***The Day of the Lord  
  
RV38-02***

Please open your Bibles once more to Revelation 3:1-6 as we are looking at the letter to the church in the city of Sardis. We want to begin, however, with reading a passage in Romans 13:8-14. This passage of Scripture calls for a godly lifestyle because Christians are daily coming near to the ultimate salvation at the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. The Lord is at hand. If there's anything true about Christianity today, that is one thing that is definitely true. The Lord is at hand, and the prayer of John, at the end of the book of Revelation, "Even so, come Lord Jesus," is very near to being fulfilled. In view of that condition, this passage in Romans 13:8-14 is particularly apropos.

Paul says that for the Christian lifestyle, in view of the near return of Jesus Christ, "Owe no man anything but to love one another. For he that loves has fulfilled the law. For this, thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet; if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love works no ill to its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in reveling and drunkenness, not in immorality and wantonness, not in strife and ending. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

**Positive Volition**

Positive volition is, of course, the determinative factor between godliness and ungodliness. One Christian lives a godly life. Another Christian lives an ungodly life. What's the difference? One thing alone: positive volition. Once they have been informed, it's simply a matter of positive volition. Those who want to yield to Bible doctrine do so, and those who do not want to yield to Bible doctrine do not do so. The people who know but who don't want to yield to doctrine are the characters who are running off hither and yon for counseling. That's why the counseling business is so big among Christians. It is quite a racket. The only counseling the Bible knows about is a pastor-teacher standing up before a congregation, and in the privacy of their personal relationship with the Lord, informing them of the contents of Scripture, which the Spirit of God then takes and applies. The only reason people need counseling is either they have been uninformed on what the Scripture contains, or they are so negative on what they have been uninformed that they're going to try to somehow make it some other way, and they never will do it. Positive volition is the determinative factor as to whether you will be obedient in the view of the Lord's approach to what this passage has told us of a lifestyle that is befitting a Christian, or if you will not be.

So, stop kidding yourself. If you are one of the kind that feels that you have some kind of a human problem, and you can't resolve it, and you're looking to somebody to give you more help, and you're looking for more information, just put it right back on yourself and look yourself in the mirror, and say, "You're the trouble." Your negative refusal to be obedient to what God has said is the reason you've got the problem. So, you can either shape up, or you can eventually ship out into God's eternity with all the consequences of having failed to apply the truth that you know.

So, negative volition Christians are the kind that 2 Timothy 3:7 is talking about, who, by deliberate choice, have placed themselves in that position: "They are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." How many Christians are ever learning, and they're never able to get it together. They are a certain weak type of temperament. They lack manliness, or they lack womanliness, and many of them are never going to make it. To have access to divine viewpoint, but to remain in human viewpoint conduct is a very dangerous game to be played.

**The Return of Jesus Christ**

1 John 2:28 tells us what the consequences of that are going to be – to have divine viewpoint information, and to fail to live up to it. John says, "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." We are to have confidence when Jesus Christ appears, and not to be ashamed when He comes. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is the next event of God's prophetic program. We have found that Jesus Christ came to earth once as a suffering Lamb of God to die for the sins of the world. He is going to come again as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The second time, when He comes as King of Kings and Lord of Lords is going to be the thing that we look forward to. However, the issue is: how are we going to feel when He does return? And that's the whole point of this passage in Romans. Paul is saying, "Be prepared, so that when it happens, you're not going to be ashamed."

This matter of the Lord's return is the major theme in the Bible. We found that this is to be visible; it is to be literal; and, it is to be physical. The return is to be accompanied by divine glory; it's to be accompanied by power; and, it's to be accompanied by a royal escort, not only of the church, but of the angels of heaven. This Second Coming is also inevitable; it is stealthy; it is unexpected; it is destructive; it is sudden; it is inescapable; and, it is going to be met with a lot of human viewpoint delusion when it happens.

We've been seeing that the Sardis believers, with all of their failings, have been promised a white robe. The white robe signifies ultimate sanctification when Jesus Christ returns to this earth. And with ultimate sanctification, of course, comes a salvation from the presence and the power of evil.

**Prophecy**

Something else that we ought to look at in connection with the return of the Lord is the time factor. Well, one of the things to remember about the coming of the Lord, first of all, is that it is a future event. We've gone over a lot of crazy ideas about how it has taken place in some symbolic spiritual way, but the Bible says, "No, it's a future event. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is part of a divine program of future events. John 16:13: "Nevertheless, when He, the Spirit of truth (that is, God the Holy Spirit) is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak from Himself, but whatever He shall hear, that He shall speak, and He will show you things to come."

