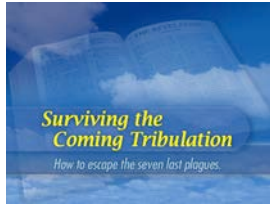


23 – Surviving the Coming Tribulation (The 7 Last Plagues)



How to Escape the 7 Last Plagues



The mighty nation of Egypt was the most highly civilized empire then in existence. Years before, a God-fearing slave, named Joseph, had been elevated to prime minister and saved the nation from famine. But now he was forgotten. The friendly pharaohs who had known and admired Joseph had long since passed to their graves.

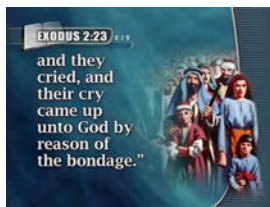


The new rulers viewed the rapidly multiplying Israelites as a threat to national security, fearing that in the event of war, the Israelites might join themselves with the enemies of Egypt. So the children of Israel were placed in bondage and forced to become slaves under the grinding tyranny of the Egyptians.



(Text: Exodus 2:23, 24)

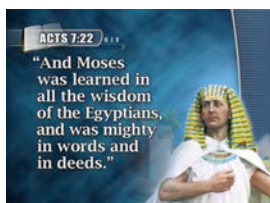
“And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage,



and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.”



“And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.” Exodus 2:23-24. God was preparing a deliverer. Moses, though a Hebrew, was raised in the house of Pharaoh’s daughter. He became one of the most powerful men in Egypt! The Bible says:



(Text: Acts 7:22) “And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.” Acts 7:22. But Moses made the mistake of thinking he could deliver Israel from Egypt using his own plans. When it became known that he

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⁷ had killed an Egyptian slave master, he had to flee the country.



For 40 years, Moses tended sheep out in the lonely desert. There he learned about himself. He learned about his God. By caring for the sheep, he learned patience and gentleness.

Gone was the self-confidence he had enjoyed as the proud young prince in the Egyptian court. God saw that now he was ready!



In an encounter at a burning bush in the desert God gave Moses his instructions. He was told to return to Egypt and confront the mighty Pharaoh. He was to lead his people to freedom and to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

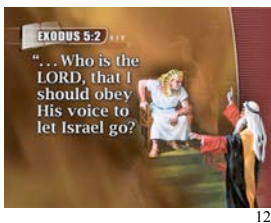


To help Moses in accomplishing this tremendous mission, God instructed Moses' older brother Aaron to go out and meet Moses. Not only would Aaron lend moral support, but he could also serve as Moses' spokesman, since Moses had not used the Egyptian language for so many years.

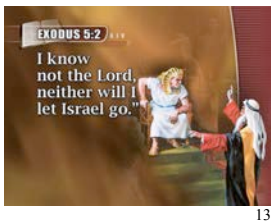


With the boldness of those sent by God, the two brothers entered Pharaoh's palace.

Before the monarch stood two brothers, one a humble Midian shepherd, still clutching his shepherd's rod; the other a local Hebrew slave. Both were proclaiming the great power of the God they served. When Aaron stated that they came with a message from the Lord requesting that Pharaoh let His people go, Pharaoh snorted in disdain:



(Text: Exodus 5:2) "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?"



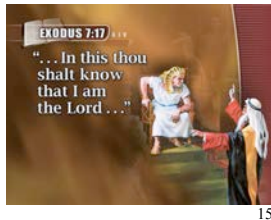
I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." Exodus 5:2. Pharaoh had no intention of losing the thousands of slaves at his disposal. Aaron's request drew a stern reaction. The king increased the workload of the Israelites.

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14

But soon God would let the pompous Pharaoh know who the Lord was and something about His mighty power. Pharaoh was warned by Moses and Aaron that God would send one plague after another upon Egypt until His people were released from bondage. Then the Lord's message to Pharaoh was:



15

(Text: Exodus 7:17) "In this thou shalt know that I am the Lord..." Exodus 7:17.



16

It wasn't long before the plagues began to fall. Ten, to be exact! Before each plague fell, Moses and Aaron warned Pharaoh of the judgment to come, hoping he would choose to release the children of Israel, thus saving himself and his people from disaster. But each time God gave him opportunity to change his mind, Pharaoh chose instead to harden his heart. And, as promised, unique calamities began to fall upon the Egyptians.



