***The Millennium and the Morning Star

RV28-02***

We are studying the letter to Thyatira in Revelation 2. It is a self-evident fact that in every local church there are believers who are positive to the Word of God, and those who are negative when there is Bible doctrine being taught by pastor-teachers. Many times this is not being done in local churches, so there aren't either positive or negative people. But where the Word of God is being taught, and the propositions of doctrinal truth are being laid out in intelligible and usable form, there is inevitably a division within a congregation in varying degrees of people who go for it, and people who reject it. The positive believers in these situations go on to super grace maturity with happiness and success as their lot on earth, and rewards as their lot in heaven. For the negative believers, the result is to go down into reversionism and into spiritual insanity and misery as their lot on earth, and with the loss of eternal rewards in heaven.

**Volition**

Positive and negative volition to the Word of God determines a Christian's place on a scale that looks something like this: At the top is the image and the likeness of God. At the bottom is the image and likeness of animals. Every human being is someplace on this scale, and the degree of positive volition response to the instruction in the Word of God determines how far you are above being an animal and reflecting the image and likeness of God, or how far your negative volition has sunk to the degree of being an animal. When you reject the principles of the Word of God, you inevitably slide down to the animal level.

**Feminism**

The feminist movement is often held up to ridicule. It is a serious problem. It is more than something to ridicule, simply because it is a violation of a biblical principle of the order of authority between men and women and the place of women under what, in effect, was the divine judgment of God, because of the participation of the woman in the Garden of Eden. The feminist movement is a direct assault upon a biblical principle. It is a direct assault of rebellion against the judgment which God imposed upon the race of women, as he did upon men in their particular respects. It is interesting that those who are at the forefront in the liberation movement of resisting this principle of the Word of God called themselves the feminist movement. That is very appropriate because feminist emphasizes female, and female is an animal term. It is very fitting that these who are resisting the Word of God and moving down to animal level existence call themselves females, because they are not women. The greater the resistance from the Word of God, the more a woman loses her womanhood and moves toward the animal level of being a female. Every woman is either female or animal. Every Eve is either woman or female: female on the animal side; or, woman on the image and likeness of God side. And responsiveness (positive volition to the Word of God) determines where you are on that scale.

The same thing is true of men relative to their manhood or to their animalhood. They too, depending on their positive volition to the Word of God, are someplace along the scale: positive for the image of God that they reflect; or, negative when they sink down into animal level situations.

Everybody's character and everybody's conduct is determined by where you are on this scale. You can obviously see that how you act is the result of how you think, and how you think is the result of your positive or negative volition toward the Word of God. Your godly character and your godly conduct are the result of being up here on the scale of the image and likeness of God because of positive volition. Your animal conduct and animal character are determined by your negative volition which sinks you down on this scale.

So, when people (Christians or unbelievers) are acting like animals, you know that they have either not been informed on the Word of God (they're uninstructed), or they have been negative on the instruction they receive. That's all there is to it. It is just that simple. This is no big secret. This is no big complication. It is the way the human race has been set up, and every one of us has this at stake in our own experience. So do not take lightly your reaction to the instruction in the Word of God. Do not take lightly the fact that you act like an animal. Do not take lightly that you are indifferent, neutral, or antagonistic – a rebel against the principles of doctrinal instruction, and against the principles of the Word of God. It's a very serious matter if you are, and the consequences are very grave.

**Holiness – Absolute Righteousness and Justice**

The basic responsibility of every human being, therefore, before God, is to establish compatibility with the holiness of God. Everyone here should, without any problem, be able immediately to give me the definition of holiness on the basis of the essence of God. You should immediately be able to tell me that holiness means, first of all, absolute righteousness. Secondly, it means perfect justice. These two attributes in the character of God form His holiness or divine integrity. It is the duty of every human being to establish compatibility with these two factors in the character of God: the absolute righteousness, and, the perfect justice. What absolute righteousness demands, in the character of God, His perfect justice will execute. That constitutes holiness. That is the standard to which we must relate ourselves.

**Compatibility with God**

We do this, of course, in three basic steps.

