***The Millennial Kingdom

RV159-01***

The apostle John, in this portion of the Revelation, is recording a portion of what is referred to as the large set of parentheses. It is a set of parentheses inserted into the chronological order of events which are represented by the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls. This large parentheses will go on until Revelation 15:8. At that point, the revelation under the seven bowls will be made known, and the final expression of the wrath of God will come forth. The seven bowls actually are probably going to be triggered in the very distant near-end of the second three-and-a-half years – maybe in the matter of the last weeks.

We call this the large set of parentheses because there's a smaller one that preceded this. What this large set of parenthesis is doing is giving us additional background information of the events that are taking place during the last half of the tribulation. Just to orient you back to where we have started from, the seventh trumpet has blown, and out of the seventh trumpet will proceed the final seven bowls of the wrath and judgments of God upon the tribulation world. But before those bowls are poured out, this large set of parentheses has been inserted to give us additional background information.

**The Messiah Savior**

What John has seen, among other things, is primarily the basis for all the anti-Semitism that has ever existed in the world. The woman Israel (and this is presented in symbolical form) has given birth to the Messiah Savior which God promised in Genesis 3:15, who would, as God indicated at that time to Adam and Eve, defeat Satan. That was bad news for Satan. He has not been very happy with anyone who has had anything to do with this promised Messiah Savior. This child in time indeed was born. He was the God-man Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God sent to pay for the moral guilt of all mankind.

**Satan**

Satan had previously rebelled against God in heaven, and was able to get a third of the angels to join his cause. At that point in time, Satan, who had been the archangel and the royal honor guard in God's throne room, protecting, of all things, the very holiness of God, was now demoted, and his angels with him. However, access into God's presence in that throne room was not denied him. Satan did his best from then on, over the centuries, to frustrate God's plan of salvation by trying to lead the God-man Jesus Christ into personal sin, or by killing Him. He was able to do neither of those.

**Jesus Christ**

In fact, Jesus successfully completed his mission of paying for the sins of the world as the Lamb of God upon the cross, and then ascended to His father in heaven. There He now awaits the day when He will return to the earth to rule over all nations from the city of Jerusalem as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, while Satan himself is imprisoned in the pit of the abyss.

**Anti-Semitism**

Satan, at mid-tribulation, begins an intensified worldwide persecution of the Jewish people in one last effort to destroy them, so that there wouldn't be any Jews alive in their physical bodies who are born-again to be able to enter into the millennial kingdom. If he could accomplish that, he would frustrate all the plan of God. God has to have Jews who are alive in their physical bodies (bodies as we now have), so that they can enter, with a certain number of gentiles, into that Millennial Kingdom. That has been the basis of anti-Semitism throughout the centuries.

**Saddam Hussein**

That is the basis of Satan's latest agent, Saddam Hussein, who is an avid opponent of the Jewish people, and has an intense hatred for them. Everything that we are now confronted with is being motivated by his desire to eliminate the nation of Israel off that Mediterranean seacoast, and, hopefully, to kill every Jew on the face of the earth. Because he is empowered by Satan, Saddam is not going to be an easy clown to defeat. He knows what he's doing.

**Adolf Hitler**

I suspect that some of you young men may yet experience what I did as a high school kid, when the clouds of war were forming in Europe, just before World War II. I had a chemistry professor who was on top of world events, and periodically he would speak to us about that in class. We weren't all that sharp to be picking up what he was saying, but I remember one day he said, "We have not talked too much about chemistry today," because he did give us a great insight on what was happening in Europe, and where this was likely to end for the United States, and specifically for those of us who were in our later teens. He said that we have not had a great deal of chemistry, but perhaps we have learned something that is equally important, should you be faced with the decomposition of your body on some battlefield in the near future?

Well, some of the people I knew in that class indeed had that very experience. Others of us escape that dire consequence, but it became necessary for young men all over the United States to be picked up into the military service, to stop an equally determined madman in Adolf outlaw Hitler.

