

**Mr. Melvin Rhodes**

**Sermon Transcript**

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# September 11 in Perspective

You know, for many years.... I've been in the church now for over thirty years. And in the time that I've been in the church, our focus, when it comes to prophecy, has generally been in three areas. One is the decline of the English speaking nations; another is the rise of Europe, and the third is the Middle East.

We have made mistakes in the past when it comes to articles written on prophecy — and I'm not talking so much about recent years, but going back thirty and twenty years - mistakes were made; and quite often the mistakes were made because we got too much into specifics. We would look at specific events and try to interpret them in the light of Bible prophecy, and sometimes we'd make mistakes as a result of that. Or we would predict that certain individuals, for example, were going to be the leaders of the beast power. Or one article I remember in 1966 was titled "No, Britain Will Not Enter the Common Market." Well, of course, Britain did enter the Common Market. So, we did make mistakes when we got into specifics. But if you look at the trends, you'll find that the church's teachings on prophecy — the understanding that we have, and have had, over the past few decades — is correct when you look at the trends.

And that's what I want to do this afternoon because there are certain trends that have become even more apparent as the result of the events of September the eleventh that we need to look at. I found it interesting that immediately after September the eleventh, I saw some postings on the internet of people saying, you know, the church is wrong, and this is . . . Mr. Armstrong never said anything about this. When you look at these trends though, you'll see that those three main areas are still the three areas that we could focus on. So, what I want to show this afternoon is where we are now in prophecy, and also help you to understand the reality behind 9/11 and what it portends for us.

It is about five months now, almost six months, in fact, since the events of the eleventh of September, and during that time, things have been seemingly getting back to normal in certain ways. But this week, I think everybody's been sobered by two developments, certainly one of them, and that was the murder of Daniel Pearl. The gruesome details, by the way, were in the Times newspaper in London yesterday, and it really is sickening the way that he was murdered. And then, of course, the other thing was one of our generals in Afghanistan, one of

our senior men, made the comment that the war in Afghanistan is only just beginning, never mind the greater war, the war on terror that is going on in different parts of the world and is likely to involve other nations before long. But the war in Afghanistan, which I think many people thought was largely over, is really just beginning. So, this problem is a problem that is not going to go away.

We need to realize that what happened on September the 11th is a part of an historic continuum. It is the continuation of developments, historical events which have been taking place for hundreds, even thousands of years. With the help of some maps here, I want to show you and explain how there has been an historic struggle that goes right back fourteen hundred years to the very beginning when we saw this struggle between Islam and Christianity.

The next map please. Okay, here we see, if we can look at the details, here we see the development of Islam going right back to the six hundreds. Islam as a religion began in the early six hundreds. That's when Muhammad received his visions, and what Muhammad did was he accomplished the unification of the Arab peoples. If you look at **Genesis 16:12** you'll see that the Arabs who are descended from Ishmael would have certain national characteristics.

**Genesis 16:12** - *And he shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.*

Now this is a prophecy regarding the descendants of Ishmael. The Arabs know they are descended from Ishmael. If any of you saw the Lehrer Report over the last ten days, they've had some reports from Saudi Arabia. One man, I remember in particular, a very wealthy architect, was talking about how he could trace his ancestry back to Muhammad in the six hundreds,

and he brought in also the fact that they are descended from Ishmael. It is common knowledge in the Middle East that people know that they go right back to Abraham. They know also that the Jews go back to Abraham through Isaac, and they don't understand about the greater Israel, but, you know, it is common knowledge.

What Muhammad did was unit all these war-like tribes down in the Saudi Arabia area. And then Islam spread out. What you see colored green there is just how far Islam got in that first century. Now remember, this is before you had cars, before you had planes, before people could move fast; just on horseback, these tribes spread Islam over all that territory that you see there.

Now, let's move to the next map. We'll see a little bit later in the next century, the eighth century A. D. Look at the extent of Islam now, in the eighth century A. D. Now the pinkish or the reddish areas in the north there are the areas which were

dominated by the Catholic Church, so that's the Christianity, the mainstream Christianity of that time. But notice how Islam got into Europe, right up through Spain, right into France. And in fact, in the latter part of the eighth century, the Muslim forces got right outside the gates of Paris. So, almost the whole of Europe was ready to fall into the hands of Islam. It was a very aggressive religion that pushed out in all these directions and people converted, either voluntarily, or in many cases they were forced to convert. But the religion spread really fast. And it lead, of course, to clashes with Christianity. And when I use the word - Christianity in this sermon, I am talking about mainstream Christianity, and essentially, I'm talking about Roman Catholicism. Although sometimes the Orthodox religion also came into conflict with Islam. But you see, going back almost fourteen hundred years, fourteen centuries, there has been this struggle between Christianity and also between Islam.

Now let's move to the next map. Okay, now this is sometime later, with the Ottoman Empire, so we're jumping a few hundred years here. But remember, there was also a clash about a thousand years ago between Christianity and Islam in the Crusades. Those were the major battles, and that went on for two or three hundred years. Now we see Islam becoming a great force again after the crusades in the fourteen hundreds, and again throughout the fifteen hundreds as this new empire, the Turkish Empire or the Ottoman Empire as it was called; because it was lead by the Ottomans. This empire, which was an Islamic Empire, but was not ruled by Arabs, spread out, and look how far it spread. And you see again, in Europe, right at the top there, you see again in Europe, the Turkish/Islamic forces took a large part of Europe.

In fact, just a few years ago the Pope was in Vienna, the Capital of Austria, the Pope is Polish, remember. The Pope was in Vienna for the celebrations of the three hundredth anniversary of when the Austrians, with the Hungarians and the Poles, (because the Poles at that time were a part of the Austrian Empire); they all defeated the Turkish forces in 1688. That was when things turned around. But you see, from the six hundreds, (that first map we looked at), right up until the end of the sixteen hundreds, Europe constantly lived under the threat of Islam taking over. And the main clash was the Crusades around 1000, 1100, 1200, that period of time there.

