



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Various Scripture Passages

"The Age of the Kingdom"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we again come to Thee in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And we thank Thee that Thou hast brought us to this in hour in which we may study Thy word again. We thank Thee for its power, that it is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, the living word of the living God. We pray again that Thou will guide us, Lord, as we study Thy word. Will Thou remove all of our preconceived notions with regard to it? We recognize Lord, that all of us have idea with regard to divine things that are wrong and need to be purged by the word of God. And so, we pray that we may come in genuine humility to study the word under the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. And especially tonight, Lord, we pray again for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we study the great subject of the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We commit our time of study to Thee with thanksgiving and praise for him who has loved and has loosed us from our sins in his own precious blood. And we ask it in his name and for his sake. Amen.

[Message] Let me while I am thinking about it, make an announcement. We will not have the class next Monday night. I expect to be out of town in California then. But

we will have it the following Monday night and the Monday night after that, which will be June 1, and that will be the conclusion of our series of studies for this year. So we will not have the meeting next Monday night, but the next two Monday nights we will, for there are three more studies in the series as we have been following them.

Now tonight the subject is the kingdom, "The Age of the Kingdom." And you can see on the blackboard the section about which we will be speaking, the age of the kingdom, which follows the series of the tribulation and the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. I think tonight for the sake of the Scripture reading, there are many passages that we might read. I'm going to turn to a couple of passages in the Old Testament and read them. Isaiah chapter 9, and we'll read verses 6 and 7, and then chapter 11, verses 1 through 10. Isaiah chapter 9, verses 6 and 7. Now, remember this section of the prophecy of Isaiah is a connected whole. The prophet is speaking about the coming of the king, and he has already described his birth in chapter 7. He is to be born of a virgin. Now here he will describe his ministry and give the details of it in the conclusion of the section in chapter 11. Verse 6, this is a very familiar verse for us, because it is often used around Christmas time, and as you know, it forms part of Handel's Messiah. It is not often understood that the 7th verse follows this 6th verse, and the reference is to his kingdom of the future. Verse 6,

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

Now let's turn over to chapter 11. Isaiah chapter 11, verses 1 through 10,

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse (Now, you remember, of course, that our Lord was out of the stem of Jesse for he is the seed of David, and David was from Jesse.) There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 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; 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. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 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. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

Now, let's turn over also to Luke chapter 1, Luke chapter 1. Now, in Luke chapter 1 we have the account of the announcement of the birth of the Lord Jesus. And here we read in verse 30,

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God

shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Now for the final passage, let's turn to the Book of Acts, chapter 1, in verse 6, Acts chapter 1, in verse 6. Now, this of course, is in the post resurrection ministry of the Lord Jesus. Remember, he taught them for forty days the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, in verse 3, Luke says. Notice that particularly, the things concerning the kingdom of God. Now, he goes on to say,

"Being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, (No I'm never going to restore the kingdom to Israel. He doesn't say that, you notice that they ask about the time. He answers then about the time. He said unto them,) It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

Now, for the last passage, Acts chapter 3. This is really last, too, Acts chapter 3, and this is Peter's sermon, remember, the second one in the Book of Acts. And we read in Acts chapter 3 now as the people are gathered around having seen this apostolic miracle performed by Peter in the healing of the lame man. Peter, in the midst of his sermon says in the 19th verse,

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. (Or as the Greek text has it, "in order that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.) And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: (Now, he shall send Jesus Christ

which before was preached unto you.) Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration (This is the same root word found in Acts chapter 1, verse 6, "Will Thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel. Here is the answer.) Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

In other words, the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus will bring the fulfillment of the things which the prophets have spoken from the beginning. Now, tonight we are to look at the age to come, or the age of the kingdom. Men often to look to plans as panaceas; we have seen a lot of this in the years in which most of us have been living. We remember when Russia first instituted its five year plan, which I think was succeeded by another five year plan. And then I lost track of the five year plans until a year or so ago was it not that Khrushchev announced another such plan for Russia. We remember a few years back when Mendes-France was Premier of France. He had a thirty day plan, which he initiated which would lead France out of the wilderness. And then we remember, of course Hitler's one hundred year plan. He was probably more realistic than the others, but he had his plan too.