1. **Salvation**

We relate ourselves to God (to His holiness), first of all, with personal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from human works. It is a gift of grace. This, of course, is stated for us in Ephesians 2:8:9 which tells us that we are saved by grace through faith, apart from our human works. John 3:16, of course, declares to us that we are saved by believing in this Son. We accept the gospel message concerning him. That's step number one in seeking compatibility with God. It is salvation. Of course, nobody in the human race can establish compatibility with God until that step has been taken. That's why we practice evangelism. That's why the Lord says you must be My witnesses. Any human being's compatibility with divine holiness determines his destiny. People who are compatible with divine holiness go to heaven. People who are not compatible with it go to hell. So a great deal again is at stake here.

Step number one is salvation. Therefore, people have to know how to be saved. Satan interjects a great deal of confusion. He follows up this first step in an unbelievable way by injecting various efforts on man's part (various human doing factors).

1. **Temporal Fellowship**

The second step in establishing compatibility with God is maintaining temporal fellowship with the Father through the confession of known sins; that is, to maintain spirituality, or what the Bible calls the filling of the Holy Spirit. So the second step is confession. That, for the Christian, maintains compatibility with divine holiness. 1 John 1:9 tells us that if we confess our known sins to God the Father, He will forgive. Ephesians 5:18 tells us that we are to maintain a status of being filled with the Spirit. We do that by permitting God the Holy Spirit to control us. That's what "filled" means. He controls us when we are willing to be subject to His leading. When we confess our sins, we are admitting when we have not been subject, and that we have changed our mind on the matter.

1. **Super Grace Living**

The third step of establishing compatibility with divine holiness is super grace living. Remember that we're talking about what is the duty of every human being to move with a spiritual maturity structure to the super grace level of living. This is to build within the soul super grace capacity through the grace system of perceiving spiritual things. We store accepted positive knowledge ("epignosis" knowledge) – full knowledge that the Word of God has given us, that we have accepted. That is stored in our mind. 2 Peter 3:18 tells us that we are to seek to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. What Peter is talking about is getting ourselves compatible with divine holiness on a gradual basis. Ephesians 4:14-15 indicate that it is the Word of God (doctrine) that is the key to establishing this compatibility with God: "That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men and cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ." And that's what the Christian life is all about – the gradual sanctification of the believer into the image and likeness of God in his experience.

So here are the three steps for arriving at compatibility with the holiness of God. Positive and negative volition toward the instruction in the Word of God, therefore, is at the heart of any progress to compatibility with God's character. The resistance of that results in moving into an animal level of life. The reception of that moves into living in the image and likeness of God.

**Individual Responsibility**

This makes it very clear indeed that every believer is responsible for his own adjustment to the holiness of God. Churches foul this up. Churches are very deceptive about this. I loathe this, and I grieve for the people who are in churches like that who are given the Freudian concept that you are not responsible for your own circumstances; you're not responsible for what you do; and, you're not responsible for the results that you are experiencing as the result of decisions that you have made. That is not true. The Bible makes it very clear that every individual believer is responsible for his own adjustment to the holiness or the integrity of God. Romans 14:12 says, "So that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." You are not going to give an account for somebody else. You are going to give an account for yourself.

**Priests**

1 Peter 2:9 tells us that we are a royal priesthood. That means that every believer in the body of Christ; in the royal family of God; and, in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, is a priest. There is not a select group of clergy. Everybody here belongs to the clergy. Everybody here is a priest. And you are a priest for yourself alone. If you are a father, you are a priest for your children until they reach the age of maturity. But once they reach the age of maturity, when they hit 20 years of age, they are on their own in priesthood before God, and they are their own responsibility.

Believers who lack instruction in Bible doctrine principles will also lack the divine viewpoint to be able to be compatible with divine holiness. If you don't have the instruction, you don't have the capacity to release yourself to divine holiness. You lack the capacity, therefore, for dealing with the problems of life. You cannot come up to an issue in life and be able to relate yourself to it in such a way that you can come up with God's answers.

In today's ... newspaper, you will read some letters to the editor that might be of interest to you on the national affairs briefing that was held at Reunion Arena last week. I'd like to read just excerpts from some of the letters. These are the responses of people to that event. One person says, "Morality cannot be legislated." Wrong. Morality, of course, is legislated. That's the only kind of morality we have because the law says you can't go shooting holes in other people's heads. They can't do that to you. That's legislating morality.

Continuing: "Morality cannot be legislated. Let's get on with the reality of the situation. Women must work in many households to support the family for necessities – not niceties, so let's give her the equal rights to do so. Abortion is safe, so let's allow abortions to prevent raising a child on welfare. Homosexuals are born, not made. So let's let them live in peace. Our money is worthless, so let's go back on the gold standard. Our army is pitiful." (You'll love this one.) So let's conscript both sexes," which will only make it more pitiful than it is.

