



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Eschatology

“Preparation for the Kingdom”

TRANSCRIPT

Our subject is the “Preparation for the Kingdom,” and we want to look at some of the events which must transpire just before the establishment of the millennial kingdom of the Lord Jesus upon the earth.

The Scripture reading that we are to listen to now preparatory to the message is Matthew chapter 25 verse 31 through verse 46. So, will you listen as I read these last verses from the last part of these verses of our Lord’s Olivet Discourse:

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the

righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Peace on earth and goodwill toward men. That is the theory over which the philosophers wrestle. It is the dream of the humanists. It is the wishful thinking of the politicians. Announced by angels, it comes only at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus.

Then, Jerusalem. Incidentally, the term, Jerusalem, probably means “city of peace,” although the derivation is a little bit uncertain. “Then Jerusalem, the city of peace, will be true to her name.” In the meantime, the city of peace lies in pieces. Someone has said, “When Israel is out of Palestine, she is out of place. And when Israel is out of place, mankind is out of place.” That, I think, is true. When Israel is out of Palestine, she is out of her ultimate place. And if Israel is out of place, then all

of the affairs of this human existence of which we are a part are out of place, because Israel is the key to the consummation of the earthly plans that God has through Christ.

We have been talking about the various events of the prophetic future, and in our last study we were speaking of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus in which he comes to the earth to destroy the enemies of God and to begin that part of his work that leads to the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth. There are, however, events that follow the Second Advent and precede the establishment of the kingdom. And that’s the subject of our study tonight.

And the first of them is the conversion of Israel. We alluded to this in our last study, of course, because when the Lord Jesus comes in the air and to the earth, the Nation Israel shall see him and they shall look upon him who they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, and that is undoubtedly a reference to the fact that they shall come to an understanding of the fact that many hundreds of years ago they crucified their own Messiah.

I want you to turn with me if you will to the third chapter of the Book of Zechariah. Zechariah chapter 3, in which we have a text that pertains to national Israel. Zechariah chapter 3 and verse 9. Now, this is page 966 in the edition of the King James Version that I am reading, and as you well know it is the next to the last book of the Old Testament. Zechariah, Malachi. So, Zechariah chapter 3 and verse 9. Now will you listen as we read the 9th verse. The Lord Jesus, through the prophet, is giving us some prophecies concerning the future. And we read,

“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

Now you’ll notice the statement, I’ll remove the iniquity of that land in one day. Now the reference, therefore, is to a sudden, national conversion which will touch all of those who dwell in

the land of Palestine. Other passages of Scripture make it quite plain that the time at which this is accomplished is the Second Advent, and that is described for us in Zechariah chapter 12 verse 10. So, will you turn over a couple of pages, and we will read this prophecy to which I’ve already alluded. Zechariah chapter 12 verse 10, and I want to read through the first verse of chapter 13, verse 1, because this pertains to the subject. Now we read in verse 10,

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications:”

Now remember, last time I talked about this and pointed out this is the effectual grace given by the Holy Spirit that leads to the conversion of national Israel, for as I said last week, no one is ever brought to the knowledge of Jesus Christ apart from the prevenient grace of God; that is, the grace of God that comes to us before we are saved. We must be the recipients of effectual grace if we are to come to faith in Christ. Now, this is not only true of the church, of you and me, but of everyone who is ever saved. Effectual grace is something that pervades the Old Testament and the New Testament. In other words, the whole Bible is Calvinistic, not just the New Testament.

Now you’ll see here that we have the spirit of grace and supplications is poured out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and consequently,

“They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him (they are enlightened), as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan

apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart,
and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives
apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives
apart. In that day, (notice these expressions that refer to the Day of
the Lord) In that day, there shall be a fountain opened to the house of
David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”

Now you see, what he is saying is that at that day, Israel is going to see the Son of David coming in
the clouds of heaven. By the grace of God, they will recognize who he is, and they will so
enlightened that they understand what they have done and they shall mourn because of what they
have done.

