

Fundamentals of Belief  
#20B: God's Kingdom on Earth

Edited Sermon Transcript  
Jon W. Brisby; 9-14-2002

Well, brethren, this afternoon we want to continue with the second and final part of fundamental number twenty concerning the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom on this earth. If you will recall, the last sermon—the first part—was the sermon for the Feast of Trumpets. Fundamental number twenty does encompass the material found in the explanation of the keeping of the Feast of Trumpets. Let's read that fundamental again:

We believe in the personal, visible, premillennial, imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ to rule the nations of earth as King of Kings, and to continue His priestly office as Lord of Lords; that at that time [This is the part we're going to cover today.] He will sit upon the throne of David restoring all things during a thousand year reign upon earth and establish the KINGDOM OF GOD upon earth forever.

That's fundamental number twenty as Mr. Armstrong originally wrote it. If you'll remember from last time, on the Feast of Trumpets, we went through the first portion of this fundamental which focused on the actual return of Jesus Christ to take possession of His Kingdom. We can easily divide this fundamental into two parts. The first part has to do with the actual return of Christ and Christ taking the Kingdom—making it His own. The second part has to do with what comes after. I have used the comparison of a political election process. It's one thing for a candidate to run a campaign, to gear up the political machine, to do the fundraising and all the things you have to do in order to try and win an office; but as soon as you're successful and you get installed into that office, your work is only beginning.

I remember in the last presidential election, the media was covering Mr. George Bush concerning his apparent success, although we had all of those problems with the election process last year that went all the way into mid-December. But I remember

the early media coverage when they thought and felt that he had won the election. And then, it sets in on that candidate—the gravity of that office that he now holds and what he is required to do. It's one thing to spend all of your energy and effort trying to get that office, but it's quite another to fill the shoes and to fulfill the responsibilities incumbent upon the man who sits in that office, and to be the leader—especially of this country, being the only remaining superpower recognized in the world and still with many of those Birthright promises. What an awesome, overwhelming responsibility that is.

In the same way that any human who is installed into an office has to change gears and begin to think about how they are going to fulfill that responsibility, so we can look at the coming of Jesus Christ in the same way. Now, Christ is perfectly prepared and without any trepidation whatsoever because He knows exactly what to do. He is perfectly prepared to fulfill that office of responsibility as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

When Mr. Armstrong wrote this fundamental, he divided it into two parts. One focuses on the activities of securing the Kingdom. That's what we went through last time—the details given to us in the Bible that tell us about His literal entry, what it will be like when He returns. He's going to come in the clouds. Every eye will see Him. His coming will be as the lightning shining from the east to the west. A first resurrection is going to happen when He arrives at that very last trump, and the dead in Christ are going to be raised up and will meet Him in the air. They're going to be changed into spirit beings and they're going to become a part of that great God Family, and together will all of the billions and probably trillions of holy angels, they're going to descend upon the Mount of Olives as a great army coming to wage war and to take that Kingdom by force. That final battle of Armageddon is going to occur, and Christ is going to be victorious because there is no being, human or spirit, who is going to stand in defiance of the Eternal God. What He has willed to do is going to be accomplished, and when the Father turns over the reins of that Kingdom to the Son, it is going to be His and nothing is going to prevent it from occurring.

And so, we saw last time, on the Feast of Trumpets, the details surrounding the entrance of Jesus Christ as He is going to dethrone the current god of this world. There is going to be a regime change. A new King is going to sit on the throne, and He is going to wield ultimate power. So, having gone through the

details of His entrance on the world scene, His Second Coming, and the events that are prophesied to occur in the process of His taking possession of the throne, today we want to look at some of the things that are going to happen directly after He becomes the King. What will His Kingdom be like in comparison to that of the kingdoms on this earth that we've experienced for the last 6,000 years?

". . . that at that time He will sit upon the throne of David restoring all things during a thousand year reign upon earth and establish the KINGDOM OF GOD upon earth forever." First, let's look at the first part of that phrase. ". . . at that time He will sit upon the throne of David. . ." This is some of the material I went through when I covered fundamental number sixteen on British Israelism. We talked a lot about the scriptures that certify the significance of the throne of David. So let's go through just a few of those things again as a refresher.