I don't know how he got enough brains to put the gold standard in there, but he sure did. But every one of those issues strikes most of you, as Bible doctrine educated people, with revulsion because you know the answers to those, and you know that the person who is writing that letter is totally ignorant of the Word of God, and does not, as a matter of fact, believe that the Bible is an authority that has spoken on these issues, therefore, there is no discussion, and there is no appeal. God has made the statement as to what women are supposed to do. They're supposed to run households. If in some circumstances they are to labor, that is a decision to be made within the basic context of what God says that a woman is to be. She is to be, first of all, her husband's helper. That is first, second, third, and last. She has nothing else in life but a help fit for her husband... That is her role, and that is her calling.

**Abortion**

The Equal Rights Amendment is not in any way going to enhance her role as a woman. It's going to degrade it. Abortion is not safe. It is cruel. It is loathsome. It is a disgrace that only we, in the history of all the nations that have ever existed on the face of this earth, have proceeded to legalize in such degree this kind of outright destruction of human life. They claim that it is to prevent raising children on welfare. There are other ways of not having children put on welfare.

Anything that the Bible calls a sin, like homosexuality, is preventable. This person should not say that homosexuals are born. Wrong. Homosexuals are not born. Otherwise the Bible would not call it sin. It's a thing that homosexuals have assumed. And for the army to be improved by having women on the field of battle, in the midst of that carnage and horror, is about as insane as any human being can become.

Letter number two: "I wish to point out to those who so righteously call themselves the Moral Majority that what has made this country great, which they claim to promote, is the constitutional separation of church and state, or religion and politics. This is what made the United States an improvement over repressive regimes from which our citizens fled since our beginnings. And it is what distinguishes us from modern-day theocracies like that currently in power in Iran. Those who truly celebrate the uniqueness of the American democratic system and the freedom it affords its citizens must certainly reject efforts to inject certain religious principles which do not reflect the beliefs of all religious Americans into American political life. They must also reject political leaders who jump on this convenient bandwagon out of sheer opportunism."

Now, again, this person in this letter is reflecting the fact that they do not believe that the Bible is an authority that gives us the grounds for passing laws which are the basis of our moral conduct. They are suggesting that, therefore, it is man's reasoning that has come up with these rules, and that that is the basis upon which these decisions are made. The whole tenor of this letter indicates a complete dismissal of the Bible as not even being an issue to be discussed or to be considered in this matter. That's why they are calling this religion. I can guarantee you that, while these people were religious people who were at the Reunion Arena, this was not a religious gathering, and it was not a political gathering. It was a moral gathering. If the person who wrote this letter would exercise a little judgment, they'd see that there is a significant reason for calling this group the Moral Majority, because it is a gathering upon what is right and what is wrong. There are things that are right, and there are things that are wrong. Who is to decide, and on what basis, which are which?

Letter number three: "We do not understand the adverse reaction of Brian Wooley, and much of the media in general, to the national affairs briefing. No one became upset when the Gay Liberation Caucus and Gay Liberation Movement were spawned. The media is not real in shock at the political goings on of the ... environmentalists. Abortion rights groups do not suffer castigation by the media and public opinion. Why is it that when Bible believing Christians begin to organize and educate themselves so as to intelligently support candidates and legislation that fall in line with their ideology, the reaction is such that an Iran-like theocracy is inevitable? We are just another special interest group looking out for our interests. As for the mixing of politics and religion, it is our belief that governments are by nature moral religious institutions. The laws they pass and enforce are judgments of what is right and what is wrong. We plan to elect men and women and lobby for legislation that will provide laws which are congruent with the mores of the Judeo-Christian ethic."

That man understands Bibles doctrine, and he got it all straight. There's no problem. He sees that there is a basis for making decisions. If every human being is responsible for his own compatibility with divine holiness, and he is, then he must indeed have information from the only source from which he can get information to establish that compatibility, and that is the Word of God. Therein lies the problem. They do not have the content of the Word of God. They have not been instructed in doctrinal principles, or they have been negative to those principles. But you are responsible for yourself. Negative volition believers, however, as you well know, like to blame others for their carnality; for their evil; and, for their ungodliness. How many times have you heard somebody say that they are doing something because somebody made them like that? They never used to be like that, but now they have become like that because you have associated with them and made them like that. They are like that just because their mother was like this, or just because their father was like that.

