



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Zechariah 14:1-9

"The Second Advent in Glory"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer removed from audio]

[Message] The subject for tonight is "The Second Advent in Glory." The human view of history is inclined to see it as cyclic. If you have read much of the philosophy of history, if you have read much any of Arnold Toynbee's works, for example, you know that his view of human view history is cyclic. That is, that there is an endless cycle over and over again, and the great civilizations of the world, of which there have been about fourteen or twenty-one, twenty-one, I think Mr. Toynbee says, have all followed very much the same pattern of rise, apex, decline, and fall, so many look at human history in this light. Others see it as purely senseless. Albert Calmus, who was very famous, and died just a year or so ago, in his book *The Fall*, said that human history may be just senseless or absurd. And this is the view also of men like Robert Penn Warren.

Now, when we turn to the Bible we see quite a different picture. The biblical view of history has forwardness about it. Things are moving toward a goal. And so it is not cyclic. It is not absurd. And there is no reason to say, if we look at the Bible with Mr. Warren, there is no forgiveness for our being human. The Bible centers around three great events. Number one, the event of the creation; the creation in Genesis chapter 1,

has in a sense set the scene of human history. And then the second great event is the event of the cross, and the cross is the focus of history. And the focus of history centers in man's redemption. Christ is providentially in the mind of God and in the plan of God, the focal point of human history. He has split history into before and after.

Isn't it interesting that the world has recognized this, too? When Mr. Khrushchev writes to Mr. Johnson in the White House, their letters are dated. And they are dated in accordance with the event of Christ. 1964, we date human history according to BC and AD, whether it is before Christ, or in the year of our Lord, 1964. And so, even men who are atheists have to recognize the fact of Christ. So it is a remarkable thing that the Bible in its truth that the cross is the center of human history, has found this recognized almost unwittingly and unwillingly by the world. The last great event to which the Bible points forward is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the goal of history, and we are living in the interim. If you were to look at this chart, you can see these great events. Here is the creation in which the scene of human history has been set. The cross, which is the focal point and which in a sense, determines the conclusion of human history. And the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus and the kingdom that follows, which is the apex of human history, when the Lord Jesus is the king over all the earth.

Some time ago I was, well back in my childhood this used to happen quite frequently, but some time ago I read a story of a group of men who were watching some men play chess in a little village in the state of Florida. I used to spend a lot of my time in North Carolina, and in Hendersonville, North Carolina, where our family had a summer home, the streets at night used to be closed off, and they used to have square dances in the middle of the street. And then in the day time, people who came to Hendersonville to relax in the summer time would play checkers along the side under the trees, and people would pass by and do their shopping. And the old men, usually, would be playing checkers by the side of the street.

Now, I understand that in some of the little villages in Florida they play chess. At any rate, a preacher was standing looking at a group of men playing chess, and as he was looking, and all of them were very intently watching the game, he suddenly heard one of the men say, "That's it. That's it." Just as one of the players made a certain move. Now, what he meant by that was that, though the others didn't understand, he understood that that determined that particular game, that move. When that move was made, the issue was determined, and though the other person may squirm as much as he possibly could, he was going to lose that game. You know, in checkers it's the same way. When you make a certain move, it's possible to so trap your opponent that you know that you've got him. He may run back and forth in one of the corners interminably, but sooner or later you're going to win that game, because you have made the key move.

Now, the Bible, in a sense, has played the part of the man who says, "That's it." for the Bible says that nine hundred years ago the Lord Jesus hung upon Calvary's cross and there he bore the sins of the human race. And that event is the key event of human history. And that event has determined all human history. When the Lord Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" it was just as if God had said, "That's it. That is going to determine human history." And so we are now living in the interim, and Satan is struggling. He is squirming. He is attempting to prevent the conclusion of things according to the plan of God in the Bible, but he will never succeed, because the event that determined all of this, the cross, has taken place. Sin has been paid for, death has been met, and resurrection awaits, and the coming and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. So we are living in the age of polarity and tension, but it is the age in which we are living in a victory that is to come, and it is just as certain as that Jesus Christ died on the cross at Calvary.

This is why Sunday after Sunday Christians sit down at the Lord's Table and they remember him, as Paul says, till he come. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death, till he come." So we are living in this interval.

