***Signs of the Second Coming, and its Changes  
  
RV232-02***

When I was a boy, about 12 or 13 years of age, my oldest sister and her husband took me to a large department store in Chicago, and bought me a Boy Scout uniform, ... and it was a delightful moment in my life. The uniform in those days was jodhpurs. They were sort of military pants, just following that era of World War I. And it had the round ranger cap (or D.I. cap, if you're in the military – the drill instructor's hat). And it was a very gracious and kind thing for them to do.

Shortly after that, I went out on a campout and wore the uniform – the whole bit. One of the things that we did on that campout was played a game at night. It was something like capture the flag, where you chase around after people. And our leader did not caution us to do what I now do on the first night at summer camp. We have the rule that nobody runs in the campground at night.

So, it was kind of a dark night, and I found myself on the trail with some other guys in hot pursuit. And I ran down this trail wearing my Boy Scout uniform, and suddenly I was clawing the air. There was no more trail. I had come to the side of a cliff, and gone right over. And I'm clawing. The Boy Scout hat was hanging up here, sort of a parachute-like, giving me a little sustaining descent. But I hit the ground, and went rolling in the dust; in the trash; and, in everything at the bottom. Fortunately, there were no broken bones or anything sprained, but the uniform did not look too good.

When I got home, my mother took one look at me, and it was her attitude that uniforms are for parade-ground-use only. She didn't understand that uniforms in the field don't stay clean. It was a horrible mess, and I just gave up trying to explain to her, and was just glad that she never joined the Boy Scouts. But you don't take uniforms out in the field as if they were parade-ground attire.

Humanity today is about to experience what I experienced the night I went across that trail and off that cliff. It was a moment that looked very impressive. The guys who were chasing me couldn't figure out what had happened to me – how I eluded them so quickly. When they found that I had simply jumped over the edge of the cliff, and fell quite a few feet down before I landed, they thought I was a very gutsy type of person. And I did nothing to dissuade them from that opinion of me. To have done so would have been to have acquired the title of "dumb." But that's when I learned not to run in the dark.

**The State of Humanity Today**

Humanity, however, today has not learned the disaster that it is about to face in a similar way. It stands on the edge of a cliff, and beneath it is a deep abyss into which mankind is about to be hurled. This pit is filled with the worst kinds of horrors ever encountered by the human race. In this abyss is nuclear annihilation; famines; chemical and biological weapons; international terrorism; loss of freedom under dictatorial governments; rampant crime; violence to one's person; drug addiction; disasters in nature; destruction of the biblical family; welfare dependency; rejection of God's moral laws; inability of schools to educate; social diseases out of control; religious fanaticism opposing biblical Christianity; claims to human godhood; feminism; sexual perversions; and, youth gang rebellion – to which one could add, I'm sure, many more.

In any case, this is a snake pit of an inordinate power in itself. This is the world in which we live. This is the society through which we are now moving. While the leaders of the world try to turn things around, they are in a hopeless position. World leaders see humanity out of control, and they see that governments can do very little, and they see that mankind is lurching to war and to self-destruction. Political liberalism has brought destruction and suffering to those that it leads, in all nations. People who live in fear and all of these things that we have mentioned.

Consequently, they're looking for a leader. They're looking for someone who can straighten things out. When this has happened historically in the past, you come to where you have a dictator and tyranny imposed in order to make things right, because the attempt is always making it right from the outside rather than from the inside of the heart of man.

We know that the only way out of this snake pit is to return to earth of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. How far away is that? One man this morning said to me before the service, "I'll be glad when Christ comes. I'm sick of the situation in which we all have to live. I'm tired of the things that are surrounding us that are degrading. I'll just be glad when the Lord returns, and we get all this over with."

**The Rapture**

Well, how realistic is this hope? We don't have any signs relative to the rapture of the church (the catching away). The church requires nothing to be done before we're gone.

**The Second Coming of Christ**

However, we do have signs relative to the Second Coming of Christ. Certain things will take place before the Second Coming of Christ. Of course, that means that seven years before that would be the rapture. Let's look at the signs of the nearness of the Second Advent of Christ. The Lord Himself laid out several of these for us which would be guideposts and markers for us to know how close we are to the end of the age. See what you think.

