

EVANGELISTIC LECTURES

Now as we look to Jesus in the closing prayer, I hope you will reach out with that living touch of faith and touch Him and then you'll get the help and the power that you need. After I pray, just keep your heads still bowed and we will sing a lovely prayer song which will be your prayer after my prayer.

“My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary, Saviour divine;
Now hear me while I pray
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day Be wholly Thine.”

After we sing that, I want us all to repeat Isaiah 53:5. This is the text I used in my sermon which says, “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”

I want you to put in the word “my.” “He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities: the chastisement of my peace was upon Him; and with His stripes I am healed.”

All right now we are going to have prayer, then the prayer song, and the verse of Scripture. (Prayer.)

Blessed Jesus, precious Saviour, we thank Thee for the blessing that Thou hast given to us tonight. Lord, we have had our hearts warmed. Thy Holy Spirit is here. We have drawn a little nearer to Him tonight than ever before and we've felt His presence. Lord, we thank Thee for these four simple ways by which Thou wilt be more real in our life! May it be just now, that every soul here may just reach out with that living touch of faith and touch Jesus.

O, blessed Christ, all powerful Saviour, just reach down Thy mighty arm into every life here and do for each one what he needs to have done. Our faith, Lord, does claim the promise, and we thank Thee that Thou wilt do this for each one because we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now then the song. Every head bowed. (All joined in singing My Faith Looks Up to Thee.)

Heads still bowed, let us quote the text. “He was wounded for my transgressions, He was bruised for my iniquities: the chastisement of my peace was upon Him; and with His stripes I am healed.”

I feel sure you have been blessed in this after meeting. I think you feel like John Wesley, the man who founded the great Methodist church. He went to a little meeting one night in Aldersgate Street in London. He heard some one read from Luther's writing how Jesus Christ changes our heart when we have faith in Him and as he listened he said, “I felt my heart strangely warmed.” How many of you really got a blessing out of this after meeting and felt your heart warmed tonight? Will you raise your hands? (Many hands were raised.)

(Then the topic for the next after meeting was announced and those present were urged to come forward promptly when the invitation to the after meeting would be extended on Sunday night.)

9. Last Day Signs

When the Son of God came to this earth at His first advent a sign was given of His arrival into our world. A beautiful star appeared that led the wise men step by step to the very spot where the wonderful Christ child was born at Bethlehem. So the Scriptures tell of certain signs which will appear when this same Son of God is about to make His second advent to our world.

Let us read the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 24:32, 33. “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh: so likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors.”

At the close of the winter season when the bare trees begin to leaf out, of what is this a sign? Everybody knows what this means. It is a sign that summer is near. This Scripture declares that when the branch puts forth its new leaves you know that summer is nigh. Jesus Christ declares that just as the swelling of the buds is a sign that summer is near, so the fulfilment of certain signs He has given will show that His coming is near.

Mark this point well. Jesus actually commands us to know that His coming is near when these appointed signs are fulfilled. He says “When you see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.”

Some have tried to set a date for the end of the world. Jesus Christ declares that it is impossible for any man to figure out the exact date on which He will return. You will find this in Matthew 24:26 where He says, “But of that day and hour knows no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only!” While it is impossible for any man to know the exact day when Jesus will return, it is the duty of every believer to know that the coming of Christ is near, when the appointed signs are seen in the world.

Jesus reproved the Pharisees for their inability to read the signs of the times. We read about this in Matthew 16:1-3. “The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired Him that He would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, when it is evening, you say, it will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today: For the sky is red and lowering. O you hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky; but can you not discern the signs of the times?”

If the Jewish people in the days of Christ had understood the prophecies which pertained to the first advent of the Messiah, they would have recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah, and the Saviour of the world. But they rejected Him, because they did not understand the prophecies that pertained to His first advent. This is a warning to professed Christians today. Unless professed Christians heed the prophecies that pertain to Christ's second advent they will be in the dark and caught unprepared at His second coming, as the Jews were at His first advent.

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Jesus has a question for every soul. "Can you not discern the signs of the times?" May God help me to take His Holy Word and make the signs of Christ's coming stand out so plainly, that you will be able to discern the signs of the times.

If you want to know what time it is, what do you do? You note the relative positions of the hour and minute hands on the dial of your watch. So if we want to know where we are going today, if we want to know what is coming, and where we are on the stream of time, we must look at the hands on God's prophetic clock. The last day predictions of the Bible, these prophecies which tell what is to be in the last days, constitute the hour hand on God's clock. The fulfilment of these last-day predictions in modern history and in current conditions is the minute hand on the face of God's clock. I invite you to take note where the hands are on God's clock. I shall take the Bible and read what God prophesied would be in the last days, and then I shall leave it with you to say if this is what you now see in our world.

