***The Age of the Jews, No. 9

DS7A***

This is the 13th session on the dispensations. In our studies of this doctrine, we have looked at various dispensations specifically. First was the dispensation of the gentiles which means that the gentiles were God's stewards upon the earth. The second was the dispensation of the Jews which means that the Jews were God's stewards upon the earth, and God had a certain arrangement of life for them. The dispensation of the Jews was interrupted by the dispensation of the church which is the age in which we live today. This age of the church began on the day of Pentecost. It will end on the day of the rapture. Following that rapture will begin the tribulation period, the third phase of the dispensation of the Jews. The tribulation will continue for seven years until the return of Christ in His Second Coming.

I remind you that a dispensation is simply a way of looking at human history from God's viewpoint. We periodically hear ministers who say they do not believe in the doctrine of the dispensations. I listen to these talk shows on the religious radio programs, and frequently people call in and say, "Do you believe in the doctrine of the dispensations?" Then some pastor of some very significant church in town will say, "No, I do not." Of course, this usually reflects the fact that, first of all, they do not know what the word dispensation means. Secondly, they do not know what they themselves believe on the subject. Because they don't know what they believe on the subject, their own practice contradicts their statement.

I doubt that there is any one of these pastors who says, "No I don't believe in the doctrine of the dispensation," who is getting up on Sunday mornings and warning his congregation about ever eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Since he is not doing that, he is obviously, in practice, a dispensationalist since that was an order of a previous age. At one time, people were warned (those who did live at that time) that they were not to violate that rule. That was God's order of his household. I find that these same pastors are not bringing animal sacrifices in behalf of their sins. So, in practice, they are denying what they say when they say, "I don't believe in the doctrine of the dispensations," because they are practicing a dispensational difference.

I doubt that these pastors are very often going to the civil authorities and calling up the police and saying, "Listen I just saw a man out here washing his car on Saturday, and I want to report him for execution for working on the Sabbath day." Since they're not doing that, they are, in their practice, denying what they say when they say, "No, I don't believe in the doctrine of the dispensations." So please have that part clear. I think that by now we all understand that the dispensations are a very legitimate area of Scripture. The Bible teaches this very clearly, and in practice, churches in general recognize that this doctrine does exist even though many will deny that they believe in that doctrine.

This period of the tribulation that we looked at last time is a period of worldwide events culminating in the return of Jesus Christ. We call that the Second Advent or the Second Coming. You should distinguish between the two terms "rapture" and "the Second Advent." The rapture deals only with the church, and this is the point at which Christ comes into the air to catch up His church. At the Second Advent or the Second Coming, Christ actually touches down upon the earth itself.

The tribulation phase ends with judgments on Jews and Gentiles, separating them into saved and lost categories. That is, the tribulation period is tied up (climaxes) with all the Jews being taken out into the wilderness and put under the examination of God. Those who are born again Jews are permitted to enter the Millennial Kingdom. Those who are unbelieving Jews at the end of the Tribulation are put to death. Ezekiel 20:33-38 describe that for you. The gentiles likewise, at the end of the tribulation period, are brought under judgment relative to the issue of salvation. That is described for us in Matthew 25, and we'll look at that in this session. The gentiles will be divided into sheep (those who are born again) and into goats (those who are not born again). The sheep will be permitted to enter the Millennial Kingdom. The goats will be taken and executed. So at the end of the tribulation period, everything will be tied up relative to the dispensation of the Jews, including the fulfillment of the three unconditional covenants to Israel which, as of yet, have not been fulfilled.

I will jump ahead a little bit to answer a question that has been raised. The Millennial Kingdom begins with this kind of an entrance of judgment upon Jew and Gentile. Mind you that present upon this judgment period are all of you who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and members of the body of Christ. You two will be here, but there will be something different about you. You will have a resurrection body. You will be free of the old sin nature. You will be absolutely perfect in the image of Christ. You will have a body that appears to be like what you have now, but it will be a resurrection body. It will be free of time and space, and the issue of death.