So, we may yet see the draft coming, and we may yet see some of you finding yourselves in a totally different lifestyle. And you may, in the very near future, find yourself in the unthinkable. You may find that you too are facing a mortal enemy in the field of combat. Why is this? Because Saddam wants to kill the Jews.

John understands exactly what is taking place here, because throughout the centuries, John is aware of the fact how, on various occasions, Satan has made efforts to destroy the line of King David. One occasion came down to one little boy, and the ruling Queen Mother said, "Kill him." And with that boy's death, God's plan would have been permanently frustrated. There would have been no one in the line of King David.

The southern kingdom only had one dynasty. It started with the line of David, and it never went out of that family. Up north in the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, they were so intensely evil that they had maybe four or five different family lines (dynasties) that occurred. But the one in the South had to be only through David. The last king qualified in that line was, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ. All the rest are dead, who may potentially have been in that line. He alone is alive in heaven as the God-man qualified to fulfill God's purpose of a world kingdom ruled by a king upon David's throne.

So, Satan, throughout the centuries, has sometimes come very close, and John knows about that. He understands that Satan's hatred for the Jewish people is based upon that Genesis 3:15 promise. Satan knows that if this Savior is not brought to an end, or his people terminated, there's no happy future for himself.

**War in Heaven**

So, at the mid-tribulation, he begins an intensified worldwide persecution of the Jews, to destroy all of them, if possible. John sees that the Jews, at that point in time, will be fleeing to the surrounding mountains for their survival for a three-and-a-half year period preceding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And as we've indicated, that is in all likelihood the city of Peta. John sees, at mid-tribulation, an enormous battle between Satan's angels and God's angels. You will view yourselves that very battle, because at this point in time, you also will be in heaven. Satan loses this battle. At this point in time, he is finally permanently expelled from access to the throne room of God.

Satan is hopping mad because now he is restricted in his activities only to the planet earth. This expulsion of Satan indicates to believers in heaven that there are only three-and-a-half years to go before God's program, which was revealed to Daniel, of His plan of years of dealing with the Jewish people will have been completed. When that happens, they also know that God will then proceed to bring to fruition (to completion) certain great works of God.

So, we read in Revelation 12:10, "I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ have come." And when it says, "Have come, it means that these things have been completed, or are about to be completed.

**Salvation**

The first thing he indicates that God is going to complete is the matter of salvation. This refers to phase three salvation (ultimate sanctification) into sinless perfection.

**Power**

The second thing he says that God will bring to fruition is His power. The omnipotence of God is now going to be turned loose in full judgment against Satan and his world system of evil.

The saints in heaven rejoice over the imminent fulfillment of phase three of salvation, and of the turning loose of the power of God to finally bring down Satan. These Christians have been treated as naive fools in the devil's world, while evil has had its day, and been dignified. These Christians have lived through an era when television widely propagated the viewpoints of the opinion-makers, and every moral concept of Scripture was ridiculed, and every degrading concept (every immorality) was dignified and exalted. It has been tough to be in a society like that, and walk the path of a godly Christian.

These saints in heave also knew Bible doctrine, so they guided their lives by its revelation concerning where history was going. They did not come to the pastor and say, "Here's the mess I've made of my life" after they have been taught the principles of living life in the right way. Christians have this amazing quality, in effect, to come to a spiritual leader for some information and say, "Listen, you told me that cyanide would kill me, but can you tell me how I can take the cyanide and not be killed? I've taken the cyanide. I just love this stuff." Now, what are you going to tell someone like that?

Well, when you break the principles of doctrine, you are taking spiritual cyanide. So, why are you coming to me to say, "I have busted these principles wide open? Now I have a life that's all shredded. I have relationships that are all destroyed.” What do you think I'm going to tell you? All I can do is tell you what the doctors tell you to do when you've got a problem in your arm. You go to the doctor, and you say to him, "When I lift my arm like this, it hurts." What is he going to say? He's going to say, "Don't do that anymore. 50 dollars, please."

