

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Revelation - No More Delay

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[0 : 00] to please turn to the book of the Revelation, chapter 10. And if you happen to have looked in the bulletin, the title for the message this morning is No More Delay.

Revelation chapter 10. I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud.

And the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet were like pillars of fire.

And he had in his hand a little book which was opened, he placed his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land.

And he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. And when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.

[1 : 22] When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken, and do not write them.

Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land, lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will be delay no longer.

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as he preached to his servants the prophets.

Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, Go take the book which is open in the hand of the angel, who stands on the sea and on the land.

So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, Take it and eat it.

[3 : 09] It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey. I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it.

And in my mouth it was sweet as honey. And when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

And they said to me, You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.

And the content that John will be prophesying regarding the priests and the kings and so on is that which is incorporated in the balance of the book that we are now engaged in studying, and that is, of course, the revelation.

No more delay. If you have a King James translation, it says something to the extent that that time should be no more. Well, that's not really the best translation because it does not involve the cessation of time.

It does not mean that time is no longer going to exist. What it means is that there shall be no more time given.

[4 : 34] In other words, the curtain is coming down. The end is near. Now is going to be the fulfillment of whatever is lacking in the plan and program of God, which has been up to this point delayed.

Purposely delayed. The only rationale for that that we can gather is that the long-suffering of God continues to be extended to unbelieving man, affording additional time and opportunity for repentance.

But the long-suffering of God does have its limits. The time will come when he says, no more.

That's what this chapter is about. And it is introducing us to the events that will follow that will actually be the fulfillment of that which will now begin to transpire.

We are approximately halfway through the book of the Revelation. And I want to remind you that this is visionary content. By that, I mean John is not seeing these things in literal actuality. [5 : 53] He is seeing them in a vision. The vision has been prepared for him by God so that he is able to witness these events and then he is told to write them.

But there is one exception here in this chapter and that is when these seven voices with their thunderous announcements make their pronouncements, John is prepared to write what they say and he is interrupted and he is told no, don't write these.

We'll see an Old Testament parallel to that because that too is very significant and it has to do with the mysteries of God. So, there will be no more delay.

And as we are also about halfway through the book of the Revelation, chronologically, if our chronology is correct, I think it is, but none of us has this thing called biblical prophecy altogether so that we know we're giving you infallible information.

I don't dispense that kind of information because I don't have it. But this is the best understanding that I am able to come up with. And not only are we halfway through the book, but we are also at the halfway point in the 70th week of Daniel.

[7 : 26] That means we are approximately three and a half years into the tribulation period, which is going to last for a total of seven years.

It is that 70th year of the 69 years that Daniel talks about in chapter 9. And before we actually get into the text, I want to remind you of five important events that have been in place during the first three and a half years.

Now, this is a little bit confusing. I'd be the first to admit it. And the reason is because in this book, there are certain things that transpire chronologically and in sequence, one after another.

And I think for the most part, perhaps in totality, they are all chronological. Yet, at the same time, there are certain realities that seem to permeate the whole seven-year period.

they are in place from the beginning. And yet, that is not always obvious. So, let me just run by you, if I may, what those events are. The ministry of Elijah is something that begins very early in this book, very early in the 70th week of Daniel, that time of tribulation, when the prophet Elijah apparently is going to be resurrected, or one will come in his name, as John the Baptist was often referred to as Elijah.

[9 : 02] He was in the power, and with the message of Elijah, although he was not the same, he was not resurrected, Elijah. We do not know exactly what God is going to do to provide this Elijah person, whether it will be a resurrection, or whether it will be simply someone else who comes in the power and ministry of Elijah.

Elijah. But let me remind you of this. This book, more than any other book in the Bible, is replete with the supernatural, one event after another.

It is as if once the church is gone, once the rapture has occurred, and the translation of saints has occurred, that the age and the dispensation of Israel returns, and it is going to be characterized by one miraculous event after another, the likes of which we have never seen, and we will not see, as members of the body of Christ.

This is peculiarly Jewish, and peculiarly kingdom-oriented content, radically different from what you and I experience in the body of Christ with our spiritual realities.

This is going to be very hands-on, very physical, very supernatural, very much involving angelic beings, both good and evil.

[10 : 33] There's going to be a tremendous influx of demonic activity, as well as good angels who are functioning at the command of their Lord.