**The Origin of Evil**

Well, I want to tell you that the Bible has laid out doctrinal principles that are going to shoot holes out of that theory and kind of cut you off at the legs with Matthew 15:18-19. Here is where your negative context comes from, and it's the only place that it can come from. Here is the responsibility (the origin of it), and it's the only place it can originate. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart (the mentality of the soul), and they defile the man. For out of the mentality proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands (externals) does not defile a man."

So where do our evil ways come from? From within the patterns of our own thinking. We are not the victims of what is put upon us externally. We are the results of what we choose to do with what has been put into us. Maybe you were reared by an alcoholic father. Maybe you were reared by a mother who blew smoke up your nose every time you came into her presence. Maybe you had other problems that you had to live with. That is not the issue. The responsibility is what you do with the circumstances which surround you and with the events of your life. It is what you choose to do with what has been placed upon you and is surrounding you. It is what you do with what has been put inside of you and the influences that come into you. The evil comes from within you, and each person is responsible for what he is and what he does. The satanic notion is that environment is what makes us what we are. That's the basis of communism. Karl Marx read that, and he said, "I've got a plan. I've got the idea. It is economic environment that makes people evil. We will create an environment of socialism and sharing, and people will no longer act in an evil way." Freud was wrong, and everybody who has built systems like communism upon Freud is also wrong.

Unless you understand that what is wrong and what is evil in what you do is because of you, and not because somebody made you that way or causes you to do that, then you will never take that thing and confess it to the Lord. You're not going to go to the Lord and confess what you don't think you're responsible for. You're not going to go to the Lord for help with what you think is not your fault. You are not going to go to the Lord and say, "Lord, I had this problem" when you think it's somebody else's problem and they're causing you difficulty.

The grace of God has promised to carry each one of us into full compatibility with God and into full super living. In 2 Corinthians 9:8, Paul says, "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work." God is able to make sufficient grace available to you to carry you through.

**Super Abounding Grace**

James 4:6 is the basis of the doctrine of super grace: "Wherefore He said, 'God resisted the proud but gives grace unto the humble. But He gives super abounding grace.'" So God's grace is there to help you meet what comes from within you, for which you are responsible, that keeps you from coming up here into compatibility with the holiness of God.

**Ruling with Christ**

The Lord Jesus Christ gives a promise of special reward to some members in the church in Thyatira. We found that they had to be two kinds: they to be overcomers, which meant to be born again; and, secondly, they were those who had reached spiritual super grace status in their adjustment to God's holiness. Those who followed the Jezebel-like woman, or who were sympathetic with her cause, were eliminated from this special reward. The reward that was promised was to exercise ruling authority over gentile nations in the millennium with Jesus Christ. Satan now is in control of the gentile nations of the world. Satan creates societies which rebel against God's divine viewpoint principles as they are outlined in the Bible.

Biblical morality for preserving the human race during Satan's rule is under severe attack today as it was in Thyatira. Today, positive volition super-grace believers are ridiculed. They are dismissed as benighted mentalities from the Dark Ages. That's because the world lacks the ability to recognize the divine authority of the Bible. So, it functions on the authority of human viewpoint.

Those are the only two bases of authority in the world: human viewpoint – what man thinks; and, divine viewpoint – what God thinks. When these questions that affect our society are discussed, you discuss it on one basis or the other. The sophisticated elitist commentators that you hear on TV are all talking from human viewpoint (man's reasoning). It would come as a shock to them. I often wonder: what would happen if you got up there with a sophisticated elitist that everybody knew and had the great fame, and you just sat down with a smooth Hugh Downs, for example, and said, "Now we're going to discuss the matter of this political question that everybody's interested in, and what kind of people should be in Congress, and should not? But before we can discuss it, we have to establish authority. The problem here is that I don't think we can discuss the matter because you don't have the information about the Bible. We have to either accept or dismiss the Bible."