Christ will not return to take possession of a non-existent throne. Jesus Christ is not coming to create a new office, a new throne that has not existed before. Not at all.

Let's begin with Genesis 49 and verse 9. Here we find the blessings that Jacob pronounced upon his sons, which was a prophecy that God inspired him to speak for the outcome of each of those men and their descendants. Here is the prophecy that Jacob spoke on behalf of his son Judah. What did he say?

Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come . . .

What is that Shiloh? We're talking about the very time when Jesus Christ comes back and takes possession of that throne. Here was a prophecy that was spoken by the very aged Jacob several thousand years ago, picturing and pointing to the age in which you are living right now. It was spoken then, from that time, that Judah and no one else, would hold that scepter of a crown, of a throne, of authority from God, and that it would continue.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Unto who? Unto Jesus Christ who was going to come as that great King. Yes, the Scepter promise was to remain with a descendant of Judah forever.

Notice Psalm 89 and verse 3:

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

Here is a promise specifically given to David, who was of the house of Judah. David was a Jew. God had used David as a partial fulfillment of this very prophecy spoken by Jacob years before. God was Himself the original King of Israel on Mount Sinai when Israel made that covenant with their God. The very first King who ruled over them as a nation was God Himself. Then, you remember, they asked for a king, and they got Saul for a short time. But ultimately God had His intention of fulfilling His very promise that it would be through Judah that the Scepter was going to continue. And so, David of the house of Judah became that first faithful king over the nation, through whom that nation was united. "Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." That's an incredible promise that was made to David.

Then, skipping down to verse 28:

My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

What an amazing prophecy this was—the throne that was being established, and even the role of this one human being, David, as king of Israel, of the house of Judah. God was certainly impressed with the fruits of the character of this man, in spite of all of his failings and the mistakes that he made, which are chronicled in the Bible. And yet because he was repentant and feared God, and he turned and repented of his mistakes, God counted that an incredible sacrifice. And part of the way that God honored this man David was the fact that He certified that not only would that throne continue through the house of Judah, his ancestor, but that it would also be through a descendant of David—not just a Jew, not just any Jew from the tribe, but more specifically a descendant of David, because of the very character that this man manifested in his life.

My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes . . .

Which is exactly what they did. Solomon started it off. It couldn't even get one generation beyond David before it went downhill. Yes, there were a few righteous kings after that, but none of them were like David. The majority of them absolutely failed—and God knew it was going to happen—but because of the righteousness of David, God made this covenant with him that was irrevocable. He was going to uphold it no matter how badly David's descendants behaved. "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod . . ." Oh yes, He was going to make them pay the price, and He certainly did. He certainly is now. I think we're only beginning to see it. The modern physical descendants of Israel are getting a taste of it.

Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.

These are pretty strong words coming from God, don't you think? He's not mincing any words about His intention with this special covenant and David's role.

His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

An amazing passage. It tells you that not only would it be a Jew who would sit on that throne, but even more specifically, it would be a descendant of David, who was a Jew. It would be one from his family.

Jeremiah 33 and verse 17:

"For thus saith the [Eternal]; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." We accept that at face value, even today. We

believe that, in spite of all of the things that have transpired in the history of human beings over the last centuries and millennia, the throne of Israel—that throne of David—exists today. It is not a vacant throne. There is a monarch, with the authority of God, who now sits upon that throne, which has nothing to do with them being righteous or godly. Remember, there were many people in ancient times who were wicked as wicked could be, but who sat upon that throne and fulfilled the very promise of God. Physically, because of who they were in that kingly line as a descendant of David in that kingly line, they absolutely fulfilled that role to pass the baton down generation after generation through time and to keep that throne of David alive and active. We accept that this throne exists today. It exists in the British Isles. Right now, upon that throne sits the House of Windsor, and they are Jews. They are descendants of that King David. If not, then God has failed to fulfill this very prophecy—this promise and this covenant that He made—and we don't believe that for a minute. We believe that throne is active. It is not ruling over the entirety of Israel because Israel is scattered about the earth, but it is ruling over a portion of modern-day physical Israel—even the British Commonwealth. That throne has been preserved, and it continues even today.

Notice Luke 1 and verse 32—a prophecy concerning Jesus Christ.