God. And that's what's going to characterize this 70th week of Daniel. It is going to be absolutely abnormal to our thinking in every way, supernatural in every way, just mind-boggling, eye-popping stuff, and we won't be here to see it.

But there will be millions, billions, if you will, who will. and in the midst of it all, they're going to recognize that they're actually dealing with the Almighty.

And there will be some, blessedly so, who will submit to His authority and recognize that God really is in charge and that He is a righteous God and He is commanding that men repent.

And there will be multitudes who will repent, who will be saved. The preaching of the 144,000 is going to be very effective. And the only reason they will not be martyred themselves is because they have the seal of God upon them and they are virtually indestructible.

[11 : 52] Someone says, what do you mean indestructible? These are 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes. These are going to be ordinary human beings, just like us. How are they indestructible?

That's part of the supernatural thing I'm telling you about. They are going to have some protective device whereby, despite efforts to eliminate them and kill them, they will endure.

That is supernatural in and of itself. So there will be one event after another. And I realize, I fully realize that as we read these things, the tendency is, well, that's not literal.

That's just figurative. Well, it is literal. It is literal. And the reason we have such difficulty coping with the literality of it is because it isn't anywhere in our experience.

We have no frame of reference for this. It is natural for us to look at it and say, oh, come on, that's fanciful, that's outlandish, that's, you can't take that stuff literally.

[13 : 02] Well, I beg to differ. It is to be very, very literal. So, the ministry of Elijah is one.

The 144,000 that is going to extend throughout the seven-year period is another. The ministry of two witnesses, which remains very enigmatic, and we do not know who those two witnesses are, although there's a lot of speculation about it.

That will be coming up in chapter 11. These two are individuals selected by God, put on the scene, operating in the city of Jerusalem with their pronouncements and their prophecies, hated, hated, despised by the world, who will set out to kill them, and will be unable to do so.

That's another supernatural aspect. The two witnesses. The political system and the alliance of the ten kings, these are politics going on with the antichrist at the helm, and it will be unlike anything the world has seen.

And the fifth thing has to do with the religious system of ecclesiastical Babylon that will surface later, and it is the religious component, and I use the word religious.

[14 : 24] I'm certainly not talking about anything Christian. I'm talking about religion. It will be the religious component that is functioning and operative after the church is removed.

And it will consist of all kinds of apostate groups, both Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, you name it.

There will be a smattering of everything that will comprise the ecclesiastical or the religious Babylon. All true believers will have been removed. So, we are at the sixth trumpet.

It concludes here at the middle of the tribulation period of three and a half years. It will be followed by a temporary cessation before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which will find the bowls of the wrath of God Almighty being dumped upon the earth.

and that is what is meant by time shall be no more. In other words, there will be no more delay. Here it comes.

[15 : 36] And God literally pours out, well, literally, figuratively, you know what I mean. God pours out these bowls of wrath. This is righteous indignation of an offended holy God calling rebellious mankind to account and to repentance.

So, Revelation 10 then introduces us to what will transpire during the last half of the tribulation period of three and a half years.

Let us look now at the text, if we may, please. Revelation 10. John, and bear in mind now, he is being given a vision. Picture, if you will, yourself looking at a giant screen and seeing events transpire before you.

That's precisely the kind of thing that John is witnessing. And from the time the vision began, early on in the Revelation, he has been instructed to write down what he sees and describe it.

And he does the best that he can because he is limited to his own sphere of experience and reference. He is going to see things in this vision, the likes of which he's never seen before, and as a result, he is finding it difficult to describe what he's seeing because he wants to depict it.

[17 : 13] And yet, it's unlike anything he's ever witnessed before. So, what he does is he engages in trying to describe these events on the basis of what he does know and what he has experienced.

And that's why he uses the word repeatedly like or as it were. He isn't saying that something has the head of a lion, but he says it looks more like the head of a lion than anything else I can think of. But he is at a loss to describe it more accurately, so all he can do is reach back in his memory bank and pull out that with which he has been familiar. And that's exactly what he does.

So, in verse one, in this vision, he sees another strong angel coming down out of heaven. This angel is not identified. He is not given a name.

And where the scriptures do not tell us exactly who this is, we probably would do best to just leave it alone. All we know is it is an angel. And he is a strong angel.