And as a result of this illumination and understanding of what they have done, and sense of
conviction of sin, there is at that time opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of
Jerusalem a fountain for sin and uncleanness. In other words, the iniquity of that land is removed in
one day. The nation comes to faith in the Lord Jesus.

Will you turn over to verse 9 and 10—or 8 and 9, I should say. Verse 8,

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two
parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.
And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them
as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call
on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they
shall say, The LORD is my God.”

Again, the prophet looks at the overall plan of the tribulation period, in which through those great judgments poured out, Israel shall be refined as a nation and brought to the time when they acknowledge the Lord after he has acknowledged them.

In the New Testament, we have a text in Romans chapter 11 verse 26 which pertains to the same subject. You are familiar with it, I know. And so (Romans 11:26):

“And so, all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, ‘There shall come out of Zion the deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.’”

So what we are taught, then, in these passages as they are put together is simply this. That at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, the Nation Israel, enlightened by the Holy Spirit who removes the veil of blindness from their eyes, which is upon their eyes as a nation today, they see the Savior who returns. They recognize what they have done. They are brought under conviction for their sin. They acknowledge what they have done, and they receive the forgiveness of sins, because in that day a fountain for sin and uncleanness is opened unto them.

Now, I want to make one point clear, because I think sometimes this is misunderstood. There is not going to be any special kind of fountain that is opened at that time in the city of Jerusalem for the [house] of David and the inhabitants of that city. What the prophet means when he says in that day there shall be a fountain opened is that in that day, they shall come to understand what the fountain really is. And so since at that time they begin to partake of the benefits of the fountain (which was opened almost 2,000 years before this) it can be said there is a fountain which is opened.

The fountain which is opened for sin and uncleanness is the cross of Calvary. Now that cross of course has already taken place, and by the time that this takes place, it will be some other years. So, what we are being taught here is not that there is going to be another fountain opened in

the future, but simply that Israel is going to recognize the fountain that was opened 1900 years ago, and since they enter into the benefits of it, historically, at this future date, the prophet writes in this respect with reference to the entrance of their blessings.

Back in the Book of Genesis, we have a beautiful illustration of this that David Baron in one of his books has written about, and which I have remember for at least twenty-five years, because it was over twenty-five years ago that I read David Baron’s book on the prophecy of Zechariah. He alludes to the prophecy in Genesis chapter 1 when Hagar and Ishmael are cast out from the house of Abraham. And in Genesis chapter 21 and verse 9 we read, “And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian whom she had borne unto Abraham, mocking, ‘Wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this bond woman and son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.’”

You’ll remember that the Apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians uses this as an illustration of the fact that we are not under law but under grace, because the son of the bondwoman is cast out, whereas Isaac who was the son of the promise becomes the heir. And we are sons of promise. He uses this illustration in a different way.

Verse 11, “And the thing was very grievous in God’s sight because of his son.” Abraham, like any father, not only loved Isaac, he loved Ishmael. “And God said unto Abraham, let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad and because of the bondwoman. In all that Sarah hath said unto thee harken unto her, for in Isaac thy seed be called.” Abraham, the heir to the promises is not Ishmael. The heir to the promises is Isaac. I have chosen Isaac; I have not chosen Ishmael. Harsh language, isn’t it? Abraham had to learn the doctrine of election, sovereign, distinguishing grace.

Today I was reading a book almost 200 years old written by Samuel Hopkins, congregational minister in the city of Providence, Rhode Island. He was the pastor of the First Congregational Church there, and it was a book on the millennium, one of the first books on the millennium written in the United States; 1793 was its date. And in the introduction to it is a statement made of the fact that it is as a result of “the sovereign, distinguishing grace” – those were his words – “the sovereign,

distinguishing grace that the blessings of God come to men.” So, 200 years ago, almost, there was a man who understood what grace was in the New England States.