One of the wonderful promises to the disciples was that when God the Holy Spirit came, future things would be revealed to them. Revelation 1:1 says, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass, and He sent and signified it by his angels unto His servant John." God the Father informed the Son, and the Son informed John through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

**His Return is in the Future**

So, the return of Jesus Christ is part of God's plan. It is part of future events. There are many factors that are connected with the return of Christ which have not been realized. The arrival of Jesus Christ on earth is necessary for the fulfillment of these many details. Again, we want to remind you that for the prophetic picture that we have in Scripture, for every one thing that the First Coming fulfilled, it left eight things unfulfilled. So, the vast majority of things that the Bible has predicted are dependent upon a return of Jesus Christ to this earth for their fulfillment. So, it's future. It is yet ahead of us.

**His Return is Unrevealed**

Secondly, in terms of the time factor, it's unrevealed. We don't know when it will occur. We know that it's future, but we don't have the exact moment of the Second Coming. Mark 13:22, Jesus says, "For false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall show signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect." Let's compare that with Matthew 24:36: "Of that day and hour, no man knows. No, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

So, Mark tells us that the time of the Lord's return is an event that is definite, but it's one which is going to be contaminated by false claims. Of course, through the history of the human race, there have been people who have risen and said, "I'm the messiah. I am the coming one." They have claimed to be the Christ. But Matthew says that you won't know when that person will arrive. The time is unexpected. Even Jesus Christ in His humanity does not know when He is going to return. He is seated now on His Father's throne, and at some point in the near future, the Father is going to turn to the Son and say, "Now it's time for the rapture, Son." Then Jesus Christ is going to stand up; move out into the outer space atmospheric areas; and, we are going to be caught up to meet Him then. The Lord does not know Himself when that's going to be.

We have this Acts 1:7: "And He said to them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His Own power." Just before Jesus left, He emphasized again that the Father is the one who knows. Another thing about the time of the return of the Lord is that it's the next event. I can tell you that: that it's the next event. That's why Revelation 1:1 states to us that this return is to take place shortly. "Shortly" there, means it's the next event: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave up to Him to show His servants things which must shortly come to pass." "Shortly" means it's the next event. There is nothing that is waiting to be fulfilled before Jesus Christ can return for the church. That's why we say that His return is imminent.

**His Return is Near**

Also, we can say that, relative to the time factor, it is near. Revelation 1:3 says, "Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy (the book of the Revelation) and keep those things which are written in it, for the time is at hand" (that is, it is very near). Then near the end of this book, in Revelation 22:10, we read, "And He said to me, 'Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.'"

What all this means is that from the divine reckoning, the time of the Second Coming is just around the corner. This condition of nearness was true 1900 years ago, because God views time in a different perspective. 1,000 years is nothing but a day with God, in effect. Therefore, we have not had a very long time, from God's point of view, since Christ was here. The Bible constantly says that His return, therefore, is immediately near at hand. You should not press that and say, "Oh, when God says 1,000 years, He means one day." That isn't what it says. It says, just as a comparison, that a long span of time with us is nothing with Him. So, the principle to remember is that the return is near.

**His Return is Imminent**

Further, it is imminent. The word "imminent" means that the return of Jesus Christ for His church can happen at any moment. This means that there are no prophesied events which must be fulfilled before He can return. For us, nothing stands in the way. There are signs related to the return of Christ in the Second Coming, but these are signs that have to do not with His coming down to meet the church in the air and taking us back for the Judgment Seat event. These signs are when He actually comes down to the earth. We have signs indicating that. There are certain things which had to be fulfilled, and must yet be fulfilled. But for His taking us to heaven, there are no signs, and there is no event, which must yet be fulfilled.

So the Christian is told to look for the Lord. He is not to look for the so-called signs of the times. Philippians 3:20: "For our citizenship is in Heaven, from where also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." That's where your eyes should be. Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ." We do not look for signs. We are not scrounging around to find these various evidences. We are looking for Him. There are no signs to look for.

**The Day of the Lord**

There is another thing in terms of the time factor. We may call this transitional. The return of Jesus Christ covers human history from the day of man to the Day of the Lord. We go from the day of man (and that's what we're in now) to what the Bible calls "the Day of the Lord." So, the return of Christ has this effect on time: you go from man's domination over to God's domination. In 1 Thessalonians 5:2, we read, "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night." Now let's be sure you understand what the day of the Lord is.

The Day of the Lord is a period of time, and it has two sections to it. First is the period of seven years known as the tribulation. That's the first part of the Day of Lord. When the Day of the Lord is presented, as it often is in the Old Testament, it begins with a terrible darkness – with events that are horrible. It's a nightmare event. Then, there is the second part of the day of the Lord, which is the millennium. That is the 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth. So, the day of the law takes in first a period of great human suffering and a period of darkness that then explodes just because Jesus Christ returns at this point into the millennial kingdom where Jesus Christ is ruling on the face of the earth. So, man enters the golden age of mankind. For that reason, we see that the return of Christ, in terms of time, is going to be a transitional event: from the day of man to the day of the Lord. It's a transition from human viewpoint values to divine viewpoint values.