17

First, the River Nile, worshiped by the Egyptians as one of their gods, turned to blood. The fish died, and all the rest of the water in Egypt became blood for seven days. But Pharaoh refused to let God's people go!



18

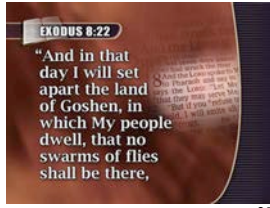
Next, a plague of frogs infected the land. Millions of them! They were in the food, in the beds, everywhere! Yet, the stubborn king refused to let Israel go.



19

A plague of lice came next. But the arrogant ruler still wouldn't agree to let the people go. Notice that the first three plagues fell on both Hebrews and Egyptians; however, the last seven plagues fell only on the Egyptians.

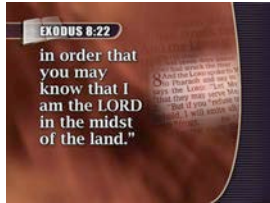
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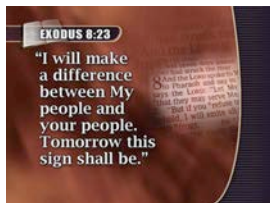
(Text: Exodus 8:22-23)

“And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there,



21

in order that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the land.



22

I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be.” Exodus 8:22, 23.



23

The fourth plague was an infestation of flies that filled the land of Egypt, except Goshen, where the Israelites dwelt.



24

The fifth plague was a terrible disease that swept through the land, destroying the animals that were in the fields. Pharaoh was curious. Had the animals of the Hebrews been destroyed also? Or had they been protected as Moses promised?



25

(Text: Exodus 9:7)

“And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead.



26

And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.” Exodus 9:7.

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The sixth plague brought boils upon man and beast, but still the obstinate monarch refused to release the children of Israel. Moses next predicted a seventh plague, of hail. However, God promised that all who protected themselves and their animals would not die.



The news spread quickly throughout the land, and many Egyptians took cover, along with their animals. The hail came, mingled with thunder and laced with lightning. Those who failed to prepare for it died in the awful storm!



The Egyptians saw clearly that the elements were under the control of the God of the Hebrews, and that their only safety was in obedience to Him. For a few fleeting moments, Pharaoh actually toyed with the idea of obeying God and letting the people go, but as the plague abated, so did his good intentions.



Moses warned Pharaoh that if he refused to let the children of Israel go, the next scourge would be a swarm of locusts. Appalled by the thought of more plagues, Pharaoh's counselors pleaded with him to let the slaves go, but the king still refused. And the eighth plague of locusts came as predicted.



Then came the ninth plague: three days of darkness so intense it could be felt. But the rebellious Pharaoh continued to defy the God of heaven.

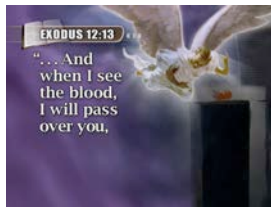


Moses stated that one more plague would be poured upon the Egyptians. A destroying angel would pass through the land at midnight and would slaughter all the firstborn in Egypt – both of man and of beast.



Again, the Hebrews were to be spared; but, this time it was not enough to be a Hebrew or to live in Goshen. In order to avoid the death sentence, each family was instructed to slay a lamb and sprinkle some of its blood on the doorpost of their house as a token of their faith and loyalty to God. And God promised:

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34

(Text: Exodus 12:13)
“And when I see the blood, I will pass over you;



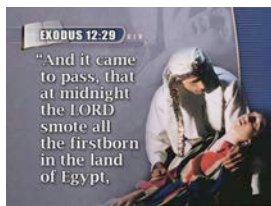
35

and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt.” Exodus 12:13.



36

What an interesting scene was portrayed that night! Thousands of Hebrew families, and many of the Egyptians, stood by their doors watching as the father, holding a basin of blood in one hand and a sprig of hyssop in the other, sprinkled the doorposts.