So, what am I going to tell you when you take spiritual cyanide? "Just don't do that." But if you do, I'm going to assume that you wanted to do yourself in.

These saints in heaven knew the Word of God, and they acted accordingly, but it wasn't fun. They got pretty sick and tired of being made fools of, and being treated like a bunch of donkeys. Now the great day of the vindication of biblical Christians is at hand, and they are glad.

**The Kingdom**

The third thing that God is going to bring to culmination, that John points out here, is the kingdom. This is the Greek word "basileia." "Basileia" is identified in the Greek Bible as *the* kingdom, so that it is indicating a very specific kingdom. This kingdom is going to finally be brought into existence and full operation three-and-a-half years after Satan's expulsion from heaven. This is referring to the specific Messianic Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ which was repeatedly predicted in the Old Testament, and promised through the line of King David. The reference here is to the Old Testament Messianic Kingdom promised first to Abraham – that he would have a posterity; a land; and, a people. It was then amplified in the Davidic covenant where King David was told that he would be the line of a kingdom that would have no end.

**The Abrahamic Covenant**

To Abraham, the statement was made in Genesis 12:1-3: "And the Lord said to Abraham (this man who lived in the territory of Babylon), 'Go forth from your country of Babylon, and from your relatives, and from your father's house (all of them were probably pagans), into the land which I will show you." Somehow, God came down to the Euphrates River, and he picked this man, Abram, for eternal life, like he picked every one of us. And somehow God revealed himself to Abraham, and Abraham believed the gospel. And he looked forward to God making a provision for his sin. The Bible says, "He believed God, and it was accountable to him for righteousness."

God said, "Get out of this country. I'm going to give you a new country. Go to the land which I will show you (the land of Canaan on the Mediterranean Sea). And I will make you a great nation. And I will bless you, and I will make your name great. So, you shall be a blessing."

Then, in the New Testament, the apostle Paul, in Galatians, took this phrase, and said, "What God meant by that was that you will be a blessing by being the source of salvation to all mankind, because through your posterity will come the Messiah Savior, the King of the Jews."

Verse 3 says, "I'll bless those who bless you. The one who curses you, I will curse. In you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Again, this is referring to salvation.

Centuries went by, and in 2 Samuel 7, King David is on the throne. He wants to build a temple, a suitable dwelling for God to dwell in. God said, "No, it is not in My plan for you to do that. Your son Solomon will do that." But in 2 Samuel 7:4, God says, "But I'll tell you what I'm going to do for you, David. And listen to me carefully, because I am the God who never lies. David, I'm not going to do this for you only if you behave yourself, or if you are nice. That has nothing to do with it. I'm going to do this whether you behave yourself or not. And I'm not going to make this contingent upon whether your posterity, the Jewish people, behave themselves, or whether they're true and faithful to Me. I'm going to do this. Well, that was pretty heady stuff.

**The Davidic Covenant**

The prophet Nathan comes to deliver this message. 2 Samuel 7:4-17: "And it came about in the same night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, 'Go and say to my servant David: 'Thus says the Lord. Are you the one who should build Me a house to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt, even to this day. But I have been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle. Wherever I have gone with all the sons of Israel, did I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel which I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not build me a house of cedar?' Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts." I love that phrase. "Hosts" means "armies:" the Lord of armies.

"'I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be the ruler over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make you a great name like the names of the great men who are on the earth. I will also appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may live in their own place, and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, even from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and I will give you rest from all your enemies.

"'The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. When your days are complete, and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name (Solomon), and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me. When he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men. But my loving kindness (my grace) shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall endure before me forever. Your throne will be established forever in accordance with all these words and all this vision.' So, Nathan spoke to David."

What a marvelous promise! "I'm going to bring kings from your line, David, and ultimately a great and final king who will establish a kingdom on the face of this earth which will last forever. The people of Israel will dwell in peace and safety. I will care for them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And even if they step out of line and sin (which historically they did very grievously), I will not break this promise that I'm making to you. I will keep My Word. There will be a kingdom of the Jewish people, with the capital city of Jerusalem, and a descendant of David will rule upon that throne over all the nations of the world."