Now, to most people living in Ohio this may seem like ancient history. But when I go back to England to see my family, I pass the city of Nottingham. You know, where Robin Hood lived? And there is a pub there which I'd like to recommend for any possible future sermon you might like to give, Mr. O'Brien; this pub was built in 1199 to enable the soldiers who were going off to the Crusades to have a last few nights of revelry. And the pub is called - Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem, and it is over eight hundred years old. In fact, I may have the date wrong. It may be over nine hundred years old, actually, but the pub is still exactly as it was back

then. The only change is they've introduced electricity, but I think the toilet facilities are the original. If ever you can go there, it's interesting.

But you see, you know, people in Europe remember all of this because they see things around them. So, it is very real to realize that there has been this historic struggle. And you see here just how far the Ottoman Empire got into Europe. And gradually, after the year 1700, the Ottoman Empire was pushed back gradually further and further until at the end of World War I, less than a century ago, it finally collapsed.

Now, let's move to the next map. You can see this map...I can't see too well from the side, but this is again the Ottoman Empire. Again, you see the extent of the Ottoman Empire, all those colored areas are the Ottoman Empire, a very big and powerful empire. Although it was ruled by Turkey, forty percent of the population was Turkish, forty percent were Arabs, ten percent were Jews, and the Jews were treated quite well, and the other ten percent were other minorities, Armenians, especially the Armenians were treated quite badly. But it was a fairly liberal Islamic Empire by world standards, and it lasted for over four hundred years. But eventually, it collapsed.

Now, how did we get from that to the situation we've got today. Towards the end of the Ottoman Empire, which included all of this territory here; the Empire was in decline. I have at home a quote from a letter written in 1910 from somebody in what is now Iraq, but at that time was called Mesopotamia, just a region of the Ottoman Empire. This person was writing to a relative who lived I think in England, and he wrote in the letter, "This is the most boring part of the world. Nothing ever happens here." That was in 1910.

Now, I hope that guy managed to stay around a few years because after World War I, everything started to happen here in this particular part of the world. You see, in World War I, the Turks, the Ottoman Empire, made the mistake of allying with Germany against Britain, and later on America. So, when Germany lost World War I, the Ottomans lost. Their empire collapsed. And suddenly the rest of the world had to decide what to do with the different territories that were a part of the Ottoman Empire, and the result was: The next map: The carving up of the Middle East. So all of these countries came about as a result of World War I.

World War I was called the "the war to end all wars." It was the worst war ever fought in history. More military personnel died than in any war before or since. And a lot of people called it, "the war to end all wars." After this, there'll never be another war, they thought. Of course, they were wrong.

But after World War I, when the victors got together to decide on what to do with all these different territories that now suddenly had no leaders, they signed the Treaty of Versailles, a peace treaty, and somebody, a British Marshall General

called Wavell described that peace treaty as a "peace to end all peace". The "war to end all wars," and the "peace to end all peace" because he knew, and many others knew, that the peace was going to create even more problems. And you can look at every problem in the world today, every single geopolitical problem that you see on your TVs at night, every single problem goes back to that treaty, World War I, and the event that triggered off World War I, the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand in 1914. You won't find a problem on your news that does not go back to all of this because after World War I suddenly all these new countries came into existence. And the world became a much more complicated place. Europe became more complicated. Instead of big empires, you now had lots of little countries. The Middle East became much more complicated. Instead of the Ottoman Empire, now, suddenly, you have all these different new nations. And especially here, you have potential conflict emerging. The British were given control of Iraq after World War I. They were also given control of Palestine, what we today call Israel, and they had control of Jordan as well. And the French were given control of Syria and Lebanon.

Now while the British ruled Palestine, in the thirty years between the end of World War I and the end of British rule in that area, in that thirty years, a lot of Jews moved into the area. And eventually there was conflict between Jews and Arabs, the Palestinians. And in 1948 the British could not control it anymore, so the British pulled out. But before they pulled out, they went to the United Nations and asked the United Nations to resolve the problem. And the United Nations decided to create the state of Israel. And so the Jewish nation of Israel came into existence in May of 1948, and that altered everything. Because once there was a Jewish state in Israel, there was never ending conflict between Jews and Arabs.

Many of the prophecies in our Bible could not have been fulfilled; many of the end time prophecies could not have been fulfilled without the establishment of the modern nation of Israel. Because this is a center of conflict in the world, in the Middle East, and that conflict was not there before. Remember the man in Mesopotamia who wrote to his friend or relative in England, and said, "This is the most boring part of the world. Nothing ever happens here." Nobody would ever write a letter like that from the Middle East today. You see how much things have changed as a result of World War I and then later, the establishment of the nation of Israel.

Look at **Luke 21**. We see here that Jerusalem is going to be a focus of conflict at the time of the end. Jerusalem has been foretold that before, that during the period of the Ottoman Empire, for over four hundred years, it was at peace. And suddenly with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, in the last century, Jerusalem has been foretold that a number of times. So, things have changed a great deal.

**Luke 21:20** - . . . *when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that it's desolation is near.*

**Verse 22** - *For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.* You know, end time events do revolve a great deal around Jerusalem, and it still is very much the center of Bible prophecy regarding the end time, so the Middle East is an important area to look at.

Look at **Daniel 11**. We see other things here, which I think are interesting. In **Daniel 11** we have a whole chapter that covers a period of history going right back to the time of Daniel, right up until the second coming of Jesus Christ. In fact, in the book of Daniel, there are many chapters that take us through from Daniel's time in the sixth century B. C. right up until the second coming, and the establishment of the kingdom of God. And what we see in **Daniel 11** is that this area is a focus of prophecy for that whole period of time, that whole two thousand six hundred years, a focus of prophecy.

This passage of scripture, **Daniel 11**, is the king of the North and the king of the South. After the time of Alexander the Great, Alexander's Greek Empire was divided up. This is in the fourth century B. C. And you had the Ptolemies in Egypt, and you had the Seleucidaes in the northern area of Syria, and there was constant conflict which affected the Holy Land for hundreds of years. Then the prophecy in **Daniel 11:40** comes right down to the present time, and says this:

**Daniel 11:40** - *At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; (the king of the North), and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.*

**Verse 41** - *He shall also enter the Glorious Land.* (The Holy Land.) A prophecy again about the end time. A prophecy where Jerusalem is going to be central to these end time events. It ties in with **Luke 21**. So, we're looking again at this area for end time conflict.