**Morality Today**

These commentators have already dismissed it, but not one of them understands the Scripture. Not one of them could give you a reason for dismissing the Bible. They simply repeat parrot-like something they've heard from somebody else: There are mistakes in the Bible. The truth of matter is that there are no mistakes in the Bible. These people, first of all, need to be pushed to the wall and snatched and nailed into a corner over the fact that they are ignorant of the authority contained in Scripture. They can't even discuss the matter. On what basis can these people get on public television and discuss these issues of morality when they have no understanding of Scripture and no understanding of the authority of the Bible? A book without error cannot be produced by men. Only a supernatural God, using human authors and superintending what they said, could produce the kind of a book that we have in the Bible. Until that is recognized or disproved, then they cannot discuss the issues of morality in politics or anything else.

That is the issue that we're faced with today. Super grace believers who've got this story; who've got the facts straight; and, who have the insights of God to bring to our society, are dismissed and ridiculed and attacked for the fact that they're trying to elect people to office who function on these principles and on these guidelines of the Word of God.

Evil reigns in all nations, and the nations of the world and the people of the world are amassed right down here at the animal level of human relationships. So, you've got the barnyard morality that possesses most of our society. And it affects all of the divine institutions.

**Rulers**

However, all of this is destined to be changed when Jesus Christ returns to rule over the whole earth for 1,000 years. Things will get so far out of control that people will welcome the antichrist to enforce order. The power of Satan will back the antichrist; the antichrist will repeat the performance of the Thyatira Jezebel; and, evil will reign everywhere. Jesus Christ returns to rule as a beneficent dictator, functioning entirely on the divine viewpoint of the Bible. These principles will be enforced.

So we come to the end of the letter to Thyatira beginning in Revelation 2:27. We've been told that those who are believers and those who are super graced are going to exercise ruling authority over the people of the millennial world, sharing the authority of Jesus Christ. Verse 27 gives us a little more expansion of how you are going to rule the world that Christ puts under you. It says, "And." The Greek word is "kai," indicating an addition: "And you will rule." The word "rule" is "poimaino." But "poimaino" actually means "to shepherd." Therefore, it indicates that the way you will be ruling the people of the world under your authority is that you will be guiding and caring for them. That's what a shepherd does. He guides his sheep to safety, and he cares for them in all of their needs. Christians will possess great authorities as shepherds over the nations.

Psalm 23:4 indicates to us that a shepherd bears a rod and a staff. In order for you to exercise the rule of "poimaino" (the work of "poimaino") – to shepherd, you must have a rod and you must have a staff. The rod is used for correction. That is to beat the sheep over the head with as necessary. The staff is used to jerk them back from the edge of the cliff with the crook when they're going to go over, because sheep are dumb (which is one reason I suppose God used that to illustrate Christians in general). The rod is for correcting, and the staff is for protecting. That's what you're going to do. As a "poimaino" over the millennial world, sharing the reign of Christ, you will be exercising discipline on people, and you will be protecting them in ways that are compatible with God's principles. Christians will be the political guides for the whole world.

Boy, are these people who wrote these letter to the editor going to be surprised? These very people that they're attacking and making fun of – little do they know that you are the birds who are going to run the whole thing someday. You are going to be the political commissars of the whole world. This word is in the future tense which means in the time of the millennial rule of Christ over the world. It is active. Christ personally is going to exercise this authority, and you will exercise it under His guidance. It's indicative because it's a statement of a spiritual fact.

**A Rod of Iron**

So it says, "He shall rule them with a rod of iron." The word "them" refers to the gentile nations that we've already looked at in the previous verse. "And he shall rule them with." The word "with" is the Greek word "en." That's a preposition, and it means "by means of." "He shall rule them by means of a rod." "Rod" is the Greek word "hrabdos." That refers to "the scepter of kingly authority." This is a rod in terms of what a king uses – which a king carries with all of its jewels, and it's a sign of his authority. This rod is made of a very hard metal. It's made of "sideros." "Sideros" is iron – a ruling scepter of iron. You are a king. You will have political authority over people of the world, and the sign of your authority will be an iron rod. The scepter of Christ's rule is an iron rod because it is one of absolute righteousness. It indicates authority expressing the integrity of God.

Now, everybody is responsible to be compatible with the holiness of God, but everybody does not act in a way that is compatible with the holiness of God. The nations of the world do not function on the basis that is compatible with the holiness of God. But come the millennium, everybody will function in a way that is compatible with divine integrity, and that is going to be brought about by the authority described as the rod of iron.

This rod of iron rule was exemplified (and will be exemplified) in the separation of the sheep and goat nations (the sheep and goats gentiles) in Matthew 25 to determine who goes into the millennial kingdom and who does not. The believing gentiles go in, and the unbelieving are left out. All during the millennium, mankind will be ruled with absolute righteousness and with perfect justice – full adjustments of the integrity of God.