This is very clear. It was repeated many times by other prophets over the centuries. Yet, we have the people today who refer to themselves as amillennialists, which means that they don't believe in a 1,000-year reign of Christ upon this earth. And they have the audacity to say that God has decided not to keep His Word, and instead has taken all the good things He promised to the Jews, and has given them to the gentile church.

That may surprise you, and your first inclination may be to say, "That it is very hard to believe about the God we know." However, you should be aware of the fact that you are a minority people as those who believe that Jesus Christ will indeed reign upon this earth. You are a minority in the Christian community. The great denominations, and the great churches, and the great religious leaders believe that when it speaks about the throne of David, it's Christ upon the throne in heaven; and, when it speaks about the Jewish people (about Israel), it is speaking about the new Israel, the gentiles. All of that is an assumption found nowhere in Scripture, and we won't go into that more than that.

I do call to your attention that the Lord Jesus Christ, in time, born from the line of David, came to earth to fulfill this very covenant – this unconditional covenant. This covenant is unconditional because you don't see the word "if" anywhere. You can read this over more carefully, but you won't see the word "if." When you read the Mosaic Covenant, the word "if" is very prominent: "If" you people do this," God says, "then I'm going to do this for you. If you don't do this, then this is what I'm going to do." The whole Mosaic Covenant was an "iffy" covenant.

However, this one has no "ifs," which means that God is going to do it: "You're going to misbehave yourself. I will chastise you. In time, I will bring you back in line. You will suffer terribly as a nation because of your rebellion against Me, but I will keep my word.

So, indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth with the explicit purpose of setting up this kingdom to be led by the nation of Israel. That was made very clear when His mother was informed that she was going to become pregnant and bear the God-man Jesus Christ. In Luke 1:30, we have this statement: "And the angel (Gabriel) said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And, behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus ('Yeshua,' or 'Joshua,' which means 'salvation'). He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High.'" He will be called the Son of the Most High. He will be divine. He will be human, but he will be God: "And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David."

What do you think Mary thought when she heard that? Did she look up and say, "Oh, wonderful, He's going to be on a throne in heaven?" She knew exactly what the angel was saying, because she understood the Old Testament covenant made with David: "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever." What do you think she thought? She knew what the house of Jacob was (the Jews): "And His kingdom will have no end." What did she think about that? She understood what a kingdom was. This was a royal dynasty – a governmental entity. It is very clear that it was the purpose of God for Jesus Christ to fulfill the promise to David. The Old Testament prophets repeatedly spoke of this future world kingdom under the coming Messiah, and they described this kingdom in detail.

**The Church is Distinct from Israel**

Now when the Jews rejected God's Messiah, Jesus, the kingdom that He had come to establish had to be postponed to the time of His Second Coming. That's what happened. God never said, "OK, I'm going to forget this whole kingdom business. I'm going to forget the promise. I'm going to start with a new batch of people, a new species of saints, the church. And I'm going to give them all the blessings that I wanted to give you." That is a horrendous assumption. It is never found in the Word of God. God is still going to keep his promises to the Jewish people. Yes, He does have a new species of believer, and they are a higher breed than the Jews. Yes, we Christians have been described as the royal family of God. We are up there as the royal priests of God. We are the aristocrats of all the believers that have lived in any age previous to us. We are the aristocrats, and God has a great deal to say to us, but it is not to be found in Judaism. It is not to be found in the promises to Israel.

When the Jews rejected God's Messiah, the kingdom was postponed. During the postponement period, God has been building a new body of saints totally separate from Israel. It's called the church, and it is described as the body and the bride of Jesus Christ. That period of postponement has now lasted for almost 2,000 years.