This whole age, this age of the church is the interval until God consummates that victory that has already been won in the cross. The second coming, of course, is a very unpopular doctrine. It's just as unpopular as the cross. The cross is unpopular, because both of these condemn the world. The cross condemns the world, because it says that we are unable to expiate our own guilt. The fact that Jesus Christ died, in effect, says, "You cannot save yourself." And so man does not like the cross, because it reminds him that he needs a Savior. He needs someone else to take away his sin. If righteousness could come by our good works, then Christ died in vain, Paul says.

And if we are able to save ourselves, there is no reason for a cross. So the fact that God has brought the cross into being, and into history, and the fact that the cross took place is evidence of the fact that we need a Savior. And so man, self-righteous and proud, does not like to realize that he needs someone else to save him. So the cross is very unpopular, and when you start talking about the cross to your friends, and they do not seem to respond to it as you do, with love and affection, because the Lord Jesus has done so much for you. Don't be surprised, because it is contrary to human nature. We are naturally proud and self-righteous, and we do not want anyone to tell us that we need help from anyone.

So the cross is very unpopular, but the second coming of the Lord Jesus is just as unpopular, because the second coming says to us that we cannot set our house in order. The second coming says to man, for example, that the League of Nations, or the United Nations, or whatever organization man may set up can never bring world peace. The second coming says that we need the advent of Christ to bring peace, and happiness, and well-being to the earth. The second coming says that all of the plans of man will fail, try as man might to set his house in order, he cannot do it. The second coming of Christ is the only thing that will set things in order. And so it is natural that when you start talking about the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ and the need for the second coming,

that men are not so anxious to hear that message, because it just reminds us that we are failures, failures in ourselves, and failures nationally.

Well now, tonight we want to talk about the Second Advent, and I want to do this. Briefly we want to look at a passage in the Old Testament in which certain events in connection with the Second Advent are prophesied. Then we want to look at a New Testament passage in which the Second Advent is prophesied. And finally, we want to turn to the passage in Revelation chapter 19, verses 11 through 16, in which the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus is described by the Apostle John. So the first passage that we want to look at is one in the Old Testament, the Old Testament prophetic announcement of the Second Advent, Zechariah chapter 14, verses 1 through 11, Zechariah 14, verses 1 through 11. This is the Old Testament prophetic announcement of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would take us too long to expound all of the details of this passage, but I want you to notice three things that are described by Zechariah in this prophecy. This is the next to the last book of the Old Testament, page 978 in the Scofield Edition of the King James Version, near the end of the Old Testament. Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

The three events which are described here are the battle over Jerusalem, then the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus to the earth on the Mount of Olives, and then finally the blessings that shall flow out of it, and particularly that the Lord shall be king over all the earth. Let's read through, and notice just these three facts. Verses 1 and 2 now, here we have described a great battle that is going to take place over the city of Jerusalem. Now, mind you, this event has never yet, up to this point, taken place. You can study the history of Jerusalem, and never have all the nations of the earth been gathered together against Jerusalem. Here we read in verse 1,

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the

houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

This is the climax of the Great Tribulation period that we looked at last time, which is pictured here on our chart according to Matthew chapter 24, verse 21. Now, back of this event, which is described in Zechariah chapter 14, is the restoration of Jerusalem to Israel in unbelief. Now, we may sympathize with the jingle, but it is true, how odd of God to choose the Jews. But he does have a future for them, and Israel shall return to their land and shall be right in the center of the movement of God during the days of the tribulation period. You know, I think it is one of the most thrilling things that today, after many, many hundreds of years; we have a nation Israel again. I can remember when I first started to teach the word of God, we could not say there is such a thing as the nation Israel. We could say, we think there will be a nation Israel in the latter days. And I can go back to some notes of mine before May 1848, in which I said on the basis of other teachers, I'm not claiming to be a prophet or even the son of a prophet, but I did know what the Bible taught, and what some great men had taught, too, that there was going to be a nation Israel in the land in the last days. And when I began to teach the Bible, along in 1944 and 45, I did not have any idea that in the next five years there would be a nation Israel, and it would be possible for me to receive a letter from Israel, and have Israel on that letter. We are living in climactic days. There is a nation Israel on the earth after all of these hundreds of years.