**Signs of the Second Coming of Christ**

1. **The Rise of False Christs**

One of them, in Matthew 24:4-5, is the rise of false Christs: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.'" Many today are, in fact, claiming to be the voices of Jesus Christ. Many today are, in fact, claiming to possess the Christ spirit. This is New Age theology. You possess the Christ spirit, and thus you are a Christ. That is very widespread. And because you are Christ (and in Hinduism, they call that a "guru") you now gather people around you, and you become the voice of God to these people. A guru claims to be a Christ, and there are thousands of them in Hinduism.

The adulation that is given by Americans to religious, sports, and entertainment personalities treats them as virtual deities, and they rear their children to emulate them: "Be like this person in entertainment; be like this person in the sports world; and, be like this religious leader." What are the parents doing? They're telling their children, "Here is a Christ. Follow him."

**The Antichrist**

Of course, the antichrist himself is going to be the epitome of false Christ whom people will follow. Yes, this sign of the Second Coming is well in place. We have lots of claims of people who are Christ bearers – who are in the spirit of Christ. Some of them boldly claim to be Christ.

1. **Wars and Rumors of Wars**

A second identifying mark of the approach of the Second Coming of Christ, Jesus said, would be an increase in wars and rumors of wars. Matthew 27:6-7: "And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places, there'll be famines and earthquakes."

So, nations are going to rise against one another in constant warfare as we come to the end. Well, a day does not pass, I need not tell you, today when there isn't a military conflict going on someplace in the world. Religious, ethnic, economic, and racial enmities are driving the engines of war at full speed, and with increasing intensity today. And science has produced weapons which are capable of massive death and destruction with delivery systems now that can be placed anywhere in the world, including delivery from under the sea in submarines. There is no place on the face of the earth that is safe from military attack.

The Middle East itself is a ticking time bomb of Jewish and Arab hatreds. Israel is surrounded by overwhelming military superiority of the Arabs, who are waiting for a chance to attack. That is why Israel is willing to trade land for peace. Who would have ever thought that the Jews would allow into the West Bank thousands of Palestinian military and police contingents? And you know that when those people get in there, they're not just going to be there to keep order in the territory that has been ceded back to them by Israel. That is going to become the base of their further military enterprises. It's going to be the jumping off point for their ultimate goal of destroying Israel. That's how bad it is – that the Jews who have suffered so much are willing to do such a thing as giving away part of the Promised Land.

Today, nuclear weapons are getting into the hands of the most fanatical kinds of tyrants who have great financial resources to use those weapons. Today, it is now true that mankind can totally annihilate itself. Here in Matthew 24:21-22, Jesus said, "For then there will be great tribulation (the last three-and-a-half-years of the seven-year tribulation) such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be. Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days shall be cut short." So, the Bible tells us that even the seven-year tribulation has to be shortened somewhat when nations begin to rise against each other, determined to wipe each other out.

Military experts tell us that because of the geopolitical situation worldwide today, nuclear war by the year 2,000 is almost inevitable. That's pretty shocking for me to read by men who know what they're talking about. Nuclear war by the year 2,000 is almost inevitable.

So, people are personally in great fear, and things are going to get worse. This is what Jesus told us in Luke 21:25-26: "And there will be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, and perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves; men fainting from fear, and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world, for the powers of the heaven will be shaken." This will take place during the tribulation, but we are now at the stage of the preparation for these tribulation events.

Because of wars and rumors of wars, and the fear of the weapons of war that are now in existence, nations are being driven to seek the security of a world government and a world army.

1. A third signaling the approach of the Second Coming is found in Matthew 24:7 – famines: "And in various places there will be famines." Widespread starvation around the world is a fact of life. We have recently gone into Somalia to try to stop the starvation there. There are many other places in the world that are as bad as Somalia in terms of starvation. Much of the famine is the result of the socialist policies of governments, Many times, as in the case of Stalin, and the Ukraine, it was a deliberate famine which was deliberately caused by the government in order to force the Russians of the Ukraine to knuckle down, and for the farmers to obey the government order to come into collectives. When they did that, the production went down.

China did the same thing. Mao Tse-tung, incidentally, was the greatest murderer of people in all history. He killed more of his people than any other tyrant. When Mao Tse-tung found that his collectivist farming policies had created enormous starvation, he allowed the peasants to have a little plot on the side where they could grow their own stuff. Within a year or two, the food supply of China suddenly leaped forward.