"He shall rule them with a rod of iron." And how will he exercise this rule (this scepter)? "As" is the Greek word "hos." "As a vessel." The word "vessel" in Greek is "skeuos." That's the word for "a container." Here it is a clay container made by a "keramikos." That is a "potter." It means "made of" or "made by a potter." Here is a vessel made by a "keramikos." You can see how we get the English word "ceramics" from that. That's where that English word comes from – from "keramikos." He has these clay pots, and they are to be dealt with with his iron rod. He's going to strike these pots and break them to pieces. The Greek word is "suntribo." "Suntribo" means "to shatter." It is present tense which means that this will be the constant nature of His ruling authority. It is passive. The vessels receive this shattering blow when they are out of compatibility with divine holiness. It is indicative. It is a statement of fact. They will be broken to pieces. And it's the authority of the super grace believer which is going to be exercised in this way. You will rule with a rod of iron.

How will you rule? By encouraging? By coaxing? By pleading? By feeling? Not anymore. The age of grace is past. When people step out of line, they're going to get struck like a pot being hit with a rod of iron. That is severity of judgment. Rebellion against the adjustments of God's rule will obviously result in personal self-destruction.

This phrase is almost interjected in the first part verse 27 to what he said in verse 26. Let's read it, skipping it for a moment: "He that overcomes (the born again person), he that keeps my works unto the end (that is, he who goes to super grace level), to him will I give power over the nations (and then the last phrase of verse 27), even as I received of My Father." In the first part of verse 27, He stops and He quotes from the Old Testament. We'll look at that in a minute. That's where those words come from. The continual thought is, "I will give power over the nations, even as I received of My Father." The Lord Jesus Christ has received from God the Father this authority over the nations. And what His Father gave Him in this authority, He is going to share with us. So, we will have delegated to us the very power that God the Father gave to God the Son.

This statement that is interjected is in Psalm 2:7-9. Let's just look back and read it for a moment to see the context from which the Lord Jesus Christ is quoting: "I will declare the decree (that is, the decision of God). The Lord has said unto Me, You are My Son. This day I have begotten You (addressing God the Son). Ask of Me, and I shall give you the nations (the gentiles) for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession." Verse 9: "You shall break them with a rod of iron. You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." So, the Lord Jesus Christ, in this letter simply goes back there, and He quotes what God the Son is going to have in the way of an exercise in authority over all the nations of the world.

This kind of authority has been delivered to Jesus Christ, and we have that indicated to us in John 5:22 where Jesus says, "For the Father judges no man, but committed all judgment unto the Son." So, the Lord Jesus Christ has the judgment over the nations of the world. Revelation 2:27 looks back to Psalm 2; quotes that psalm; and, then it looks forward to Revelation 19:15, also in the context of the rod of Iron Rule: "And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, and with it He should smite the nations. He shall rule them with a rod of iron." So, there is no doubt of the kind of authority that Jesus Christ is going to exercise over the nations of the world. First he smites them with the sword (the battle of Armageddon). Then he sets up the millennium, and He rules them with a rod of iron.

The reason for this is because, while Satan is bound during the millennium, and the world system of Satan has been put out of commission, nevertheless, the sin nature still resides within every human being. So the rod of iron rule is necessary to maintain compatibility on the part of societies with the holiness of God. Jesus Christ delegates this to the church body, and finally, the golden age of political authority will have dawned on mankind.

**The Millennium**

Very briefly, what will this golden age rule of iron include? Well, it will include several things:

1. **No Open Rebellion**

First of all, we're told that all who oppose Jesus Christ and his church will be destroyed (Psalm 2:9, Isaiah 60:12). This rod of iron rule indicates that there'll be no open rebellion against divine viewpoint principles. No open rebellion will be tolerated (Isaiah 11:3-5). You cannot rebel in the millennium against God's divine principles openly. In your heart internally (in your mind) you can rebel. But if you show that rebellion outwardly, you will be cut down immediately like a man taking an iron rod and smashing a clay pot to pieces.

1. **No War**

Isaiah 2:4 tells us that universal peace will be enforced between nations. No nation will be able to go to war. There will be peace on this earth and it will be shoved down their throats.