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.

This is a confirmation that Jesus Christ was also a Jew. Jesus Christ was a physical descendant of King David. He came down through the very lineage of that king, which is documented in both the books of Matthew and Luke. One shows the lineage of His actual physical heritage through His mother Mary, and the other shows His legal heritage through the man who was supposed to be His father, Joseph. But both of them came from David.

As we've said—remember, brethren—God Himself was the very first King of Israel. But that throne was never vacant, and that throne will never be vacant, which means there is a descendant of David sitting upon that throne at this very moment. And when Jesus Christ returns to take possession and to rule over the earth, it is the throne of David upon which He is going to sit. That, you're going to find out, is one of the explanations for the multiple crowns that Christ wears. We're going to see that in a moment when we read Revelation 19, but there are a

couple of other scriptures I want to cover first. Not to get ahead of myself. Yes, Christ is going to rule from Jerusalem, and He is going to rule on that throne of David.

Let's turn first to Micah 4 and verse 1:

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the [Eternal] shall be established in the top of the mountains . . .

This reference to mountains symbolically always refers to kingdoms. It refers to nations—the authorities of governments. So, among multiple governments—multiple nations upon the earth—you're talking about a mountain or a government that supercedes all of them and rules over all of them. And we're talking about the very end time. We're not talking about some ancient time in history; we're talking about something that's going to happen in the very near future, in this very era.

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the [Eternal] [meaning, the government of Jesus Christ—His Kingdom] shall be established in the top of the mountains [meaning, over every other government], and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the [Eternal], and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the [Eternal] from Jerusalem.

Where is that seat of power going to be in the government of Jesus Christ? It's going to be right there in the city of Jerusalem. That's going to be His capital city, just like Washington D.C. is the capital of this country and the seat of our federal government. Even so, the government of Jesus Christ is going to be in the city of Jerusalem—that city which is so besieged. It is the focal point of war, bitterness, hatred and every evil thing that's going on. Is there any wonder why Satan has stirred so many to make Jerusalem such an uninhabitable place—a place with so much difficulty and distress? And yet, Satan knows precisely the significance of that city in the plan of God. He's using his power as the current god of this world to wreak all kind of havoc, but the day is coming when that very

city—which is the last place that many of us, for safety sake, would want to be—is going to be the very safe seat of the King of the earth. He's going to reign in Jerusalem, and He's going to sit upon the throne of David.

Verse 3: "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off . . ." It means He's going to be acting with power and authority. His will is going to be carried out on this earth. We're not talking about a weak king who is going to be a figurehead, but then allow all of the people and the nations to do whatever they want to. No, the government of God is going to rule supreme over the entire earth, and all nations are going to bend to that authority. They're not going to be allowed to war with one another any longer. They're not going to stir up. They're not going to seek their own will; they're not going to lead people off into false directions. The government of Jesus Christ is going to dominate, and the Law of God is going to be the law of the land. There will be no other competing law in the civil government at that time. Not at all. We're going to see some examples of that.

". . . he shall judge among many people . . ." That means He's going to be in charge of the judicial system. They have installed an international criminal court now. It is the first attempt to have a judiciary authority on an international basis that supercedes and crosses over national boundaries, to whom all peoples of the earth are subject. I can tell you for sure, brethren, those things are going to fail. They're never going to stand, but the one that's going to stand forever is going to be the judicial system instituted by Jesus Christ. He's going to have an international criminal court, you can bet, but He's going to be the righteous judge. And it's not going to be according to human politics. It's not going to be according to all of these other nefarious things that human beings concoct in the name of justice and righteousness. No, we are going to have a righteous judge, and He is going to judge.

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks [God is not going to allow them to war anymore. It just won't be permitted.]: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

That doesn't mean that there are not going to be human beings who want to pursue war. There certainly are going to be human beings in that Kingdom who are going to want to fight and to continue with the same orientation of mind that they have had, even without the influence of Satan the Devil to deceive them. Their own carnal nature is going to drive them in their selfish desires—as Mr. Armstrong always said, "in the way of get." That's still going to be there. They're still going to be fighting that, but the thing that God is going to prevent—that which Jesus Christ is not going to allow—is for them to organize and to actually pursue a way of waging war against their neighbors. It's going to be prevented. It is not going to be allowed.