37

(Text: Exodus 12:29)
“And it came to pass, that at midnight that the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,



38

from the firstborn of Pharaoh . . . unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon,



39

and all the firstborn of cattle.” Exodus 12:29.



40

But in the homes where the blood had been sprinkled on the doorposts, in obedience to God’s instructions, not one firstborn had been touched by the plague!

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41

Throughout the vast kingdom of Egypt the cries of mourners could be heard. With trembling legs and frayed nerves, Pharaoh remembered how he had ridiculed the Hebrews' God and had defiantly snorted:



42

(Text: Exodus 5:2)

"...Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?" Exodus 5:2. Now he knew. Humbly, he and his counselors sent for the two Hebrew brothers and urged them to take the children of Israel and leave the land of Egypt in haste!



43

God's people were set free! And just as God had instructed, they had prepared. With sandals on their feet and coats on their backs, they were ready for the great exodus. They were on their way to the Promised Land!



44

The story of the plagues of Egypt is not just fascinating biblical history. It is used in the book of Revelation as a type or metaphor of what is to take place in the last days!



45

These prophecies make it crystal clear that once again plagues will fall – but on a much more devastating scale.



46

Yes, according to Bible prophecy, history will be repeated. This time, there won't be ten plagues, but seven. And they are called the "Seven Last Plagues," evidently in reference to the plagues of Egypt. Like the Seven Last Plagues of Moses' day, God's people will be protected from the seven last plagues at the end of time!

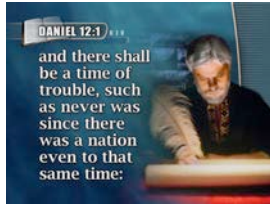


47

(Daniel 12:1)

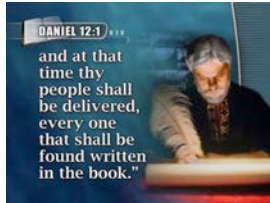
The prophet Daniel describes these events in this way: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people;

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48

and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:



49

and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1.



50

The “everlasting gospel” will have been preached to the entire world. The call of the second angel to come out of spiritual Babylon with its religious confusion will have been given. And to every man the third angel proclaims:



51

(Text: Revelation 14:9-10)

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,



52

the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God...” Revelation 14:9, 10.



53

This is the most dreadful warning in the Bible ever addressed to mortals. The issues will be clear. Men and women will choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. Those who chose to obey man instead of God will receive the mark of the beast and “drink of the wine of the wrath of God.”



54

And when those final decisions have been made, probation’s door closes forever for all mankind. The solemn announcement is given:

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55

(Text: Revelation 22:11)

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still:



56

and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11.



57

Christ’s work as our High Priest in heaven has ended. Every person has decided for eternal life or eternal death. The door of God’s mercy is shut! Now it is that earth’s inhabitants experience the “time of trouble” spoken of by the prophet Daniel.



58

And listen, friend, God isn’t going to snatch away His people before the plagues fall. They will be right here on earth until the end! They will be protected during the plagues, just as were the children of Israel, but they will not be free from difficulties and suffering. It will be a time of trouble for everyone.



59

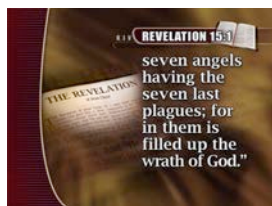
The most vivid description of this period of earth’s history cannot describe the scene as God’s wrath against sin is poured out unmixed with mercy. To the prophet John was given a view of what this time would be like:



60

(Text: Revelation 15:1)

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous,



61

seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” Revelation 15:1.

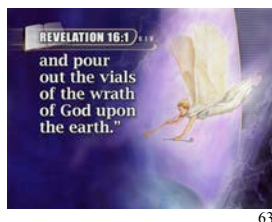
And again John wrote:

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(Text: Revelation 16:1)

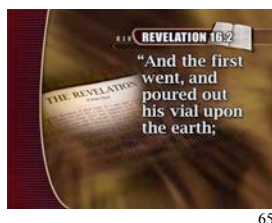
“And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, go your ways,



and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.”
Revelation 16:1.