These ignorant men of Satan never learn their lessons. The ignorant men (the madmen) who run our nation today are barreling down the same road of socialism, and when they get their way, they will create what socialism always creates: poverty; and, shortages. Poor countries (socialist countries) can never feed themselves. They have to import food. Poor countries cannot afford to import food because of the impact of inflation, for one thing.

Revelation 6:5-6 tell us at the time will come when inflation will be so bad that a man will have to work all day for a cheap meal. He'll have to work all day for three cheaper meals to try to feed his family. We say that, and it's hard to imagine that. None of us ever thinks too much about where we're going to get something to eat. That is not a problem. Yet, the Bible says that it's going to be a big problem. Some of us have been in parts of the country where we have seen people under the poverty of some of the government's policies and the restriction of food. We have seen them digging through the garbage piles. The things we throw away, they're eager to eat.

Furthermore, God sends natural disasters that destroy crops. He sends insects which become immune to pesticides so that they cannot be stopped. In countries dominated by Hinduism, like India, certain animals, because they are gods, are sacred, and they cannot be restrained from eating food. So, because the rat is a sacred animal, a god-animal in Hinduism, rats eat tons of food that people need, so people starve instead. But as the Old Testament says that those who oppose the truth of the real, true, Creator God cause the Lamb to vomit them out. These countries have people dying by the millions because the land is under the judgment of God, and the land is casting them off. We have famines all around us.

1. **Plagues**

Another thing is pestilences or plagues. In Luke 21:11, this is referred to as a sign of the Second Coming: "And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and plagues (or pestilence). Deadly diseases will be running rampant: often from sexual sins; and, often from sanitation breakdowns. Today, we have deadly diseases, and as the medical world works upon them, germs and viruses have the irritating quality of mutating. So, about the time you think you've got one that you can kill off, it changes into a form that what you have discovered won't help.

There is a return today of old diseases. I was amazed at how many states were announced on television the other day that are now under the threat of the bubonic plague: rats. Rats are carrying the bubonic plague germ, and causing the disease to spread in the United States? How many cases are being reported now of tuberculosis? In the United States? Sanitation will break down. Sin permits man to go amok, as he does, for example, in sodomy. If a beach is contaminated with sewage, that beach is closed because it's deadly. And what homosexuals do is to place themselves in the sewage system of the body. And God says, "Fine. Here's the disease that comes when you associate with sewage." So, you have AIDS, and there is no glimmer of hope on the skyline for this to be changed. When all societal controls break down, you will see disease rampant as never before. We see it now.

1. **Earthquakes**

There is the signal of earthquakes. Matthew 24:7 points out that there would be earthquakes in various places. I don't have to remind you that there's been a sharp increase of earthquakes around the world: increase in frequency; increase in intensity; and, interestingly enough, places being hit by earthquakes that have never been earthquake-prone before. Yes, God is doing something. The earthquakes are a clear signal from the almighty that He's getting ready to make His move. These earthquakes, as the one we recently had in San Francisco, are unbelievable in the intensity of their furor.

1. **Antagonism toward the Jews**

There is also a great increase of antagonism toward the Jews. Matthew 24:9 says, "Then they will deliver you to the tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name." There have been great periods in human history in the 20th century where there has been systematic extermination of the Jews. In the United States today, one of the greatest anti-Semitic groups is the Black Muslims. Now, they're headed by Farrakhan. The Black Muslims are in deep hatred toward the Jewish people. The Black Muslims are one of Satan's modern-day expressions of attacks upon the Jews. And the nations of the world, as you know, are in conflict over Israel.

What are we going to do with this tiny little nation that won't go away? The Arabs are as determined to destroy the Jew as they ever were; and, the Jews are as determined as they ever were to survive. But the increase of hatred for the Jew is everywhere. One has only to keep his ears open to see how many remarks are made against the Jews.

1. **False Prophets**

Next, there is the rise of false prophets. Matthew 24:11: "And many false prophets will arise and mislead many." We've had a wonderful false prophet in our area named Bob Tilton. The other day on television, I saw him look into the screen and say, "I am a prophet of God." I said, "No, you aren't." He said, "Yes, I am a prophet of God." He's a false prophet of Satan is what he is. The courts are catching up, and forcing him to face up to the fact that he made claims that were fraudulent. One of these women who has been suing him is suing him because she received four letters assuring her that he would be able to bring healing to her husband who was seriously ill – her husband, who had already died. She received four letters after he was dead.

