



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 11:1 – 12:6

“The Coming of Jehovah’s Kingdom”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee again that we are able to look into this great prophecy of Isaiah. We thank Thee that it is the Word of God. We thank Thee, Lord, for the fact that Thou hast preserved it for us and now in the 20th Century, we are able to read the things that the prophet has penned by divine inspiration. May our thoughts be arranged and given by the Holy Spirit and may we understand in a way that will profit us spiritually. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

[Message] The subject for tonight is the coming and consummation of the Kingdom, Isaiah chapter 11 and chapter 12. Just one word of brief review, remember that a new phase in Judah’s History had come with King Ahaz. He had come to the throne in 735 B.C. Ahaz is the king of no faith. We have been saying in each of our last few times together. Remember that in Ahaz’s day, Syria and Ephraim, the northern kingdom, for at this time, Israel had been divided into the northern and southern kingdoms, were attempting to depose Ahaz, the king of Judah, in order that they might set a usurper upon his throne. They wished apparently to get rid somehow of the Davidic King and Ahaz was that Davidic King. And while he was a poor successor of David, he, nevertheless, was David’s legal successor.

Now, Ahaz was encountered by Isaiah, the Prophet, and exhorted by Isaiah to rest himself upon God. And that God would seem him through the difficulty of the Syro-Ephraimitic War when Syria and Ephraim made war against Judah. But instead of leaning upon God, Ahaz leaned upon the King of Assyria. Isaiah had said to him, “Ahaz, if ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.” Chapter 7 and verse 9. But Ahaz did not think nearly so much of the promises of God, as he thought of his own trust in the King of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser III, who is also called Pul in the Old Testament Scriptures. In other words, he had a trust in his heart that meant far more to him than trust in God. He had promises which to him, though of course, they were insubstantial, meant more to him than the promises of the holy Scriptures and the words of the Prophets. He had a trust in Asshur or Assyria.

And of course, the lesson for us is obvious. Very often, we have upon our lips religious thoughts, religious words, we say them, we go to church, we attend the meetings. It is possible to even attend the Bible studies such as this but our trust is really not in the Lord and in the promises which he has given us. Deep down in our hearts, when the issues of life come, we lean upon ourselves and instead of leaning upon the word of God and those promises. And that of course, is why we fail. Because trust in Asshur or trust in the arm of the flesh or trust in the world is always insubstantial. It can never support us and it can never bless us. On the other hand, trust in God is always substantial and when we do lean upon him in the trials and problems and perplexities of life, there is always something that is real and which holds us up. But Ahaz was Mr. King No Faith.

Now as Isaiah describes this in the 7th chapter, with that he concludes, for a time, his public ministry. And in the 8th chapter, remember, he began his private ministry to his disciples. In the 8th chapter in the 16th verse, you can see it very plainly, God tells him: Bind up the testimony, seal the Law among my disciples. And Isaiah says, “And I will wait upon the Lord who hiddeh his face from the House of Jacob and I will look for

him.” And then he receives a message and this message is something that is the clue to the chapters that immediately follow. Isaiah is told, “Behold, I and the children whom the Lord had given me.” and “He is giving” of course, the Words of God that came to Him, “Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are four signs and four wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion. So three signs. For Isaiah had two sons, one of them was named Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. The other was named Shear-Yashub. And then Isaiah, himself is the Third sign.

Three signs are given to the prophet which are to guide him during the times of the Assyrian peril. And he is to keep these truths and seek to understand them for they are truths that we will enable him to rest his heart while all outside is in turmoil and tumult. Now the three names that were given him were Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, “speed, spoil, hurry, pray”. And remember that was designed to tell Isaiah the Prophet that there was going to come a time of desolation. Because Ahaz had been disobedient, it was necessary for the Assyrian to come. He was going to lean on the Assyrian but the Assyrian was going to be a different kind of resting post than he imagined; for he was going to invite the Assyrian to come help him but the Assyrian was going to come into the land and, as a matter of fact, he was going to come right to the very doors of Judah and almost take it. And so this is a sign of approaching judgment, discipline for the nation Israel.