Everybody knows that there has been a greater increase of knowledge in the last seventy-five years than in all the rest of the history of mankind put together. What does this mean? You will find this explained in Daniel 12:4. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

What did the prophecy say would happen in the last days? In the time of the end knowledge shall be increased. The last days of earth's history would be characterized by an increase of knowledge.

Is this true of our day? Look at the endless list of inventions and wonderful discoveries that are being brought out with every passing year. Life has been completely revolutionized during the last fifty or seventy-five years. The old tallow candle has become the electric light. The horse and buggy has become the automobile the aeroplane and the streamliner. The needle has become the electric sewing machine. The old fashioned broom has become the electric sweeper. The old oaken bucket has become the water faucet with running water. The old goose quill has become the typewriter. The messenger on horseback who carried messages has become the telegraph, the telephone and the radio. The horse drawn plough has become the tractor. The scythe and the old-time binder have become the modern reaper. And so we might go on with many other items.

There seems to be no end to this increase of knowledge in our day. New wonders are discovered and developed with almost every passing day. The other day the Associated Press reported the development of a radio facsimile machine that prints a four column newspaper at the rate of five hundred words a minute. News, photographs, maps, charts and cartoons were reproduced during the demonstration by means of signals from a frequency modulated type of broadcasting station. The machine itself is only a little larger than a portable typewriter. It can be used as an attachment in combination with a frequency modulation home receiver. The device turns out printed papers measuring 9.5 x 12 inches at the rate of twenty-eight square inches per minute. This is truly a great wonder. But before the ink is hardly dry which recites the story of this newest wonder there will likely be another wonder developed that will eclipse this latest one.

Little school children today have far greater knowledge along some lines than their grandparents had when they were seventy years old. It is safe to say that any person who is sixty years old has seen in his brief lifetime a greater increase of knowledge than all the people of all past generations put together. What does this mean? It means that we are in the time of the end. Daniel 12:4 says, "In the time of the end knowledge shall be increased!" Just as surely as you know that there has been this great increase of knowledge in recent decades, just so surely you may know that the end is near.

Up until about a century ago men were not able to travel faster than men before them had travelled for all past generations. Then all of a sudden a change came. Men began to find ways of travelling faster. And during the last ten years they have been travelling decidedly faster and ever faster. How did it come that there was no change in the speed at which men could travel until about the last one hundred twenty years?

Bible prophecy shows that there would be an increased speed of travel in the closing period of earth's history. Daniel 12:4 indicates that in the last days men would travel very swiftly. In the time of the end the prophecy says, many shall run, not walk, but run. Every aeroplane, automobile, train and steamer is a travelling sign of the end of time. Every plane that roars overhead every automobile dashing along the street or highway, every train rushing along the shiny rails, every steamer cutting across the ocean deep, is saying, "it is the day of God's preparation and you should be ready to meet the King."

Let us notice two striking signs in the business and industrial world of our day. In James 5:3 we read: "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." The Revised Version says, "Ye have heaped treasure together in the last days." Bible prophecy indicated that in the last days men would pile up fortunes very quickly. Do we see this today? Since 1900 there has been a piling up of colossal fortunes on a scale and at a rate that exceeds all the past history of mankind.

Here is a typical case. In 1900 Henry Ford did not have enough money to buy a turkey for Thanksgiving day. Forty years later he was a billionaire. Think of it! There are hundreds of people in our day who have made, or are making, a million or more dollars in one year. Do you know how much a million dollars amounts to? If you saved five hundred dollars per year, and that would be a tidy sum for most of us to save, how long would it take you to get a million? You would have to save five hundred dollars a year for two thousand years to have a million dollars. If you had been here on the night that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and had lived on every year since, and had saved five hundred dollars every year, you wouldn't have a million dollars yet. Hundreds of men have made this much or more in one year in our day. What does this mean? It means exactly what Bible prophecy says in James 5:1 They have heaped up treasure in the last days.

In James 5:4 it is made plain that during this same period when men will be piling up these colossal fortunes, there will be a most bitter struggle of the working man against his employer. Do we see this? Since 1910 there have been the most extensive and intensive labour troubles of all past history. What does all this mean? We find the answer in James 5:8. "Be ye also patient, establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh."

This rapid accumulation of wealth and these great labour troubles in our day are a double sign of the nearness of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. During our day we have seen the greatest accumulation of wealth and the greatest labour troubles in the history of mankind. As surely as we have seen these things, we may know from Bible prophecy that the coming of the Lord draws nigh.