But now, God has a plan also. And that plan is in the Bible, the word of God, and it is designed to bring security, prosperity and peace to men. It is associated with the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I'm not going to say anything against the United Nations or the League of Nations. You may feel about them as you will, but I do know this, that no human organization can bring peace to human kind. Only the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ is able to do that. And furthermore, even though our President has now announced a war on poverty, I know that we shall always have poverty.

I heard the other day, by the way, that someone said, "I hear that Johnson has announced a war on poverty. Where do I surrender?" [Laughter] But the Bible says, and

our Lord himself said, remember, in John chapter 12, in the incident of the anointing of his head and feet by Mary of Bethany, "The poor ye always have with you." And so I'm in favor of doing everything that we can do within reason and good sense for the poor. Nevertheless I do not have any hopes for Johnson's war on poverty. I don't think that it will succeed, although it may be a very good thing. I'm not a politician and I'm not going to say pro or con, because I realize that in this room I have some experts, and I have to be careful about what I am saying. I do know this, though, that God has a plan which will be successful for men.

Now, I'm going to be using a term tonight, which I want you to understand. It is the term millennium. Now, the term millennium comes from two Latin words. One of them is the word mille, and the other is the term annus. Now, if you remember your Latin, you'll remember that the term mille means "a thousand," and annus is the word for year. So that the term millennium is a thousand year period. Sometimes millennialism, which is the doctrine of the millennium, or teaching concerning the millennium, is called chiliasm. You may occasionally find that term. That is from a Greek word, chilios, which means "a thousand years." It is the same thing as millennialism, but when we talk about millennium we mean a thousand year period of time. The age of the kingdom is the age of the millennium, for the kingdom according to Revelation 20, as we shall see, is a period of one thousand years. So we are going to be using this term millennium.

Now, generally speaking Bible students who are at all true to the word of God, and let me assure you that there are some Christians who are not necessarily pre-millennialists, some of them are not premillennialists, but are genuine Christians. Generally speaking Bible students can be classed in prophetic teaching under three heads. Some are post millennialists. Now, the word post is word in Latin which means "after." So a post millennialist, and these terms are related to the Second Advent of Christ, is a term which means that they believe that Jesus Christ is coming after the thousand year reign. In other words, instead of coming here, he will come at the conclusion of the

kingdom. Post millennialists, they believe that Jesus Christ will come after the millennium.

Then there are those who are called amillennialists. Now "a" in Greek, it's unfortunate, of course, these terms were not consistent. Post is a Latin prefix, "a" is a Greek prefix. It is the negative prefix, it is the alpha privative. It is called that in Greek. That is, if you want to negate something in Greek you do not say "un" as we do in English. Unknown means "not known." Unsolvability is a problem we cannot solve. The Greeks used "a" for that. If something was not known, they would say agnostos, from which we get agnostic, one who does not know whether there is a God or not. Atheist is a man who believes no God. Atheos, atheist, no god. So an amillennialist is someone who believes that there is no kingdom of the Lord upon the earth. Now, generally speaking, amillennialists believe that there is a kingdom, but it is not a kingdom upon the earth. Some vary, and there are variations in most of the views, because not everybody within each camp agrees completely with one another.

Now, premillennialists are the opposite of post millennialists. Pre is a Latin prefix which means before. So the premillennialist believes that the Lord is coming before the millennial kingdom. So pre's believe the Lord is coming before the kingdom. Post millennialists believe the Lord is coming after the kingdom. Amillennialists do not believe that there is a kingdom upon the earth. Now, as you can tell from this chart, it has grown according to the theology of a premillennialist. So you would gather from this that Dr. Johnson must be a premillennialist, and if you have gathered that, then you have made the proper deduction, for I am. Now, I hope I am, because the Bible teaches that.

Let me say something about the history of these view points. I think I can demonstrate, although I'm not going to spend a whole of time doing it tonight, I think I can demonstrate that this was the historical position of the Christian church. That is, that the earliest believers outside of the New Testament period, because that's the period at issue, were premillennialists. Amillennialism began with Augustine, who lived in the 4th

century. Post millennialism is a much later development than that. Now, as you can see, the post millennialist is the optimist of the crows, because he thinks that man is going to bring in the kingdom, and then the Lord Jesus is going to come. And if you have ever heard ministers pray about the church bringing in the kingdom, then you better put it down that that man was a post millennialist, because that is essentially his position.