Then the second sign, Shear-Yashub; that name means “a remnant shall return.” Now the purpose of this name was to give Isaiah hope and to remind him that though the fortunes of Judah and Israel should reach the place where it seemed as if everything was gone. Still, a remnant would return and through that remnant, God would bring blessing to the nation Israel and through Israel to the world. And so in the 10th chapter he says that a “remnant shall return” Shear-Yashub. So Isaiah was to be comforted by the sign Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz and Shear-Yashub. Judgment is coming but a remnant shall return.

Now, the third sign is the name of the Prophet himself, Isaiah. Isaiah means “the salvation of God’ and son in chapter 11 and chapter 12 we are going to read about the salvation of God. And this is the salvation that is going to make it possible for a remnant to return after judgment and through that remnant for the blessing to come to the whole of the earth. So we are going to look at that third sign. The first sign, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, chapter 8 particularly chapter 9, and then in chapter 10 particularly the sign Shear-Yashub, and now in chapters 11 and 12, the salvation of God. You know what? It is really remarkable how the Prophet has constructed his book. These three signs are key signs for us.

Now, with chapter 11, and the doctrine of the kingdom and the king that it unfolds, we have the final of the great themes of the Book of Immanuel. I said to you a long time ago that chapters 7 through 12 of the Book of Isaiah are often called the Book of Immanuel. The reason for this is that these chapters have to do, either directly or indirectly, with Immanuel, “God with us” Our Lord Jesus Christ. They have to do with the king. And remember in chapter 7 and verse 14, the Prophet writes about the birth of the king that is to come. In fact, he writes really about his coming birth. And then in chapter 9 he says that a son is given, a child is born, “his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” There the child is born in the prophecy.

Now, in chapter 11, we are going to see the king reigning. So we have progression - chapter 7, the king who is about to be born; chapter 9, the king born; chapter 11 and 12, the king reigning and he is called Immanuel or “God with us”. So we are now coming to the third of the pictures of the king. And let us begin by reading verses 28 through 34 of chapter 10 because this is the introduction. Isaiah, in what has been called one of the greatest portions of portrait in all of language, Isaiah stands on the ramparts of the City of Jerusalem and he sees the king of Assyria coming, and the king of Assyria, by the way, is described in the book in the Bible as like a cedar in Lebanon. And

he sees the king of Assyria coming with his hosts as if they were a great forest and he watches them approached. In this very vivid description which I say, esthetically considered, is one of the greatest poetic passages in all of language.

This passage is a description of the Assyrian King as he comes down to Jerusalem and listen to what he says, verse 28, He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he stored his baggage. They are gone over the pass they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled. Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth. Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee. As yet shall he remain at Nob that day.” Overnight he stays. “He shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.” And Isaiah sees the King of Assyria and all his hosts now right against the City of Jerusalem. And then these amazing words: “Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.”

Now, I want you to turn with me to Ezekiel chapter 31 for just a text. Ezekiel chapter 31 and verse 3: “Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs.” So the King of Assyria, you see, is likened to a cedar in Lebanon and here he is with a host of high ones who gathered about the City of Jerusalem and so Isaiah, he is a prophet, you know, but he is also a poet. And he looks at this mighty army of the Assyrian as if they were one great cedar of Lebanon, the greatest of the cedars and all about him are hosts like a forest of cedar trees and he sees the Lord lopped the bough with terror and the forest is hewn down as if by a mighty one. In other words, the Assyrians overthrow is prophesied in scripture. The forest crashes with a deafening roar by a mighty one and now, chapter 11, and there shall come forth a twig. That is what it means. That is what the Hebrew word means, “twig”. “And there shall come forth a twig

out of the stem of Jesse, and the Branch shall grow out of his roots.” Now can you not see the picture? It is God who has destroyed this great mighty host like a forest of mighty trees and now as he looks at a little oak, there springs from it a little shoot. You know, this is one of the most magnificent pictures in all of the Bible.