Now, this prophecy in Zechariah chapter 14 has as one of its conditions and prerequisites the fact that the nation Israel shall be back in the land in the latter days. For here we read of them being in the city of Jerusalem. I think also it is significant that men are discovering the great mineral wealth that lies in the Near East, and even in that land itself, which has for all of these years been a desert land. Even today, with modern methods of agriculture, and modern methods of discovery, and modern methods of

industry, the nation Israel is blossoming as a rose almost before its time. Well, all of this is presupposed here.

Furthermore, it is presupposed, as we said last time, that the anti-Christ shall make a covenant with the nation Israel, and the worship of Israel shall be restored in the land. And today we are seeing the beginnings of this, too. Do you know that in the land of Palestine today men are studying again the word of God? That they are really reading the Old Testament in Hebrew? And another thing which is very interesting in this connection, if you have ever studied a foreign language, you know that languages change through the years. In fact, if you know anything about English, you know this. Have you ever tried to read Chaucer's English? Well, you know if you've ever tried, that you need a lexicon to read English. You think you're an Englishman, you think you understand English, then I would just like to give you a little Chaucer and have you read it for me and explain it to me, because it's very difficult for me. I've read Chaucer and I can understand some of it, but I have to have a Lexicon. I have to have an edition with some notes that tells me that this English means such and such, and this English word means this.

Now, it's an interesting that Old Testament Hebrew, if it had continued as a spoken language in Israel down through the years, would have been utterly beyond the Israelite of today. But what has happened? Well, remember when Israel went into captivity, they began to speak Aramaic, so Hebrew became a fixed language. Then down through the years they spoke Aramaic, then they were spread to the four corners of the earth, and the Jews speak English, or they speak German, or they speak French, or whatever it may be. And many of them also speak Yiddish, is something of a combination of Aramaic and German. Now, today with Israel back in the land, and there are over a million Jews now back in the land. I think now over two million Jews back in the land, they're picking up the Old Testament Hebrew, and they are learning to speak Hebrew in Jerusalem.

I've taken a course in Modern Hebrew, and do you know what Modern Hebrew is? Modern Hebrew is the Hebrew of the Old Testament, modified just slightly, very slightly. For example, we do have to have a word for an automobile, and so they use the word for chariot for automobile. We even use that in English, don't we? We go up alongside of someone who has a Lincoln Continental and we say, "My, that's a lovely chariot you have there." [Laughter] But they use terms like that. So what I'm getting at is this, that today the Modern Hebrew spoken in the land of Palestine is essentially the language of the Old Testament text itself. So that those who are learning to read Modern Hebrew, and learning to speak Modern Hebrew are able to open up the Hebrew Old Testament and read it, which is a modern miracle in itself. You see, God has in a sense put this book on the shelf for them, and has taken their own language away from them, so that now when they are learning it again, they are learning it in such a way that they can read the Old Testament and understand it without having to use a lexicon to translate it. So it is a remarkable age in which we are living. Israel is back in the land, and all of these events about which the Bible speaks are beginning to come to pass almost before our eyes.

The third thing, of course, that is described here, is not only that Israel is in the land, and not only is the worship of Israel to be restored, but there is going to be a marshalling of a great federations of nations against Jerusalem. Ezekiel describes this in Ezekiel chapter 38, in verse 11. Put that down if you are interested in looking it up. But there are many other passages in the Old Testament which do it. But anyway, you can see from verses 1 and 2, that there is described here a great battle over the city of Jerusalem. Now, in verse 3 through 5 Zechariah describes the blessed event of the Second Advent of the Lord. Notice the 3rd verse, then just as this great battle is taking place in the city of Jerusalem, and just as if it looks as if the city is going to be the loser, because half of the city has gone into captivity, half of them are cut off in the city, at the point when it looks as if everything is lost, it is reminiscent, of course, of how they were

before the Red Sea, and Pharaoh was following them, remember, and the Red Sea was before them. And it looked as if that was the end of Moses and the children of Israel. But God opened up the Red Sea, and so the place which looked as if it were a place of defeat became a place of victory and of defeat for the Egyptians.

So in this future day, before the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, when it looks as if everything is lost, when the nations are gathered against the city of Jerusalem, then a supernatural event shall take place, the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus.

"Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

This is probably a reference to the angelic hosts who come with him. Now, here you see then, the statement is made that the Lord stand with his feet upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem, and there shall occur a very great earthquake, and out of these great changes that take place at his Second Advent Israel shall be delivered, and the kingdom follows; notice, the events that follow.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light. And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward

the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one."

And so the unique blessings of the coming of the Lord Jesus are described, and essentially they are that there shall be a king over all the earth. So he describes then the Second Advent, the great struggle that precedes it, and the kingdom that follows. Now, this is the Old Testament prophetic announcement. I want you to look with me now at a New Testament prophetic announcement in the 1st chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. Acts chapter 1, here we have the New Testament prophetic announcement. Remember, Acts is the book of the risen Christ.

Last night I was speaking to some around the Lord's Table, and I referred to Acts chapter 1 and verse 1. Do you notice this verse, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." So emphasis rests on that word "began" in the original text. Now, from this text, you see, Luke is saying that he wrote another book, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." So he is saying, in effect, "I wrote a former treatise, Theophilus, and in it I told you all that Jesus began, both to do and to teach." What is the implication of this? Well, the implication of this is that in this second book the Acts of the Apostles, he's going to tell us what Jesus continued to do and teach. Someone has said, "In Acts chapter 1 we have the last view of Christ after the flesh, but not the last view of Christ. For the whole Book of the Acts is a picture of the risen Christ at work." So the former treatise, the Gospel of Luke, the things that Jesus began to do and teach, the Acts of the Apostles, the things that the Lord Jesus continued to do and teach from the right hand of the Father, in the power of the Spirit, through the apostles. I've never liked this title the Acts of the Apostles, and when I get out my Bible, my translation I'm going to change the name of it. Now, I'm not going to get any adherents, mind you.

Oh by the way, lest you be disturbed and think I'm becoming a heretic, these titles are not inspired. They were added long afterwards. In fact, the first historical reference we have to the title the Acts of the Apostles is about 150 AD. They were not put on the original documents. So the titles are not inspired. I'm not meddling with the word of God when I say that. As a matter of fact, the Greek text simply says, *Praxeis Apostolon*, Acts of Apostles. If you look through and read through the Book of Acts, you discover that the Acts is not the Acts of the Apostles, but the acts of four apostles, for only four are mentioned in this book. And furthermore, you could not really say that they were acts of apostles that the book primarily teaches, for the book primarily tells us of the acts of the Lord Jesus, which he does in the power of the Spirit through the apostles.

A.T. Pearson recognized this, and he referred to this book always as the Acts of the Holy Spirit, for it was the Spirit or the Lord Jesus who did those wonderful acts which are described in the Acts of the Apostles. Some years ago John Masefield wrote a play. It was called *The Trial of Jesus*. And at the conclusion, he has a little scene in it in which Claudia Procula, the wife of Pilate, is speaking with a Roman centurion by the name of Longinus. And she turns to Longinus and she says, "Longinus, where do you think he is now?" And Longinus says, "He is not here." "Well, where do you think he is, Longinus?" "Why, Lady, he said, Jesus Christ has now been let loose in the world, where neither Roman nor Jew can stop his truth. And that's right. For you see, by the resurrection, the Lord Jesus has been released from the bodily confines of the days in the flesh, and now he has been let loose as the risen Savior throughout the world. And Roman or Jew or American nor anyone else can stop the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you ever noticed how the Acts ends? I mentioned this last night. And I think it's so wonderful, you know, scholars interest me. I can't claim any real scholarship. I have taught the Bible for a number of years, but I'm not going to say that I'm a scholar. I do not a lot about what scholars say, and what they study, and how they reason. And it's very interesting how they reason over the last chapter of the Book of Acts. Have you

ever noticed how abruptly it ends? "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

So Paul is in Rome, in prison, in the time of Nero, and the text just suddenly ends with the statement that he was there for two years, teaching and preaching the things which concerned the Lord Jesus Christ, no man forbidding him. This is a remarkably abrupt ending. Why does this end so abruptly? And so scholars try to guess why it ended so abruptly. One says, "Why, Luke was doing some research, and when he got to this point he had to move for some reason. Perhaps he was in Rome at the time when Nero called out all of the persecution against the Christians, and he had to move." Others say, "Perhaps at this time Luke died," so all kinds of human reasons to explain why the Book of the Acts of the Apostles ends so abruptly. One of them that is frequently used is the fact that twenty-eight chapters in the Greek text would be in a scroll about the length of an ordinary scroll upon which those men wrote. And so they say he came to the end of his scroll, and he didn't have any more material, and so he just stopped with this.