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Jesus prophesied that fear and distress would dominate the thinking and conditions of the people of the world, just before He would appear on the cloud at His second advent. We find this recorded in Luke 21:25-27: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

Is this what you see now? There never has been a time when so many people have lived in distress and fear as since 1940. There has been distress among all classes among all nations. Mankind today is afraid.

In an article entitled "Must We Be Scared To Death?" appearing in *The Christian Century* (Jan. 9, 1946) Winthrop S. Hudson says that "I now there is fear-real fear, stark naked fear, a fear that is not a figment of the imagination-and we do not know how to live with it, nor how to handle it."

This is true. Humanity is in the grip of terrifying fear, and doesn't know how to free itself from it. This is a time of distress, fear and insecurity that surpasses any other time of which we have ever heard, or seen or read.

What does this mean? Look at the very next verse in this prophecy of Jesus. In verse 27, after speaking in verse 26 how men's hearts would fail them for fear, how fear would dominate the thinking of people in the last days, Jesus declares, "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Bible prophecy indicated that in the last days there would be the worst disasters and calamities in the history of the world. We read about this in Luke 21:11: "And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."

Look at the earthquakes, the floods, the tidal waves, the cyclones, the hurricanes, and the famines of our day. Authentic records show that from the 12th to the 17th centuries there was on the average only one destructive earthquake in the period of each one hundred years. During the eighteenth century there were six destructive earthquakes. In the nineteenth century there were twelve destructive earthquakes. Since 1900 there has been an average of one destructive earthquake every year. During the last fifty years there have been more destructive earthquakes than occurred during the preceding eight hundred years.

When an old man draws near the grave he staggers as he walks. This world today is staggering to its end. These calamities and disasters are forerunners of the approaching end of the world.

Bible prophecy declared that in the last days there would be the greatest preparation for war and the greatest plans for peace in the history of the world. You will find these predictions recorded in Joel 3:9, 10 and Isaiah 2:2-4. Do we see this in our day? Since 1900 we have witnessed the greatest war preparation and the greatest peace plans in the history of mankind. What does all this mean? It means that we have come to the final movements of this world's history.

Bible prophecy indicated that in the last days men would develop unparalleled powers of destruction. We read about this in the prophecy of Jeremiah 4:19, 20. "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart makes a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: Suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment."

Do we see anything like this today? Look at the fearful destruction that was wrought by the bombing raids of World War II.

Think of the atomic bomb and its fearful implications for destruction. Look at the projected trans-oceanic rockets, the germ sprays, cosmic rays, etc. These show us that the time is fast approaching when God will intervene, and as we read in Revelation 11:18, "He will destroy them that destroy the Earth."

Have you been impressed how fast things are moving in our world today? I am sure that you have. I don't see how anybody could live in these strenuous days without being conscious of the rapid march of events from day to day. More history is made in one year now than formerly in a century. Ever since 1910 there has been a most marked speeding up of history.

Scripture shows that in the last days there would come just such a speeding up in living. You know of course, that the faster you keep moving, the quicker you reach your destination. This very speeding up of affairs shows that we are swiftly approaching the end of time.

Jesus declared that the last days would be like the days of Noah before the flood, and the days of Lot just before Sodom was destroyed. How was it in the times of Noah and Lot? The Scriptures reveal that these were times of intemperance, immorality, lawlessness, easy divorce, a craze for pleasure and a marked indifference to the requirements of the law of God. Isn't this exactly what we see today? Everybody knows that our day is a day of marked intemperance, immorality, crime, lawlessness, easy divorce, a craze for pleasure and a disregard for the law of God.

In a little town in one of our mid-western states two girls went for a ride with some boys in a car. There was an accident. The girls were killed. They took them to the morgue. Nobody knew just who they were, so the city clerk announced over the radio that mothers whose girls had gone out and not returned that night should come to the morgue to assist in the identification of the girls. The next morning seventy mothers in that little town appeared at the morgue to identify the girls. If this is the way in a small town, how about conditions in a larger city?

Crime has become so bad that day after day, night after night, some person is murdered on the average of every forty minutes. One out of every four hundred is doomed to be shot, stabbed, poisoned, choked or black-jacked. What will the outcome be? Jesus says in Matthew 24:37: "but as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be!" In the time of Noah man became so corrupt, so sinful, that the only thing God could do was to take the few good people out of the world into the ark and blot out the rest with the flood. So, Jesus Christ is coming to take the righteous to heaven, and destroy the wicked.