Now, I want to take you back to chapter 6 and verse 13 for a moment. You know, I have learned a lot by growing trees, did you know that? Let me explain after I read this text. Verse 12, Isaiah, you remember, had been given his commission and his commission is to go and tell Israel that hearing, they understand not; seeing, they perceived not. “Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and converted, and be healed.” Because, you see, Israel is in unbelief and now judgment must come.

“Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, until the cities have been wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.” Keep it up Isaiah, until there is apostasy and also until Israel has been scattered abroad. And of course Isaiah’s test was undertaken by others.

But then verse 13, “But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten or consumed as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance of it.” Now, what that means is this, is that there is going to be left in Israel, a trunk that is cut down, but it is an oak. And if you know anything about oaks, you know there is hope.

Now, this is what I have learned. I did not know this about seeders, but I did know this about oaks. You know, I bought a lot four years ago that did not have a tree on it; a typical Texas lot. And so I planted about 40 trees on this lot. They are all little. Mary calls them “my sticks.” And I must say I am not a very good husbandman of my crop of trees because last year I planted an oak tree, and I watched that oak and watched

it and finally the hot weather came in July and then August and the leaves began to shrivel up and finally it died, I thought. And so I went out and, I forgot whether I got a saw or what it was; there was a tree about 12 feet high, but anyway I cut down that oak tree. Then I threw it away, and I forgot it. Do you know what is the fast growing tree in my yard now? The shoot over that oak tree.

Now, you know there is an interesting thing about a cedar tree. I learned this. Did you know that a cedar tree never has shoots? Did you know that when you cut a cedar tree down, it rots? Did you know that? I did not know it. But, isn’t beautiful the way the Holy Spirit has described the Assyrian as the cedar tree cut down by God, no hope of any succession thereby, but when Israel is cut down, Israel is likened to an oak. Because you see there is life in the center of the oak which is Israel. It is the holy seed; it is our Lord himself, of course, ultimately. And from him there shall come forth a shoot and ultimately there shall be a tree that shall be fruitful over the whole of the earth. And Isaiah will later write about that in his little apocalypse in the chapters that follow.

But here, of course, he is talking about the beginning. And so he says, “Look, see that Assyrian and its host, it is all cut down. But, there shall come a twig out of the stem of Jesse and a branch shall not grow so much” as the Hebrew text says “be fruitful; a branch from its roots shall be fruitful.” The House of David is to renew its youth, and is ultimately to be fruitful in the earth.

Now, you know there are some interesting things that are found here in that clause too. I would gather from this that what this means is that at the time when Israel is in humiliation and degradation that it is at that time that we can expect the Messiah to arise and that is precisely what has happened.

You see when our Lord Jesus came, the tabernacle of David was fallen. Israel was in very poor straits. Israel was under the thumb and under the heel of the Romans, but it was at that point that Jesus Christ came. He came when it almost seem that as if Israel’s hopes were gone. The nation in unbelief; only a little tiny remnant was faithful to him.

There was an Anna, and there was a Simeon and there was a Joseph, and there was a Mary. But very few had kept their faith in the Jehovah who had led Israel out of the land of Egypt. But there is a baby born in the manger in Bethlehem of the stem of Jesse. He belongs to the divine line. He possesses the right, legally through Joseph to the throne of David. And through his mother Mary, he possesses the nature that qualifies him to sit upon that throne. In fact, it almost seems to me as if Isaiah recognizes that the condition of Israel will be such humiliation that he does not even say the stem of David. He says the stem of Jesse as if to stress the humiliation.