[18 : 26] So, apparently, that indicates that he is not your run-of-the-mill angel. Because angelic beings have hierarchies. There are those that are just angels.

There are those that are seraphim. There are those that are cherubim. There are angels like Michael and Gabriel who are referred to as archangels, first angels.

Maybe we would call them commanding generals of angels. So, there is a hierarchy established. And in the midst of all of the angelic beings that God has created, all of whom are spirit beings, but yet able to assume physical form, out of all of those beings, and we are not told how many there are, approximately one-third of the created angelic order were recruited by Lucifer, and they rebelled against the creator, and as best as we can understand, these fallen angels comprise the demonic spirits that exist in the world today, and it is these same demonic spirits that are confined in the abyss that we looked at earlier in the revelation, and that will surface once again later on. This angel, this strong angel, whoever he may be, he sees him coming down out of heaven, closed with a cloud, and the rainbow was upon his head.

And I told you repeatedly that there is no book in the Bible so connected to the book of the revelation as the book of Genesis.

[20 : 07] First book in the Bible, last book in the Bible, they are intricately related. They are definitely intentionally connected in so many ways.

One has to do with the beginning, this has to do with the ending of the planet and the world as we know it. So, it's important to keep in mind that the Bible is its own best interpreter.

I, frankly, this is not a statement of mock humility, it is a statement of absolute persuasion. I am not competent to interpret the Bible.

I know that, and that has been proved to me time and again. and that is why we must allow the Scriptures to interpret themselves.

And it does a magnificent job of it. You need a way of comparing Scripture with Scripture. That's what Bible study is all about. All too many Christians are content with just reading the Bible.

[21 : 14] I'm not knocking that. I'm all in favor of it. But you need to do more than just read it. because you cannot intelligently respond to what you do not understand.

And if you limit yourself to just reading it, every other verse you're going to be saying to yourself, I wonder what that means. I wonder what that means. Well, you can read the words, but listen, reading the words, reading the words doesn't give you understanding.

You've got to understand what the words mean, what they are saying, before you can intelligently respond to it. And that's why, frankly, that's why we make such a big deal of the Bible. That's why we are a Bible church, because we recognize this as our authority.

And if you do not go with biblical authority, you are limited to human authority, and for that I can say, God help us. Because which human's authority are you going to accept?

So this brings us right back to the book. Clothed with a head, and his face was like the sun.

[22 : 54] There is that simile again. Simile is a figure of speech, and those of you who are following along in the Christianity Clarified, dealing with the hermeneutics, the art and science of interpreting the Bible, will recognize that a simile is a figure of speech, and it is a comparison of something to something else.

And it means that it isn't that thing, but it is like that thing. It reminds you of that thing. It resembles that thing. And this is exactly what he's talking about. This is a simile, and it is often accompanied by the word like, such as we have here.

And his face was like the sun, very bright, very brilliant, and his feet like pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book.

Now, this was not a book as we think of as a book with binding and covers. This is a scroll. We saw the scroll earlier surfacing in chapter 5, I believe it was, and no one was able to open the scroll except the Son of God, and he came forth and he broke the seals on the scroll.

This is a scroll that is wound up, just wound up, and then to read it, you unroll a little bit of it, and the more you unwind, the more you are able to read.

[24 : 17] We saw that earlier in this book, but now this is a small scroll. It doesn't say it's tiny, it just says it's a small scroll. It doesn't have nearly as much content on it.

He placed his right hand, this angel, placed his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land. And I suspect that what is being depicted here is that this angelic being is laying claim to both land and sea.

In other words, he is saying both of these elements, these components, are under my authority, my jurisdiction, and he puts a foot on each, indicating control, supremacy, over those two elements.

And he cried out with a loud voice as when a lion roars. And there again is that word as.

It isn't the roar of the MGM lion that you see on the screen, but he is at a loss to explain just exactly what that roar sounded like.

[25 : 38] And he's saying it just sounded like the king of the beast letting out a big roar, something similar to that. And he cried out. When he cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.

thunder often accompanies a manifestation of God as in the Old Testament as well as in the New.

And God is often accompanied with thundering and lightnings.

And I suspect that one of the reasons might be, perhaps the main reason is, there's no mistaking this. I mean, if you are out and about and it begins to thunder, thunder, you hear it.