1. **Biblical Morality**

Isaiah 5:20 tells us that this rod of iron rule will require the standard of biblical morality to be enforced as the basis of human relationships. At this time, all biblical principles of morality will be enforced. You won't have to have any meetings like they had at the Reunion Arena to try to get the nation to elect leaders to go back to biblical morality. There isn't going to be any other kind in operation except those.

1. **No Evil Rulers**

Isaiah 32:5 tells us that sinful people will not be honored just because they're talented and famous. How many evil men rule our nation? How many evil men have influence over our society and over the American people? They are evil in the sense of violating biblical morality, and yet the American public fawns on them. That will not be permitted in the millennium.

1. **No Deceptive Advertising**

Isaiah 42:3 tells us that there'll be no deceptive advertising for shady business dealings.

1. **Violence will be Restrained**

Violence will be restrained because crime will be punished. Capital punishment will be enforced for capital crimes.

1. **Economic Justice**

Economic justice will be practiced with no exploitation of producers for the benefit of non-producers. Isn't that going to be great? The rod of iron rule will mean that producers are not going to have the products of their efforts drained from them to be given to non-producers. I don't have time to read the Scripture verses, but Isaiah 65:21-22 tell you exactly that. You will not work and have somebody else enjoy the benefits of the fruit of your labor. That is exactly what Isaiah says. That, folks, is what's coming. That's part of iron staff and iron rod rule. You can add Psalms 72:12-13 to that. That's the kind of economic justice that will be enforced.

1. **No Divorce**

Marriage will be sanctified as a lifelong union with absolutely no option for divorce. Some marriages are nightmares. For some marriages, people had checked their brains out when they entered into those marriages. But in the millennium, the rule will be that the grace of God enables you to reweave a life that you have entered, and you will work within the confines of that decision – period; over and out. Anybody who tries to divorce gets the rod of iron treatment.

1. **Respected Lines of Authority**

Lines of authority will be fully respected in all human relationships: husbands with wives; parents with children; employer with employees; adults with children; laws with citizens; and, so on. Lines of authority will be respected. Those who try to break them get the rod of iron.

1. **Jerusalem**

Nations will recognize Jerusalem as the world's center of spiritual enlightenment and authority (Zachariah 14:16-19). All the world will look to Jerusalem for enlightenment about God. Those who reject the enlightenment that comes from Jerusalem receive the rod of iron.

1. **Physical Health Programs**

There'll be great physical health programs enforced. You will not be able to buy junk foods in the millennium. Foods will be processed without contaminations. There'll be no drugs available for you to have your highs on. All that's going to be removed. It's going to be a world of disgustingly healthy people on all accounts. Anybody caught being unhealthy will get the rod of iron.

1. **Natural Resources**

Environment and natural resources will be used for mankind's benefits to subdue and to enjoy the earth. There'll be no exploitation of God's creation, but there'll be no bureaucratic repression over God's creation as we have now by the environmentalists. The environmentalists are going to get shafted with the rod of iron also.

1. **Human Life will be Sacred**

Human life will be held sacred from conception to the grave. So, there will be no abortion, and no euthanasia to kill off the old people. There'll be no infanticide to kill off the children born that you don't want.

1. **Spiritual Principles**

Sexual sins will be placed under divine condemnation and they will be brought under maximum discipline. The whole world will know the truth about God and His will (Isaiah 11:9). That's one of the most severe expressions of the rod of iron. You will not be in ignorance of spiritual principles. That is what will be the most painful thing. Everybody will know. The information will be there. Everybody will understand. You won't have the problem that we alluded to earlier, where you're talking to people about great moral principles, and these characters are ignorant of the Bible. They're even ignorant that the Bible has to be listened to. That won't be the case. Everybody will know that the Bible speaks for God. Everybody will have direct communication from Jesus Christ. And we, the Christians, will be the administrators and the channels of that information.

1. **The Origin of the Universe and of Life**

It will be clear to everybody that the origin of the universe and of life is by divine creation. Evolution will be exposed, and it will be ridiculed.

There are many more things that could be added, but that just gives you a little bit of an idea of how you are going to shepherd these people with your rod of iron, and the basis upon which you will function.