Revelation 2 and verse 26: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." Yes, there's someone who is going to be a part of that first resurrection who is going to be given incredible power. All of those who come up in that first resurrection are going to be given offices of incredible responsibility, and you're going to rule under Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. You, too, are going to be kings and priests, reporting to Jesus Christ, and you're going to be given designated responsibilities over cities and nations of this earth. You're going to have the accountability to carry out those administrative functions over those areas to which you will be charged.

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he [Jesus Christ] shall rule them with a rod of iron . . .

That means it's not just a pretense of authority like we currently see in the United Nations. You've seen some of the latest things in the news in the last week, concerning the fact that the United Nations, for the most part, is viewed by many countries as just a paper tiger. They make resolutions and demands very much like that inexperienced or unwise parent who makes resolutions to their children. "Now, little Johnny, don't do that. Don't do that or else I'm going to have to punish you." Little Johnny runs out and does whatever he's going to do anyway, flaunts it in front of his mother or his father, and what does the parent do? "Little Johnny, I told you not to do that. Now, don't make me count. One, two, three . . .", and then they get to ten, and Little Johnny does the same thing anyway. Then what do they do? "I'm going to count again. Nine and a half, nine and three-quarters, nine and seven-eighths . . ." It's a parent who has no intention of actually executing the

rule of law over their children. And many view the United Nations the same way in regard to some of these rogue nations, as they're called in the media of the world—which we have a hard time believing a lot of the things we read. But here is a body that is supposedly exercising some kind of authority, and yet even the President of the United States has recently called it a bluff, if they don't begin to act. Well, I can tell you that in the day that Jesus Christ rules, there's not going to be any question about who holds the authority. He is going to use that authority, and there is going to be the rule of law on the earth—the rule of God's Law, not man's law. He is going to rule with a rod of iron.

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

We're talking about a real King. We're not talking about this "namby-pamby" Jesus Christ that most churches of this world like to picture—the weak, weepy, wimpy Christ. They see Him only as a little baby in a manger or as a pathetic figure on a cross. No, we're talking about a Jesus Christ who is going to be a conquering King, and He is going to rule as a magistrate on this earth. He is going to be a perfect and a glorious King.

Now Revelation 19 and 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.

The big distinction, here, is that this God who is coming to be King is a righteous God. He is not selfish. He is not self-serving. It is not His intent to merchandise His Kingdom, to take advantage for personal gain, to subject for the pure sake of showing His authority and His power. No, you're talking about a perfect, glorious, loving, righteous King; but don't misinterpret that love, mercy and meekness—which are all a part of His perfect character—as weakness. Meekness does not mean weakness, and true love is not pathetic in nature. We're talking about a glorious God of love who is going to rule with a rod of iron. Most human beings can't reconcile those aspects of the nature of God, but that is precisely the kind of ruler we're talking about.

. . . he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns . . .

Why many crowns? Because Jesus Christ is going to consolidate the authorities of all of the nations unto Himself. He is also going to consolidate the throne of Israel, upon which sits the Queen of the House of Windsor—on the very throne of David—and that is going to be consolidated with the office of kingship over the entire earth. The throne of David has never ruled over the entire earth. It has only ruled over Israel—or at this time, a portion of Israel. We're talking about a time in the future when, for the first time, that throne of David is going to become the throne from which the Monarch of the entire world is going to rule.

Who is it that now sits upon this earth as the king? Satan the Devil. God has allowed Satan to continue to rule as king over this earth for a reason. He gave Lucifer that authority before human beings were ever created, and he was given charge over this earth. Even after his rebellion, God did not remove him from that office. He has kept him in that office as king over this earth—the prince of the power of the air—for more than 6,000 years now because we don't know how far back that office went. He was a shining archangel when God gave him that authority over the earth, but even when he became a Devil—when he became Satan—God continued his office. And so, Satan still rules as the god of this earth. We've gone through those scriptures before, so I won't take time, but even in a temptation of Jesus Christ, when he offered Christ all of the power and glory of those kingdoms, Satan was offering that which was his to give. The only thing is, it was only his to give for a short time because God has determined that the limit of Satan's rule is going to be swift, and it is going to end soon—in the near future.