Now let's move to another map, because I want to show some interesting developments here. When we think, for example about 9/11, we suddenly realize that we have a potential enemy which we hadn't noticed before, and that enemy potentially is Islam. Prior to 1990, our enemy was Communism. Prior to 1945, it was Fascism. Go further back, there were other enemies. But now, what is the greatest threat to world peace; well, I think we would have to admit the one potential problem is the problem of Islam. It doesn't mean that every Muslim, every follower of the Islamic religion would like to start a conflict with the West. It doesn't mean that at all, but certainly there is a problem with militant Islam and of course, what we are in the dark about is to what extent people in Muslim countries support the Islamic fundamentalists. But Islam was not a force to contend with until fairly recently.

Now, again, I mention, that for fourteen hundred years we've had this historic clash between Christianity on the one hand, and Europe and Islam coming up from North Africa and the Middle East. But from the eighteen hundreds, you saw the ascendancy of the European nations, particularly the British, and so Islam did not pose any threat. For two hundred years, Muslims did not have any victories against the West until fairly recently. I'll come back to that later on. But now, suddenly, we see the world has changed a great deal.

The green parts here are the Islamic nations. The green areas that you see colored there are the Islamic countries. You can see how big a force Islam has become. Now, let us understand that twelve years ago, it was not as big as this, because twelve years ago, many of these areas here were under Soviet rule, therefore dominated by Russians. And so those countries up there didn't matter. But now, suddenly, we've got this major, major power here. These are not united; they're different countries, but they are striving to come together and be united. And I think from Bible prophecy we can deduce that this is the king of the South at the end, you know, the Islamic forces coming together. Who they will be lead by is anybody's guess at this time. But remember, historically, the king of the South was always south of Jerusalem. Okay, so somewhere down here, south of Jerusalem, everything is Islamic. You've got to go right down to southern Africa to get away from Islam, and down in southern Africa, those countries are very poor, very backward. They're not likely to pose any threat to anybody. So, this is, again, a major area of potential conflict.

Now, we need to understand something else that is happening. I want to show you a map of the world as it was at the time of American and British domination, the British Empire and the United States. If we can go to that map, which is, I believe the last map we've got there, because I want to show this. We'll come back to some of those maps of Islam a little bit later.

Here is a map of the United States and Britain during their period of domination. Now, again, it's important to understand the trends. We're looking at trends here. We've had fourteen hundred years of - on again, off again - conflict between Islam and Christianity. Now we need to look at another trend here, because something else has been happening in the last fifty years, and these two trends are coming together with a third trend, which we'll look at as well, if we have time towards the end.

Remember, I mentioned the three major areas of focus of Bible prophecy in the Church for the last five decades, or six decades have been the decline of the English-speaking countries, the rise of Europe and the Middle East. Those have been the three major areas of focus.

The trend in the Islamic countries has been that they have grown, they have become more powerful, and so we see Islam rising up as a powerful force. Now, I

want to show you the decline of the English-speaking countries, because these two trends, you know, the decline of the English-speaking countries, the rise of Islam, we're going to have a problem, okay? That problem has already begun, but we will see it a little bit more clearly, I hope, after looking at some of these recent events and also looking at scripture.

This is the full extent of the British Empire and the United States at the height of their power; the British Empire about one hundred years ago, the United States came to preeminence also a hundred years ago. And you see how much territory it covered. The British Empire alone was over a quarter of the world's peoples, a huge Empire, the biggest Empire in history. And for a hundred years, or more, the British got their way all over the world because, you know, they were so much more powerful than any other nation.

From the Napoleonic wars right up to World War I; from 1814 to 1914, a hundred year period; the "Pax-Britannia" it's called - British peace, which a fulfillment of Bible Prophecy. Look at **Genesis 48**. Here we see the promised blessings to Joseph's sons. We'll just look at them briefly.

**Genesis 48:15** - *And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, (this is Israel blessing his son, Joseph,) God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has fed me all my life long unto this day,*

**Verse 16** - *The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.*

**Verse 17** - *Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.*

**Verse 18** - *And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."*

**Verse 19** - *But his father refused, and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, he also shall be great; but truly his yo brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."*

So, one was to be the greatest single nation, the other a multitude of nations. You see, the multitude of nations, all these were separate countries, totally different in character, even in language, in many respects completely different from each other, but they were all a part of the British Empire and Commonwealth, which was the most powerful force in the world, right up until World War II in fact.



I want to read to you what an American historian, James Truslow Adams, wrote in 1940. 1940 was a very interesting year. The British Empire was already at war against Nazi Germany. The United States was neutral. And James Truslow Adams chose that year to bring out his book. He finished his book that year on the history of the British Empire from 1784 to 1939. And at the end of his book, he writes this: (It's a warning to the United States and a warning to the world.)

"For those who have been accustomed to freedom of person and of spirit, the possible overthrow of the British Empire would be a catastrophe scarcely thinkable. Not only would it leave a vacuum over a quarter of the globe into which all the wild winds of anarchy, despotism and spiritual oppression would rush, but the strongest bulwark outside ourselves for our own safety and freedom would have been destroyed." I'll paraphrase that: American historian James Truslow Adams writing - this was the perception that many people in America had in 1940. That if the British Empire fell, if it was defeated by Germany, it would leave an incredible vacuum around the world because the British for as long as anybody could remember had kept the lid on all kinds of problems around the world. For example, the problem here, between Hindus and Muslims, the problem in the Middle East between Jews and Arabs, problems in Africa between different tribes that were hostile to each other. The British Royal Navy in the nineteenth century had stamped out slavery because the British had abolished slavery, the first major power in the history of the world to do so, and then the British Royal Navy was given the authority to stop any ships on the high seas and release any slaves that were being held captive. And also, the Royal Navy was given the authority to stop piracy anywhere in the world. So, the peace which the world had enjoyed had been as a result of British supremacy.