It is with good reason, from biblical chronology, that we believe that Adam was created around 4,000 B.C. From 4,000 B.C., we were brought to the time of Christ. Since then, we've had to we've had 2,000 more years. That totals 6,000 years. God works on a series of sevens. Is it possible, as we come to the year 2000, and we are closing in on the sixth millennium, that the seventh millennium (bringing to completion God's dealing with mankind) will be the Millennial Kingdom of God upon the face of this earth? Very likely it will be. That's why we are talking about the fact that any period that is seven years short of the year 2000 is a potential rapture day. We don't know the exact figures. We don't know exact times. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Here is the general condition when these things will start coming to pass. This will be what it will be like in that generation. And we are in that generation, but we don't know the day or the hour. Only the Father knows that. Christ in His humanity does not know it.

So, don't go beyond that. All of you must live today as if you were going to be around for another 100 years. ... We serve. We do our business. We go about His work. And we have 100 years to go. But in the back of our minds, and out of the corner of our eye, we're looking over our shoulder for His arrival. And we are going to be prepared for that as well.

He told us very easily how to do it. He said, "Keep doing My business until I come. Occupy till I come." So, we know exactly what to do. Go about His business. Yes, live your life, but don't center so much on temporal things that you shortchange yourself relative to your eternal well-being and rewards.

Well, at mid-tribulation, the eviction of Satan from heaven signals the imminent Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. Those people are going to be able to set dates by time, because they are going to know the time schedule. They're going to know that when Satan is evicted from heaven is when the antichrist has set up his own image in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and told the Jews, "Now I am your god, and you will worship me," and all the world rushes to worship this god, and those who bow their knee to that image will immediately have a mark that appears on their forehead and in their right hand to identify them as followers of the beast. I suspect that those who receive that mark will never be able to be saved.

Yes, people who do not believe in Christ now will be left behind at the rapture, but they have a possibility of being saved in the tribulation. They will not be part of a body of Christ. They will not be part of the aristocrats of the saints of all ages. They will be back an Old Testament ground, and be part of God's dealing with the Jewish people. But at mid-tribulation, they know that they have three-and-a-half years to go, and Christ is going to come to establish His Messianic Kingdom.

We can look ahead in Revelation 19:11-16 to see what that period of Christ is going to be like. It's going to be very dramatic: "I saw heaven open, and behold, a white horse. And He (Jesus Christ), who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness, He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire. Upon His head are many diadems. And He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (That is you people.) From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that, with it, He may smite the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron. And He treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe, and on His thigh, He has a name written: 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords.'"

That is the way that He's going to come back, and He's going to come back this time not as a meek lamb, but as the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah. You really have to go off your rocker to say that all this applies to heaven, and all this is a description of what Christ does in heaven. That is total nonsense just by reading it. This is not a reference to a kingdom in heaven, nor is it a reference to the rule of God in the hearts of believers. Nor is it a reference (certainly) to the church as the body of Christ. All of those are ways that people have tried to interpret this appearance of Christ to bring a kingdom – a kingdom which will exist in heaven.

Psalm 2:8 indicates that this kingdom, when it is set up, will rule over all nations: "Ask of me (the Father speaking to the Son), and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possessions." This kingdom of Jesus Christ will be over all nations on the face of the earth.

Isaiah 11:4 indicates where this kingdom is going to be located. This is a very important verse: "But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips, He will slay the wicked." This is describing the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation to set up His kingdom.

Notice Isaiah 11:9: "They will not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain." The word "mountain" there is a code word for kingdom: "For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord (not heaven – the earth is going to be full of the knowledge of the Lord) as waters cover the sea." Very clearly, the kingdom that Jesus came was to be located on the face of the earth. It was a kingdom. It was a world government over all nations.

We are told in Revelation 20:4 that this earthly kingdom will exist for 1,000 years: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus (during the tribulation, and other times) and because of the Word of God; and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand. And they came to life and reigned with Christ for 1,000 years."

There will be other believers out of the tribulation who also will have a part in training with Christ, but we are going to be the King's bride. No one will be as close to Him as we will be. No one will have the authority that we will have. No one will be as dear to Him as we will be. But others will have a part as agents in this kingdom.