However, these people who are permitted to enter the millennium will be in their normal physical bodies--both Jews and gentiles. They will still have an old sin nature, and that old sin nature will cause them to do evil in the millennium. But God, through his angelic hosts will immediately deal with any overt action of evil. That's why this world is going to know peace; it's going to know prosperity; and, it's going to know all of the things that the liberals today are seeking to bring about, in all sincerity, but which cannot be accomplished until we have a beneficent dictator on the throne of the world government in the form of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we want to begin now with looking at the end of this tribulation period when the covenants made to Israel will be fulfilled. When the Lord Jesus Christ came the first time, in his First Advent, as a baby in Bethlehem, He came to fulfill the three Jewish unconditional covenants which are based upon the Abrahamic covenant. These include: first of all, the Palestinian Covenant which relates to promises of eternal possession of a land; secondly, the Davidic Covenant relative to the eternal promise of a seed--a ruling household, a descendant, a controlling government, and so on; and thirdly, the promise relative to blessing in the New Covenant which is regeneration--that the Jews would have the experience of being born again. None of these have been performed for the Jewish nation today. The Jewish nation does not possess the land promised to it. The Jewish nation does not have a government which is functioning and ruling, from the city of Jerusalem, all over the world--a government that is in charge of the whole world. That is not true today. Nor are the Jews a born again people. Only a remnant--some of them--are born again.

When the Jews rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, He left the house of Israel desolate with words that reflected the grief in the heart of the Lord on that occasion as He turned from his earthly people. He had come to them as King of the Jews. Incidentally, that title in itself is a testimony of the fact that there is a difference between Israel and the church. Why would Jesus Christ be called the King of the Jews if all of the promises to the Jews are now being fulfilled in the church? That's what the anti-dispensationalist ends up saying. The fact that He was called the King of the Jews shows that He came for a specific purpose, namely to fulfill these three unconditional covenants.

In Matthew 23:33-29, we have these pathetic words in which Jesus Christ declares His separation from His first mission. He came the first time, in the first phase of His mission, to the Jewish people: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone them who are sent unto you. How often would I have gathered your children together even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not? Behold, your house is left desolate unto you, for I say unto you that you shall not see Me henceforth till you shall say, 'Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.'" That was the end for Israel as a nation. The next time they will see Jesus Christ, they will see Him in the flesh at the Second Advent, and when they see him, they will say, "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord."

If you were to visit the nation of Israel today, you would find very few Jews who are saying, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." They consider all of the testimony of the New Testament concerning Jesus Christ simply a pile of garbage which they totally reject. It's an offense to them; it is a stumbling block; and, they will have none of Him. This declaration that you have at the end of Matthew 23, in the hearing of the disciples, raised three questions which introduce Matthew 24. These three questions were as follows: 1) When shall these things be? 2) When are You coming again? 3) When is the end of the age to come?

**The Olivet Discourse**

The Lord Jesus Christ never again publicly returned to Jerusalem or the temple after His crucifixion. He will do that at the Second Advent. Question number one (When shall these things be?) related to the destruction of this temple which He had predicted. In Matthew 24:1-3, the Lord Jesus Christ tells the disciples, as they look upon this temple, that the time is coming where not one stone will be left upon another that shall not be thrown down. In other words, Jesus Christ was saying, "Look at this magnificent edifice of worship which is the center of your nation's life. I am now telling you that in the very near future, this temple will be a pile of rubble--completely destroyed." Now that temple was a really fantastic magnificent building. It had received originally all of the brilliance of Solomon. It had subsequently been restored with as much authenticity as was possible. It was no mean structure to look upon. It was inconceivable to the Jews that such a thing would happen to that building--a pile of rubble with not one stone upon another.

The Lord answered this question in Luke 21:20-24 which we will not look in this session. However, the answer that He gave referred historically to that which took place in the year 70 A.D., some 35 to 40 years after His crucifixion. This took place under the Roman armies under the leadership of Titus. When Jerusalem the city was laid under siege: the Jews resisted; a million Jews were slaughtered; and finally, the Roman armies broke through the defenses, and they went through the city and they tore it apart rock from rock. They took apart that temple. They carried away what was of any value, and they left the city in rubble. That was the fulfillment and the answer to question number one (When shall these things be?) about the temple.