And the United States also had benefited from this because America was able to concentrate on expanding westwards, building up the United States internally while the British basically were taking care, at that time, of the rest of the world. And this had gone on for the best part of two hundred years. And the British had had complete supremacy since the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1814, 1815, that particular period of time.

So, James Truslow Adams was reminding America that the British Empire and Commonwealth was America's first line of defense and if anything happens to it, then we've got a problem in America, but he was also pointing out that the end of the empire would leave an incredible vacuum everywhere.

In 1945, Britain and America were victorious against Germany and Japan. And this is the way the world looked in 1945. The British dominating everything there. It looks yellow from here. I don't know if that's the color you're seeing, and the blue bit over there, for the benefit of those of you who went to public school is the United States. This is the domination. This is the way the world looked in 1945. Okay? But it was never to look this way again because two years later, the British

gave independence to India. They divided it up, Hindu India, Muslim Pakistan, in fact, here as well, two Pakistans at that time. And then Sudan got independence, and suddenly, the world was changing. Now the lid had been taken, the conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims and India. And when independence came, millions of people were massacred because each religion was killing the others, you see, en masse.

And then in the 1950's and 60's, all of this was given independence in Africa, one third of all the countries in Africa today are fighting civil wars, one third of the countries of Africa. All these conflicts have come to the surface. And it wasn't just Africa and India which changed, the Middle East, of course, changed as well, and what we saw happening in the Middle East, what we have seen in the last fifty years has been that as the European powers have declined, as Britain, especially has declined, as the empire was dismantled, we have seen the rise of other forces in the world.

Now we need to understand because, you know, all of this about the British Empire, for example, political correctness tells us that all of these nations getting independence was progressive. It was a good thing because now they were given them their freedom. And that was not true. What happened is this: prior to 1945, all of these territories in the British Empire all had their own parliaments. They all had a form of democracy. Not everybody had the vote. Where we lived in Rhodesia, for example, there was a qualified franchise. I did not qualify to vote. But many African peoples did qualify to vote. There was a qualified franchise, but every single country had a parliament, and this was known as an association of free peoples. Even Americans called it an association of free peoples. So not just British people called it that.

Colin Powell, for example, in his autobiography, "An American Journey," writes very positively about Jamaica and his upbringing, or his family's upbringing, rather, as a part of what was then a colony in Jamaica. But, since independence many of these countries have become dictatorships. So although they are free in one sense, they no longer have British rule. On the other hand, they've become dictatorships. And in some countries you've got conflict between different tribes, conflict between different religions, but also the end of the empire has changed some other things.

Before independence, every single one of these countries was dominated by people of Ephraimite descent.. So, you could say, they were dominated by Israelite peoples. With independence, domination changed and now they were dominated by indigenous peoples. So what we have been seeing in the last fifty years is the decline of the western world. The British and American peoples have been the dominate peoples in the western world for two hundred years, the British right up until World War II, America since World War II. The world has been shaped by the British and Americans more than anybody else. But what we

have seen in the past fifty years is a gradual decline in the west, not just the British Empire has gone, the French Empire as well, and most of this was French, and this was French around here. The French Empire has gone too, so the west has been in retreat for the last fifty years.

Benjamin Netanyahu describes what is happening now between Islam and the west as a war to reverse the triumph of the west. Benjamin Netanyahu was the Prime Minister of Israel a few years ago, and he sees a great deal of this himself. The west has been in decline for the past fifty years. We've been in retreat for the last fifty years.

We need to understand, there's a scripture here, **Genesis 49. Genesis 49:1**, okay?

**Genesis 49:1** - *Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days." A prophecy about the last days.*

**Genesis 49:22** - *"Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well." Now in **Genesis 48** we saw Israel blessing Joseph's sons, telling Ephraim he would become a multitude of nations, telling Manasseh he would become the greatest single nation. Now we don't see Ephraim and Manasseh mentioned. We see instead Joseph mentioned. And I think this is a key to understanding where we are in prophecy at this time because we have tended, especially in America, to look at everything from an American perspective. And quite often after September 11<sup>th</sup>, people would ask the question: "Is this the beginning of Jacob's trouble?"*

Well, if you are looking at it from an American perspective, just looking at America, you could say, yes, September 11<sup>th</sup> was the beginning of something completely different. But when you look at it from the perspective of Joseph as one, in other words, the United States and Britain as one, you see it is part of this historic continuum. You see, back then in the 1940's, the British was driven out of Israel by terrorism.

In the 1950's the British had to fight terrorists in Kenya colony down here in Africa. There was a problem with terrorists in the Indo-Pakistani conflict. There were big problems with terrorism in Malaysia, the British were fighting a terrorist war against Communists in Malaysia throughout the 1950's and 1960's. You see, September 11<sup>th</sup> was just the part of this continual problem with terrorism and this continual retreat by the west, by Britain especially, but by the west in general because as each nation changed hands, it ceased to be dominated by a western power with western values and instead became something completely different.

So, this retreat has been going on for over fifty years, ever since World War II by the British, by the French, even by America as well because America lost the

Philippines and also has lost military bases around the world in the past fifty years, so gradually being pushed back, you see. And that's what's been continually happening. *Joseph is a fruitful bough*, it says in **verse 22**. *A fruitful bough by a well*.

British and Americans were very productive economically . All of these nations of the British Empire were developed during the time that they were ruled by Britain as a colonial power. Most of these nations have gone backwards economically since independence. In Africa that is especially true. Ghana, where I still go regularly, Ghana, before independence in 1957 was richer than some of these countries in southern Europe. Ghana today, the people today have an average income of twenty-five dollars a month. You see, they went backwards considerably as a result of the end of colonial period.

Now remember, the liberals in our society and the politically correct will still describe the end of the colonial period - decolonization - as a good thing, as a positive thing; failing to realize that it has left behind hundreds of millions of people who are suffering more now than they ever suffered before. Okay? So again, gradually, you see these changes taking place.

