

# The Soon Coming End – Part 5

2 Peter 3:1-13

<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. <sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, <sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! <sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, <sup>15</sup> and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. (2 Peter 3:9-15 (NASB))

Most of the people of the western world go about their many activities and events of daily life completely unaware of anyone or anything except that which they can see and hear. And they will do that all the days of their lives having never realized that there is a whole other cosmos of beings and activities stirring and churning all around about them, angels and demons and other living creatures, influencing, affecting and causing many of those activities and event to take place, creatures, some of whom intend good towards them, but many, many others who intend them harm, and do cause them harm, but all the while, those creatures remaining invisible to the natural eye.

With all of that being true, as we continue to consider these days that God here calls “the last days”, and to consider all the many occurrences and events that have taken place in the past, and that are still yet to take place, we can envision a kind of circular “swirling” of all those many occurrences and events, much like water circling a drain, a swirling in which everyone and everything is being drawn toward a center point of conclusion out there in the future, a conclusion that is now coming a lot sooner than it has ever been before.

And central to all those occurrences and events, are all those many creatures of that unseen world that we just spoke about, angels and demons and other living creatures.

May I pause for a moment and ask you, “Do you believe these words that I am saying to you? Do you really believe that these unseen creatures really do exist, the angels, the demons and other living creatures? And do you believe that they really do interact

moment by moment within all the matters of our daily life, and will someday be a part of the destruction of the earth as we know it?”

May I plead with us, though it all be so difficult to comprehend, that we, by faith, reach to these scriptures and believe the things that are written here. The angels, and the demons and the other living creatures spoken about hundreds and hundreds of times all throughout these scriptures, are really real. May I read two passages about these unseen creatures in Revelation 4, verses 6-8,

<sup>6</sup> . . . before the throne (the throne of God) there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: <sup>7</sup> the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. <sup>8</sup> And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” (Revelation 4:6-8 (ESV))

And in Chapter 5, verses 11 and 12,

11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (Revelation 5:11-12 (ESV))

And these angels are just a few of all the angels that God has in His service. These particular angels and the four living creatures seem to have the one purpose of ministering directly to God as He governs from His throne. But there are others, many, many others, some of whom are powerful warriors, others are messengers, and there are some who are assigned to minister directly to our needs, yours and mine, we who have given our hearts to Christ. Listen to the words of Hebrews 1.

<sup>14</sup> Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14 (ESV))

And in Psalm 34

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them. (Psalm 34:7)

Once you and I have received Christ as our Savior and Lord, these angels, these “ministering spirits” are ever and always with us, ministering and serving us. And

though we are not able to see them as they serve and do things for us, I am certain that they are blessing and protecting us, beyond measure, in every involvement of our day.

And yes, sadly, as we also know also from these scriptures, there are other angels, many, many of them, who chose to turn away from God and to join with satan in his rebellion. And they, the demons, in a similar way, have their attention focused on you and me, but their intent is to do us harm. And all these angels and demons will continue to carry out their special roles as the “last days” spoken about here draw to a culmination, the “good angels” doing us good, while the “evil angels”, the demons, do us harm.

Some of the activities of those “evil angels”, over these many millennia of existence, have been to insert their way into most of the religions of the world, desiring as satan desired in Isaiah 14, to be “like God”. And so, they became “little gods” to groups like the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Egyptians and on and on.

And those “evil angels” are permitted to do a special thing that we never see the “good angels” do, and that is to enter into the physical bodies and possess the minds of us people, and by their presence control those people. Yes, the good angels can take on human form, but they do not enter into and possess people in the way that the demons do.

In these scriptures, we see where the demons took possession of the “demoniac” in the tombs. And that man did not have just one demon in him, he had legends of demons possessing him. And we also saw where satan entered into Judas and provoked him to betray Jesus. And we also read in these scriptures how Jesus and His disciples drove out many other demons from people.