Now let’s go on, verse 13, “And also of the bondwoman I will make a nation, because he is thy seed.” In other words, I am going to bless Ishmael, but the promised son is Isaac. “And Abraham rose up early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, giving her the child, and sent her away.” It must have been very difficult for Abraham, but it was the command of God. “And she departed and went into the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the skin, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs, and she went and sat down apart from him, a good way off, as it were a bowshot, for she said, ‘Let me not see the death of the child.’ And she sat apart from him and lifted up her voice and wept.

“And God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven and said unto her, ‘What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, hold him in thy hand, for I will make him a great nation’”—God’s going to bless him in a temporal way—“And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water and gave the lad drink.” Now, it does not say God created the spring of water or the well of water. It says, and God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled the skin with water and gave the lad a drink.”

In other words, the well was there all along, and Hagar just did not see it. And so God, by an act of illumination opened her eyes so that she saw the well of water and thus was able to partake of it. So it is with the cross of Calvary and Israel. There is no further opening of a fountain for sin and uncleanness. There is just one fountain for sin and uncleanness, and that is the cross of Calvary. And that fountain has already been opened, but unfortunately, Israel, the nation – not every individual – but as a nation, Israel eyes are blinded and she does not see it. It’s there before her eyes. But in the future, as the result of the work of effectual grace, she shall see what she in blindness does not see today. But there is no new fountain; it is the same fountain that has been there all along.

The second of the events of the future is the judgment of Israel, and we turn over to Ezekiel chapter 20, verse 33 through verse 38 to read of Israel’s judgment. Now verse 33 of Ezekiel chapter 20, it’s Ezekiel,

“As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face.”

Now if you have one of the Scofield editions of the King James Version, you’ll notice it does say, I’ll enter into judgment with you at this place. I think the King James Version says I will plead with you, but this rendering is true to the Hebrew text: I will enter into judgment with you, face to face,

“As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.”

The Jews in the land are evidently judged or refined in the tribulation period, but those who are scattered to the four corners of the earth – Ezekiel appears to be saying – will be called back to

Palestine at the time of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, and they will be judged as they return. And their regathering is a regathering to the borders of the land. And as a result of this judgment that is exercised by God with reference to Israel, those that pass the judgment are allowed to enter into the land, and of course, into the land means into the land of the kingdom, and those who do not pass it are sent off to be reserved for everlasting punishment.

There are these three great passages of Ezekiel chapter 20, Malachi chapter 3 verse 1 through verse 5 (which we will not read), and Matthew chapter 25 verse 1 through verse 30, but there are two aspects. And first of all, I have been talking about the judgment for entrance into the kingdom.

Now, this particular judgment, then, is designed to regulate the entrance of the inhabitants into the kingdom, and what we are taught here, evidently, is that when the kingdom of the Lord Jesus is set up upon the earth, only believers will enter into that kingdom, and Israel the nation will be judged, and all of those that are not believers will not be allowed to enter into the kingdom of the Lord Jesus upon the earth.

There is a passage in the New Testament that I want you to turn to now that speaks of this particular judgment for the Nation Israel for entrance into the kingdom, and it is Matthew chapter 25 verse 1 through verse 13. Now, while that passage in Ezekiel speaks directly to the question of predictive prophecy, this one speaks to the question by a parable. The Lord Jesus is in the Upper Room Discourse, and remember, he is looking on into the future, the time of the tribulation period and speaking of events that concern Israel’s 70th Week – that seven years of tribulation that we have been studying for a good bit these past weeks. Let’s look now at verse 1 through verse 13 of Matthew chapter 25,

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took

their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

So by this parable, the Lord tells of an incident which is designed to stir up his readers to be sure that they are really prepared for the coming of the king and for the marriage feast of the kingdom of God upon the earth. The oil which the wise virgins have for their lamps is, of course, the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Now, the Holy Spirit is the distinguishing feature of Christians. The way you can tell a Christian from a non-Christian is ultimately this: Christians have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. Non-Christians do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. Now of course, non-Christians have not truly believed in the Lord Jesus, and true Christians have believed in the Lord Jesus. But that’s looking at it from the standpoint of the human instrumentality by which we receive the life. From the divine standpoint, it is the possession of the Holy Spirit that distinguishes the true from the false.