Now, it seems obvious to me that God had a hand in Luke stopping here. For it's almost as if God is saying, "Now the remainder of the Acts of the Lord Jesus, through the apostles and through the disciples, is going to be written by those disciples, down through the years, until he comes again." And so all of the age of the church is really the completion of the Book of the Acts of the risen Christ. For the same Lord Jesus Christ who worked through those apostles is working through us today. And when someone finds the Lord Jesus this goes down in the heavenly book of the acts of the risen Christ through his disciples. So it is very fitting for me that the Book of Acts ends abruptly. It's almost a suggestion that we must complete this book by being the instrumentality of the risen Christ as he carries on his ministry. So I, myself, I feel that there is a very good reason why the Book of Acts ends as it does. Paul, preaching with all confidence, "Paul,

why, you are in prison," and yet, in spite of the fact that Paul is a charge of the Roman government, he has absolute freedom. How can you explain that? Why, you can't explain that except on the fact the Lord Jesus Christ is alive, and so Paul is given the freedom to proclaim his message, though he's in Roman confinement, so to speak.

And furthermore, Paul, Nero is on the throne. Nero will blame the city and blame it on the Christians in just a year from now. Nero's on the throne, but Paul, with all boldness, no man forbidding, not even Nero can forbid the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. So you see why Acts ends as it does, there is a great stress upon the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is alive. You know, that's the only thing that explains a Bible class like this. I've often said, and I fully believe it with all my heart, if General Motors, which just the other day issued its quarterly statement, over five hundred million dollars net income the last quarter. Why, if General Motors had been operated on the principles that the church has been operated on down through the years, if it had been operated in the same lackadaisical, nonsensical way in which he has been done, by no appeal to its charter, the word of God, we've gone so far from it that you can hardly recognize the New Testament church when you look in our churches today. If General Motors had been operated in the same way, it would have gone broke years ago. How can you explain the fact that the church is still here, and that believers who have acknowledged the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, are gathering in a room like this to hear the word of God, except for the fact that it is just as Longinus said, Jesus Christ has been let loose in the world, the risen Savior. And no one can stop his truth, not a Nero, not a Stalin, not a Khrushchev, not a Lyndon Johnson, not anyone else. They cannot stop the truth of the word of God. That's it. The cross has taken place, and so we are living in the victory of the Lord Jesus.

Well now, that's the Acts. I want to turn to chapter 1. Have you found that chapter yet? Chapter 1, now I got off and started doing a little preaching there. By the way, this is the book of personal experience, too, a great stress on really knowing this

risen Christ personally, not only knowing him in the word, but knowing him personally as well. You know, I heard a story one time about a professor, being a professor I'm always interested in these stories, but this professor wrote a book on love. He spent many years of research. He was unmarried. He had never been in love. When he completed his manuscript, it was a big thick manuscript, and he looked around for someone to type it. And he heard about a young lady who might do the typing, and so he went over and he took his manuscript out and he handed it to this young lady. But as he handed it to her, his eyes met her eyes and something happened that was not in the book. [Laughter] The professor knew more about love after five minutes with that young lady than he had after thirty years reasoning and thinking about it. For you see, he had the personal experience of it.

Now, in the Book of Acts we have the personal experience of the risen Christ to stress, too. Well, let's look at this first chapter and you know the details of the opening of it. And here now the Lord Jesus has given them a commission in verse 8. And in verses 9 through 11, Luke describes the ascension and the announcement of the Second Advent. And I want you to notice that this is done from the Mount of Olives. Notice the 12th verse, "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey." So the ascension took place from the Mount of Olives, and you will remember that it is stated in Zechariah that his feet would stand on the Mount of Olives when he came again at his Second Advent to deliver the city of Jerusalem from the struggle that was going on around it.