Now, there were many post millennialists before the Second World War. The Second World War had practically demolished the post millennial eschatological prophecy position. Because, you see, the post millennialists believed the world was getting better and better through the testimony of the church, and we were permeating the world with the leaven of the gospel. And then as more and more joined the outward church, the Lord's enterprise, was succeeding so much more. And ultimately, they believed that we would have a time of peace and prosperity, and unity in Christ on the earth that would be a kingdom on the earth, and then when we had managed to bring things to this wonderful state of affairs on the earth, then the Lord would come back, and he would be satisfied with what he saw.

Now, when the First World War came, that was a rather shattering experience to post millennialists, because it made them feel that perhaps things were not getting better and better. And when the Second World War came, you know it's harder to find a post millennialist now, than it is to find almost anything. You almost hardly can find a good old fashioned post millennialist anymore, because the Second World War has practically decimated that position. So that today, the amillennialists and premillennial are the most popular of the eschatological systems.

Now, I want to say a few more words before we look at the kingdom itself as the Bible teaches it. Here are some of the outstanding supports for the premillennial position. First of all, the literal interpretation of the Bible. Now remember, don't make the mistake that I tried to allude to last time, and say that by this we mean the Bible must be interpreted literally in every verse. The Bible contains figurative language. It contains

language that is to be interpreted literally. All agree on this point. The question is what is the normal principal of interpretation to be followed in case of doubt? And I think beyond a shadow of a doubt as we read the Bible, the normal interpretative principle to follow is take the Bible literally, take it at its normal meaning unless the facts of the context, studied in the light of related passages, indicate clearly otherwise. In other words, the normal interpretation is literal. If there is a modification made necessary by the facts, it is possible to interpret as a figure certain passages in the Bible. But we should not go the opposite way to the Bible and interpret it figuratively, unless we find some reason to interpret it literally, so that the normal interpretation of Scripture supports this.

Let me read you a statement by an outstanding amillennialist. This is a statement made by Floyd Hamilton, a well known teacher, in his book called *The Basis of the Millennial Faith*. This is what he admits. "Now we must frankly admit that a literal interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies gives us just such a picture of the earthly reign of the Messiah as the premillennialist pictures." So he acknowledges that if we take the literal interpretation of Scripture, that is, take it at its ordinary meaning, then we will have a premillennial system.

Now, there is another reason why I think that Bible teaches premillennialism. This was the view of the early church. And I would like to read you some early statements made by the early leaders of the Christian church. I am going to read a statement now by Justin Martyr. He was born around 100 AD, that is, almost at the time that John wrote the Book of Revelation and his other literature also. This is what he said. He wrote a book called *Dialogue with Tryphon*, which was an attempt to explain Christianity to the Jews. And so he puts into the the mouth of Tryphon certain statements, and then he answers them showing how Christianity meets the objections of Jews. And so Tryphon asks him in this book, "Do you admit that this place Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and do you expect your people shall be gathered together and made joyful with Christ, and the patriarchs, and the prophets, both the men of our nation, and other proselytes who joined them

before your Christ came?" And Justin answers, "I and others are of this opinion and believe that such will take place, as you assuredly are aware. But on the other hand, I signified to you that many who belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians think otherwise. In other words, what he was saying was just what I said a minute ago. We are premillennialists; but there are many who are genuine Christians who do not follow us in the interpretation of prophecy. Remember, to become a Christian one must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that determines a man's Christianity. We may differ on prophetic teaching and still both be Christians. Now, it is important for us to remember that. I think that some of both amillennial camp and premillennial have failed to recognize this, and because others do not agree on every particular, we saw they are outside the faith. Now, Justin goes on to say, "But," he says, "I and others who are right-minded Christians on all points [Laughter] are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be rebuilt, adorned and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel, Isaiah and others declare."