I make mention of this because that is apparently the same kind of role that the demons will play in many of the events of the “soon coming end”. Here in the Book of Revelation, we see where certain powerful demons, here described as a “dragon”, and as “beasts”, will take possession of the minds and hearts and souls of certain national leaders, especially those in some of the Mideast countries, and perhaps some European or Asian countries. And as they control those leaders, they will bring most all the people on the earth under their control and servitude. And they will eventually wage a great war among the people, a war like no other war that has ever taken place before, Armageddon.

May I read a passage from Revelation chapter 13? Turn there with me please.

1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. 2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. 3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. 4 And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" 5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear: 10 If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. <sup>12</sup> It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. <sup>13</sup> It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, <sup>14</sup> and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. <sup>15</sup> And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. <sup>16</sup> Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, <sup>17</sup> so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. <sup>18</sup> This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666. (Revelation 13:11-18 (ESV))

I am fully convinced that in these present days in which we now live, many of these very things are already beginning to take place, demonically possessed leaders leading nations against nations and people against people, controlling financial and economic markets, devising philosophies and attitudes of behavior and conduct among the cultures. But all of that is, at present, all being done within the protective "hedged" that

God has placed around everyone. And we can see those protective hedges right within these words that I just read, verses 14 and 15.

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(Revelation 13:14-15 (ESV))

Note that word “allowed” in both of these verses. And the question is, “allowed by whom”, and the answer ultimately is, “allowed by God”. This is God’s restraining hand, only giving permission as His “Great Plan” is being put into place.

But while God is restraining the demons now, in the very “last days”, as the “final end” approaches, God will pull back His restraining hand and remove many of those protective hedges. And that is when the horrifying miseries of the “Great Tribulation” will come upon the people of the world in full measure.

Consider again, this one warning given here in the passage we just read, the warning describing the absolute demand that everyone must receive the “mark of the beast”, the 666 on their forehead or on their hand, pledging their allegiance to him, else they will not be able to buy food or receive services such as police protection and fire protection, or medical and hospital care, and on and on.

Consider what will happen then to those who are now protesting our national anthem, and our new president, when they dare make the same protests against these demonic beasts. Are they ever in for a horrifying surprise.

But also, there will be many, many others who will realize their foolishness in having rejected Christ and were left behind in the rapture. They will, during those terrifying days, turn their hearts to Christ, here in these words in Revelations called the “saints”. Those will be forced to go into hiding and into a “survival mode”, finding food and shelter and help wherever they can get it.

We aren’t told much about those struggles in these scriptures, but we can imagine. There have been many popular books and movies written about those days, depicting those people who resist taking the “mark of the beast” as being similar to the resistance of the French underground during the days of the occupation of the Germans. And it may be somewhat similar, but probably really not. And also, note these instructions from the Lord in verses 9 and 10 of Revelation 13.

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear: 10 If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. (Revelation 13:9-10)

Again, as we said at the beginning of this message, while during these days, the creatures of that other realm are able to go virtually unnoticed by us, as the very final days draw near, I am convinced that those of us who have the Spirit of Christ living within us will begin to have “eyes to see”. And we will more and more be able to recognize the activities and the behaviors of the demons within the people around us, and the demonic presence will become more and more perceptible to us.

Even now, most Christians, especially those who are faithful to read and study these scriptures, are more aware daily of the incursion of the demonic world. Folks, I can see their hand clearly in the people and the events of many of the activities of men, in the governments of our world, and especially in our own government, and in the political system, and in financial systems, and especially in our American culture.

Civility is becoming non-existent, “mean”, demonic behavior taking place all around us, rioting in the streets, people killing our policemen, and on and on. And those are just the things taking place here in America. We can see far, far worse in other countries, especially in those nations controlled by the Muslims, places such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan where merciless slaughter is rampant. It makes me begin to wonder if the “mark of the beast” has not already been taken by a great number of the people of the earth.

Our time is finished for today, but consider some closing thoughts . . . after hearing these words here today, are you any more willing to believe that there really is a “soon coming end”? And are you willing to begin to see all the many events and circumstances taking place this very day as being part of God’s “Great Plan”, a plan that will soon bring all things to a close? If so,

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, <sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! <sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, <sup>15</sup> and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. (2 Peter 3:9-15 (NASB))