Now, in verse 9, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Now, that is the ascension. Do you remember the Lord Jesus prayed in the Upper Room discourse, in chapter 17 and verse 5, "Glorify Thou me with the glory that I had with Thee before the world was. Holy Father, Glorify Thou me with the glory that I had with Thee before the world was." Now, that is the glory which our Lord entered into right here, when he was taken up out of

their sight. "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel." I do not know who these two men were. Most commentators feel that they were angelic beings in the form of men. That may be so. It so happens that there are two men who do announce the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, most likely Moses and Elijah, according to certain passages in the Bible. And it may well be that they were here. We cannot be sure. Let's just say that they were angelic beings and not engage in any speculation at this point.

But now they turn around, and they say to those who are looking as the Lord Jesus goes up into heaven. Mr. Spurgeon, you know, in his earlier years, before he believed strongly in the Second Advent of Christ. He used to mock certain Christians who lived in his day who were always talking about the Second Advent. He used to say to them, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven. Get on about the Lord's work." But then Mr. Spurgeon, in his latter years, he became a very strong believer in the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus himself. And then, of course, he began to look up into heaven, too, just like these disciples for the Lord Jesus to come again. But notice now, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus," do you notice that? "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Now, the same way the he ascended, he shall come again, Luke says. He ascended in bodily form. He shall come in bodily form. He ascended visibly before their eyes. He shall come again, visibly, personally, he ascended into heaven. Personally he shall come again. This same Jesus, and do you notice the human name is used, Jesus, the name that marks him out as the one born in Nazareth. Jesus, but glorified, shall come again.

May I read a little quotation to you? In the light of this statement in Acts chapter 1 I have set in my library called the *Interpreter's Bible*. I will not say anything more about it. It has many helpful notes in it. It also has many things that are very unscriptural in it. It is written by many, many Bible interpreters and preachers. And so one cannot just

condemns it wholesale, or improve it wholesale, because there are many people involved in the writing of it. But the man who wrote the exposition of the Book of Acts has one of the most amazing expositions of this passage that I have ever read in my life. This man, he is or was at this time a few years ago, the rector of Trinity Church, Copley Square in Boston. And you can seek it out for yourself if you want to find his name, if you are that curious. But this is what I read, this is an exposition of this statement, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner."

Now, listen to what he says, "They watched the skies for his return. They forgot, or perhaps they never knew, that things seldom come back the way they go. History never repeats itself, quite. When Aristotle came back through Aquinas, it was not exactly the same man who tutored Alexander. The people we love always come back to us, but seldom do they come in the same way that they left us. In the glance of a young daughter's eye, a wife lost early may come back to her husband. Across of a page of poetry, years after, a friend comes back to his comrade. Those therefore who have watched the sky for Jesus have been disappointed, and so will they always be." Now mind you the text says, "This same Jesus, whom you've seen go into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Shall so come, he says, "They have been disappointed and so will they will always be. He will never come that way."

Now, I don't think you could find a commentator denying more explicitly the teaching of Scripture than that. "He will never come that way. He will come in the need of this dreadful hour. He will stand crucified above the debris of our wrecked cathedrals, pointing to our shame and promising his help." I might say that this does contain a truth. The Lord Jesus is spiritually present with us today. For remember, he said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." That's the message of Acts. Jesus Christ is our contemporary. He is our contemporary today. We may meet him in this room, or we may meet him on Park Lane in Richardson. He is our contemporary, but he is more than this. That is what the Bible says. He is today with us, and we may meet him today. But

we are going to meet him personally, visibly in his Second Advent, too. "He will come in the closed rooms of our secret lives to quiet our horrid grieving and steady our rapid pulse. With him will come all good and true things, not just as they left will they return, but purer, stronger, and more real." I say, I don't think you can find a stronger denial of the truth of Scripture than the statement, "He will not come again in that way."

Christians may, in the light of Acts chapter 1, verse 11; expect the Lord Jesus to come back bodily, visibly, personally, in his Second Advent. In fact, I think a Christian should live in this way; he should live as if Jesus Christ was crucified yesterday, as if he arose this morning, and as if he is coming tonight. This is the way the Bible pictures the advent hope of the Christian.