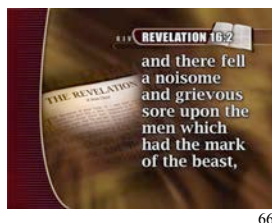


“But,” you ask, “what are these terrible plagues that are to be poured out by the seven angels upon the wicked?” That’s a good question. As we read about the plagues, you will notice a striking similarity to the ones that fell upon Egypt. Let’s read what John has to say about the first angel:



(Text: Revelation 16:2)

“And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth;



and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast,



and upon them which worshipped his image.” Revelation 16:2.



Perhaps these sores are similar to the boils suffered by the Egyptians during their seventh plague. Or, maybe they could be somewhat the same as the boils Job endured.

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69

Can you imagine the impact such a plague would have? Schools would close.

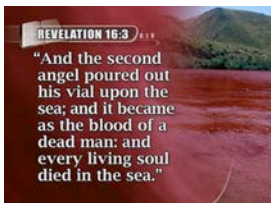
Factories would shut down. Stores would not be able to open.



70

Hospitals would be overflowing with people seeking emergency treatment, but most of the doctors and nurses would be suffering from the same affliction.

And then, while people are still suffering from their sores, another calamity strikes!



71

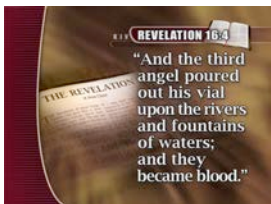
(Text: Revelation 16:3)

“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.” Revelation 16:3.



72

What a sight, and what a stench, as the creatures of the sea wash ashore. People will be stumbling over one another in their speedy exodus from the beaches. But the third plague is closely associated with the second.



73

(Text: Revelation 16:4)

“And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.” Revelation 16:4.



74

Just think! A person turns on the faucet to get a drink, and instead of water, blood gushes out! What havoc would ensue! Could anything be worse?

But, ghastly and frightening as the Seven Last Plagues may be, God’s justice is fully vindicated. For the angel declares:



75

(Text: Revelation 16:5-6))

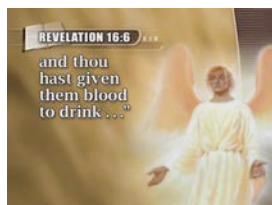
“Thou art righteous, O Lord . . . because thou hast judged thus.

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76

For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,



77

and thou hast given them blood to drink.” Revelation 16:5, 6.
At this time, when the wicked are perishing of thirst and have nothing to drink but blood, the promise is made to him who walks righteously:



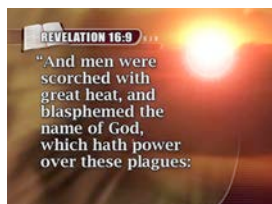
78

(Text: Isaiah 33:16)
“...bread shall be given him; his water will be sure.” Isaiah 33:16.



79

(Text: Revelation 16:8-9) And then the Bible says the fourth angel poured out his vial: “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.



80

And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues:



81

and they repented not to give him glory.” Revelation 16:8, 9.
Then, the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the headquarters of the beast:



82

(Text: Revelation 16:10-11) “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness;

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83

and they gnawed their tongues for pain,



84

And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores,



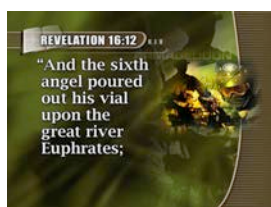
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and repented not of their deeds.” Revelation 16:10, 11.



86

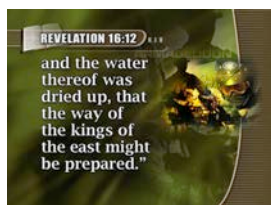
By this text we discover that these plagues are not all universal, nor are they all immediately fatal, because here we find that those under the fifth plague are still suffering from the sores of the first plague. Apparently the plagues fall successively instead of simultaneously, as their effects persist from one to another. Upon the sixth plague comes the great final battle, Armageddon:



87

(Text: Revelation 16:12-14)

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates;



88

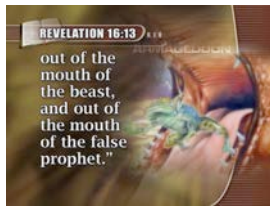
and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.



And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon,

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89



90

and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.



