : 00 ] And they will believe and they will repent and they will be saved even though it may cost them their life as a martyr. But those who will dig their heels in are people it doesn't make any difference how much evidence there is.

They will not believe. And you can't make me. And these are people who are going to perish in that tribulation. They are going to be called to repentance.

They are going to be given more than ample reason and more than ample time and they still will shake their fist to God and they will pay the ultimate price.

So this really, this time of Jacob's trouble, this time of great tribulation is also a time of great condescension on the part of God where he is providing unbelieving man with more and more and more reasons why he should believe and why he should accept.

And those who are given the most evidence are going to be held with greater accountability than those who had lesser evidence. These are sobering things to think about.

[ 61 : 11 ] And you know what it all ties in with? This whole concept of truth and moral relativity as opposed to absolute morals that we've been talking about.

All of these things are going to figure very dramatically into the whole package. Well, I told you this is a pretty bizarre passage of scripture and it is, but guess what?

There's more coming and it is all predicated upon the supernatural being, the new norm. Pray with me, please.

Father, there's still so much about this passage and these events that we do not begin to understand, but we cannot help but believe you have given us what you deem to be adequate information.

And if you deem it to be adequate, so it is, and we accept it as such. We pray that as we continue on through this that you will use it to stimulate each and every one of us to living for Christ and sharing Christ with those who do not know him.  
[ 62 : 22 ] We pray and ask it in his name. Amen.