Now there is going to be a future desecration of the temple of the Jews which they are going to rebuild. There will also be a pillage of the city of Jerusalem, just before Christ returns. It will be at the end of the tribulation period, and we have referred to this before. This will be in the temple which the Jews (in our generation perhaps) will begin rebuilding, and this temple will again be desecrated by the leader of the Western confederacy through his agent, the False Prophet. In that temple will be erected the image of the Western dictator, and the Jews will be called upon to worship him as their God. This is found in Zachariah 14:2 and Revelation 11:2.

Question number two (When are You coming again?) was answered by identifying numerous signs such as wars; rumors of wars; famines; diseases; earthquakes; and, lightning from the East to the West. These were described in Matthew 24 as signs which will identify the approach of the return of Jesus Christ.

Question number three (When is the end of the age to come?) was marked by Christ's Second Coming. Matthew 24:3 says, "And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately saying, 'Tell us when shall these things be? What shall be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?'" (It does not say, "the end of the world" as some of your translations have it.) What they're referring to is phase three of the dispensation of the Jews; that is, the end of the tribulation period. This is not a reference to the church dispensation. That must be very clearly understood. They are not asking, when is the end of the church age to come?

Then the Lord gives them signs. This is important because there are no signs for the end of the church age. There is absolutely nothing that is happening today politically or on the historical scene of our day that indicates that Christ is going to come tomorrow or that He's going to come 100 years from now. His return is imminent--any moment. There are no signs and there are no requisites. Nothing has to be done and nothing has to come to pass before He returns. However, before the Second Coming, there are several very definite things that will of necessity have to come into existence before Christ can return. Those things will come to pass in the tribulation period.

So we want to briefly run through Matthew 24 which is the Lord's description concerning the coming of the end of the dispensation of the Jews. Having pointed out that certain signs would come and that these would be evident to the people who are living at that time, the Lord ends verse six by saying, "But the end is not yet." That is, the end of the tribulation period is not yet just because these signs have appeared. In verse 13, He says, "But he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved." Now He has described that there would be many false prophets; that iniquity would abound; and, that people's love for the Lord would grow cold. Then He says that there would be some who will endure unto the end, and the same shall be saved.

There are some people who don't understand the Word of God. This includes preachers who love to take this verse 13 and say, "Aha, you people believe in eternal security. Here's the verse right here in the Bible. Do you see what it says? 'But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.' So don't tell me," they say, "that your salvation is secure. It's only secure if you keep hustling right down there to the end. And if just the minute before you die, you sin, and you are back in a sin condition, you are going to go straight to hell. Bang. Just like that." They use this verse to prove it. This perhaps should be an example to you to show you what we mean by illegitimate exposition of the Scriptures. That's what that is. This is not talking about the church age. This whole chapter has nothing to do with the church age. This chapter has to do with the tribulation period. The age in which these disciples were living was the age of the Jews, and they were talking about their own dispensation. Jesus is explaining to them the end of the dispensation of the Jews.

So when it says, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall we saved," the word saved here is used in the sense that you will not experience physical death. The people who have been born again in the tribulation period who manage to survive the attacks of the man of sin; the attacks of the False Prophet; and, the attacks of the other world political blocs and their rulers, and manages to live through the tribulation period, he will be saved in the sense that he will be kept alive and then be able to enter the Millennial Kingdom. He will not experience death. Verse 14 says, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.

Oh, this is another favorite one. Have I ever heard the sermons on preachers who had a warm heart for missionary enterprise which we all highly commend and which we all desire highly to pursue? However, in order to get the Christians out there witnessing, which they should do, this verse has had some very eloquent sermons as the heartstrings were touched and the tears were drawn. People were told to think about delaying the return of the Lord. They say, "The Lord Jesus is just standing at the door of heaven waiting to come, waiting to leave. And do you know why he can't? Because you people are frittering away your time and not getting the lost saved. This verse says that until this gospel of the kingdom is preached to all the world, the end cannot come." That is another legitimate interpretation.