I would liked to have seen that kind of a healing. As a matter of fact, if you did have to gift of healing, that is the ultimate expression of the gift of healing. If you do have the gift of healing, you can raise people from the dead, but the charismatics know they can't.

I was out at Chuck Smith's church some years ago in Costa Mesa, California, on one of our tapers conferences there at the Malibu Pacific Palisades campground. I visited on Friday night when they were having their Holy Roller type of meeting. They don't do that on Sunday because it looks bad. These people are getting up and giving their testimonies, and people were getting healed. One man stood up and said, "You know, I have the gift of healing." Oh, boy, I was interested in this. He said, "But you know, the first three people I prayed for to be healed died, and I couldn't understand why they would die when I had the gift of healing. Then the Lord revealed to me that that was the final and ultimate healing – to be taken home to be with the Lord." Tell that to your doctor. I'll pay a doctor. If I die, I'll pay you anyhow, because you've done me a great service. And this is an intelligent man, and he's giving us that kind of nonsense. We're sitting there listening to this as a testimony of the ultimate expression of his gift of healing.

The false prophets are running amuck today, and television is filled with them. They are claiming to be the voice of God, and they are the voice of Satan. And the more dignified they are, the trickier they are to follow.

When I was still in the hospital some time ago, I would listen to the 700 Club which has some very good news reports. Then following it, Robertson gets up, and he used to have a Bible-answering session. One day he was going to answer questions and teach about the Holy Spirit. As I lay there listening to that broadcast, at least 80 to 85% of what he said was exactly wrong. It was exactly opposite from the Word of God. He was telling people about things of the Holy Spirit that were completely untrue. I thought, "How sad for this false prophet, and millions of people are sitting out there listening to him, and he has their attention and their mind because he doesn't look like a crazy.

These people gain great followings by claiming to be apostles, and to be miracle workers, when they are, in fact, the great con men of Satan. They accumulate a great deal of wealth from their naive and spiritually ignorant followers, and they parade, as does Satan, as angels of light.

1. **The Rise of Lawlessness**

Another sign of the nearness of the Second Coming of the Lord said, would be the rise of lawlessness. In Matthew 24:12, Jesus says, "And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold." Personal integrity is increasingly rare today. People cannot be trusted.

I was recently talking with my son-in-law, who is in the army in the judge advocate's department. I was saying that I've had this problem getting some information from these people, and they told me they have mailed it to me several times. They have reassured me that it's mailed. And he says, "Don't trust them." He said, "I deal with people all the time in the military who assure me that something is so that is not so." The rise of deceit and lack of personal integrity is enormous.

I have even had Christians who have shocked me, even sometimes within our own congregation. They are pleased to tell me how they're beating somebody out of something, or how they are getting around the government with some deceit. I say to them, "Do you realize what's going to happen to you if this is discovered?" And they do not even have the shame not to tell me ... of their lack of integrity. I'm appalled; and, wondering whether or not this guy is conning me.

There is a decrease in integrity. There's a rise in lawlessness. The attitude of the American people is that character doesn't count. When Gary Hart found that his sexual peccadilloes suddenly became public knowledge, and that terminated his run for the presidency, because people had a little more sensitivity then, I remember him getting on television and saying, "Well, if you're going to insist on that kind of real moral perfection, you're going to have a lot of competent leaders who will not be able to serve the nation." And I said, "No, there are people we don't want to serve the nation, because your character and your integrity are important.

During this last election, we were told the character doesn't count. Oh, boy, is the country ever finding out how wrong they were about that, with what is happening now, from the White House down, where the lack of character is demonstrated every day. Character does count. People lie. People steal. People cheat. And they feel justified in doing it, even among Christians.

The trouble is that a society of citizens which lacks personal self-discipline to do right is going to become a jungle which cannot be controlled. No amount of police force is going to control crime in this country. The latest insanity out of Washington is that we're going to have 100,000 policemen distributed around the country who are under federal control. That's the way Hitler began – by taking over the police units of every local agency, and pretty soon the government was the policeman, and everything was under the federal control. They think that we're going to solve crimes by having more policemen. No, our Constitution and our society was based upon the fact that we are a Christian-oriented, biblical-oriented people, and that we hold to the moral code of the Word of God, and we act as our own policemen. We discipline ourselves when nobody is watching. When nobody knows what we do or don't do, we do right, because somebody does know. God knows.