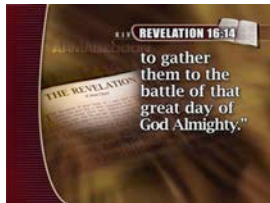
91

For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles,



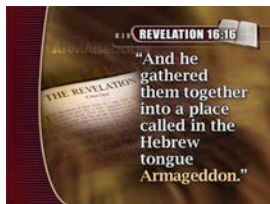
92

which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world,



93

to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”
Revelation 16:12-14.
And Revelation 16:16 says:



94

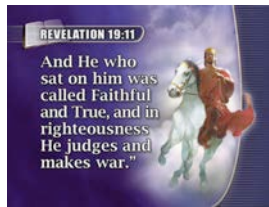
(Text: Revelation 16:16) “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” The whole world is to be involved in this final conflict.
John wrote:



95

(Text: Revelation 19:11, 14-15)
“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse.

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96

And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. . . .



97

And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.



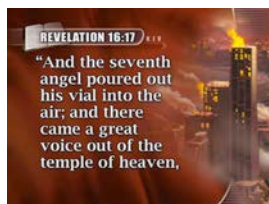
98

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations.



99

...He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Revelation 19:11, 14, 15.



100

(Text: Revelation 16:17-18, 20-21) "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven,



101

from the throne, saying, 'It is done.'



102

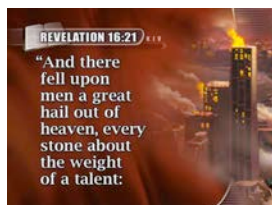
And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake. . . .

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103

And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.



104

And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent:



105

and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” Revelation 16:17-18, 20-21.

Most scholars place the weight of a talent at 57 pounds. No one can imagine the devastation such a hailstorm would accomplish.



106

But the Bible says that the Lord Himself will interrupt the conflict as He rides forth with the armies of heaven to deliver His people from a planet in rebellion.



107

“But,” you ask, “how can I make certain of God’s protection when the plagues begin to fall?” There is only one way.



108

Those who were delivered from the final plague in Egypt had demonstrated their faith in God as their Deliverer by sprinkling the blood of a lamb on their doorposts. When the destroying angel passed over their house, they were safe. They had followed God’s instructions and had made the necessary preparations.



109

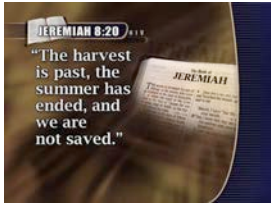
And again, God’s people will be spared when the plagues fall, if they have accepted the Lamb of God as their sacrifice and allowed His blood to cleanse them from sin.

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110

By our lives, we are choosing today which side we will be on-- God's side, or the side of a rebel angel. And friend, when the destroying angels begin their work, it will be too late to change sides! Probation's door will have already closed forever. Won't you place yourself on God's side, under the protection of the blood of Jesus now? The saddest words men will ever utter are found in Jeremiah 8:20:



111

(Text: Jeremiah 8:20)
“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!”



112

The story is told of an Australian lumberman who built a little cabin at the edge of the forest. It wasn't much, but it was home to him. One day, as he returned home from work,



113

he was stunned and heartbroken to find his little cabin just a heap of smoldering ruins. All that was left were a few pieces of charred lumber and some metal, blackened by the flames. He walked out to the place where his old chicken coop had stood.



114

All that he found were a mound of ashes and some burned wire. Aimlessly he shuffled through the debris. Then, glancing down at his feet, his eye caught a curious sight--a mound of charred feathers. Idly, he kicked it over. And what do you suppose happened?



115

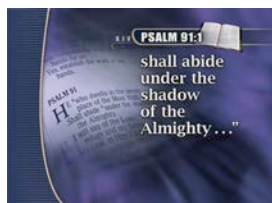
Four little fuzzy, baby chicks scrambled out, miraculously protected by the wings of a loving mother. In the most beautiful and meaningful language of Scripture, God describes what He longs to do for every one of His children on earth when the plagues fall:

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116

(Text: Psalm 91:1, 4)
"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High



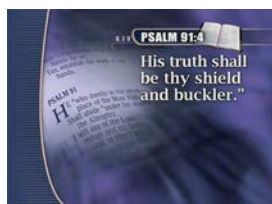
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shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. . . .