So, here was Joseph right at the height of it's power as a tribe of Israel. *Joseph is a fruitful bough; a fruitful bough by a well. His branches went over the wall*. Very productive. The British were great investors. During the 1800's and the 1900's all of these territories were developed by British capital. London today is still the world's biggest financial market, eleven times bigger than New York, not the biggest stock market. New York is a bigger stock market. But London is still the place where governments go, nations go when they want to raise capital to develop their countries. The British had an informal empire as well. During the 1800's, not only did they develop all these British territories, their informal empire included Argentina, Brazil, Chile, all of whom were developed with British capital, and a lot of the development in the U. S. was British capital. The Louisiana Purchase, for example, Baring's Bank in London loaned Jefferson the money for the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. So, a very wealthy mercantile empire developed all of these different areas. Then notice the next verse:

**Genesis 49:23** - *The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.*

**Verse 24** - *His bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob*. You know, you look at this and you see the impression is given of continual wars here, but at the same time, victory, the strength given by God. One of the students at ABC pointed out this week when I read this, that archers suggest also that these were being attacked from afar because, you know, you shoot a bow and arrow from a distance rather than a knife where you've got to be right next to the person. And that's an

interesting thought as well because, you know, I've always thought that when we have this supremacy, you know, wars were fought thousands of miles away from home. We had to keep the peace all over the world. But now that all of this is gone, the wars are going to be fought at home. See, there's the difference, because when you don't have a military presence all over the world, you end up fighting on the home front, which is what most nations have had to do all the time. But we didn't because we had these territories, especially the British had, but America also became a great military power. But here we see also this prophecy of , you know, never-ending, or seemingly never-ending, but regular conflict, if you like, as the tribe of Joseph has had this period of ascendancy. In fact, since 1815, if you look at the research done on this, the countries which have fought the most wars in the world have been number one, Great Britain. The U. S. is number five. Remember, America did not become a great international power until World War I, and especially World War II. Because after World War I, Congress voted to become isolationists again, and Woodrow Wilson did not get his own way. So, America was a late arrival on the scene, so to speak.

France has been the second country that has had the second most wars after Britain because the French as well have this role of trying to stop all these different nations fighting each other around the world and trying to make the world safe for commerce.

But anyway, what we have been living through, what my lifetime has coincided with as it happens is the decline and fall of this system, the multitude of nations. And it's been going on for over fifty years, and the French Empire is gone as well, and so we've seen this reversal of the triumph of the west that Benjamin Netanyahu talks about. And now it is at the point where, with the west in decline and Islam at the same time rising, you know, we've reached the point of clashing, which was inevitable. And of course, Israel and the Middle East, the Jewish country of Israel, is the major theater right now of conflict.

Why has Islam been rising? Well, we need to understand this, and it ties in with **Deuteronomy 28**. **Deuteronomy 28** is, I believe, one of the most important chapters of Bible prophecy. It is the blessings and cursings chapter. And here God tells the Israelites that if they keep His commandments they will be blessed, but if they break the commandments, then they will be cursed.

**Deuteronomy 28:1** - *And it came to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord, your God, to observe carefully all His commandments, which I command you today, that the Lord, your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.*

**Verse 2** - *And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you because you obey the voice of the Lord your God.* You know, for obedience, the nations would be supreme in the world.

Now I know that Britain and the United States have not kept all the commandments of God. But let's just consider, for a moment, in Victorian times, in the 1800's, whether in the United States or Britain, our laws were based on the ten commandments, the obvious one which was not a law was the Sabbath. But Sunday observance was very strict, and, you know, the people were ignorant of the Sabbath. But they were very strict and they were zealous for God. In fact, if you want to read a good history of the British Empire, there is a three-volume history by a historian called James Morris. And the titles are interesting. The second volume is called "Pax Britannia.", which is about the British Empire at it's height in 1897, and it's a very colorful description of all the celebration throughout the empire of Queen Victoria's sixtieth anniversary on the throne.

The first volume, the rise to pre-eminence, is called, "By Heaven's Command," which I think is a very interesting title. James Morris is not a religious person, but the point of the book is that it was deep religious conviction which drove the British to build this empire around the world because they believed that the Protestant religion, which they had, after breaking away from Rome, was extremely important and so was their system of government which had developed from that religion, and from the publication of this book, the King James version of the Bible in 1611. You know, it was the progressive thing. England broke away from Rome. That was the beginning of our freedom, the beginning of our freedom in the 1500's. It was under Elizabeth I first - breaking away from Rome. Then the translation of the Bible - the Bible led to people studying the Bible and coming up with new ideas, which lead to the development of the political systems that we've got today, the development of the United States. "By Heaven's Command", shows the evangelical fervor that drove the people at that time. And the ten commandments, as they understood them, were the laws of the land. The ten commandments were the laws of this land too, in Victoria's time.

Of course all of that changed after World War II. And all of this changed after World War II. The map changed after World War II. As we turn more and more away from God, so we have been in retreat, if you will. Look at **Deuteronomy 28:15**:

**Deuteronomy 28:15** - *It shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today; that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you*

**Verse 16** - *Cursed shall you be in the city, cursed shall you be in the country.*

**Verse 17** - *Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*

**Verse 18** - *Cursed shall be the fruit of your body.* Now, let's just pause for a moment and look at that. Go back to **verse 4**, when it describes blessings,

**Verse 4** - *Blessed shall be the fruit of your body.* You know, it is interesting. In Victorian times it was not uncommon in Britain and United States for a couple to have eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve children. Now one or two might die in infancy of diseases. You could reckon on one dying in one of the many wars that was being fought. But most of the others lived.

Now, that was a blessing. God says that having lots of children is a blessing. Now what do all of us think in this room? Let's be honest. We don't think that way, right? We think that limiting the size of your family is the best thing, the best way to go. And yet God says in *verse 18, cursed shall be the fruit of your body.* One of the punishments, one of the cursings for disobedience is not having many children.

Now, we've looked at that as a positive thing, being able to limit the size of our families, but let us understand the one reason why we have been in retreat for the last fifty-five, fifty-six years, whatever, since World War II, one reason we have been in defeat is because we have a very low birthrate. Those of Israelite descent have a very low birthrate. In fact, there's only one place in the whole western world where the population is growing. You know where that is? Oh, come on. The students guessed. Sorry? No, in the western world. In Utah. Because the Mormons don't practice birth control. But everywhere else in the United States and in western Europe, in Britain, Australia, the population is declining, and that is the descendants of Israel are declining in numbers.