And if there is a bolt of lightning, you see it. It is a very telltale thing. Nobody says, hmm, I wonder what that noise is. You know what it is.

And you might have been told that it was the potato man wheeling his potatoes in heaven years ago when you were a kid, you know, and some of the potatoes fall off the wagon and make a noise. All kinds of stuff people tell their children.

[26 : 52] But this is a mighty manifestation of the presence and the power of God. And there isn't anything that gets a human's attention like rolling thunder and brilliant flashing lightning.

It's always a whoa, look at that. And you stand in awe of it. There is this discharge of energy that is just overwhelming.

And we all know nobody wants to get in the way of that. so it is something that is very much attention getting. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them.

Well, why not? I thought that was the whole purpose of this book was to reveal. Bible. And now he's saying you are not to write these things.

And there is a precedent for that. I think we probably ought to look at it because in reference to my having said earlier about the Bible interpreting itself, I think we find some interesting parallels.

[28 : 13] So let's go first of all, if we may, to let's go to Ezekiel chapter 2, if we may, and we will see how the testaments kind of come together, how one sheds light upon another.

Ezekiel chapter 2, verse 1. Bear in mind that Ezekiel is ministering and writing hundreds of years before Jesus was ever born in Bethlehem.

So this is going back way, way far back from what we are reading in the Revelation. And let's start with verse 1, if we may. Then he said to me, Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you.

I guess maybe he was lying down. We are told that he fell on his face and heard a voice speaking in verse 28. And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.

Then he said to me, Son of man, that's Ezekiel, I am sending you to the sons of Israel to a rebellious people who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day.

[29 : 36] And I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children. And you shall say to them, Thus says the Lord God. As for them, whether they listen or not, for they are a rebellious house, they will know that a prophet has been among them.

And you, son of man, neither fear them nor fear their words. Though thistles and thorns are with you, and you sit on scorpions, neither fear their words nor be dismayed at their presence, for they are a rebellious house.

God is telling Ezekiel, now they're going to try to get to you. They're going to try to scare you and intimidate you, and they will threaten you, they will do anything they can to shut you up.

Don't worry about them. You just say on. You shall speak my words to them, whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.

Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.

[30 : 50] Now, this too is a vision that Ezekiel is being provided, and he is told to eat what God is giving him.

In verse 9, I looked, and behold, a hand was extended to me, and lo, a scroll was in it. And when he spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning, and woe.

Then he said to me, Son of man, eat what you find, eat this scroll, and go speak to the house of Israel.

So, I opened my mouth, and he fed me this scroll. And he said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach, and fill your body with this scroll, which I am giving you.

Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. Really tasted good. Then he said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel, and speak with my words to them.

[32 : 00] For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech or difficult language, but to the house of Israel. You all speak the same language. Nor to so many peoples of unintelligible speech, of difficult language, whose words you cannot understand, I have sent you to them who should listen to you.

Yet, the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to me. Surely the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate.

And you know what? They still are. Nothing has changed. They still are. Well, while we're in the neighborhood, I want you to come to Daniel, if you will, please.

That's the next book, Daniel chapter 12. We'll see about this scroll and about the eating of the scroll. What this has to do with, really, as in the vision, he is eating this.

What he is doing is absorbing. He's taking in the word of God. We use a word like, if you're reading a book or you're studying for a test or something of that nature, you may say, I read it over and I ate it up.

[33 : 24] I fully digested the material. Well, you didn't eat it. You didn't put the papers, the pages in your mouth and chew them up and eat them, but it meant that you absorbed the content of them so that they became, so that the message in the book or on the pages became part of your being.

You took it in so you were able to give it out. That's the whole point. That's why they are to absorb the contents of the scroll, whether it's Revelation or whether it's here.

It means thoroughly, fully familiarize yourself with the content so that when you go out among people, you will know what to tell them and you will give them my words that you have digested and you will repeat them and give them to them.

It provides a human dimension with divine authority and that is the whole point. Now we are in Daniel chapter 12. Now at that time, and this by the way is prophetic as well, Michael, the great prince, this is an angelic being, an archangel, who stands guard over the sons of your people will arise.

Now we do know from other places in scripture it appears very obvious that God has placed this angel, Michael, the archangel, in a very strategic leadership position among angelic beings.