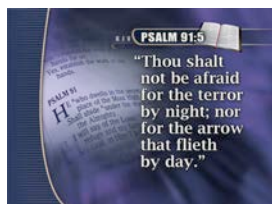
118

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust:



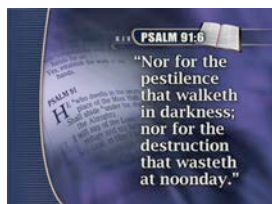
119

his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." Psalm 91:1, 4.
Yes, God has given wonderful assurance to those who choose to follow Him:



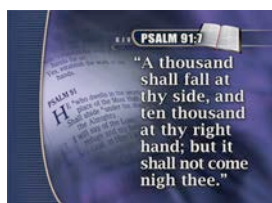
120

(Text: Psalm 91:5-11)
"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;



121

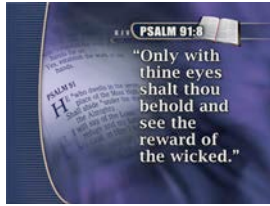
Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.



122

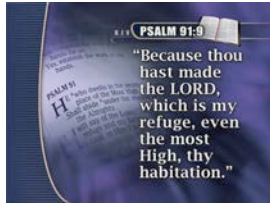
A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

23 – Surviving the Coming Tribulation (The 7 Last Plagues)



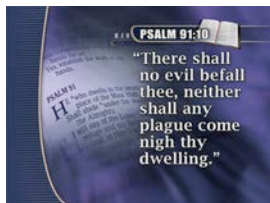
Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

123



Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

124



There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

125



For he shall give his angels charge over thee..." Psalms 91:5-11.

126



127

Could anything be more reassuring? Don't you want to be sheltered under the wings of the Almighty when the plagues begin to fall? When there's no place to hide? Your heavenly Father wants to protect you and save you in the hour of trouble and destruction.

As you turn your life over to Him, He will be able to protect you as a mother hen who gathers her little chickens under her wings. The decision is yours. Surrender your will to Him. Choose to obey His will as revealed in His Word. And as you do so, you can rest in His assurance that His grace, His presence, His protection will be with you now, no matter what the future may bring. Do you want that to be your experience, my friend? Do you want to choose to submit your life to Jesus' saving grace and life-changing Word?

If so, would you kneel with my right now as we pray?
[Kneel together with the audience, then share the following instructions:]

23 – Surviving the Coming Tribulation (The 7 Last Plagues)

Tonight instead of my simply praying, we're each going to take the opportunity to talk to God silently and individually. Maybe there's something in your heart He's been convicting you about. Maybe there's a sin you need to confess and make right, a habit you need to overcome, a grudge you need to forgive. I don't know what the Holy Spirit has been convicting you of, my friend, but I do know one thing: It's not worth holding onto at the expense of eternity. Tonight I invite you to simply talk to God for a moment. Ask Him to show you if there's anything that stands between you and your Savior. And ask Him to take it away, and hide you under His almighty wings. Just take a moment to pray right now.

[Give sixty to ninety seconds for silent prayer before closing with prayer.]

[Suggested prayer next slide]



128

[Suggested Prayer]

“Dear Father in Heaven,

Tonight we want to thank you for being such a loving God. Thank you for loving this earth enough to warn us of the coming seven last plagues. We know Your desire is that every single one of us should be safe under Your protective grace. Lord, please separate us from the sins that would separate us from You. Please help us to trust and obey your Word, to be surrendered to obeying Your will just as Jesus was willing to do Your will, not His. I want to pray for each person gathered here this evening. Lord, please draw especially close to those who may be struggling with important decisions. Help them to see that the only safety is in confessing You before men, so that You can confess them before the throne of the universe. If there is anyone here who is struggling with the decision to surrender their life to You without reservation, please strengthen their heart and bring clarity to their mind that they may see that nothing in this world is worth trading for the more abundant life that Jesus wants to give them now and eternally. Tonight, may each of us leave this place securely surrendered to Your will, trusting Your heart, and finding refuge in a saving relationship with You. This is our prayer in Jesus' name, Amen.”