I'm going to read you a statement now by Iranaeus. Iranaeus was an interesting Christian because he served in the east and he served in the west. He was born in the east. He was also Bishop of Lyon in Gaul. Iranaeus was born around 140 AD, died 203 AD. The interesting thing about Iranaeus is that he was the disciple of Polycarp, who in turn heard the Apostle John. And so, in a sense, John was his spiritual grandfather. And this is what Iranaeus said. He spoke of the times of the kingdom when "Righteous shall bear rule upon their rising from the dead, when also the creation, having been renovated and set free, shall fructify with an abundance of all kinds of food from the dew of heaven, and from the fertility of the earth."

Now also, another early Christian was a man by the name of Papius. He was born in 80 AD. So he was living at the time that John was living. He died around 155. Now, he, as a premillennarian, is reputed to have heard John the Disciple of the Lord Jesus, according to Eusebius the church historian. And so I think that in this case we have a

tradition that goes back very close to the Apostle John. He speaks about the time when the Lord taught, or rather he says, "Iraeneus said that the tradition which Papias passed on was that the Lord, in his day, taught concerning the millennium that," now I want you to notice here is a case where we can distinguish between the apostolic writings and the fathers, for the church fathers who come along do not have the same clarity of the faith that the apostles had. And you'll see how he has gone on beyond Scripture in his interpretation. For this is what he says, "That is the millennium vines shall grow each having ten thousand branches." Now, where in the world did he get that? "And in each branch ten thousand twigs," now where in the world did he get that? "And in each one of the chutes ten thousand clusters and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five and twenty meters of wine." Now, you can see that he has perverted the teaching concerning the millennium, but he did accept that teaching.

Now, he is like very many today, you know, who take a good truth in the Bible, proclaim the truth and then embellish it with their words so that ultimately the truth almost is lost amid the error. So, I'm not suggesting these men were inspired. As you can see, they were not inspired. I'm just saying that there is, as far as we know, no evidence that these early Christians had any other form of teaching regarding the kingdom than that it was to be a time in which the Lord Jesus would reign upon the earth. In fact, I want to read you a quotation by an outstanding Anglican scholar, Henry Alford. This is what he says, "Those who live next to the apostles, and the whole church, for three hundred years understood them," he's talking about the prophecies, "in the plain, literal sense. And it is a strange sight in these days to see expositors who are among the first in reference of antiquity, complacently casting aside the most cogent instance of consensus which primitive antiquity presents." In other words, as far as the teaching of the fathers is concerned, they have the most agreement on this subject of the kingdom than they have

on any other subject. So, secondly, the early church believed in the premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus, a kingdom upon the earth.

Now finally, and this I think I would give more support than anything I've said so far, the New Testament interprets the prophecies of the Old Testament in a literal way. Just take, for example, the prophecy that our Lord would be born in Bethlehem, in Micah chapter 5, verse 2 it is stated that "Out of thee, Bethlehem, shall he come forth unto me who is to be ruler in Israel." Now was the Lord Jesus born in Bethlehem or not? Well, of course we know he was born in Bethlehem. The Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled literally. Now, if they were fulfilled literally. This, of course, is the way in which we, too, are to read the Old Testament prophecies. And as I mentioned in that passage from Acts chapter 3, Peter told them in the sermon in Acts chapter 3, that the heavens must receive the Lord Jesus until the fulfillment, the times of the restitution of all things, which were promised in the prophets. So Peter, himself, says that Jesus Christ will be in heaven until the events of the prophecies are fulfilled. Then he will come and establish his kingdom upon the earth. There are also referred to Acts chapter 1 and verse 6, where after they had been taught forty days by the Lord Jesus concerning the kingdom, they said to him, "Wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom?" You see, he had been teaching them concerning that kingdom, and now they were anxious to know the time. And if you could look at that in the Greek text, there is a great emphasis placed on the word time. At this time, will you restore the kingdom? And so he said, "No, it's not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has kept in his hand." No one knows when the Second Advent will take place. No, you're not to know the time when the kingdom is to come. You're to look forward to it, but in the mean time, you are to be witnesses unto me to the uttermost part of the earth. The program today is to witness to the Lord Jesus, but the kingdom is coming.