But the population in other parts of the world is increasing. So, in all of these countries, the African population kept on growing. The average couple in west Africa has 8.3 children, whereas, we on average have 1.3, I think it is now. You need to 2.1 just to stay constant. But our birthrate has been really low, and it keeps on getting lower and lower, whereas the birthrate in third world countries has increased dramatically. And the Islamic countries, that we saw on the map, the birthrate is extremely high. In fact, in a twenty-year period, in a twenty-year period, the number of peoples in the peoples descended in the tribe of Joseph would go down by about a quarter, whereas the number of peoples in the Islamic countries would increase by a couple of hundred percent. And this has been happening for over fifty years. So, you see why we started to have problems. We are declining in number. In fact, you go further down in **Deuteronomy**, the further down in the book of **Deuteronomy 28:62**, again, it says this even more, a cursing.

**Deuteronomy 28:62** - *You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God. You will be left few in number. Look at **verse 43**.*

**Verse 43** - *The alien who is among you (that's the stranger, the Gentile, the non-believer, non-Israelite,) the alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower.*

**Verse 44** - *He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head and you shall be the tail.* In all of these countries, sixty years ago, people descended from Ephraim were the head. But now, in every case, they're the tail. You see, one after the other, the indigenous population has replaced those of British descent, and so those nations now are no longer western oriented, if you will. They're completely different. They've changed course. Their interests are different. The dominant religion is different. Their values are different.

Democracy has been really a British and American concept. Other countries, if they have been democratic at all, it is usually for a brief period of time. It doesn't last. It is a part of our heritage that goes back hundreds of years. We've tried to impose it on other nations, but it never lasts. You often hear Presidents of the United States, when they talk about problems in other countries, they'll say, "You know, we want to restore democracy." Whenever I hear that expression, it bothers me because how can you restore democracy to a country that's never had it, Haiti, for example, in the Caribbean. The last president wanted to send troops in there to restore democracy, but it never had democracy. See, it's a different form of government.

Anyway, this is the trend we've seen in the last fifty-five years. The west has been in retreat. Benjamin Netanyahu mentioned that, and at the same time, Islam has been increasing. Peoples of Islamic descent have increased in number. That has been true also in the United States. CNN said yesterday in 1970, there were less than half a millions Muslims in the United States. Today, there are almost eight million. See how things have changed.

These demographic trends are going to continue. I want to quote to you from Samuel Huntington, who wrote the book, "The Clash of Civilizations and The Remaking of World Order," in 1992. And he said this regarding Islam and Christianity. "In the long run, Muhammad wins out. Christianity spreads primarily by conversion, Islam by conversion and reproduction. The percentage of Christians in the world peaked at about thirty percent in the 1980's, leveled off and is now declining, and will probably approximate about twenty-five percent of the world's population by 2025. As a result of their extremely high rates of population growth, the proportion of Muslims in the world will continue to increase dramatically, amounting to twenty percent of the world's population by the turn of the century, which we've now passed, surpassing the number of Christians in the first decade, which we're now in, and probably accounting for about thirty percent of the world's population by 2025.



Now, just think about this for a moment, if we can go back to one of those maps of Islam and the world as it is today. Okay, this is the Islamic countries, the western part of the Islamic territory, these lighter colored countries here do have some of other religions in them, but they're still predominately Islamic. These darker countries are all exclusively Islamic, okay? Ninety-five percent or more. And it continues over here too, if we can just look at this stretch, you see how far it goes, and then even further down here, there is Indonesia, which is the world's biggest single Muslim country. Consider this. There are fifty-six countries in the world in the Islamic conference. Now the number of countries in the world in total is about one hundred ninety countries. So, fifty-six out of the hundred and ninety are Islamic countries. That's quite high right there.

Not one of those Islamic countries allows Americans or British people to come into their countries to live and become citizens. Not one of them allows that. The only way anybody from the west could move into one of those countries and live there indefinitely is by converting to Islam and marrying somebody who is a Muslim. So some American women, for example, have married Muslims from some of these countries and they are living there, and that way, they can stay there forever, okay? In fact, they can't leave without their husband's consent, which is often a major problem in itself.

Not one of those countries allows immigration from the western world. Why do you think that is? You see, we allow immigration from those countries into the United States, into Britain, into France. The reason is that these nations understand that Islam and the western way of life are incompatible. They're incompatible. They cannot coexist. That's why they don't let us in to live there.

I mentioned the fourteen hundred years, this conflict between Islam and Christianity. Today it's not so much a conflict between Christianity and Islam, as between western secularism and Islam. Our way of life, which is secular; it is post-Christian because the western world has turned it's back on it's former Christian faith. Our way of life today is very different; it's very secular, very materialistic. And these nations do not want western influences coming into their nations. We allow people to come in from their countries. We are not allowed to go to theirs. We can go and visit, in some cases. We can even go, and we can operate a business there, if the business is based in the U. S. or Britain. Somebody could go out there and work for a couple of years. We can take our skills and work on contract in some countries for two or three years. But we can never live there and become citizens. I think that is very interesting.

You see, Muslim countries realize the two are incompatible. We do not in the west. Because in the west, we have changed our beliefs considerably in the last fifty years. We have lost our religious consciousness. You know, this nation was founded by Protestants. I know this is politically incorrect, but it was. It was founded by Protestants. Not that we are Protestants. We are not. And Protestants

basically believe the same as Catholics but they are protesting, Protestants, against the Catholic system of government, the Catholic government which was very corrupt at the time of the Protestant Reformation.

But Protestants gave us two things when they broke away from Rome. First of all, they broke away from the authority of Rome. That was the beginning of our freedom. But secondly, we also got the Bible through Protestants, for which we should be very thankful. And the Bible changed the thinking of those nations which were Protestant, and particularly the British and later the American people; the thinking changed. But we have lost our identity. And as a result of losing that religious identity, today, most people believe that it doesn't matter what religion you have; they're all the same; we all worship the same God; it is commonly said.