Now then, in the second verse, after speaking of the coming of the king in humiliation and loneliness, he describes the anointing of the King. Let us look at the second verse, “And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.” The anointing of our Lord Jesus Christ occurred at his baptism. It was there, remember, that the Lord Jesus saw the spirit as a dove descending upon him. It was there that the voice from heaven accompanying the vision of the dove said, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” And it was there that our Lord was baptized. He went down into the water and he came forth out of the water and by that fact signified visibly what the voice says that came to him had signified by expressed statement. For you see, when our Lord Jesus came to be baptized and the Spirit came upon him, the Scripture was fulfilled, which is described in the 61st chapter of the Book of Isaiah, “I have put my spirit upon him.” The Messiah was to be anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Now, Jesus of course, because he was the son of God possessed the Holy Spirit, in the fullest of measure by reason of his relationship to the God had, intrinsically in his being. But the Holy Spirit came upon him at his baptism in order to equip him for his Messianic test. And when the Spirit came upon him to inaugurate him into his Messianic ministry, it was then, not that he knew that he was the Messiah for he had known that,

but it was then that his calling was confirmed to him. And when the voice from heaven came, you remember it said, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

When we get to the 42nd chapter of Isaiah, we shall understand this better, but if you remember that statement "this is my son" that comes from the second psalm and in the second Psalm the Messiah is presented as the Messiah who is the reigning king. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give Thee the nations of the earth for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." He is the Messianic king. But in Isaiah chapter 42 in verse 1, it is stated there in a great messianic passage by the Prophet Isaiah, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." "Mine elect" in whom I am well pleased, my chosen one, my beloved one, for the words mean that in the Hebrew text.

Now, in Isaiah chapter 42, Isaiah prophesies of the servant of Jehovah. And in the rest of Isaiah, he will point out that it is the work of the servant of Jehovah to die. And so when the voice came from heaven that said, "This is my beloved son," it was as if God said to our Lord, who understood of course the words of Scripture, but it was as if he said just as plain as it could be said to anyone who would understand the Bible, "This is the messianic king." And when he said "in whom he is well pleased," it was just as if he had said he is the suffering servant of the Book of Isaiah and he must die. And so those two statements "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased" marked him out as the king who is to suffer. And when the Spirit came upon him as a dove, the gentle bird of suffering and mourning, what was stated by the words was also expressed in the vision.

And then when our Lord Jesus went down into the water and came up out of the water in his baptism, it was a visible expression of what his test would be. It would be to go down into the waters of death, to be baptized and to come up in resurrection; the glories that should follow. And that is why our Lord says, later on in the gospels, "I have a baptism to be baptized with," that ye know not of." The baptism is the death of our Lord Jesus. Our Lord was anointed by the Holy Spirit for his task.

Now, here in Isaiah chapter 11 we find and described in great detail, “And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,” inclusively, rests upon him like Noah’s dove, which could not find rest in the earth because the earth was wicked. So, here the Spirit comes upon him and rests upon him because our Lord is the only human being upon whom the Holy Spirit could ever rest by virtue of his own merit. Isn’t it a wonderful truth to realize that it is our Lord Jesus who alone in himself, may receive the Holy Spirit of God and receive him justly? In your case and in mine, we received him because Jesus died took away our sins, made it possible for the Holy One to come and indwell unholy people. But he could never do that were it not for the fact that our Lord has suffered. But with him, the Spirit may rest upon him and find perfect soil for his activity.

Now, it is described in a series of three pairs. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and his intellectual life. Our Lord’s intellectual life was absolutely pure and spotless in spite of the fact that in his human nature he had to learn. We were talking in the last hour in our systematic theology class about the nature and character of God and particularly his attributes. And we were talking about his immutability, his unchangeability, and his infinity. And then how he possessed the completeness of knowledge, innately, immediately and fully, and he never had to learn. He never had to go to school, the father. There never was a time when he said, “I think that I would like have a lesson in this or a lesson in that.” I find that I am weak in this or weak in that. But in our Lord’s case, while in his divine nature he possessed everything that deity possesses in his human nature, he learned. And he learned perfectly. And he was perfect at every stage of his development, not behind, not a hero himself, just where he should have been. And so he grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and with men and in humanity.