Now, let's take a look at Revelation chapters 19 and 20, for since this is all that we have time to say about the kingdom itself. I want to show you when the kingdom is to

come, according to these chapters. Then I want to give you some Scriptures that pertain to the character of the kingdom. So you may see certain facts with regard to it. And then I want to try to answer the question, why have a kingdom upon the earth? For there ought to be a reason for such an even as that. Well now, here in Revelation chapters 19 and 20, we have seven last things described by the Apostle John. And I want you to notice that there is a logical progression in a little worse way, which occurs over and over again. Now, in the first part of chapter 19, verse 1 through 10, John describes the hallelujahs of the glorified saints and the marriage of the lamb.

Now, notice chapter 19, and verse 1, "And I saw heaven open," now you just notice that little word "and" for that little word "and" is a word that connects these sections together, "and." And I want you to see in a moment that it is chronological. I think we can prove that in a moment, but you just bury it in the back of your mind that it is chronological, as if I were describing a football game and said, "At two sharp the kick off took place, and so and so took the ball, and such and such, and such and such, and finally SMU was victorious." This, of course, is previous to the disturbances that occurred over the last weekend. [Laughter] Everybody is sad out on the hill top. I understand. But notice the "and."

Now, the second coming of Christ is described in verses 11 through 16, and we talked about that last time. Now, notice verse 17, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun," and the great conflict is described here. Then in chapter 20, verse 1, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." And Satan is bound. So we have the marriage supper of the Lamb, the Second Advent, a great conflict, now the binding of Satan. Now, notice verse 4,

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his

mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And (Now I want you to look at this text very carefully because it shows us that the ands are chronological.) And when the thousand years are expired (So he has mentioned the thousand year period, and now he says "and" showing us by adding the words "when the thousand years are expired" that these "ands" are chronological.) And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

And he describes a final conflict, which we shall look at in our next study, so I'm not going to devote any more time to that. Verse 11, though, here we have another "and." "And I saw a great white throne," and here is the final judgment pictured. And we'll say a lot about this, too, next time, so I will pass that by. I want you to look at chapter 21, verse 1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Now, here you have seen a progression in these "ands." We have the marriage supper of the Lamb and the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus, and a great battle, and the binding of Satan, and the kingdom, and the thousand years expired, and a final conflict, and the great white throne judgment, and the new heavens and the new earth. And you have seen that they are chronological in their progression, the ands.

Now, since the advent is mentioned before the mention of the kingdom, it seems obvious that the advent of the Lord Jesus is premillennial, pre the thousand year reign. The advent is described in chapter 19; the kingdom is described in chapter 20, with the "ands" chronological in between. So as far as I can see, the New Testament teaches the premillennial advent of the Lord Jesus. I remember there are some Christians who do not hold with me on this, but we who are, as Justin says, "right-minded Christians," [Laughter]

oh I'm just pulling your legs a little bit. We who are right-minded Christians, well this is what we believe. No, don't you feel that way about the man who is really a believer in the Lord Jesus who doesn't quite see with you yet. If you have the truth, he will come to it ultimately apart from your persuasion. In fact, you may keep him from it by arguing with him too much over it.

Now, let's take a look at what the Bible has to say about the character of this kingdom. And so I'm just going to turn now to a number of passages. This is probably the first time some of you have had to face this particular doctrine, and I'm just going to read now a few passages that will give you the details, and then you will have to study it and think it out for yourself. First of all, the kingdom's king is the Lord Jesus Christ. And again, let's turn to a new passage this time, rather than the Isaiah 9:6-7 passage, which we have already turned to, let's turn to Jeremiah chapter 23, and read verses 5 through 8, Jeremiah 23, verses 5 through 8. That's page 796. The kingdom's king is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jeremiah chapter 23, verses 5 through 8, now Jeremiah says here "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Now, notice he is described as the righteous branch of David. "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt."