Keep in mind in the 1800's, after the Irish potato famine in the 1840's, a lot of Irish people started moving to America. They were Catholics. There were Anti-Catholic riots in America because people were afraid that if Catholics were allowed into the country, the country would come back under Rome. And, you know, people realized back then that their ancestors had been fighting for three hundred years to break away from the authority of Rome. And people would not have tolerated other religions which they considered pagan religions, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, to come into the United States, or to come into Britain. They were not tolerated. But now, of course, it's quite different. Now everything is very different, and we all worship the same God, or so we're told.

And so because we've lost that religious identity, we don't understand that there are differences between different religions. There are different cultural values, different traditions. It's not that one is superior to another, that's not what we're talking about. We're just talking about differences. Can people who are of a western mindset, secularists, coexist with people who are of the Islamic tradition where the teachings are very different and in obvious conflict. The rights of women, for example, are obviously in conflict here.

Now, looking at the world from the Islamic point of view, you see that there is resentment against the western way of life for a number of reasons. The Muslims have a word for - crusade. The word in Arabic - al-Salibiyyah. And they talked about three crusades.

The first crusade was between the Christians and the Muslims about a thousand years ago, when they fought for control of the Holy Land. The second crusade was when the European invaded some of the areas of the Middle East and they became colonists of the British and French. The third crusade, which they consider the worst of all, is cultural imperialism. The second crusade, colonialism, was imperialism, European imperialism. The third crusade is American imperialism, because our form of imperialism is changing the Middle East in a way which they don't like. Our imperialism is TV, movies, music, clothes, the

attitudes which we have in terms of things like women's rights, for example, and even our family systems, alternative lifestyles, all of these ideas, which have been coming in in movies and on TV are affecting all of these different nations. So there is this intense resentment against us, and this is a primary cause of the clash between Islam and between the west at this time.

But there's other things too. Our economies in the west have done very well. We have prospered. But for various reasons, the economies in many of these areas have not prospered. They've got a high birthrate, which means that in some areas, sixty, or even as many as seventy-five percent of their people have no jobs. And the younger a person is, the less likely he is to have a job. So, you've got in some areas seventy-five percent of people in the sixteen to thirty age group have no jobs. So, again, there is a lot of resentment. And they have no prospects of any jobs either. And without a job, that means they can't get married because they have to pay a dowry in order to get married. So, you know, there's frustration there as well. So, you can see why so many are willing to become suicide bombers because they are promised by their religious leaders that as soon as they die, they'll go straight to heaven and have seventy virgins. You see how that appeals.

Now I wonder where these virgins can come from because when you consider that people in the Islamic world can have four wives, there can't be that many women left over, so to speak, so how come the seventy for each guy when he gets to heaven? But somehow, you've got to figure out the math.

But you see how that can appeal to people, and it's interesting too, just to dwell on this for a moment. Saudi Arabia is supposed to be an ally of the U.S. Twenty-five percent of the world oil comes from Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is very rich. It's where Mecca and Medina are, the holy places of Islam, and the Saudis consider themselves protectors of Islam around the world. And they finance mosques all over the world, including those mosques that train kids when they are young to be suicide bombers. But the mosques in the United States are also financed by Saudi Arabia, and a recent article in "The Spectator," from England showed that eighty percent of the Imams, the religious teachers in the mosques in Britain are members of the Wahabi sector of Islam, which is the sect which the Saudi Arabians belong to. And the Wahabis believe that Islam can only be achieved through violence, and so, the kids in the mosques in the U. S. are being taught by these Wahabis.

Now in the past, when people have come to America, the first generation usually is not very American. But their kids usually become very American. But now we're going to see a reversal of that with Islam, because the children are going to hate America because they are being taught by these Imams and this is already happening around the country, so this problem is not going to go away.

So, I think we can see that the trends are the decline of the English-speaking nations. That decline still continues. The rise of Islam, which is going to be the king of the South. But now let's look at the third one just for a few moments.

In **Daniel 11:40** - we saw it mentioned the prophecy about the king of the South pushing against the king of the North. Now when we think about the king of the North, obviously that's the power to the north of Jerusalem. The king of the North historically was the Seleucidae dynasty to the north in Syria to the north of Jerusalem. Later on, this area was dominated by the Roman Empire. We see in **Daniel** the prophecy regarding the beasts that would go on right down until the second coming of Jesus Christ. But what we see, if you go from **Daniel 11** for a moment, to **Revelation 17** is that we're going to see another change take place prior to Christ's return because in **Revelation 17** we see this final resurrection of these beast powers. **Daniel 7, Daniel 2, Revelation 13, Revelation 17** all talk about these beasts. And these beasts were the Gentile powers that dominated the Middle East in ancient times and right down into our modern times today.

**Revelation 17:12** mentions - *The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.*

**Verse 14** - *And these will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings. So, we see that we are going to see this system again prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ.*

The reason I am including this in this particular sermon this afternoon is because there's an interesting development which has been taking place in the last few weeks since the State of the Union address. There has been a marked separation between the United States and Europe taking place in the last few weeks. It doesn't get much attention on TV news. I was thinking about it yesterday; I only decided to add it while I was sitting there waiting to begin this afternoon because it could turn out to be of considerable significance. It revolves around President Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech where he described Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil." And you know he's been in Asia these last few days, and in the Asian countries, a lot of them were very upset by this. The South Koreans especially were really upset about the speech because they've been trying to reach out to North Korea and be conciliatory to try to bring the two countries back together.

The Chinese were upset about the speech. The Japanese were upset about the speech. The Europeans are also upset about the speech. I have not heard it mentioned on any of the American networks, but I have heard it mentioned on the BBC, the French in particular have been really upset about it, describing it as, I've forgotten the word they used, but the implication used was, it was "childish"; it was "simplistic"; I think that was the word they used. That is was simplistic. And

they made it clear that if the United States attacked Iraq or Iran, that it would not have the support of its European allies. The Germans condemned the speech. The Italians and the Spanish all condemned the speech. There is no support for that speech. I think Tony Blair would support it in Britain, but there are many people in his Socialist Party who would not support it. So he has not said anything at this point. .