Now, let's look on to our last passage, Revelation chapter 19. This is the biblical fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 14 and the prophecy of Acts chapter 1, Revelation chapter 19, in verse 11. This is the first of the seven last things described in chapters 19, 20, and 21 of the Book of Revelation. John presents here, in this vision of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, a royal commander followed by a dazzling retinue. Listen to the introduction in verse 11. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Now, let me stop here for a moment. You notice that John describes this advent of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords as an advent upon a white horse. Commentators have needlessly argued whether this horse was a literal horse or not. Now, I personally feel that in this case John is using figurative language. This was the language that they knew in his day. So it seems to me in delight of the context as a whole that he is using figurative language.

Now, I want to be careful, though, because you know, the Bible tends to be very, very literal throughout. You know, when you talk about biblical language, some people will say the Bible contains a lot of figurative language." And others will say the Bible is to be interpreted literally. The truth of the matter is, of course, that the Bible contains literal

language and it contains figurative language. And that it is wrong to say the Bible should always be interpreted literally, and it is wrong to say that the Bible should be always interpreted figuratively. The question is not whether it should be interpreted literally or figuratively, for both sides in this controversy, which frequently rages among Christians, accept that some is literal and some is figurative. The question is, what is the general rule? What is the normal rule of interpretation? Is it normally figurative with some allowance for literal language? Or is it normally literal with some allowance for figurative language? And I think that the latter, of course, is true. That normally the Bible is to be interpreted literally, but we should remember that there is figurative language in the Bible. Take every word at its normal, literal, every day meaning, unless the facts of the context, studied in the light of related passages, and axiomatic or general truths indicates clearly otherwise. So take it normally, literally.

Now, I'm not going to get in any big argument with anyone over what kind of horse it was that John saw. It seems to me that that is beside the point. The point he is trying to get over is that the one on the horse is coming again. That's the point. But I say I want to be a little careful, because in the Old Testament, in Zechariah chapter 9, and verse 9 we had a prophecy concerning the first coming of the Lord Jesus. And Zechariah wrote, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Now, did the Lord Jesus literally fulfill that or figuratively? Well, of course, he fulfilled it literally didn't he? He came into the city of Jerusalem in his triumphal entry on a colt, the foal of an ass. So it might be that this is some kind of apocalyptic horse, much better horse than Northern Dancer, on which the Lord will come. But I'm not going to argue that point. The point is that he shall come.

But notice in what way he shall come. He shall come as the judge, and he shall make war. Now, that is a startling thing. We are inclined to think of the Lord Jesus as just as the meek, gentle Jesus who went to the cross to die for our sins. That's true, but

notice at his Second Advent he comes as the judge. Now, the Book of Revelation, of course, presents him as the judge. It presents him as Savior, but it presents him as the Savior who will be the judge of men. And it is has always been a startling thing to me, too, that in this presentation of the Lord Jesus as judge, the most common name for him in the Book of Revelation is the Little Lamb. The Little Lamb, as if to contrast the picture that we have of him normally, with the picture that presents itself when he comes again to the earth. So he came the first time to die for our sins. He comes the second time to execute judgment and justice in the earth towards those who have refused him.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire," what does that mean? Why, that is the penetrating judgment of the King of Kings. "His eyes were as a flame of fire." Now, we did not see many evidences of this when the Lord Jesus was here the first time. But we did see some inkling of it. Do you remember when, in the beginning of his ministry, he went into the temple and there were the priests and others who were there with the cattle, and they were there with their tables of money, changing money so that the Jews who came up to the feast might take their money and give the proper kind of coins into the treasury. And of course, these men were making money in the house of God. They were selling the animals for sacrifices in the temple itself. And remember, the Lord Jesus came in, he made a scourge of small cords, and he overthrew the tables of money. He drove the money changers out, drove the cattle and oxen out and said, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise."

Now, I want to ask you a question. Do you think if all of those Jews were set up in that temple making a lot of money, do you think that one man could have come in and have driven all of that crowd of money lovers out of that temple, were it not for the fact that they saw something in his eyes that had swam up to the surface, so to speak, of the eternal glory. I'm quite sure that when they looked into his eyes, they saw something of what will be manifest throughout the whole world at his Second Advent, before which no man can stand. What luck would you have going down on Elm Street and routing the

men down there? [Laughter] You wouldn't have much hope would you? But our Lord went into that temple and he cleaned the place out, because there was something in eyes of the eternal glory. Then remember, near the end of his earthly ministry, when they came to him in the garden, and the Roman soldiers were there and Judas. And they came and he went out to meet them, and he said, "Whom seek ye?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." And he said, "I am here," and he uttered the ineffable words, "I am," the title for deity. Do you remember what happened to them? They went back and fell to the ground, for again there had come up to the surface in our Lord Jesus something of the eternal glory of the holy God. And when he said, "I am," there was just enough of the pulling aside of the curtains that they were able to sense the presence of deity, and immediately they were on the ground.