The spirit of wisdom and understanding shall rest upon him, then the spirit of counsel and might, his practical life and the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, his spiritual life; all of these, the one great central fact of the spirit of God with the

three branches of pairs. What does it look like? But of course, we do not remember. What is that reminds you of? The seven-branched candlestick; the one central branch, the Spirit of the Lord resting upon him and then the pairs. Well that reminds you of the seven-branched candlestick that was placed in the tabernacle in the holy place, which of course looks that our Lord as the light of the world. And by reason of that which the Holy Spirit gives our Lord, by reason of this anointing, all of these things together simply affirm that he is, in Isaiah’s words “Immanuel”, “God with us.”

You know it is going to be great to have a king like this. But let us read now the rule of the king verses 3-5. “And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked one. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his waist.”

Now, if you follow carefully and you have been thinking about this presentation. We have here of course the coming of the king, the anointing of the king and what would naturally expect at this point. Well, I think you would expect the sufferings of the king. But you do not have that.

Now, of course, one of the reasons for this is that Isaiah is going to reserve the question of his sufferings for the latter part of this book. But the fact that he does not even mentioned this age in which we are living is also significant. Remember when we put the outline on the board, the Holy Spirit comes on the Day of Pentecost, there is a period of time which is indeterminate. That period of time is the age of the church.

Now, the age of the church will conclude, with the rapture of the church, then shall come 70th week of Israel, the time of Great Tribulation, to be followed by the kingdom. This section, which is an indeterminate period of time, is not the subject of all testament prophecy. Never are we told of the period of time in which we have the

church on earth. In fact, that is the great thing that our Lord had to tell the disciples. When it became evident that Israel was going to respond negatively then he unfolded to them a series of parables in which he described the events that will take place during this period of time, and also sought to make plain to them that there was going to be an interval between the coming of the Holy Spirit and the fulfillment of the promises which have been made to Israel.

That period of time is now stretched out and we are in it, 1968 plus something. It is stretched out that long. That period is not the subject of all testament prophecy. As a matter of fact, the prophecy of the Old Testament looks forward to the first coming, and then off and on to the events that just precede the second coming, the tribulation and the second coming and kingdom. And so it is natural here then, that Isaiah should skip the present age and go on to right of the rule of the king. And so now, he has moved from here over to here, because that was the way that it might have occurred. I am speaking of course from the standpoint of humanity. From the standpoint of God’s sovereignty, this the way it has been determined from of old.

But now, with verse 3, we have here the prince of peace and noticed that the principle that shall govern our Lord in his rule is, “And shall make him a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” The Hebrew says, “He shall delight in the fear of the Lord.” That shall be the fragrance of his life; the fear of the Lord. You know it is not an amazing thing that Jesus Christ the only perfect man whoever should live, that man is characterized by this fear of the Lord. The one person, who it might seem to us at first glance, did not have his life characterized by the fear of the Lord, if the one person, who is most characterized by that among men. The very fragrance of his life is the fear of God. How much more of you and I to fear the Lord? He shall make him a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. He will not judge by his senses, as the basis of human judgment; he will judge by spiritual truth.

Now, think of man, how does Mr. Nassar judge? How did Hitler judge? How did Stalin judge? How did Lyndon Johnson judge? How did our rulers carry out their judgment? They can only judge by the senses. Our Lord does not judge by the senses. He judges by reality. He judges by his perfection of human character. Now, glorified and by his divine being, he is the God man. He never makes a mistake. I read an article a year or so ago in which one of our government leaders was seeking to justify lying. By the president, it was not Lyndon who said this, it was one of the men associated with the government. He said, “It was perfectly right for the government to lie.” Now, he meant of course in matters of security. I do not want to try to pass judgment on that, I just merely want to say this, when Jesus Christ is ruling, it is not going to be necessary for men to lie. He is going to judge truthfully, because he shall judge out of a position of absolute strength.

Now, before he comes to his throne, he has to deal with the person who is known in Scripture as the antichrist. So, will you turn with me to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and I think that if we read this chapter, we will understand what it means by the last part of verse 4. 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and let us read beginning with verse 3. Paul writes,

“Let no man deceive you by any means. For that day shall not come, except there come the falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all this called God, or that is worshipped. So, that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, when I was yet with you, I told you these things.”