This does not speak concerning anything relative to the dispensation of the church. This is referring to the gospel of the kingdom. It's different than the gospel of the grace of God which you and I preach. The gospel of the kingdom is an emphasis upon the good news that the King is about to return. This is what John the Baptist and the disciples were proclaiming in their day--the return of the King. "The King is here." All of the promises of the Old Testament covenants are about ready to be fulfilled. That's what they were preaching.

This gospel of the kingdom during the tribulation will be preached and will be witnessed to all nations throughout the world. Then the end of the tribulation will be able to come--the end of the tribulation with the Second Advent of Christ. From verse 15 on, we have a description of things that will exist once the antichrist, the Western ruler, puts up his image in the temple to be worshipped. The Jews are told in verse 16 that when they see that, get out of Judea; head for the hills; grab some supplies; and, find a cave and hole up because things are really going to get bad. There is a particular pity upon mothers who have just had newborn children--nursing children. Their situation will be very very harsh under this condition because they will be fleeing literally for their lives.

Verse 21 then declares, "Then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be." This is speaking about the middle of the tribulation period. This tribulation period is divided into two halves. The first part is called the tribulation. The second part is called the great tribulation, and that's what this is referring to. This is the time when Satan and his angels have been defeated in the outer space battle with Michael and his angels, and Satan has been cast out of heaven. Now he comes down as a raging roaring lion to the earth to wreak havoc and destruction upon those who are alive on the earth at that time. He therefore moves the Western power ruler in the great movement of antisemitism against the Jews.

So verse 22 says, "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. But for the elects' sake, those days shall be shortened. "Those days" are the tribulation days. "No flesh" means no human life on earth. "Be saved" means to remain alive to enter the millennium. Physical deliverance is meant. Remember that Satan knows this. Satan is going to try to kill every believing Jew and every believing gentile such that there is nobody left when Jesus Christ returns in His natural body. This is because it is the program of God that the people will enter the millennium in their natural bodies in order to set up the final stage of humanity's life on planet earth.

So Satan is out to destroy all human life. Consequently, he brings the nations of the world together in the battle of the campaign of Armageddon, which we've already looked at. The idea will be the destruction of the human race. The Lord says that if this last three-and-a-half year period wasn't telescoped and shortened somewhat, man would literally, under the direction of Satan and his demons, be able to destroy all human life on the earth. There must be human beings in natural bodies who are believers to populate the millennial earth, or God's plan will be thwarted.

**The Parable of the Fig Tree**

The verses following verse 22 describe the false prophets that shall arise, and the desire to identify that Christ has come. He tells them not to fall for that. They'll know very clearly when He has come. Then we have the description, beginning at verse 29 of the actual return of the Lord to the earth. Verse 33 then says, "Likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door." He has just, in verse 32, told them the parable of the fig tree. It illustrated that you can tell what season you're in by watching the stage of the development of the fig tree as a plant. So He says, "When you see these things that I have given you as signs, you will know where you are in the tribulation period." That does not apply to you. This has no reference to you or members of the body of Christ which belongs in the dispensation of the church. This is information for the people who are living at that time, and we cannot apply it in any way today.

In verse 32, this parable of the fig tree, the symbol of the fig tree is that the fig tree represents the tribulation. When it speaks about, "You know that summer is near," that's the millennium that it is referring to. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When its branch is yet tender and puts forth leaves, you know that the summer (the millennium) is near."

Moving on down to verse 37, we have been enjoined that these people who live at this time are to watch and to be prepared because nobody knows of the exact time of the return of Christ except the Father only. Verse 37 says, "But as the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." This is His coming in His Second Advent. Verse 40 then says, "Then shall two be in the field; one shall be taken; and, the other left. Verse 41: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill. The one shall be taken, and the other left." You can interpret these verses for yourself with considerably more accuracy now that you understand that this chapter is dealing with the tribulation period, not the church age.

There is a certain movie that has a theme song that is built upon these verses. The words are quoting these verses, and they are connecting it with the rapture--the catching up of the church to meet the Lord in the air. These verses do not apply to the rapture. What these verses apply to is the end of the tribulation and the judgment that I spoke of earlier of Jews separated into saved and lost, as well as the gentiles. So what this is saying is that there will be two people in the field, one of them saved, and the other one unsaved. The one who is a believer will be taken in the Millennial Kingdom, and the other believer will be taken away.