Now listen, if this was true in his First Advent, how much more true will it be in the Second Advent, when he comes as the judge of the earth? "His eyes were as a flame of fire," John says. "On his head were many crowns." What a difference from his earthly ministry. His head had been the human head. It has rested in Mary's bosom. It had been a head that had spent many years in the carpenter's shop obeying Joseph's commands. Then in the Garden of Gethsemane that head had sweat great drops, as it were, of blood. And then in the presence of Pilate and the Roman soldiers, the head had bled from the crown of thorns that was placed upon it. And then on the cross that head had cried out "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Then they had placed they body with the head in the sepulcher and they had wrapped around the head the napkin, which afterwards was there in the tomb, remember, rolled up by itself. And then on resurrection morning, the head and the body had come forth in glorious resurrection. Now, John says, when this rider on the white horse comes, on his head there are many diadems, many crowns. Well you see this is the king of heaven. This is the king of hell, too. This is the king of creation. This is the providential Lord. This is the king of grace.

Mr. Spurgeon, a woman who had been visited by Mr. Spurgeon said, "Ah, Mr. Spurgeon, if Jesus Christ does love me and save me, he shall never hear the last of it." This is the head upon which there are many diadems. And why do you think he has these diadems? Do you remember that Satan has offered him all the kingdoms of this world? In the temptation he had taken him up on a high mountain and he had said, as he looked out over all the kingdoms of the world, he had said, "Why, I will give you all of these kingdoms if you will bow down and worship me." The Lord Jesus had said, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, Satan." And because he refused Satan's test and temptation, now he all that Satan had ever offered him and more, because of obedience to the will of God. So on his head there are many diadems.

"And he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself." Now, I'm not going to tell you what that name is. [Laughter] "And he was clothed with vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword." You see, he is clothed here in the garments of blood, and out of his mouth goes the sharp sword, so that he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with the rod of iron, and he troddeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. The last of the human kingdoms is now to fall. And the kingdom of Satan is to become the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ.

Well, we must stop. I want to say just a word about verse 16, "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Have you noticed the three names that are given? There is a name which is for Christ alone, verse 12, "a name written that no man knew but he himself." Then there is a name in verse 13, and his name is called the word of God. That's the name by which we know him, particularly through John's gospel. And there is the name by which the whole cosmos shall know him, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. If men do not know him today as the word of God, the time is coming when they shall know him as King of Kings and

Lord of Lords. So you see, that's it; that's it. The battle's won. All that remains is for God to say to the Son, "Now is the time to come back again," because the victory has been won.

The Lord Jesus said to the disciples in the Upper Room, "In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." We haven't overcome. He has overcome. Many years ago when I was living over on Carruth, in Dallas, the children were out in the back, and they were playing with a ball, and it was near sundown. One of them, threw the ball, it went out over the fence, back over against a neighbor's fence. And the neighbor's never cut their grass. In the back up against their fence, there was grass about this high, and the sun was going down, and they were looking for that little ball. And they became somewhat frantic, because it looked as though they might not find it. But finally one of them found it, and my little daughter was about six or seven years old at the time, and she hadn't been looking, she was afraid to get in that grass there with the boys. But she was standing there looking, and when they found the ball, she rushed back in saying, "We found it. We found it. We found it." Well, she hadn't even been looking for it [Laughter] but she had identified herself with them.

Now, when the Lord Jesus said "Rejoice and be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," we can rejoice because we are identified with him. And because he has overcome, we shall overcome. And so we know the Second Advent is victory for us. Time's up, let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to Thee for the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. We do thank Thee that Thou hast, by the Holy Spirit, shown us the one who loved and gave himself for us. And now, Lord, we do look forward to the Second Advent. And we would say with the John the Apostle; even so come quickly Lord Jesus.

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[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]