By the way, we often say, you know, now you want to not teach a young Christian prophecy. Save that for later on, that prophecy is really confusing. Give them the simple truth of the Bible, like the person of Christ, and the work of Christ, and how to live the daily life. Now, I think all of those things were important, but let me remind you

that the apostles thought it was extremely important that we understand prophecy. Let me tell you why.

Paul spent so far as we know, 15 days in Thessalonica. He came there, he proclaimed the gospel to them, a little church came into existence by reason of the new birth and he left. Now, it is possible that in the Book of Acts, he spent a week or two more there. At the most, he could not spend more than six weeks there according to the chronology of the Book of Acts. So far his acts are concerned it only says he was there 15 days. And you know what he taught them? He taught them all about the cross. He taught them all about the work of the Holy Spirit. He taught them all about Christian living. And furthermore, he taught them about the man of sin, you are reading about it, he said remember you are not when I was with you. I told you these things. He taught them about the rapture of the church. He taught them about the tribulation period, the 70th week of Israel. He taught them about the kingdom. He taught them not only these facts, but he taught them about the individuals themselves and what they would do. And he told them that the man of sin was going to arise; that is, what he is talking about right here? So we do not apologize for teaching the prophecy. If Paul did it, we can do it too. And if the Thessalonians could take it, so can you. So there. [Laughter] All right, verse 6,

“And now ye know what was restraineth, that he might be revealed in his time for the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now hindreth will continue to handle until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked one be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit or breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming,”

Did you notice the language? “And with breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.” As taken from Isaiah chapter 11, as the basis of Paul’s instruction to them. Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying

wonders, and with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be judge who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. In other words, when the king comes, the first act he shall do when it comes, is to destroy the antichrist by his personal coming. And then, he shall establish his kingdom, in which he shall rule and reign righteously.

Now, let us notice the kingdom in verse 6 through 9, this is the realm of the king. Now, this is one of the most interest things in all of the Bible, I think. Calvin and Luther said, “This is all symbolical, we are not to take it seriously.” Modern commentators say, “It is literal, Isaiah meant its literal, but it is just a beautiful dream, its just a beautiful wish, it will never really take place. “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb. And the leopard shall lie down with the kid.” Dr. Fineberg likes to say, "They never lie down together today, except the kid lies down inside the leopard." "And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them.” Is not that a beautiful picture? “And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lamb shall eat straw like the ox.” It will not feed on blood and flesh, it will feed on straw. “And the nursing child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den.

And you know in the Hebrew text that means this that he is so attracted to the little child playing on the ground. Sees one of these adders the bright eyes and he is so attracted by the bright eyes of these deadly little things that he reaches over and picks it up, and plays with it and it will be all right. Isaiah said, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” I went to church for 25 years before I was converted, you know what I used to pray? Our father, which art in heaven, I didn’t say hallowed be thy name. I said, “How will be thy name.” “That kingdom come”, what in the world that I mean, I

didn’t know. I have no concept of what that meant. That is what that means. Thy kingdom come means this kingdom come. That is what we pray. Thy kingdom come that is what it means this kingdom of our own.

Now, about theological contemporaries tell me it wrong to pray for that. They tell me there is no such thing as the kingdom of God upon the earth. But when I look at the Book of Revelation, I noticed that not only as the kingdom of God upon the earth prophesied, but I read that the angels are saying, thy kingdom come too. And to tell you the truth, am glad to be associated with the angels. And I say to my friends, I am very interested on what you say to me, but as soon as the angels stop praying thy kingdom come and as soon as the saints down through the years stops saying thy kingdom come, and as soon as our Lords prayer is changed to thy kingdom will not come, not until that time will I stop praying for the kingdom. And as far as I am concerned the company of the apostles and the company of the prophets, and the company of the angelic beings in heaven is the kind of company I want to keep. And so I will pray “thy kingdom come.” That is precisely, what that text meant and what it means. And this in Isaiah is the fulfillment, expressed in description of “thy kingdom come.” And it is a beautiful picture of course.