Let me remind you of a passage that the Apostle Paul has given us in Romans 8:9, “He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his.” That’s the test of Christianity. He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his. It is a legitimate test of us, in examining individuals with reference to their Christian faith when that is necessary, to ask, is there the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives? He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his. That’s the test from the divine standpoint of the possession of a true spiritual life.

Now the wise virgins had prepared. They had oil for their lamps. The foolish ones had not. And when the bridegroom who represents the Lord Jesus came, they did not have oil. They said, give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. Now, these other wise virgins were not being cruel when they said, not so, lest there be not enough for us and for you, because we cannot give this oil to anyone. They could not give that oil to anyone else because the oil of the Holy Spirit is the gift of God. It is impossible for them to give it to someone else.

So, what happened was that the foolish were unprepared for the coming of the bridegroom, and afterward the other virgins came to the Lord Jesus saying, lord, lord open for us, but he answered saying, I know you not, reminding us of the statement back in the 7th chapter and the 21st verse of the Gospel of Matthew, in which the Lord Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount says, “Not everyone who says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out demons, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

In other words, it is possible for us to have a great profession of faith in the Lord Jesus, even to do things that outwardly seem to be mighty works, and yet not to have the essential reality of relationship to the Lord Jesus. Anytime a local church gathers together on Sunday, there is generally speaking, some of the false in the midst of the true, and it is almost impossible to tell the difference. In fact, it is impossible. That’s why the Lord Jesus said, “Let the wheat and the tares grow together,

to the end of the age.” It’s impossible to tell the difference.” But the essential difference is that some have the Spirit, and some do not.

Well you see, this particular parable told in the midst of the Olivet Discourse has to do with the future and has to do primarily with Israel is a parable which is designed to speak of the necessity of reality for Israel for entrance into the kingdom of God upon the earth.

Now the next, capital B of the outline, the next parable that the Lord tells is a parable that has to do with the judgment of believers for rewards. And I’m going to read now verses 14 through 30. I hope you don’t mind that we’re reading a great deal of the Bible, maybe more than some of you have read in a week or two. I hope not, but reading the Bible is so important, so important – just reading the text. Now I want you to notice as I read this the keyword, servant. Notice how many times it occurs:

“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country,
who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.
And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one;
to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his
journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded
with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that
had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received
one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a
long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.
And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five
talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I
have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him,
Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful
over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou

into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord (he’s talking about the kingdom, of course). Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine (gave him the one). His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked (notice he is a wicked servant, now) thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Now what he is speaking about in this parable is rewards for service in Israel by professed servants of the king. So by parabolic teaching, the Lord brings home to Israel, at the conclusion of the period of time when the tribulation is the time comes for judgment, he is going to have a judgment for the believers or the servants who are in Israel, and he is going to reward those servants

who have been faithful, and he is going to speak to those who are not truly servants and cast them into, as he says here, the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Notice also that the test here also centers on the question of faithfulness – faithfulness to the Lord is the standard by which we are judged. Now I said, we are judged; this is a test that pertains to the Nation Israel, but remember, as you read this, we are told in the New Testament that we, too, as believers in this present age, are going to face a judgment seat of Jesus Christ. And as we studied 1 Corinthians chapter 3 about six weeks ago, you’ll remember that in our study of it, when we talked about the fact that our works were going to be tested by fire, we saw that the key question was, of what sort have we done? Is it the kind work that is deserving of reward or not, or is it a work done by someone who is faithful?

In the very next chapter, in 1 Corinthians 4, the Apostle Paul says, “Moreover, it is required in stewardship that a man be found faithful.” So just as we appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and our works are going to be judged on the question of whether they had been done in faithfulness to the Lord, so Israel is going to have its judgment seat of Christ as well. And they, too, as servants are going to be judged.