[34 : 59] And it is Michael who eventually will contend with Lucifer. Apparently he is the only one of the angels that seems to be up to taking on the adversary himself.

And he does. And we'll see that in a later chapter of the revelation and Michael will come to the defense and to the rescue of Israel. He is the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people.

And these of course are the Jewish people. He will arise and there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time.

and at that time your people that is the Jewish people everyone who is found written in the book will be rescued. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground these are those who passed on will awake these to everlasting life but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

This has to do with the resurrection of Old Testament believers. Completely different from the body of Christ. And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven and those who lead the many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

[36 : 24] But as for you Daniel, conceal these words. Now there is that enigmatic expression again. Don't divulge this content.

Seal the words. until the time of the end. And the time of the end will be in the revelation.

Many will go back and forth and knowledge will increase. Then if you would please come back to our text in Revelation 10 and we'll see if we can tie some of these things together. we are told to seal up in verse 4, seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them.

And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land with one foot on each. Recall, this must have been a, this vision must have been just absolutely stunning.

[37 : 39] Even you think in terms of a colossal being standing who knows how many feet tall in this vision with one leg on land and one leg on the water.

And John is beholding this whole thing and is just absolutely aghast at what he is seeing. and we are told that this angel lifts up his right hand to heaven and he is making an oath in the same way that when someone in our law courts goes into court they are told to put their left hand on the Bible and raise your right hand and you are swearing an oath.

To whom are you swearing it? you are swearing it to God. And you know there was a time in this nation when we used the Bible in the courtroom and the right hand was raised and the witness was required to repeat after me these words, I, John Doe, do solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

That's why the right hand is raised. it's raised to God. But in many of our secularized law courts today, they've done away with the Bible.

They don't use that. That might offend somebody. And they don't even, in many of them, they don't even say, so help me God. They just say, I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth.

[39 : 15] That's it. No, so help me God. Now I suspect there are some law courts where that is maintained, but it is becoming more and more outmoded. So this angel holds up his hand and notice that it is the right hand that is significant.

Jesus Christ, when he ascended to heaven, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. That is the hand of dominance, the hand of power, that is generally referred to that way.

And he swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there shall be delay.

No longer. The string has run out. We're getting on with this thing. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as he preached to his servants, the prophets.

And the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me and saying, Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land.

[40 : 38] And I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book, and he said to me, Take it and eat it, and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.

And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and he was, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

And they said to me, You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. And where will that be?

And what will that be? That will be starting with the next chapter. When you prophesy again, when you continue prophesying, you continue preaching, that has to do with the balance of the book of the Revelation.

I want to focus for a moment now, if we may, on this phrase, the mystery of God is finished, in verse 7. Whatever could that mean, and what does it mean, that when he ate this book, absorbed this book, it was sweet in his mouth, sweet as honey, but when it was digested, when it got to his stomach, we would say, gave him an upset stomach.

[42 : 06] It was bitter in his stomach. And what I believe is being addressed here has to do with the provision, the provision which is sweet, desirable, God-given, but in order for the provision to run its course, there will be a toll exacted, and it will not be pretty.

it will be bitter. So, we've got a provision made in the sweetness, and this, by the way, may be tied in, and I cannot say this for sure, but it seems to me that it is, tied in with God's answer to the martyred saints who cried out to God, whose souls were under the altar, and they cried out to God, saying, how long, O Lord, before you avenge our blood?

Those of us who were brutally slain for the witness and the testimony of Jesus Christ? When are you going to avenge our blood? This is the beginning here.

The promise is sweet. It comes from the benevolent hand of God that is threaded with justice, and when it is enacted, performed, played out, it's going to be a very, very bitter experience for humanity because the death toll will be unimaginable.

In one case, it could be a third of the earth's population will be decimated, wiped out. I have referenced in the past some of the content by Dr. Henry Morris, and I believe he's got some insight regarding this phrase, the mystery of God, and I'm not dogmatic about this, and I don't suspect that Dr. Morris was dogmatic either, but he is a Bible, he's with the Lord now, and he was a Bible scholar that gained a great deal of credibility and respect, and I think that he's probably onto something here, and we will just share this with you, and you can assess it for yourself.