The most-positive sign that He is coming soon is the fact that the message of His coming has already been preached to almost every nation on the globe. Christ's disciples asked Him, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world?" In His answer Jesus indicated, that the most direct sign of the approach of His coming would be the proclamation of a special message to the people of every nation, to inform them of the nearness of His return. We find this in Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come!"

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This message of the soon coming of Christ is being preached now to almost every nation in the world. Hence the end must be very near. Jesus declares, that when this gospel of the kingdom, the good news of his soon coming kingdom, has been preached to the people of every nation, then-at that very time-the end shall come.

Some people ridicule the idea that Christ is coming soon. They say that there is nothing to indicate that the end is now near, any more than there ever has been. Do you know that people who talk this way are themselves a sign that the end is near?

A minister preached on the prophecies one night to show that the coming of Christ is near. A man stopped him on the street the next day and said, "I understand Sir, that you preached last night that Christ is coming soon. I tell you there is nothing to it. Things will go on forever just as they always have. Show me one sign that the end is really near."

The minister pulled out a little Bible which he always carried with him. He turned to II Peter 3:34 and read to the man. "Knowing this first that there shall come in the last day scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation!"

After reading the text and emphasizing the appropriate portions of it, the minister said quietly to the man, "Brother, according to this prophecy, you are the last sign I have seen."

Do you know that there are in particular eleven characteristics that mark our day as different from any other generation of mankind who have ever lived on this earth? According to Bible prophecy each of these is an infallible sign and incontrovertible evidence that the second coming of Christ is at the door. What are these eleven great signs of Christ's coming? Here they are.

- The greatest increase of knowledge of all past ages.
- The introduction and development of rapid transit.
- The unprecedented speeding up of events.
- The greatest and most rapid accumulation of wealth.
- The most extensive and intensive labour troubles.
- The two greatest and worst wars that the world has ever seen.
- The most marked unrest, insecurity and 'distress.
- The most extensive and destructive war preparations.
- The greatest peace plans that have ever been proposed.
- The most appalling moral degeneracy according to the light and knowledge that God has given to men.
- The greatest missionary movement ever known to carry God's special last day message to every nation.

What do these eleven great signs mean? Here is the answer in Matthew 24:33, "So likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors-." It means that the coming of Jesus Christ is at the door.

I have here a chart that gives a list of twenty-four different items from Bible prophecy regarding conditions in the last days.

The last days are to be characterized by a great

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| 1. Accumulation of Wealth | Jam | es 5:3. |
| 2. Labour Troubles | Jam | es 5:4-8. |
| 3. War Preparations | Joel | 3:14, 9, 10. |
| 4. Disarmament Talk | Isaiah | 2:24. |
| 5. Awakening of the East | Joel | 3:12. |
| 6. Increase of Knowledge | Dani | el 12:4. |
| 7. Unrest and Upheaval | Lu | ke 21:25-27. |
| 8. Craze for Pleasure | 2 | Timothy 3:14. |
| 9. Religious Scepticism | Lu | ke 18:8. |
| 10. Intemperance and Physical Degeneracy | | Luke 17:29, 30; Ezekiel 16:49, 50. |
| 11. Falling Away from Bible Truth | | 2 Timothy 4:1-4; Isaiah 30:8-10. |
| 12. Moral Degeneracy and Decline of Spirituality | | 2 Timothy 3:1-5. |

The last days are to be a time of

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| 13. Rapid Transit | Nah | um. 2:3-5. |
| 14. Unparalleled Travel | Dani | el 12:4. |
| 15. Destructive Earthquakes, Cyclones, etc | | Luke 21:11. |
| 16. Destructive Insects, Pests, etc. | | Joel 1:1-4; 2:1. |
| 17. Abounding Lawlessness | | Matthew 24:12. |
| 18. Bloody Crimes | Ezeki | el 7:23. |
| 19. Breaking of Marriage Ties | | Matthew 24:37-39. |
| 20. Scoffing at Lord's Coming | | 2 Peter 3:3-5. |
| 21. Turning to Spiritualism | | 1 Timothy 4:1, 2. |
| 22. Deceptive Miracles | Revelation | 16:14. |
| 23. Rise of Many False Religions | | 2 Peter 1:2. |
| 24. Giving of special message of
to all the world to -prepare way for the coming of Christ | R | evelation 14:6-14, |

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This makes a list of 24 different items that Bible prophecy declared would be seen in the last days of this world's history. Every person knows that every one of the twenty-four items is now taking place before our very eyes. This day are these Scriptures fulfilled in your ears. What does all this mean? It means exactly what Jesus said in Matthew 24:33, "When you see all these things know that it is near, even at the door."