Putting it more accurately, it says, "The two in the field, one shall be taken, and the other left." The one who is left is not left behind in the rapture, in other words. The one who is left behind is the fortunate one. He is left behind to what? Left behind to go into the age of the kingdom. That's what they're left behind for. The one who is taken is taken off to death. When we are taken in the rapture, we are not taken off to death. We're taken off to life. The same goes for the two women grinding. One is left. That's the blessed one--left to go into the Millennial Kingdom. The one who is taken is the one who is taken in death.

This is false interpretation of true Scriptures. Verses 40 and 41 are said to prove a point which is true in the rapture. Some will be taken and some will be left. However, this habit of interpreting Scriptures which do not teach that, because they happen to be impressive Scriptures, is a mishandling of the word of God which the Holy Spirit does not bless. God the Holy Spirit does not bless a misapplication of the truth. I'll tell you that one of the favorite verses that is so misapplied, and one of which you yourself might have fallen into the trap of doing, and that is Revelation 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come into him and will sup with him and he with Me."

It is a favorite stunt of a certain type of evangelistic enthusiast to take this verse and apply it to the heart's door, and to apply this to the heart's door of an unbeliever. They convey the picture that here is Jesus Christ pounding away at the heart's door of an unbeliever, trying to get in. Then what is the invitation? Would you open your heart and invite Jesus Christ into your heart? Yet this verse has nothing to do with the unbeliever. This verse has nothing to do with salvation. Revelation 3:20 has to do with a Christian who is out of fellowship, and therefore has locked the Lord Jesus Christ out of His functioning in the life of that believer. What Revelation 3:20 is calling upon us to do is to use 1 John 1:9 and open the door of fellowship to the Lord again.

It is wrong for us to be presenting the gospel and then to come through with what we think is a zinger like the image of knocking at the heart's door. That's a beautiful zinger, boy, after you have presented all of your information and you've got the testimony and then you get close, you know, and you put your arm around the fellow and say, "Do you have a mother?" And he confesses, "Yes I have a mother." You ask, "Does she love you?" He says, "Oh yeah, she loves me." You say, "Are you breaking her heart?" He replies, "Yes I am." You say, "Wouldn't you like to open your heart's door and invite Jesus in and make your mother happy? Your mother is knocking with the Lord. Listen--do you hear it?" Then maybe you knock on the bottom of the table, and he says, "I hear it. I hear it. Come in, mother." I'll let you carry it on because you're more dramatic than I am as to where you can go from that.

This is an attempt to think that you have to come in with something that's coy and cute and humanly invented so that God the Holy Spirit can do His job. You think that you can't present the message of John 3:16 in dignity, and of all that the rest of the Scriptures have to say concerning how Christ bore our sins for those rugged hours from high noon to 3:00 PM when God the Holy Spirit and God the Father turned away from Him, and He screamed repeatedly, "My God, My God (addressing one each in turn), why have you forsaken me?" In that moment, He died spiritually in order that He might pay what we need to pay, and that is spiritual death for our sins. That's teaching evangelism. You can teach a person what God has done and how the wall has been removed that has separated him from the Lord. Then you can tell him, as Dr. Chafer used to instruct us, "Tell a person what to do with the gospel after you've told it to him," and that is to believe it. And that's all the Bible says.

By the way, the whole idea of "inviting Jesus Christ into your heart" is flawed. The word "heart" means mentality in the Bible, and the mind of an unbeliever one second before he's born again is a garbage pile. And it's the last place in the world that you'd want to invite the Son of God. But once you believe in Him, He will come in and indwell you and have fellowship with you. Revelation 3:20 refers to you now and your status of fellowship.

Matthew 24:42-51 goes on to speak of blessing and then of judgment. Verse 42 says that the believers in the tribulation are to watch for the Second Advent. If you ignore the application of this Scripture, you will say that we are to watch for signs of the rapture. Verse 44 says, "Be also ready." Ready for what? For the Second Advent. Verse 46 says, "Blessed is that servant." What servant? He who is watching for his Lord. He is watching in what respect for his Lord? For the Second Advent. All of this is the Second Advent in Matthew 24. Verse 48 says, "That evil servant." To whom does that refer? That refers to the servant who is not watching for the Second Advent. Verse 51 then speaks about the punishment and the suffering for those who are not prepared.