Now we are not going to be judged as far as our life is concerned, because our life rests upon what Christ did on the cross. But our rewards as servants are determined by our faithfulness to the tasks that are given us. So, just as we have judgment seat of Christ, so does Israel, and that is what that passage, I think, has to do with. The test is a test of faithfulness.

Now let’s turn to our third subject, the judgment of the Gentiles. And we read on at verse 31 through 46, but I’m not going to read it again. We have read for our Scripture reading verses 31 through 46 of Matthew chapter 25, in which we have this account of the judgment of the Gentiles.

The purpose of this judgment is also to determine entrance into the kingdom of God upon the earth. The Authorized Version renders the word, *ethnay*, which means Gentiles or nations, by the term, nations. Will you look at verse 32? When the Son of man, when he comes in his glory, and all

the holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory and before him shall be gathered all the nations.

Now Dr. Chafer at the seminary used to say that this judgment is a judgment of nations as nations. I don’t think that’s really true, as much as I admire, as you know, Dr. Chafer. It’s impossible to judge a nation. A nation is a group of individuals, and if we have a national judgment, we must have the judgment of individuals within a nation. That’s why, when we have had all the breast-beating through the Sixties after the Kennedy Assassination, that’s just all wrong. It’s impossible to judge a nation because of the action of one person. In the judgment of a nation, you must judge the individuals of the nation. And we have many individuals who are wild and kooky and wicked and evil in this country, but they of course must be judged as individuals. A nation cannot be judged apart from its individuals.

Therefore, it is much better to render this, “and before him shall be gathered all the Gentiles,” and the word, *ethnos*, which means “a nation”—in its plural form, *ethnaya*, may mean “Gentiles” or “nations”—but since this is an individual judgment, it’s much better to render this judgment and call this the judgment of the Gentiles, and this judgment is an individual judgment.

Isn’t it a striking thing, that the Lord Jesus, who evidently is referred to as the king here, conducts this judgment dependent upon how the Gentiles have treated those who are called “my brethren”? Notice the 40th verse: “And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

So here we a judgment where the goats are placed on the left and the sheep are placed on the right. May we imagine that at the present time? Goats over here, and sheep over here. Now he says to the sheep, “Now since you have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me”—all of these wonderful things that were done to the brethren listed above.

Who are the brethren? Well, let’s think for a moment. They wouldn’t be Gentiles, for the Gentiles are being judged. They wouldn’t be the church, because the church is in heaven at this time.

The judgment of the nations occurs at the end of the 70th Week, and the church is already with the Lord in heaven.

Now if we have Gentiles standing before him in judgment, and the church is not involved, and if we may assume that the Lord Jesus is the king (that doesn’t take much assumption), then it’s obvious that his brethren are a reference to the Jews. So in other words, the Gentiles are judged according to the way in which they have treated the Jews. Isn’t that interesting?

Now since he calls them “my brethren,” it’s probable that he’s referring to believing Jews. What believing Jews would there be? Well, remember during the Great Tribulation period, we are told in Revelation chapter 7 that there will be 144,000 that are sealed out of the Twelve Tribes – 12,000 from each tribe. These are the true witnesses of Jehovah. They don’t look anything like those who are calling themselves Witnesses of Jehovah today. And the fact that there are 2 million so-called Jehovah’s Witnesses is evidence of the fact that they don’t belong to the 144,000.

I remember some years a couple of witnesses stopped and knocked on my door. I always look forward to this [laughter]. And we had a nice little conversation. Always like to ask them the question, how do you get to heaven? They’d start out speaking about their literature, and I’d say, wait a minute, I just want to ask you one simple question: how do we get to heaven?

And one of them said, we flee to the mountain of God’s covenant. I think I referred to this in one of the messages—we flee to the mountain of God’s covenant. Where in the world did you get that? They said, well it says somewhere—they usually don’t know the text—but it says somewhere, let them that are in Judea flee to the mountains. I said, I’m not in Judea, I’m on Apple Street, in Dallas [laughter]. How can I flee to the mountains? Well, that disturbed them quite a bit that I didn’t take those words literally and not understand that the mountains in Judea refer to “The Covenant,” whatever that meant.