When the Father gives the keys of the Kingdom over to the Son, it is then going to become the possession of Jesus Christ and He's coming to take it by force. He is going to dethrone Satan the Devil. We're going to picture that, coming up in the keeping of the Day of Atonement—the time when Satan is going to be dethroned. He is no longer going to be the king over this earth. He's going to be put away, and a new king is going to reign. Then, that King, Jesus Christ, is going to consolidate the kingship over the earth, which Satan has possessed, with the throne of David, which has ruled for all of these centuries over at least a portion of the house of Israel. That's the amalgamation of several of these offices, these

kingships, that are going to come together into one office. Jesus Christ is going to wear multiple crowns, and not only as the King of Israel. He was the first King of Israel back on Mount Sinai—the one that gave the Law when He ruled over that nation. He's going to come back, and He's going to become the King of Israel again; but more importantly, He is going to be the King over the entire world. That's one of the reasons why He is wearing multiple crowns.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a 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, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Yes, He is going to be the sovereign King, and those of you who qualify are going to be resurrected to be a part of that Kingdom, that God Family. You're going to be given offices. You, too, are going to be kings and priests. You are going to be the kings and priests over whom Christ reigns. That which makes Him a King of Kings means you're going to be those other kings. He's going to be the King of Kings—the King over all the other kings who are given offices on that earth. He will also be the Lord of Lords, meaning the High Priest who will have spiritual authority over all the rest of the priesthood of which you are going to be a part in fulfilling your spiritual obligations in that Kingdom—not only as civil governors, as kings, but also as priests fulfilling spiritual offices. It will be a perfect, glorious theocracy. You will hear a lot more about that at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Next, ". . . at that time He will sit upon the throne of David restoring all things during a thousand year reign upon earth . . ." There are so many scriptures we could read; we're just going to go through a few of them this afternoon.

Let's start in Isaiah 11 and verse 1. Yes, this Kingdom under Jesus Christ is going to be a restoring endeavor. It means that Christ is going to fix the things that

have been broken, and there have been a lot of things broken by the rule of human beings in the last 6,000 years. It started all the way back with the first sin of Adam and Eve. Since then, there have been all kinds of curses that God pronounced upon mankind that didn't exist at the beginning. There are a lot of curses that are going to be lifted at the very time of the institution of this new government under Jesus Christ—things that we take for granted because they've always been a part of the world in which we live, and yet they're going to be removed and we're not going to have those curses at all.

Isaiah 11:1:

And 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 [Eternal] 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 [Eternal]; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the [Eternal]: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes [No, He's not going to partial.], neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.

He's not going to be swayed by hearsay or the testimony of human beings who have ulterior motives for the testimonies that they give. No, this is a righteous judge who is going to be able to read hearts and minds. He is not going to be swayed by the nefarious attempts of any human being to get Christ to rule in his favor.

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.

One of the great curses that started all the way back at the beginning when Adam and Eve rebelled, was that God was going to make them subject to human government. Probably the greatest curse upon humankind has been human government. We are absolutely to submit to it because God ordained it. He ordained it as a curse, but He still ordained it, which means that no matter how much those governments abuse us—as long as they do not compel us to break

God's Law—we are subject to them. That means, if they tax us through the nose, we're obligated to pay. Whatever else they require of us that doesn't cause us to break God's Law, we're duty-bound to submit. But those human governments are a curse, and they have always been a curse.

God gave man an opportunity to be ruled by the government of God. He gave Adam and Eve that opportunity. Had they been obedient, they and all of their descendants could have lived at that time under the very government of God, like unto the government that Christ is coming to establish. They could have had it from the beginning, from the start. But guess what? Adam and Eve were just like you and me. They had that good, old carnal nature, which means that it was only a matter of time before they, the same way as us, blew it. We have to do it our way. That's what they did. They came under the curse. That was one of the great curses that God pronounced upon human beings because of their rebellion. If they refused to listen and be under God's government, then He was going to let them get a full dose of their own medicine—to let men rule over them. The last 6,000 years have been a testament to the absolute failure of the governments of men. Even when a particular king or sovereign has been set upon a pedestal and revered in history for being equitable, fair and wise, the biggest problem with that is, he doesn't live very long, does he? As soon as that king dies, the next one that comes along is typically a very bad one. So even when you have a unique individual that seems to have a better ability, a certain amount of character in trying to rule fairly, there is never any longevity with human beings. It's only a matter of time before the worst part of human nature is going to sit upon those thrones and in those governments. That's precisely what we've experienced for the last 6,000 years.