Satan understands this perfectly. He understood this when Jesus came. He knew very well why Jesus came. That is why we have the record of the temptation incident of Jesus by Satan. Satan was very simply offering Christ the kingdom over the nations of the world, that He rightfully has come to assume the power over, and that He has a right to rule over. But he said, "I can do it the easy way. Why go to the cross? I'll give you the crown without the suffering of the cross. This was the final temptation of the God-man Jesus Christ at the beginning of His ministry.

Matthew 4:8-10: "Again, the devil took Him (Jesus) to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give you if you fall down and worship me.'" Satan was not lying. These kingdoms are his. He rules over every government on the face of the earth. He is the prince of the power of the air. He is the prince of the kingdoms of this world. He can put in authority those whom he chooses, with the limitations of the sovereignty of God, while God is giving Satan and evil their day.

Verse 10: "Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan. For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.''" And I remind you that Jesus, the God-man, could have accepted this offer, and that would have been the end of any salvation for mankind. The most horrendous thing would have been the result. Under this situation, Jesus would have done the same thing that the first Adam did – completely knuckle-in to Satan. But I want you to notice that Jesus was able to resist because He knew doctrine. He quoted a passage of Scripture; He knew what to say; He know what the answer was; and, He refused to accept the deal and to worship Satan.

All unbelievers, who are on the scene when Christ returns to establish this kingdom on the face of the earth, are going to be put to death. All unbelievers will be put to death. Tribulation believers who are alive at the Second Coming are going to be taken into the Millennial Kingdom. So, you have both gentiles and Jews who are in the same types of bodies as you and I are today, with the sin nature and all. They will be taken if they survive through the tribulation (if they are not killed). They will be taken alive in their physical bodies into the millennium. Those Old Testament saints who have died, and those believers who died during the tribulation at the hands of the antichrist and his agents – at the end of the tribulation, they all will be raised. They will not be raised when we, the church, have our resurrection at the beginning of the tribulation. God never mixes His programs between Israel and the church. He keeps us separate completely because we're unrelated. We are a different breed.

So, those who have not been raised at the beginning of the tribulation and the rapture, will stay in the graves for seven more years, and then they will be brought to life. But the Bible is very explicit. Paul says, "All these people are part of the first resurrection." So, who is left when the millennium starts? There is nobody in the graves who is a believer. All believers from all times past have been raised to life. They have glorified bodies – Jews and gentiles. But there are people (unbelievers) who have survived the tribulation. They will be put to death.

So, God, in His power, ensures that when the Millennial Kingdom begins, every person in it will be a born-again believer. That should make a very interesting world. It will be a world in which you cannot meet one single person who is not born again, and who is not going to heaven. That is how the millennium begins.

So, in the millennium, you have people in their normal, natural bodies, but they are saved. You also have Old Testament and New Testament saints who have glorified bodies, stripped clean forever of the sin nature, in the very image of Christ. And they are there as the agents of God in this Millennial Kingdom. This kingdom is going to be so magnificent. It is going to be worldwide. It is going to take a lot of human agents to fulfill and carry out the plan of King Jesus.

This separation of mankind into saved and lost, for entrance into the Millennial Kingdom, is going to be performed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And here again, God works in separate companies. The prophet Ezekiel was told about how God will separate out the Jews. He will separate born-again Jews from lost Jews. The Millennial Kingdom is about to begin. God brings before King Jesus the Jews who are alive at the end of the tribulation.

Ezekiel 20:34-38: "I shall bring you out from the peoples." As a matter of fact, He will bring Jews from all over the world together: "I'll bring you out from the peoples (from the gentiles), and gather you from the lands where you are scattered with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out. And I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples. And there I shall enter into judgment with you face-to-face."

God takes this vast company of Jews who are alive out into the wilderness, and has a face-off with them: "'As I entered into judgment with your father's in the wilderness in the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you,' declares the Lord God." What judgment did God enter into with their forefathers in Egypt? It was the judgment of death upon those who would not go into the Promised Land.