**The Parable of the Ten Virgins**

Matthew 25 goes with Matthew 24. Matthew 24 and 25 form what we call the Olivet Discourse. Most of you know that John 13-17 is the farewell address of the Lord Jesus Christ in the upper room to the church which was about to come into being. The Olivet Discourse, found in Matthew 24-25 is the farewell address of the Lord Jesus Christ of His earthly people, the Jews. The same theme is pursued concerning the conditions and the situation in the tribulation period. This chapter is another one that is fantastically misapplied. You begin this chapter with the parable that you know so well concerning the ten virgins. Also it includes the parables concerning the talents.

These parables do not apply to Christians in any way whatsoever. These parables belong to the age of the tribulation, and they apply to Jews who are believers and to Jews who are unbelievers. The Jewish believers are those represented by the ten virgins who have oil for their lamps. Oil is the symbol of God the Holy Spirit. This is indicating that they are born again. The unwise virgins, the foolish virgins, are those who have no oil, meaning that they are lost. They do not possess the new birth. Therefore when Christ appears in the Second Advent, they are not prepared to go into the Millennial Kingdom, and they are left out.

Matthew 24:16 calls upon the Jewish believers to flee into the mountains when they see the image of the antichrist placed in the temple. Those who flee into the mountains will survive the tribulation (Daniel 12:1). These are believing Jews, and because they have survived, they are the virgins with the oil who have been prepared to go into the Millennial Kingdom. They go in there alive. They have the oil and they have the talents. They are saved as per the New Covenant. Now the Jewish unbelievers are put to death. They have no oil and they have no talents. They have not prepared to receive the kingdom. The Jewish believers who are martyred during the tribulation period--these saints who have been killed--are raised to life (Daniel 12:2). They enter the millennium. However, they enter it with resurrection bodies. There will be resurrection bodies of Christians and resurrection bodies of Old Testament saints.

**The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats**

There is also here the parable of the division of the sheep and the goats beginning at verse 31: "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." This throne is upon the earth. It is centered in the city of Jerusalem. This return is the Second Advent of Christ. This is not the rapture. At this point, there shall be brought before Him, verse 32 says, the nations. The Greek word there for nations is "ethne," and it means gentiles. So you should read "gentiles" there because it'll make more sense. They will gather all the gentiles, and He shall separate them into sheep and goat categories. What does this mean? They will be separated as individual gentiles. Those who are the sheep are the gentiles who are born again. Those who are the goats are the gentiles who are lost. These then will accordingly be dispatched, either into the millennium because they are born again, or they will be put to death and not to rise again until at the end of the 1,000 years when the second resurrection takes place, the resurrection of all unbelievers.

Now there is an evidence that these people have shown that they are believers. The evidence is how they treated the Jewish people. The Lord says to them, for example, in verse 35, "I was hungry and you gave Me food. I was thirsty and you gave Me drink. I was a stranger and you took Me in; naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; and, I was in prison and you came to see Me." Now the righteous people are going to be very confused about this. Verse 37 says they're going to ask the Lord, "When did we do all this for you? When did we see you in this condition? Then in verse 40: "The King shall answer them saying, 'Verily, I say unto you inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me.'"

Now who are the brethren? Here is another famous distortion of Scripture--the taking of verse 40 and making the word "brethren" refer to Christians, which it does not. The word "brethren" in this context refers to the Jewish people. They are the brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ. Again there are some fantastic emotion-moving sermons built upon this text about helping the brethren of Jesus Christ. Who is the brother of Jesus Christ? Well, they say that all humanity is His brother. Therefore we have the fine base for the concept of a social gospel.

What does God want you to do? He wants you to feed the orphan. He wants you to champion the causes of minorities. He wants you to gather up baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas for those who need baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas and other times of the year. None of this is objectionable, and which in the mercy that God may draw from your heart, you may elect to do. But that is not what this Scripture is speaking about. When he refers to his "brethren," he's talking about the Jews who are in the tribulation under the attack of the world dictator.