Well then we went on and I said, well what are you, knowing of course what they’d say (I wanted to hear them say it). Well they said, “We are witnesses of Jehovah.” I said, which tribe? [Laughter] Of course they don’t know what tribe. I said, well the 144,000 are of Twelve Tribes. You

have to have a tribe. The truth of the matter is you’re not witness because you’re not even Jews. You’re Gentiles. You’re phonies. That doesn’t go over very well [sustained laughter]. But nevertheless, that’s true. That’s what they are. They’re phonies. They’re not Jehovah’s Witnesses.

And the only amazing thing about them is that they had 300,000 converts last year, so they say. Now of course, they may be counting like Baptists [laughter], I don’t know. And they have been known to add a few. And in fact, I don’t want to blame the Baptists, because that is characteristic of all of us Christians. We tend to count a few more. Now, of course, I would hope they wouldn’t have 300,000 converts. But you know, that illustrates a great Scriptural principle, and that is that numbers don’t mean anything, so far as the blessing of God is concerned. They don’t mean anything. 300,000 converts do not mean that God has blessed the Witnesses at all, because they are contrary in all of their teaching and all of their practice to the word of God. Well at any rate, they had a theological problem when they reached number 144,000, and they changed their theology at that point. No need to go into all of that type of thing.

Now the brethren, here, are 144,000 who are during the tribulation period preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus. And out of the preaching of the gospel by the 144,000, there come an innumerable multitude of believers, out of every kindred, tribe, tongue and nation. It’s all set forth in Revelation chapter 7, and also chapter 14.

Now evidently, then, in the midst of these great judgments that are poured out upon the earth, we have the greatest evangelistic campaign that ever been waged upon the face of this earth. Billy Graham, George Whitefield, Dwight Moody, Martin Luther, all the rest are pikers so far as evangelism and results—true results—are concerned in comparison with the 144,000.

Now, since there are these vast numbers of people who come to Christ in the midst of these terrible judgments, the Gentiles who have many contacts with them are going to have many opportunities to express their faith in what is happening. They’re going to be exactly like Rahab. They’re going to hear all of these stories about conversions of Jews and Gentiles, and they’re going

to have opportunity to befriend some of them because everybody is supposed to have the mark of the Beast. And those who do not have the mark of the Beast are the true, as over against the false.

There’s going to be a great deal of persecution, a great deal on the part of Gentiles to make a decision just as Rahab had to make a decision. Is this Israelitish movement a true movement of God? And when the spies came, she made her decision. She said, yes, it’s a true movement. And she hid them and protected them. And because of that, she goes down in the word of God as a woman of faith.

Now in that period of time, there will be many people who will have an opportunity then to make a decision, and many of them will make a decision. They will do things for the 144,000 and their converts. They will take them in. They will feed them. They will give them water, they will give them drink. They will take them in overnight. They will clothe them. They will care for them. They will identify themselves with them in that practical way, and at the judgment of the Gentiles, the Lord Jesus shall separate the sheep from the goats, and the sheep shall enter into the kingdom because their actions indicate that there was in their heart a true faith in what God was doing, in the king who was to come.

So we are in the realm of James chapter 2. Faith without works is dead. But when faith is living, it will produce works. Of course, that has great practical application for us, too. True faith works, and the faith that does not work is not true faith. Men are saved by faith, but not by faith that does not work. Men are saved by a faith that does work. *Sola fide iustificat sed non fide qui est sola.*

[Pause] That’s right. [Sudden Laughter] I thought someone would say, hallelujah! Faith alone justifies, but not the faith which is alone. So here we have another illustration of it at the judgment of the Gentiles.