[44 : 36] As to the mystery of God, what is this mystery of God? The word in the Greek is *musterion*, and it is used commonly to refer to the secrets imparted to the initiates in the Greek mystery religions.

Even though a precisely equivalent term does not appear in the Old Testament, the prophets are said to have been assured of the ultimate completion of the mystery of God, and that's what that verse reads, verse 7, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound. You see, the seventh angel, when he sounds, he sounds with the trumpet. It is the blowing of the trumpet. We've already had six, and we've already had two of the three woes.

This is going to introduce the third woe, that is W-O-E, and it is a time of incredible divine justice. That's the woe, and when this seventh angel blows his trumpet, that signals the first of the seven bowls to be dumped.

Remember, there were seven seals, the first six seals had some event transpiring on earth, and the seventh seal introduced the seven trumpets, and of the seven trumpets, we saw the first six, in fact, the sixth one is here in this chapter, it includes this part of the revelation, and the six trumpets, each one sounds, and a different calamity follows, but the seventh trumpet introduces seven bowls.

[46 : 24] The seven bowls will be the end. That's the finale. There are no more sevens after that. It is the seals, trumpets, the bowls, those three sets, each one of which is more extreme, more severe than those that preceded.

It is simply God tightening the screws. When man does not respond to the first set of seven, there is another set of seven that comes.

That will get the attention and will result in the repentance of many who refuse to repent under the seals. and then the last will be the most critical and the most severe of all.

And of course that too will have some who will accept, some who will repent, and many who will not. But in each case, there will be that opportunity there because in wrath, God is remembering mercy. listen, there is always, always, always a way to avert the judgment and the justice of God so long as you are alive.

[47 : 48] And the way to avert that is by repentance. Always has been, always will be. You need to change your mind, sin. You need to acknowledge your sin.

Nobody is saying you are worse than anyone else. But we are saying you're just like everyone else. You're no better than anyone else. We're all in this thing together. And when you are willing to acknowledge your sin and your offense against the Holy God, that delights the heart of God because when you do that for the first time in your life, you are delivering yourself into the sphere of truth.

And God is a God of truth. If you want to meet God, you meet him on his terms and that means you face the truth about yourself and about his provision through Jesus Christ.

This is what salvation is all about. This is what eternal life is all about. This is why there was a baby born in Bethlehem. This is why he died on the cross. This is why there's an empty tomb.

If you miss this, you miss everything. It doesn't make any difference who you are, how much money you make, or how famous you are. It doesn't amount to a hill of beans. If you miss this, you miss it all. So, Dr.

[49 : 07] Moore's concludes saying, although there are a number of mysteries referred to in the New Testament, the context here seems strongly to indicate that this mystery of God refers to the whole purpose and plan of God.

God, why has a holy God allowed evil to thrive for so long? I wouldn't. Would you?

I would have brought this curtain down a long time ago, but I'm not God, and we can all be thankful for that.

God has his purposes, his ways, and his means. He has his agenda, and it is absolutely perfect, no matter what you think about it, and no matter how much we complain about it, or gripe about it, or deny it, he really does know what he's doing, and that includes every heartache, and every pain, and every adverse circumstance, and every physical discomfort, and every emotional upset, and every all the rest of it.

He's in charge of it all. And you know what you ought to do in light of that? Just relax.

[50 : 34] Relax. Don't be uptight about anything, Paul tells the Philippians. But by everything, prayer and supplication, let your request be made known unto God, and the peace, the peace, the peace of God will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Wow. Christians have absolutely no business being in turmoil, in emotional upset, in hand wringing, in floor pacing, in, oh me, oh my, why did God allow this to happen to me?

What did I do to deserve this? And on and on and on. And on. And on. And on. And on. The Lord has given. The Lord has taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Can you really subscribe to that? But you don't know my circumstances. Well, God knows full well your circumstances.

and he has planned, he has designed, he has intent. I've often comforted myself with Mark, God knows what he's doing in your life, even when it hurts.

[52 : 00] And sometimes it hurts a lot. And he still knows what he's doing. Because if he doesn't, we have a God who's out of control.

that's not part of his job description. So, Dr. Morris says, these and many other such questions pertaining to the ultimate reconciliation and accomplishment of God's many purposes in creation will someday all be answered.