This is the last generation that will ever live on this earth in its present condition. We find that in Matthew 24:34, after Jesus told how the time would come when all these signs would be fulfilled. He declares that the generation of people, who see all these signs fulfilled, will not pass over the stage of action until all is consummated.

This is the last hour. Time is shorter than you think. I wonder if I have made this subject plain to you. How many believe that according to the prophecies of the Bible, the return of Jesus Christ must be very near? Will you signify by the uplifted hand, please? Yes, I am glad to see that you believe the prophecies of God's word.

Friends, this brings you and me face to face with the most vital issue of all our lives. Are we ready to meet Jesus Christ? Prepare to meet thy God. Get ready to meet the coming King.

Your only hope for the future is to be ready when Jesus comes. Every soul who is not ready will be lost forever. Jesus says, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh."

Years ago in Ohio a young man committed a terrible crime. He was sentenced to death. His parents begged the governor to go and see the young man and talk with him and try to help him. The governor agreed to go if no announcement was made beforehand about his coming. When the young man saw the governor approaching his cell he said to himself, "Here comes some preacher to bother me, I won't see him."

The governor stepped up to the bars and said, "Good morning, James." But he turned his back and refused to answer. The governor said, "Your friends have been talking to me about you. I have come to see you." "I don't care to talk today." The governor said, "If you knew the importance of my mission, I am sure you would give me an audience." "I don't care to talk, you will do me a favour to go away."

Sometime afterward the guard came by and said, "Well Jim, how did you and the governor come out?" "The governor! You don't mean to tell me that little man who looked like a preacher was the governor of this state?" "Yes, He came to see if he could help you."

A few days later when this young man was led to the gallows, and they put the black cap over his face, he cried out, "Oh what a fool I was. He wanted to help me and I wouldn't let him."

Friend of mine, Jesus wants to help you. He came and died on the cross that you might have eternal life. He is able to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God by Him. He wants to save you. Oh, I hope you will let Him help you tonight. How many are ready to say, "Preacher, I feel my need of being ready to meet Jesus, I want you to pray to Christ to help me to be ready." Will you lift your hands, please? Yes, it seems every hand is raised to God for help.

Let us pray. "Heavenly Father, we thank thee for thy great love in giving Jesus, Thine own dear Son to save us. Help us to accept the wonderful salvation that Thou hast provided. We thank Thee that thou hast shown us so plainly too that Jesus Christ is coming soon. Lord, we want to be ready. The saddest thing that could ever happen to any of us would be if we were found unprepared. We thank Thee, Lord, that thou wilt help us to be ready if we will only look to Thee and receive Jesus into our hearts. Lord, Thou hast seen all these hands that have been raised to Thee for help. O Lord, I do pray that Thou wilt reach down Thy mighty saying arm from heaven into every life here and by Thy saving power make each of us ready to meet Jesus. We ask it in His precious name and for His sake. Amen."

10. The Destiny of the Four Great Powers

Daniel spoke and said, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." This is the reading of Daniel 7:2, 3.

Daniel was standing by the sea shore. He saw the four winds lashing the sea in all their fury. Up from the surging waters came four great monsters one after another. The question naturally arises, What does all this mean? What does the great sea signify? What do those four winds represent? What are those four beasts?

If I should give you my opinion as to what this great sea signifies, what those four winds represent, and who those four beasts are, that would not settle the matter for a certainty. There is only one way to be sure what these items really mean and that is to compare scripture with scripture, and let the Bible declare what these things mean.

We inquire first, what are the four great beasts? I turn to Daniel 7:17: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth!" Isn't that plain? A child of six or seven years old may understand that.

These four beasts are four kings or four kingdoms that are to arise one after another upon the earth. Notice Daniel 7:23, the words of the angel Gabriel speaking to Daniel: "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon the earth." Think of this for a moment. The fourth beast is the fourth kingdom. You can see, anybody couldn't help but see, that since the fourth beast is the fourth kingdom, the third beast is the third kingdom, and the second beast must be the second kingdom, and the first beast must be the first kingdom. These four beasts represent the first, second, third and fourth world empires of prophecy.

I want you to mark this point well. This is not my opinion or my interpretation. This is God's own interpretation of God's own word. This is why I refuse to have people place a denominational tag on these Bible lectures. The interpretation that these four beasts are four world kingdoms is not a Methodist interpretation; it is not a Baptist interpretation; it is not the Presbyterian interpretation. It is God's own interpretation of His own word.

It is very interesting to note that men use this same principle that God used so long ago. God used certain animals to represent certain powers or nations. Men today are following this principle. They use certain animals to represent certain powers. For