Remember that when the False Prophet gets through with his work, nobody can go into a store and buy food unless he can flash an ID mark--the mark of the beast. Nobody can walk down and get a job to earn money unless he can show that he has imprinted upon his body the identification mark of the beast. He cannot proceed to carry on any kind of business activity. He can't buy things. He can't do a thing without this mark. It is going to be directed particularly, of course, at the Jews as well as the Gentiles who refuse to take this mark. In this particular case, these gentiles are identifying their true attitude toward Jesus Christ by the fact that in some way they assisted these Jewish believers who were particularly the brunt of the attack of the antichrist. The gentile believers are not so much the object of his attack. They apparently are able to get by a lot better. However, the Jews are hounded to death like Hitler's Germany never thought about hounding a Jew.

The result is that in order to survive, the Jew is going to have to have help from somebody. This help is revealed, in Matthew 25, to have come from certain gentile believers. Why would they help? Mind you that they are going to endanger their own situation. They are going to endanger and mark themselves. They are already under the attack and the disfavor of the ruling authorities. And here they are sharing their food with a Jew? Here they are giving clothing to a Jew? Here they are visiting a Jew and his trials and his hardships and maybe even going by and visiting him in prison? Now that is running a hazard which only would come from a heart which is regenerated. They signal their own regeneration by their willingness to do this for the Jewish brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So on this basis, the Lord separates them into sheep, who showed their salvation through helping the Jew, and into goats that He describes in just the opposite way--that they would not help him. These people said, "When did we ever see you and be unwilling to help you?" He says again, "Because you would not do it for My brethren." So with this separation of Gentiles into saved and unsaved, and with the separation of the Jews (Jeremiah 20) into saved and unsaved, the millennium begins. Everybody is born again; a new civilization; a whole new era of human history; a new arrangement in God's household which we will yet study, but all of this now begins as a result of the end of the tribulation and these divisions. This is a new world--the world of tomorrow--a world free of a lot of things that curse our society today. It all starts with everybody born again.

Now let's jump ahead and answer the question that is usually raised. Satan is tied up during the millennium. He cannot do his work. There are people in normal human bodies. Life goes on. Marriage goes on. Children are born. Life is greatly extended in the millennium, and people live hundreds of years. However, some of these children go negative toward the ruler Jesus Christ. Consequently, they hold in their heart a resentment and a hatred for the ruler. At the end of the millennium, when Satan is released, it is these children who rise up and join Satan for one last rebellious attack against God. I don't want you to think that these believers, Jews and Gentiles who went into the millennium, fell from their salvation and that they are the ones who then rebel against the Lord Jesus.

So here is the summary of this dispensation. Abraham was promised a land, a seed, and a blessing for his posterity. The land of Palestine is held by title deed, but actual possession is dependent upon the spiritual obedience of the Jewish people. So they have title deed today, but they do not have actual possession. The New Covenant was given to supply the spiritual obedience that they need. This was not achieved under the Mosaic Covenant of the law. They tried, but they failed. The New Covenant was dependent, however, upon another covenant--the Davidic covenant because you cannot fulfill the New Covenant without a qualified messiah to deal with sin and to rule forever, and that Messiah could only come through the line of David.

So here when the Lord Jesus Christ comes at the Second Advent, all of those three major unconditional covenants which we have studied will be fulfilled. Israel as a nation will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will control the Jews. They will have great spiritual ecstatic expressions and experiences such as we do not have today. Israel will be in spiritual obedience; she will possess her land; and, will rule the whole world through Jesus Christ. The end of the tribulation, the darkest period in Jewish history, will indeed be the burst of a new dawn. If you're a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you'll be there to see the whole thing.

Our Father we thank You for the fact that You have taken us into Your confidence. We thank You for these passages of Scripture which describe the tribulation period. Help us to deal with those who are in the darkness of their lost condition and the threat of the tribulation that lies before them. Help us to tell those who need this information of the gospel what we have learned and what we have experienced. In Christ's name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971

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