And it is perhaps the combination of all these that is called here, the mystery of God. In any case, all such mysteries of God's dealings with men will finally be resolved and understood during these days of the sounding of the final trumpet.

The prophets had indeed received such promises long ago. To Daniel had been promised that all these things shall be finished.

Daniel 12 7. To Zechariah had been promised, in that day there shall be one Lord and his name one. Zechariah 14 9.

[53 : 23] The Psalms have prophesied, his name shall endure forever, his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed.

God will be one. I want to conclude with this thought, and I've shared it with you before, and that is this. We look at situations in our lives and in the lives of others, and we try to assess what's going on.

We try to figure out, why is this person undergoing this? What point is there? What good can come out? That's a good question. What good can possibly come out of this?

Because all I see with it is just pain, pain, pain, adversity, heartache, disappointment. Life just throws you one curve after another. Where in the world is God?

I'm supposed to be one of the good guys, and he's supposed to be on my side, and where is he when I need him? And why doesn't God do something? We have such a terribly limited perspective.

[54 : 30] But you know, sometimes we have the audacity to charge God with something as if we think we know more about it than he does. Where do you get off God?

I recall hearing a lady make a statement one time because she had suffered some real adversity in the tragic death of the sweet, sweet little daughter of still reeling from that.

She was heard to say, when I get to heaven, God's going to have a lot of explaining to do to me.

Now, I'm sure this was just the pain of a mother's heart, talking, kind of expression that we are all very capable of saying.

Some of us would think it, but maybe we wouldn't say it. But we actually can have the gall to tell our God, you ought to be doing things my way.

You ought to fix this. You ought to change that. And if you're any kind of a God, why are you letting this go on? And what's the big idea anyway? You know, Romans, I think it's Romans 10 says, who or who has known the mind of the Lord?

[56 : 07] Or who, listen to this, or who has been his counselor? Ha ha! Who has been his counselor?

And by wildest imagination, I can just imagine God coming to my house and sitting down at the kitchen table and saying, Mark, I've got a few problems I'm working on and they're real stumpers. Could you give me some help on this? Could you advise me about this? Now you say, well, that's about the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard of.

Well, it's true, it is, but you know, in our adversity, in our pain, and in our sorrows, and in our doubts, and our questions, we can develop a lot of brass.

We can tell God what to do. Hey, listen, this is no way to run a railroad. You do this and so. And when you can just relax and say, Lord, this thing hurts terribly.

[57 : 14] I don't know how much longer it's going to go on, but I sure would appreciate being relieved from it. And yet, if you choose not to, I have to believe you still know better than I do.

And I'm counting on your grace to be sufficient for this. Sure, we have our druthers. We'd rather get this fixed.

We'd rather do away with that. We'd rather have this and that and all the rest of it. And God knows all about our wants. And he's not interested in our wants. Because God loves us so much, he's going to meet our needs, not our wants.

If we have our way about it, we'll meet our wants. I wouldn't mind winning the lottery tomorrow. Of course, I'd have to buy a ticket today, but I wouldn't, you know, that would be okay.

But I don't need that. And the Lord knows what I need. He knows what you need too. And you are just like the rest of us. If you are not struggling with some insurmountable heartache and problem right now, just wait.

[58 : 26] It's coming. It's coming. And to every life some adversity comes. It's part of being a human being, living in a fallen world. But Jesus said, be of good cheer.

I've overcome the world. Hey, I've already got the victory. Just relax and coast on in. It'll be okay. I'll take care of it. You'll see in the end. And all the wrinkles will get ironed out.

Father, we are just so grateful that you are who you are and you are about what you are about.

And Lord, please forgive our rashness and our brass and our audacity for those times when we dare challenge and question you and your wisdom.

and we know this does not give us liberty to ignore responsibilities, to be lazy rather than diligent, to just dismiss all responsibility because you're in charge.

[59 : 46] And we know that we have responsibilities to fulfill and that you are willing to energize us to do that. So help us to understand our sphere of influence and activity and not to get into yours, but to be grateful for it.

If there is anyone here this morning that has never really come to this truth issue about seeing themselves as you see them, our prayer for them is that they may know no peace and have no joy and have no serenity of soul at all until they find it all wrapped up in Jesus Christ, who died to provide that very thing for them.

In his name we pray. You are dismissed. You are dismissed. Thank you.