Now, I only insert this, that you can see from this that he talking about a time when Israel shall dwell safely after they have been scattered to the four corners of the earth as the earth verse shows. But they will say, "But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." So here is a very comprehensive prophecy, that a righteous branch of David shall be king in the earth,

and that Israel shall dwell safely having been gathered again from all of the countries into which the Lord had driven them. The kingdom's king is the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you remember when I told you early in the study of this particular series of the Christian minister's conversation with the Jew over Luke chapter 1? The Jewish man said to the Christian minister, he turned to the New Testament, Luke chapter 1, and verse 32, and he asked the Christian minister this question, he said, "Do you believe Luke chapter 1, in verse 32, "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." And the Christian minister said, "No, I do not believe that. I think that is just a general picture, a symbolical reference to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ shall have spiritual sovereignty." The Jew then said, "Well, do you believe Luke chapter 1, in verse 31, "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name JESUS." For you see, he had the virgin birth in mind. He wasn't going to accept that, the Jew wasn't. The Christian minister said, "Yes, I believe that." He said, "Do you think that that's a literal thing?" The Christian minister said, "Yes, I think that's literal." He said, "Why then do you believe that when you do not believe the other verses literally?" He said, "Oh I believe that because it's a fact." And the Jew, with an attitude of scorn said, "Ah, I see, you believe Scripture because it is a fact. I believe Scripture because it is the word of God." And he had a point, you see. We cannot use dual hermeneutics in studying the Bible. We must be consistent.

So the kingdom's king is the Lord Jesus Christ. The kingdom's capital is Jerusalem. Let's look at Jeremiah chapter 3, and verse 17, to stay in Jeremiah, Jeremiah chapter 3, in verse 17. "At that time," Jeremiah says, "they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." Thirdly the kingdom's extent is universal. It is not just a local kingdom, it is a universal kingdom. Turn with me to Psalm 72, and verse 8. There are several places that we could turn to

here; we could turn to that Zechariah 14 passage that we read last time, or to Daniel chapter 2, in verse 44, or Zechariah or other passages. Psalm 72, speaking about the kingdom, this is page 633. This is a Psalm of David, and in verse 8 we read, "He," that is this King and the King's Son, shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." His kingdom shall be universal.

Fourthly, the kingdom fulfills the promises made to Israel. Now, I mention this in Jeremiah chapter 23, verses 7 and 8, that there Israel will be regathered from the four corners of the earth, to which they have been driven in the present day. Let's take a look at Zechariah chapter 12, in verse 10, because I think you understand that God is not going to fulfill his promises to Israel unless Israel believes in him. He is not arbitrarily going to bless a disobedient people. But he's going to bring the nation Israel in a faith in himself. Zechariah chapter 12 in verse 10, this describes the spiritual work of God in bringing Israel to faith in Christ. Notice Zechariah 12, verse 10, page 977, Zechariah chapter 12, verse 10. Have you got it, Steve? He's got it. [Laughter]

Now, verse 10, And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," so Israel shall recognize their sin in disobeying the Lord Jesus, and shall respond to him. Notice verse 1 of chapter 13. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." And so Israel shall respond, and when they respond in faith, they shall be restored to their place of blessing. Turn back to Isaiah chapter 2, and verses 2 and 3, Isaiah 2, verse 2 and 3, page 714, Isaiah 2:2-3. Now, verse 2,

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all

nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. (This, of course, is the period time to which man looks forward.)"

Fifthly, the kingdom is a period of peace and righteousness on the earth for one thousand years. Now, you notice this 4th verse here, but I want you to turn over to chapter 11 now, and let's notice the great changes that are going to take place on the earth, chapter 11, verse 6. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." Now, I have a good teacher, he was a Hebrew. He taught me Hebrew. He was studying to be a rabbi when he was converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. He used to like to say, concerning this passage in Isaiah chapter 11. He says, "You notice it says the wolf shall dwell with the lamb." He says, "Now, this has never taken place, except when the lamb lies down inside the wolf." [Laughter] But at that time they are going to lie down side by side, and there is not going to be enmity against them, because the kingdom of the Lord Jesus will be present on the earth. Also, we read chapter 20, verse 4 through 6, where six times we had reference to the thousand year period of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some have said, "You know, the kingdom is said to be a thousand year period of time, but in only one passage of Scripture is it said that the kingdom will be one thousand years long." I always reply to people like this, "How many times does God have to say something for us to believe it?"

Does he have to say it once or does he have to say it six times, or must he say it twenty-five for you. Once, of course is enough."