We don't have a society where individuals say, "God knows; therefore I must do right." And these people come to me and show me what they've done to evade some requirement of the government. They never seem to understand that God knows, and that therefore, their condemnation is already there.

A society of citizens without personal self-discipline becomes a jungle. It creates fear among people who find they cannot defend themselves.

1. **Decrease in Natural Affection**

Then another thing that Jesus pointed out that is a signal of the nearness of the Second Coming is that there would be widespread decrease in natural affection. Matthew 24:12 says, "Most people's love will grow cold." So, we read about these horrible things. Recently, the garbage men found an infant who was in a garbage bin. His little head was crushed, and the mother claimed that the child was stillborn, so she threw it in there, when, in fact, something had been done to cause the child to die.

We are constantly hearing about these women who take up with lowlife snakes. A child irritates them, and they beat up on the child, and the child dies.

**Divorce**

We have heartless acts of divorce. You have someone that's the wife or husband of your youth, and someone that you have committed yourself to, and you are willing to degenerate to the heartlessness of divorce. You may have a miserable condition because you did not approach that marriage on God's basis to begin with.

**Abortion**

We have the heartlessness to our children: the aborting of our unborn; and, the abandonment of illegitimate offspring. 25% of children born in the United States are illegitimate? There was a time when that was a shameful act, and you weren't proud of that. And society didn't say, "Oh, that's all right." But Hollywood now (that cesspool of scum balls) has dignified that kind of conduct. And because Americans have no biblical frame of reference, they are impressed with that. Our young people are impressed.

**Child Abuse**

We have child abuse, and the worst abuse is the abuse of government that says, "Don't spank your child because that's child abuse." That's not child abuse. That's doctrine. But we do have real child abuse, the lack of concern and care for children whose parents don't have time for them. They're too busy with their careers, and making money. And here's this little child: "Yeah, I have the baby now, and as soon as I can, I'm going to shove him off to somebody's nursery to take care of them so I can get back to my career, because I love the money, and I don't care if I'm away from this guy for eight hours a day. Yeah, what if he dies on you? What if the Lord takes her to heaven? How are you going to feel about that? Are you going to look back and say, "I'm so glad I didn't waste my time on the kids, but I followed my career, and now I have all this money so that I can give him a nice burial?"

You better think it through. This widespread decrease in natural affection wasn't true just a generation or so ago.

**Wife-Beating**

We have the mistreatment of beating the wives (wife-beating). We have mistreatment of your aging parents. We have the heartlessness for those who are in need. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 give a general summary of society at the end of the church age, and on the eve of the rapture. The whole picture is very depressing – how heartless humanity will prove to be. Then there will also be the desire for the things that are in violation of the Word of God, and therefore our natural affections are directed to the wrong person.

**Changes at the Second Coming**

There are certain changes that are going to take place on earth at the Second Coming of Christ. That's the bright side of this coin. These signal the nearness of the return of Christ, but when He comes, as we pointed out to you (just to review for you once more briefly), there is going to be a great change. It is not the change that the politicians speak of, but a real change.

1. **The Davidic Covenant will be Fulfilled**

One of the things that will be changed when Christ returns is that the Davidic covenant will be fulfilled. In Matthew 1:31-33, when Mary is told about the birth of the Christ child, God says to her, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall name him Jesus (which is the Greek for the Hebrew name Joshua, which means 'Savior'). He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David (that's an earthly throne). And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever (the Jewish people), and His kingdom will have no end."

Isn't it interesting that when Christ's birth is being announced, one of the things God the Holy Spirit stresses is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, which had promised a King to rule over the Jewish people forever? Mary would produce the sinless God-man in the line of David, who would become the Savior to pay for the sins of the world. And out of that would come blessing and promise in the Abrahamic covenant to all humanity. And Israel would have the basis for being a nation forever under her King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ.

1. **A World Government with the Capital at Jerusalem**

Another change will be the Christ will establish a world government with Jerusalem as its capital. He will reign there for 1,000 years in the millennium, and He will conduct government on the basis of the divine institution of government, on what governments are supposed to do.

1. **The Resurrection of Jews and Gentiles**

There will also be the resurrection to sinless perfection of regenerated Jews and gentiles from Adam onward.