There is first of all reference to the animal kingdom. There is no peace on the animal kingdom today. Animals feed upon animals. Vipers feed upon vipers. Insects feed upon insects. They all feed upon one another. As a matter of fact, if they didn’t, it would be too bad for us humans. But it is within God’s plan and program for this to cease one day. Finally, the peace of paradise will be renewed. And what we are seeing here is an intergoal link in God’s program of salvation for man.

Now, I’m going to ask you to turn over with me before we close tonight to the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and I want to show you that this is not just something, that the Prophet Isaiah, poetically has given us, which we are not to take seriously and literally. In Romans chapter 8, and verse 18 through verse 25, the apostle

describes what is going to happen during the time when we are here upon the earth having been redeemed before Jesus Christ comes in the air and we go to be with him and later when he comes to the earth to establish his kingdom.

You might think perhaps since we have been converted, that there is nothing left for us to do to be glorified and Paul says, wait a minute, there is a period of time between our conversion and the consummation of the promises of God, and that period of time is characterized by suffering. It is destined for all of us to suffer, it is appointed unto us. It is given unto us not only to believe on Jesus Christ's name but to suffer for his sake. All those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. Suffering is part of our destiny, and if we have a little, we should remember that. In fact, this passage is so full of suffering you will notice that he uses the word "groan," to describe the attitude of the person who longs for this period of time the relief while he is living back here in this period of time. You thought everything was wonderful didn't you? Because you live in Texas, well it is not. And you have to suffer even in this place.

Now, notice verse 18 of chapter 8, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. For the earnest to expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Do you see what follows then? The creation is in bondage. You see when man is sent -- remember in the garden, what did God say?" Well, he said of course, "Adam, in the dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return." He said, "In the sweat of thou brow thou shalt eat bread." But, you remember he also said regarding the creation thorns and thistles shall it bring forth. Every time you put your hand down to pick a rose in its sticks you, just remember Genesis 3, the fall that is what it means.

Now, the creation Paul says, “Longs for its day of deliverance” and it will come since the creation was subjective when we were subjected to suffering, it was subjected because it is under us. So, when we are delivered, it too shall receive its deliverance, and so it longs, it is almost as if the creation is a sense of creation. It can think, it can feel.

Paul has writing of how urgently and anxiously it awaits to stay and many says of the 22nd verse, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth,” because of Genesis 3 “and travaileth together in pain until now. “Travails in pain,” what kind of language is that? Women know. It is the language of a woman in childbirth. And she is in pain in order that a child maybe born. So, the creation is groaning and groaning because of the past. Travailing in pain because the risk of anew birth for the creation, a kingdom age. That is what Paul means. He goes on to say verse 23, “And not only they, but ourselves also, we have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption; that is the redemption of our bodies. Do you want the resurrection to come? We will just have a little suffering and it will be a much more wonderful days for you.

I said to you a couple of weeks ago I had to go to Birmingham on Tuesday, two weeks ago, and stand by a graveside. And as I was going out of the cemetery, I was riding with the son, 13 years old, of the father whose body we were placing in the grave; and the wife of the man who had died said as the sun where shining in the west she said, “Isn’t a lovely day? It is almost as if God has shined down upon us.” It had been cloudy all day long. She said, “You know it would be a wonderful thing if the Lord came today,” and the little boy said, “Yes, it is certainly would be a wonderful thing if he came today.” And you know what, it is through suffering that we learned these things that really means something to the writers of Scripture.

And so, even we ourselves, if we really have this hope within ourselves, we groan, longing for the adoption, the redemption of our body, the wonderful expression of the Spirit life that God gives us; a little sample of now, a little taste of, but which we shall

have fully then. Then we goes on to saying not only does the creation groan for that day and not only that we groan for that day because we have the Holy Spirit but he even says, “The Holy Spirit, make it intercession with groanings that are unadorable,” and you know this text has been so misunderstood that I wish I could spend 15 minutes to make it plain to you but this has nothing to do with our praying and the Holy Spirit taking our prayers and purifying it.