The same Being against whom Adam and Eve rebelled in the Garden of Eden, is going to come and establish this Kingdom, and He's going to show them how it was supposed to be from the very beginning. He's going to establish that perfect, righteous government. What will that Kingdom be like? What will be the fruits of that glorious, righteous government? Well, let's continue on in 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.

This is talking about the lifting of another one of those curses which was pronounced because of man's rebellion. These wild beasts that we're afraid of are going to become tame. They're not going to be a threat to humankind as they are now. Very likely, they will return to the state in which they were first created at the time of the re-creation of the earth and the placing of man in the Garden.

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 [Eternal], as the waters cover the sea.

We're talking about a Kingdom in which, for the first time, the knowledge of God's Way of Life—His laws, the principles which bring peace, happiness, contentment and success—are not going to be isolated to only a few, like you who sit before me. That knowledge is going to be given freely to all human beings who live on the earth. They are all simultaneously going to be called to the knowledge of the Truth, and they're going to have an opportunity to know their God, their Maker. They're going to have an opportunity to be baptized and to accept that Way of Life—to learn to live in prosperity, contentment and absolute peace of mind, which they have never had before. It's not just those of the firstfruits who enjoy those blessings now, even in the midst of this evil world, but the entire world is going to have the revelation of Truth.

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 . . .

Not just Israelites, but all Gentiles—all who have been Gentiles cut off from God. That's what a Gentile means. You're either of Israel, or you're a non-Israelite. Now you're talking about a time when all peoples of the earth are going to have an opportunity to become a part of spiritual Israel. According to the promise, the covenant that God made with Abraham, all nations would be blessed through that one seed. Yes, through Jesus Christ, all humanity will have the opportunity to be saved, to be born into the very Family of God—first being begotten, even as you have been begotten, through baptism. They will be called to be a part of the Church, spiritual Israel. Regardless of what your physical background is, whether

Israelite or Gentile, it doesn't matter. God called you and placed you within this Body, and you became part of Israel. And so, all the peoples of the earth are going to have that same opportunity. They're all going to be called to the knowledge of that Truth.

". . . to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." It will be the rest that should have been from the beginning, had man not sinned. That is the rest that God offered from the very beginning of that creation. They're finally going to get a chance to experience it.

Isaiah 51 and verse 3:

For the [Eternal] shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the [Eternal]; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

The judgment of God is not going to be a burdensome, onerous thing. The judgment of God—His righteous laws—are going to bring peace, stability, harmony and happiness to all the nations of the world.

My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

Yes, many, many peoples of the earth are going to come to know that God, to trust that God and to find value in His ways, even as you have come to find value in the very laws and judgments of God now. They're going to have that same opportunity.

Isaiah 58, beginning in verse 11:

And the [Eternal] shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places . . .

Yes, all of the devastation and destruction that has and will take place upon this earth is going to be rebuilt, but not according to the false concepts of human beings. I'm going to go through a lot more detail at the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles, concerning a picture of that Millennium. I'm only giving you a snapshot, an overview. I hope to go through a little bit more detail about all the aspects that we know from the Bible that are going to be present in that glorious Kingdom of God. But regarding the destruction that is going to take place before the return of Christ: If you read those seven seals of Revelation, you are aware of all the devastation of the cities of this earth from the earthquakes, the volcanoes, probably the meteors and all the upheaval that's going to take place. It will absolutely wipe out the civilizations and the things that men cherish. Christ is coming back to start from scratch, and He's going to rebuild this earth the right way with the proper master plan, the way it should be done to care for the earth. Those cities, those habitations, and all of those things are going to be built according to the laws of God.

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

He's coming to make things right—to fix what was broken, to finally do it God's way.

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the [Eternal], honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the [Eternal]; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the [Eternal] hath spoken it.