1. **Israel will be Regathered to the Promised Land**

Another change when He returns will be that Israel will be regathered to the Promised Land. Israel will become the world's superpower. The source of the knowledge of God and of doctrinal principles from all the world will flow from the Jewish people.

1. **The Unbelievers will be put to Death**

Then another change will be that the Jews and gentiles unbelievers will be put to death at the end of the tribulation. So, the Millennial Kingdom begins with all born-again people. The antichrist is put to death, and the false prophet is put to death. What a world that will be!

1. **Perfect Environment**

Another change is that the curse of God will be removed from the earth, and it will be restored to perfect environment. Great agricultural fertility will be restored to produce ample food supplies. There will be ideal climates all over the world. Disasters of nature will be terminated. Animal ferocity will be ended. And maximum personal freedom will be had to enjoy the fruits of your own labors.

1. **Satan will be Imprisoned**

Another change of Christ will institute at His Second Coming is that Satan will be imprisoned. He will no longer be able to deceive the nations to lead them into evil. There'll be no religion existing to contaminate spiritual experiences with deception. And God's moral code will no longer be undermined.

1. **Spirituality**

Also, there will be a great era of spirituality among believers who are in their natural bodies. Genuine expressions of emotional ecstasy will take place. And the Holy Spirit will empower everybody on earth to do right.

1. **Universal Peace and Prosperity**

Another change will be universal peace and prosperity. There'll be no armies and no training for war. Private property capitalism will be the economic system, and it will create great prosperity. All weapons will be destroyed.

1. **Bible Doctrine**

Another change will be the Bible doctrine will now be proclaimed, respected, and learned worldwide. Human viewpoint will be exposed as a fraud, and a great deception, and divine viewpoint will be seen as the true wisdom from God through Scripture.

1. **Lifespan**

Lifespan will be greatly extended. There will be maximum good health enjoyed by all. Great power will exist for healing from God. Murder will be diminished, including abortion.

1. **Perfect Justice**

Another change brought by Christ will be perfect justice administered worldwide. It will be a crime-free society. Political leaders will be honorable. Capital punishment will be enforced.

1. **The New Covenant**

There is one other major change that will be brought about – a change of enormous importance. And that is the fulfillment of God's promise to the Jewish people of the New Covenant. In Genesis 12:2, this is the Abrahamic Covenant. God says to Abraham, "I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great. So, you shall be a blessing." Among the many things promised to Abraham was that he would receive great blessings from God. The New Covenant of Israel amplifies this blessing promise to Abraham.

When Nicodemus, one of the rulers of the Jews, came to Jesus one night secretly, because the Spirit of God was working on Nicodemus. He sensed that Jesus was everything that He claimed to be. Nicodemus was confused by a statement that Jesus made about being born again. John 3:10: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?'" Jesus said, "You're a teacher of the Law, and you don't know what it means to be born again spiritually?"

That raises the question: where in the Old Testament should Nicodemus have learned this from? Where is the concept of new birth discussed? And the answer is in the New Covenant. And Nicodemus failed to make the connection. Please note one of the references to the new birth in Ezekiel 36:25-27. God says, "And I will sprinkle clean water on you (speaking to the Jewish nation), and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh." This is being born-again. That is what He's talking about.

Verse 27: "And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statues, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." God says, "I'm going to do something to the Jewish people that's going to completely change them. Instead of this heart of stone that will not respond to the Word of God and to the appeals of God, I am going to do something to them such that they will just explode with positive volition toward Me. I'm going to do something to the Jewish people that will completely transform them."

That has not happened to this day. The Jewish people are still not transformed. The Jewish people are still opponents and enemies of God. They are still the rejecters of Jesus Christ. They still have a heart of stone. But God says, "I'm going to give you a heart that can feel something. I'm going to give you a heart that is going to be responsive to the Word of God.

Next time, we shall look at the majesty of Israel's New Covenant. When Christ reiterated the blessings to be placed upon the apostles by His death, up in that room, out of that New Covenant, Jesus said, "Now I want to show you something," and He instituted the New Testament (the New Covenant) of the Lord's Supper.

We Christians have a great stake in this new covenant that has was first promised to Abraham, and then through the Scriptures, it was promised that God would put upon the Jewish nation. If you're interested in the great changes that are going to come into society, this is the key one. This is the greatest change of all when our King of Kings and Lord of Lords returns. Please join us next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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