But what we are seeing, and I think it is very interesting, is America's increasing isolation. And I was thinking about this yesterday because late afternoon yesterday, I was watching the Fox News Channel, and they had a report about Daniel Pearl being murdered. And following this report, I've forgotten who was doing the program, but he mentioned that in Pakistan, there is no death penalty if a Muslim kills a non-Muslim. And because Daniel Pearl was a Jew, it means that the people who killed him could not possibly be executed.

Now this is based on the Koran because the Koran says this, that if a Muslim kills a fellow Muslim, then he must be beheaded. But if he kills a non-Muslim, then he shall not be executed. So, there is a double standard there in the Koran. So, Pakistan's law is based on Islamic law, and you know, they were looking at this particular point, and the whole perspective of the program was "Islam is barbaric." This is the whole tone of the program.

Now it struck me watching it, that any European watching this would think America was barbaric because the death penalty on this program was put across as something good. Now the European Union outlawed the death penalty a long time ago, and no country in Europe is allowed to have the death penalty under European Union rules. And so the Europeans think of America as being cruel in this particular area. Here is the Fox News Channel showing Pakistan as having this double standard and being barbaric because, you know, non-Muslim can be killed. You see how these different cultural perspectives are in conflict here. And I find it interesting.

Now I don't agree with the European perspective, but I do understand that the Europeans feel differently on this issue. And you know, when I go over to Europe or to England, you know, often people can get really nasty about some of these particular issues. But what struck me, watching the Fox News Channel, is that particular channel seems to be stirring up, you know, American feeling in different areas and almost pushing the Bush administration into doing something against Iraq. And if the U. S. acts against Iraq, we're going to find this alliance with Europe just straining, probably to breaking point. The Europeans have a lot more at stake in the Middle East than America does. That's where most of Europe gets its oil. And because Europe and the Middle East are so much closer, you know, there is a closer relationship. Plus as a percentage of population, there are more Muslims in western Europe than there are in the United States as a percentage of their population. Plus because they have a much higher population density, they

live on top of each other, so there is a greater potential for conflict there than there is in the U. S. between peoples of Islamic descent and people who are Islamic and people who are secular or Christian. So, Europe and America are definitely going in different directions on all of this.

Now I find it interesting, often on CNN and again on Fox, often you'll hear references to "the allies." But let us just stop for a moment and ask the question, "who are America's allies," in this war on terror? What other nation has been fighting with the U. S. ever since day one and has lost people? And the list is very short. In fact, it is one country - Great Britain. Which brings us back to **Genesis 49:22 and 23** about Joseph. You see in that passage, which is about the tribes of Israel at the time of the end. You see Joseph as one, not listed separately as Ephraim and Manasseh. And it would seem as if Britain and America are always fighting together. In fact, Margaret Thatcher said a few years ago, she was Britain's Prime Minister in the 1980's, she made the comment on American television is that "the great lesson of the twentieth century is that whenever Britain and American fight together, we always win. Whenever we don't fight together, we lose." American lost Vietnam. Britain did not put troops in Vietnam. You know, when Britain has lost wars, again, the United States was not involved. So, it is a very good point that she made. And it emphasizes **Genesis 49:22**.

But none of the other countries have helped. I think Australia now is involved in the conflict, but Australia is a part of Joseph as well, you see. But the French, well, you know, the French usually arrive after all the work's done. I hope nobody here is from France. And the Italians, well, I don't even want to comment, but anyway, you see, and a lot of all of these other countries . . . I'll tell you one nation that has . . . well, one man, I don't think the nation is with us, so to speak, on the war on terror, but one leader who has been outstanding is Pakistan's President Musharraf. I mean, he is risking his own life by supporting the U. S. and helping the U. S. in this, but I would question that the majority of the people in his country are with the U. S. And certainly he has not put troops into the war zone. But, you know, it's interesting. And the Europeans, the drive for European unity is driven by one thing more than anything else, and most Americans don't realize this. It is driven by anti-Americanism. That is the driving force behind European unity, the desire to make Europe again preeminent over the United States. And where is the greatest difference of opinion between the U. S. and Europe? It is in the Middle East. The U. S. supports Israel; the European Union supports the Palestinians. And the major area of conflict at the time of the end is the Middle East.

So you see how these three areas of focus that we've concentrated on for the last sixty years in the church: the decline of the English-speaking nations, the rise of Europe and the Middle East; are all coming together; they're all coming together at this time. And you see all those forces that are pushing and driving them together.

We need to be careful again not to get into specifics. If we start looking at the scriptures and trying to claim this leader of the Middle East is the king of the South, or this guy is the king of the North, or these nations are definitely coming together, or whatever, that's where we always make mistakes. If you look at these overall trends, you see that the understanding that we've had all these years is correct, and it's all coming together, taking longer than we expected, and it still make take a long time, but on the other hand, it could all happen very quickly.

The Europeans, for example, last month, the beginning of January, all came together with one currency, the Euro. And anytime in history that any nations share a currency, the next step is always political unity and military unity. So, it's inevitable, if history is any guideline.

And another thing is, the Europeans, the French and the Germans anyway, and they are the drivers of the European Union, the French and the Germans have decided that by 2004, which is only two more years, by 2004, they will draw up a European constitution to establish the United States of Europe, which could be a fulfillment of **Revelation 17:12** where it mentions *the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast*.

In other words, the Europeans, the ten nations, will decide to come together, and these nations, then, choose their governments, and their governments choose the supreme government, these are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. You see, you have the United States of Europe. That's the way the Europeans have done things in the past. That's the way the Euro was put together, carefully, with full cooperation. And the next stage is political unity, and already they're trying to put together the military force. And so we see Europe coming together, and America and Britain still very much declining, and constantly isolated too, increasingly isolated.

And then third, we see the rise of Islam. So exactly what we've always felt is coming to pass, and we should certainly be encouraged by that and realize that at the end of all this, as we know, as **Daniel** shows, as **Revelation** shows; at the end of all of this, we do have the kingdom of God. So, it's all positive at the end, but it just means a few challenges and a few problems along the way, as we know, and quite a few setbacks. But hopefully, you found that interesting and hopefully I'll meet some of you after the service today.