What is one of the requirements for having all of those benefits and blessings? Honoring God; obeying His laws, including the proper keeping of the Sabbath. Those who, even in that Kingdom, choose to obey, are going to derive all of the benefits of the rulership of Jesus Christ. Free moral agency is still going to reign in the Kingdom. God is not going to mandate any human being to personally obey. They're going to have to choose to obey, even as you and I have

had to choose whether or not to accept the calling that God has given to us. He's going to call—He's going to give an opportunity—but then that individual is going to have to respond and act upon that Way of Life. They are going to have to choose to pursue it—choose to value the laws of God, act upon them and put them into practice. He's not going to compel any human being. The only thing He's going to do is prevent them from getting together and waging war and fighting against His government. That's absolutely not going to be permitted, but it doesn't mean that in their own homes they can't be as rebellious and cantankerous as they want to be. God will allow that as long as they don't harm someone else. That's apparently the big distinction in the Kingdom of God. There is not going to be murder. There is not going to be theft. There is not going to be all of these heinous crimes, one against another. The government of God is going to prevent crime man against man, but it doesn't mean that human beings are going to be compelled to have the right orientation of mind.

We know from Zechariah 14, which we will read a little bit later, that they're going to have to choose to come up and keep the Feast of Tabernacles. God is not going to grab them by the scruff of the neck and force them to be there, because there are going to be penalties applied to those who don't, which means that obviously He's going to allow them to stay home if they choose to do that. It's just that, if they choose to do that, the first year they're not going to have any rain; and the second year, if they choose to steel themselves in contempt for God, then they're going to have a plague come upon them. The penalties get worse every year for failing to give in and humble themselves before their King; but He's going to make them choose, and they will have that opportunity. They're not going to be compelled, but they are going to be prevented from hurting one another and from gathering together to wage war against the government of God. There will be no overthrow of the government of Christ. There are not going to be any insidious attempts or plots. Those things are absolutely not going to be allowed. Remember, all the peoples of the earth are going to be dealing with a government of spirit beings who read minds and hearts. There are not going to be any secrets kept among the subjects of human beings who live upon the earth at that time. All things are going to be known. It's not going to take a secret police. It's not going to take spies or informants. The rulers are going to know the hearts and minds of their subjects. That's the state of that which Christ is bringing.

Ezekiel 36 and verse 33:

Thus saith the [Eternal] God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities [So, we're talking about a time in the future when that sin is going to be put away.] I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden . . .

Think about all the deserts on the face of this earth right now. I'm going to give you some statistics at the Feast, but think about all of the uninhabitable places, including the Arctic Poles. We're talking about entire continents that exist on this earth right now that are absolutely unfit for human habitation because of extreme weather; or deserts because they won't grow a thing, and human beings can't safely live there, let alone cultivate a life. God is going to miraculously change all of these waste places on the earth into gardens of Eden. It's amazing to think about the restoration that's going to take place on this earth. Many of the seas are going to be dried up. We're not going to have two-thirds of the earth covered with oceans as it is now. No, a lot of those seas are going to be dried up, and you're going to have that many more millions and billions of manageable acreage for the populations of the world. Humankind will live and grow, as families are born in that thousand-year reign of Christ. And then, that great second resurrection will occur at the end of the thousand years, when there are going to be billions of people resurrected. They're going to need homes and estates in order to live their time of proving in the White Throne Judgment period. All of these things are going to be prepared and actually executed during this thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ. He will be preparing, not only for the conversion of all those that are going to live into and be born in the Millennium, but remember, this earth is going to be remade and refashioned in preparation for the second resurrection when all of those billions are going to come up. They're going to have a perfect, glorious habitation on this earth—a utopian society to which they're going to be resurrected. Think about how amazing that is going to be.

Thus saith the [Eternal] God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of

Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the [Eternal] build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the [Eternal] have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the [Eternal].

Yes, the stamp of God is going to be all over every activity that will be going on in the reconstruction of this earth and the establishment of that glorious society.