Let's wrap it up. Verse 28 says, "And I will give him (the believers) the morning star." The word "give" is the Greek word "didomi." "Didomi" is in the future. Sometime in the future, this is going to come to you Christians. It is active. Jesus Christ does the giving. It is a statement of fact – indicative mood. "I will give to him" (referring to individual Christians), something he calls, first of all, in the Greek, the "proinos." This is the word for "morning." And he combines that with the word "aster" which is the word for "star." The "aster" is the morning star. You know what the morning star is, don't you? Morning star is a planet. If you're up just before daybreak is ready to break out, when it is dark and as dawn is approaching over the horizon, mainly it's the planet Venus. It catches the first rays of the sun, and it tells you that the sun is about ready to break out over the horizon. You look up there and that glittering ball up in the sky. That's called a morning star. That morning star tells you that darkness is about to be removed, and the day daylight is about to break over you.

This is used here of Jesus Christ. It is used in terms of His return at the rapture. For us, He will be the Morning Star. He has a relationship to Israel also of illumination, using again a planetary comparison, in Malachi 4:2. Here's what He is to Israel: "But unto you (the people of Israel) that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings, and you shall go forth and grow up ... ," and so on. So, to Israel, when Jesus Christ returns a second time to this earth in order to begin the millennial rule, He will come as the sun. When Christ comes to this earth, He will come as the Sun of Righteousness. When he comes to catch up the believers in the air, He will come as the Morning Star. There are the two comparisons.

Between these two points, there is a seven-year tribulation period. That is when darkness descends upon the human race: the relationships; the sins; and, the consequences. That's when the darkness will be the greatest in all of human experience. When Jesus Christ returns, He will return to us as the Morning Star. ... Revelation 22:16 refers to that – the Morning Star. That tells us that the earth's darkness of the tribulation is about ready to be terminated, and that the dawn of the millennial age is about to begin. When the Sun of Righteousness appears for His people Israel to establish the millennial age, then the dawn will break. We are going to know it seven years before, because Christ, our Morning Star, will have raptured us out of this world so that we know that the darkness is about to be terminated in seven short years.

Jesus Christ appears at the rapture. He indicates that Satan's rule is almost at an end. It has seven years to go. So we Christians rejoice to watch the horizon of the world events for the Morning Star Jesus Christ to break into view. He is our blessed hope.

Verse 29, says, "He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. We will not go into the details, because we have already dealt with these words at the end of other letters. This is simply to remind you that this is the same exhortation. But there is something different. In this letter (number four), something changes. For the first three letters, this statement, "For those who have an ear to listen to what the Holy Spirit has said," in each letter, comes before the statement to the overcomer. The statement to the overcomer here is in verse 26. "To the one who has an ear to hear the Spirit" is in verse 29.

If you look back at the first three letters, you will see that it is reversed. First, he spoke to those who had an ear to hear, because this is an address to a local congregation as a whole. But when he speaks to overcomers, He is he speaking to individuals. The first three letters represent stages historically in the local church where the congregation as a whole could turn back to the Lord. Today, Christendom as a whole can no longer turn back. Today, whole local churches cannot turn back. So He doesn't appeal to them first. He appeals instead to individuals within the churches. And those of you, as individuals, who are overcomers, you take the stand. Most of the people in many churches (it's not so true of this church, but of local churches on a whole) will not go along with divine viewpoint. In the last four letters, the appeal to the overcomer comes first because only individuals will change. The appeal to the group comes at the end. So that that pattern is followed here.

**Heed this Book**

The gist of the appeal is for believers to heed what the Holy Spirit has revealed in this letter, and to respond with appropriate correction and action. And again, I remind you that this is the one book in the Bible that promises a special blessing for positive response to the content of this book. Those who obey this book will receive fantastic special blessings from God.

This letter, I think, has been one of the most informative and one of the greatest of these seven letters in the depths of what we have covered. You may not grasp that because we've been on it so long, but you can study this series of 29 studies, and you're going to have one of the greatest impacts of what the Christian life is all about, and how to be a winner in heaven. It will be as great as any group of Scriptures that we have ever studied together. So you will be able to sit down and go from one end to the other, and see indeed what it means to be an overcomer and a winner in the Christian life.

Now we look on the horizon for our Morning Star. When He appears, we're off and gone, and you're shining up your rod of iron, and you're getting ready to do the work of authority of shepherding under Jesus Christ. Some of you thought you'd never amount to anything. I'm here to tell you that you're wrong. You are going to achieve what politicians all over this country would give their right arms to achieve. You're going to do it. Just look at the person next to you. That's the authority we're talking about. That's grace in its finest hour.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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