By the way, will you look at that 46th verse? And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal. You know what that means? That means that the length of eternal punishment is the length of everlasting life. There are people, as I’ve said to you, there are people who are telling us that everybody is ultimately going to be saved. Well do you know

what this says? These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life everlasting. The word everlasting and the word eternal are the same Greek adjective in the text here.

Do you believe that eternal life is eternal? Do you believe it’s forever? Why of course you believe it’s forever. Well then, if eternal life is forever, punishment is also forever. The Bible teaches eternal or endless punishment. Not that after a certain period of time we’re going to have a second chance, nor that after this life we are going to be annihilated so that there is no punishment. It is punishment; well, you notice it is also everlasting.

A. J. Pollack was a Bible teacher who was well-known a generation or so ago. He said in his one of his books that he was listening to one of these deceivers who denied eternal punishment, telling nearly 1,000 hearers that God passed the sentence of death on the disobedient sinner, and that the sentence of death was the sentence of physical death only.

He said he listened as the 1,000 people were gathered round, and he said the man was laboring the point, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” That is, when man became mortal and in due time died. He perished. His body died. His spirit died. His soul died, and that is *the* judgment, this man said. Beyond that, there is no judgment. The judgment is the judgment of physical death. In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die, and this man kept insisting that was the judgment. There’s nothing else.

He said finally such deceitful handling of the Scripture moved him to righteous indignation so that in the midst of this gathering, he said loudly and clearly and saliently, “Scripture says it is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment. If death is after the judgment, how can death be *the* judgment?” Says he shouted that out in the meeting. I admire a man that can do that. I admire a man that can pick a text out like that and make the point, but he did.

He said the speaker was so staggered by what he said, that he didn’t say anything for a moment or two—he said it was his assault [Johnson laughs]. He said finally he recovered himself and said, “I can’t explain every verse in the Bible. I’m only dealing at once with Genesis 2:17 now.” And Mr. Pollock went on to say, “Evasion was the only open course to him. It was not a brave or

manly course, but it affords a sample of the way in which multitudes are deceived.” People will not study the word.

Well, we have only a few minutes. I want to say just a word about the resurrection of Israel in Daniel chapter 12 verse 1 through verse 3. Daniel chapter 12 verse 1 through verse 3. What is going to happen to those Israelites who have lived in ages past? What part are they going to have in the kingdom, and how are they going to enter into the kingdom which is to come in the future?

Daniel tells us. We read in verse 1 of Daniel chapter 12,

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble (the tribulation), such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (Now notice) And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

I don’t have time to talk about the last clause, but in Revelation chapter 20 it is made plain that the distinction between the first resurrection and the last resurrection is a time of 1,000 years. The thing I want you to notice here is simply that it says “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life.”

In other words, the resurrection of the Nation Israel, those believers in ages past, will take place after the tribulation period, just prior to the beginning of the kingdom in order that they may enter into the kingdom and experience the blessings of Abraham which have been promised to Abraham and his seed. So the resurrection of Israel precedes the coming of the kingdom.

The resurrection of the Gentiles is referred to in Revelation chapter 20 verse 4 through 6, but only indirectly. There, reference is made to tribulation martyrs who sit on the throne and rule and reign with Christ, so we may only assume, infer that resurrection of believing Gentiles in Old Testament times also takes place at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus between the Advent itself and the beginning of the millennial kingdom. The Bible just doesn’t say a great deal about that. We’re largely inferring from the fact that some Gentiles, according to Revelation 20, do have their resurrection at that time.

And the sixth event is the binding of Satan, and we have referred to that before in Revelation chapter 20 in verses 1 through 3. That precedes the setting up of the kingdom, because there can be no kingdom if Satan is not bound, and so he is bound throughout the kingdom period in order to demonstrate the sinfulness of men. He must loosed at the end of that period of time to demonstrate that environment is not the solution to the problems of this world. Our time is up. We’ll have to stop. We’ll close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] We’re thankful to Thee, Lord, for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. We ask that Thou wilt continue to guide as we think we reference to the future.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.