Verse 37: "And I shall make you pass under the rod (that is, under His discipline – under His judgment). And I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant." That is for the saved ones – they go into the blessings of the covenant: "But I shall purge you (the unbelieving Jews) from the rebels, and those who transgress against Me, I shall bring them out of the land where they sojourned, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the Lord."

The context indicates very clearly that this has never happened, because when this happens, the Jew will never again lose his land. Ezekiel goes on to say that they will never again be threatened. They will always have this territory. That is not true today. The New Testament, in Matthew 24:40-41, reflects this same separating of believers and unbelievers in the Jewish population: "Two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken, and one will be left." Is this the rapture of the church that He's talking about? No. This context deals with the Jewish people. Jesus is talking what the future holds for Israel. So, what He is saying is that there are two women working. One is a believer, and another one is an unbeliever. And when they are brought before Jesus for judgment from their work, one is put to death. The other is ushered into the Millennial Kingdom.

Verse 40: "Then there shall be two men in the field. One will be taken. One will be left." That's the same principle. It is referring to Jews, some of whom will go into the Millennial Kingdom because they're believers, and others will be left behind.

This same separation is for the gentiles. We have that in Matthew 25:32: "And all the nations (that is the Greek word for 'gentiles') will be gathered before Him (Jesus), and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." The sheep are the saved people. The goats are the unsaved: "And He will put the sheep on His right (the saved gentiles), and the goats on His left (the unsaved gentiles). Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"

What is He talking about? Not heaven. He's talking about the kingdom of David, now established under David's greater son Jesus Christ, here on the face of the earth. He's telling these people, "Come into My kingdom. You are born-again. You are entitled to come into this millennial blessing.

Verse 41: "He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." These are the gentiles who are lost.

**The Judgment Seat of Christ**

The establishment of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, when He returns a second time, is going to be one of the most dramatic events in the history of the world. Everything is going to change. And we will have a great part in it. What part will you have? Well, this is why the Lord said, "I want to play fair with you Christians. I want to let you know that I have entrusted you with a spiritual ability." We call those spiritual gifts. "And I must be fair with you to say that when you stand before the Judgment Seat, I will evaluate what you have done with your spiritual ability. Some of you are one-gift Christians. Some of you are two-gift Christians. Some of you are five- or six-gifted Christians. I'm going to look at you, and I'm going to evaluate you on the basis of your potential with the ability I gave you. Then I will reward you accordingly.

Some of you took that doctrine seriously, and you pursued the mission of God for you. That was number one with you. Yes, you had all these other areas of your life: your husband or your wife; your family; your relatives; your business; your ambitions; your hopes; and, your possessions. But number one was: what do I do in the investment of eternal matters? God is going to say for some of you, "There will be the joy of great rewards." Your heaven is going to be marvelously different than for other Christians who will stand there with tears running down their cheeks as they realize what might have been, and who then are described by Paul as suffering loss. And their eternity in heaven will indeed be different.

However, for those of you who have demonstrated yourself to be faithful stewards of the grace of God given to you (that's what these gifts are – graces of God), God says, "Upon you will be placed greater responsibility. Your very life in the millennium is going to be so much more dramatic and interesting and exciting, because God will know that He can trust you with greater responsibility. Others of you will probably be in charge of the dog-catching department; the street-sweepers; or, whatever is not so much fun to do. But those of you who proved faithful, God is going to promote you. And when God promotes you, you have really been promoted.

What these people in heaven are praising God for is this kingdom that was so long promised and so long awaited. The disciples of Jesus, right down to Palm Sunday, said, "This is it. The Messiah is here. The kingdom is going to be established. We are coming out from under the military rule of the Romans. God's righteousness and justice is now going to permeate this whole world." That is what shattered them when Jesus ended up on the cross. They were so sure, and they had good reason to think that that was what He came for. But He tried to prepare them for the fact that He was going to be rejected. The second time, He's not going to ask anybody. He's going to come and establish His kingdom, and then the world is going to be a marvelously different place. The world of tomorrow in the kingdom of God is what we shall look at next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1990

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