You know, like we have often been told, a little child wants to tell mother that he loves his mother. And so, he goes out in the garden and picks a lot of flowers but he also picks some weeds and he is rushing in to give this bouquet to mother and encounter his father on the way and father says, “What are you doing?” “I am giving mother bouquet because I love her,” he looks down and he sees a full of flowers but also some weeds. So, he reaches down and takes off the weeds. And that is supposed to be the spirit’s activity in our prayer life. We pray and the spirit purifies our prayers so that the prayer comes to God as a pure prayer. Isn’t it a lovely thought? It is not scripture. It is not scripture. You know what this means? You know what the spirit is praying? He too is praying for these days. He too is praying for the redemption of our body and the redemption of the creation. Do you know why? Because then he can have it fully then he can us completely.

Now, we are in a body. We can not live the spirit life. As we would wish, and as he would wish, and so he too longs for the day when he may possess us completely and he prays; he makes intercession with groanings that are unadorable. You cannot express them. They are the spirits longing to possess us completely. And Paul says and God hears his prayers. He who searches the hearts knows what is a man of the spirit, for he makes intercession according to God in behalf of the saints for their benefit, and because the Spirit knows what to pray and how to pray for it. And because he is the Spirit, God is surely going to answer that prayer. And so, the rebirth of the kingdom, the rebirth of the creation in the kingdom is to come.

Now, in order to some people who say, “A kingdom,” it is kind of an appendage to God’s plan, one who have the cross, the coming of the spirit, the preaching of the gospel, the last events in which Jesus Christ comes and then go right into eternity. We do not need any kingdom. It is a useless appendage attached to the plan of God.

Let me remind you of something: Sin occurred in history. God gave a promise of redemption in history so Christ is King and he suffered in history. Now, furthermore, he says that in history when Jesus comes here, we are going to be caught up to meet him in the air, and we are going to be given a resurrection body in history so that men may see in history what God is doing. Not out of history, in history.

Furthermore, when man sinned, vicariously he placed the creation under a curse, in history. So, in history, the creation is going to be redeemed. Its time of redemption, is not when we believe on Jesus Christ, its time of redemption is when the children of God received the resurrection bodies and then God will bring the quick provision, his program for the creation, in history. And because of sin in history and redemption in history, sin that affects the man and affects the creation, so we must have redemption in history that affects the man and affects God’s creation and not until then shall we enter into the eternity. You see God’s philosophy of redemption is very, very to the point. So my friends, I say this is a very reasonable and wonderful program.

Now, I understand why Paul has told the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. Chapter 9, I only touched some of the passage.

Very quickly, let me just tell you what I have in mind and I think you can read it intelligently for yourself. The program of the king is simple. The Gentiles shall be brought to that kingdom, verse 10, “Israel shall be recovered from the four corners of the Earth.” Verse 11, “It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, who shall be left from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and

from the coastlands of the sea, for the kingdom needs inhabitants. And so, the program of the king is to bring the Gentiles and the nation back into that land.

And then the 12th chapter is the chapter of prayers because of God’s redemptive program. And I think the key statement is the statement in verse 2, “Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid for the Lord, even the Lord is my strength and song and he has become my salvation.” I want to tell you one of the most thrilling things in all of human history is going to be the day when Israel sings that great song and sings about God being her salvation, her strength and song and he has become my salvation, and so in the kingdom they shall lead the praises of the redeemed. Let us bow for the word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the Word of God and for the wonderful truth of it and we pray O Lord that as we sensed the times in which we are living, we pray that our hearts may be drawn out in anticipation of the coming again of our Lord Jesus and our catching up to be with him in the consummation of that programs. May these things dominate us as we live in the interim. For Jesus’ sake. Amen.