But furthermore, while it is true that only in the Revelation 20 passage is the length of the kingdom referred to, the kingdom itself and its earthly character is prophesied and taught throughout the whole of the Bible. And if we were to select passages, we would spend today, and tomorrow, and the next day, and probably a week or two gathering together all of the references of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus upon the earth. It is that frequently mentioned in the Bible. Furthermore, I've often heard people say this, "The kingdom in the Old Testament is not the same as the kingdom in the New Testament. But now we are to interpret the kingdom in the New Testament as a heavenly kingdom." Have you noticed, as you began reading the New Testament, when the Lord Jesus announces his ministry he says, and John the Baptist said this before him, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Never once did our Lord define that kingdom, because it needed no definition. They knew what he meant by the kingdom. They knew he meant what the Old Testament Scriptures had spoken of with reference to the kingdom. And so, when he announced the kingdom of the heavens is at hand. They knew he meant God's rule upon the earth. And he never explained that term, because it was commonly understood by them.

Now sixthly, the kingdom is a time of earthly blessing. Amos chapter 9, verses 13 through 15. Now, we must hurry, our time is almost up, and I wanted to say something about why the kingdom. Hosea, Joel, Amos, remember? Amos chapter 9, verses 13 through 15. Now, in Amos chapter 9, the prophet has said that in that day he will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof. And then in verse 13, page 940, Amos chapter 9, this is what the prophet says,

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and

all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them."

By the way, this is where Papias got his passage with reference to the ten thousand clusters, etcetera. He was just expanding on what Amos had said. He should have just let it go at what Amos said, but he wanted to give some dramatic detail. Sometimes, by the way, our prophetic teachers are guilty of that, too. Instead of just letting the Bible stand as it is, we sometimes tend, you know, to add it, because we are afraid it might not be interesting enough. So we dramatize it and invariably if we dramatize the word of God we are in danger of perverting it, because we human beings are sinful, and we don't know the truth as God does. At any rate he says, "They shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God."

And finally, the kingdom's religion is the one true religion. Let's turn to Habakkuk chapter 2, and verse 14. Just turn on just a few pages, just a few pages, Habakkuk chapter 2, in verse 14. Here again we read a familiar passage, "For the earth," this is page 957, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." That time has not come yet, and is not going to come until Jesus Christ comes again. Then there shall be the knowledge of the Lord filling the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Now, let me in just a brief moment or two, I have according to my watch two minutes before the hour is up. Let me just try to answer quickly, and if I have time, and I remember, I'll try to expand a little on this at the beginning of the next time together. Why must we have a kingdom of the Lord Jesus upon the earth? Why is this necessary? Well, let's go back to Genesis, and let's remember that in the Garden of Eden man sinned.

And man fell. By the way, there is only chapter in the Bible that speaks of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. That is Genesis chapter 3, others refer to it, but that is the one chapter. Now, when man sinned in the Garden of Eden, do you remember that one of the judgments was that the earth would be cursed? "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." So that when man fell, his kingdom fell, for man had dominion over the earth. Now, man lived in sin down through the years. Man failed constantly. We have seen that in all of the ages of God's dealing with men. They always fail. We are going to see next time how they failed even in the kingdom period. But man failed; finally there came a man, the Lord Jesus Christ, that man never failed. That man realized in himself what God had in mind for men, he was the king. He succeeded. Furthermore, he blotted out all of the past sin of man, and all of the future sin of man, when he died on the cross at Calvary. He is the king.

Now, when this took place, it took place in history. Redemption took place in history at a specific time, at a specific place in Jerusalem. Now, when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, our spirits are redeemed. But the earth still abides under the curse. Today we still have the thorns and thistles, but a time is coming when the whole earth is going to see that the redemption that Lord Jesus accomplished here, for here was the victory, that redemption is going to be seen by all men, and the curse, which was pronounced upon the earth, will be lifted at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. So that in earth, in history, men may see the results of the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why earth must have its testimony to the work of the cross in all of its effects sin, not only plunged us into death spiritually. But it also cursed the earth. Redemption delivers us from the judgment of sin, and it also delivers earth from the judgment pronounced upon it, because of its identification with us. And this is why we must have a kingdom upon the earth. It is the visible testimony to the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ in all of its effects. So that is why we should pray as our Lord taught his disciples to pray in that model prayer, "Thy kingdom come." That's why.

Well, we have to stop, our time is up.

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]