Next, we'll see, ". . . [the establishment of] the KINGDOM OF GOD upon earth forever." Do we have substantiation that this is a Kingdom that's not just going to be a passing fancy like some of the revered kingdoms of men from the past, which can't even hold a candle to that which is coming? And yet, they've all passed away, haven't they? The greatest kingdom that has ever ruled on the earth has only existed for a time. Within a few hundred years, its glory wanes, and someone else rises up who is more powerful and has more abilities; and because of the political expediency of the time, that kingdom is defeated and another one takes its place. The baton has been passed from one kingdom to another, one empire to the next, throughout the 6,000-year reign of man to this time. But we're talking about a time when this government—this Kingdom under this monarch—is going to last forever, and there is never going to be another one. It is not a passing phase.

Now notice Zechariah 14 and verse 9 to get us started:

And the [Eternal] shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one [Eternal], and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. [Verse 11:] And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction . . .

There's not going to be any time when the Kingdom of Christ is going to flourish in its zenith for a certain period of time, only to be weakened and ultimately become vulnerable to another power and authority who is then going to come in and sweep him off the throne and establish another government. That is never going to happen.

. . . there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. [And then verse 16:] And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the [Eternal] of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

All people on the face of the earth—just think about that—are going to be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles; and the ones that don't, read it for yourself in the following verses, are going to be plagued. How important are those annual Feasts in the mind of our Creator? Are they important? You bet they are. How important is it for us to keep the Feast of Tabernacles as well as all of the annual Feast Days? Incredibly important. Those Feasts have never been done away. One of the hallmarks of that Kingdom of God, that thousand-year reign, is that all peoples on the earth are going to be keeping that Feast. Think about it. It won't be an isolated little group of people like you are, who are going to be taking off to keep the Feast while all the rest of the world goes about their business, their jobs, and pursuing their own interests. You're going to be right there in the midst of a society, wherever you keep that Feast, where everyone is totally oblivious to the laws and commands of God. Compare that to a time when every human being on the earth knows about the Feast of Tabernacles and is commanded to keep it. They're going to be living in the time of the fulfillment of that very Feast of Tabernacles. They are going to be commanded to observe a representation of the utopian society they're going to inherit.

You would think that all human beings would absolutely relish the opportunity to glorify their God who finally brought the utopian society they had all hoped for and dreamt about all of their lives. Indications are, the great majority of them will, but there are some who will not. They will pay the price for their rebellion. Jesus Christ is going to rule with a rod of iron.

Daniel 2 and verse 44:

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [No, there is no one else who is going to inherit it after Jesus Christ. He is the last and final King who is going to reign.], but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel 7 and verse 17:

These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

This is speaking about those of you who are successful in your calling and are counted worthy in that day of the revealing of the coming King, who are given spirit bodies, who are born into the very Family of God and given offices of kings and priests to rule in that glorious Kingdom on this earth. You are also going to have offices which are eternal. Those offices are going to continue forever and ever because the very Kingdom of your God, Jesus Christ, is going to continue forever.

Final one, brethren; let's notice Luke 1 and verse 31. This was the promise of the coming Messiah, of that Jesus Christ—not just concerning His first coming as the Savior, as a martyr, but more importantly that role that He was born to fulfill in the future.

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.

We're talking about a glorious time of revealing. We're talking about a part of the plan of God which should give us incredible hope, incredible consolation, regardless of the trials that we are required to endure today, the difficulties that we experience in the flesh because of living in this world—all the hatred, the animosity, the violence, the evil and the debauchery that encompasses us in this world. For

those of you, brethren, who understand the hope of salvation in that which God is working out in this Master Plan, you can take comfort in the fact that there is a final, glorious, eternal King who is coming to set it all straight. He is going to take His crown. He is going to take the Kingdom by force. Satan is going to be dethroned. He is going to rule with a rod of iron, and He is going to be a righteous King, a righteous judge— a glorious sovereign who is going to rule and establish the very Law of God as the rule of law on this earth. His international criminal court is going to be a perfect, righteous, glorious institution. All of you who fulfill those offices are going to rule with Him in the establishment and the enforcement of those laws. You're going to help humankind come to know and worship that King, and have the happiness, peace and contentment for which they were created. All of that, brethren, is a part of your very training process right now.

If we can keep those things in mind, if we can look to that coming Kingdom, if we can keep the hope of the glorious plan of God uppermost in our minds, then we can have incredible consolation in dealing with whatever trials, difficulties or persecutions we may have to face until we see the very revealing of that great King.