**Premillennial**

Another factor on the time is that it's premillennial; that is, Jesus Christ comes before the millennium. He does not come at the end of the millennium. He doesn't come in the middle of it. He comes premillennial. He returns to this earth actually to rule and to reign upon it. The Old Testament indicates that the earthly kingdom of Jesus Christ is to be introduced with a period of divine judgments on the earth. That's what we refer to here as the tribulation period. That's the first part of the Day of the Lord. There are many passages that indicate this period of judgment (Psalm 2:1-9, Isaiah 2:2-4, Daniel 2:34-35). There are many verses that indicate that the return of the Lord is preceded by this period of judgment. All of the scenes that you have in Revelation 19:11 through Revelation 20:6 confirm divine judgments on mankind before the millennium. So, the return of Christ follows this period of judgments. But He returns before the millennial kingdom begins.

Looking at it another way is that the return of Christ is long-delayed. 2 Peter 3:9 records for us that very challenge to the promised return of Jesus Christ. Peter says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (that is, His promise of return) as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God is in no hurry to bring His final judgments upon this earth. That's why time is a different factor. 1,000 years is just a day with God. God is not in a hurry to bring judgment, because when the Lord returns, it is all over for everybody who's alive today who is outside of the family of God. There are no people who are going to be saved when they see Jesus Christ returning. They are doomed. It is over. That decision has to be made before. The Bible gives us only one action toward the people who see Him coming: they blaspheme Him. They try to get at Him to destroy Him. These armies of the world have gathered in rebellion against God, and they are ready to fight Him, even when they see Him coming. They don't fall to their knees and say, "My God, it's true. Here He is. There really is a Savior. There really is a Christ. All of the things we've read in the Bible, and everything that the fundamentalist Christians have been telling us is true. Here it is. I believe it." They're not going to believe it.

So, God says, "I'm not in any hurry to come back," because He is a God of mercy. He'd rather give people a chance to change their minds. The delay of God's wrath is simply to give people the opportunity to be saved.

**Two Phases**

The return, as we've already indicated, is in two phases. I want to button that down.

**The Rapture Phase**

There is the rapture, when Jesus Christ meets the church in the air. The Christians move off the face of the earth. They meet the Lord up in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 tell us all about that. This is the bridegroom. Jesus Christ is coming for his bride, the church. Israel is not involved in this. The only Jews that are involved in the rapture are those who have become Christians, and therefore they became part of the body of Christ. Everybody in the world today is either a Jew; a gentile; or, a Christian. Those are the only categories of human beings that there are. Christians come from the category of gentiles and Jews. God is only dealing now with the Christian group. The rapture is a private event. It will be unseen by the world. The world will not actually see us rising up and meeting the Lord in the air. The world will only see the consequences of the sudden departure of millions of believers. That's the rapture phase.

**The Revelation Phase**

Then the second phase is sometimes called the revelation phase. That's the Second Coming where Christ actually returns to this earth. In 1 Thessalonians 3:13 and the 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, you have Jesus Christ returning to the earth with His bride, the church. This, of course, is a public event. Revelation 1:7 indicates that this will be a thing that the world will be well aware of. He is returning, of course, to judge the world of living humanity.

Both of these phases of his return are found in 2 Thessalonians and in Titus 2:13. Titus 2:13 has both the First and the Second: "Looking for that blessed hope (that's the rapture) and the glorious appearing (that's the Second Coming) of our great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Let's go back to Revelation 3:5 once more. What we have read is that, "He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment." The white raiment stands for ultimate sanctification, connoting ultimate salvation – freedom from the power and the presence of sin. For all those who are overcomers (and we have seen that the overcomers are believers), this white garment is promised. But the verse has something more. John goes on with the word "and." This is the Greek word "kai." This is a conjunction which is introducing a factor in addition to the white robes. This is a very important, significant factor: "And I will not blot his name out of the book of life." The word "not" is a very emphatic word. As you know, that's one negative, "ou" in Greek. The Greek has another negative "me." "Me" is considered the weaker negative. "Ou" is considered the strong negative. But in the Greek language, you can put two negatives together, and this is exactly what happens right here in the Greek Bible. You've got "ou me." When he says that He will not blot out, He uses this absolutely most emphatic, strongest negative the Greek language is capable of.

We are treading on some very, very important and interesting ground. Are you ever worried about losing your white robe? Are you ever worried about staining your white robe so you won't make it into eternal glory? The Lord Jesus Christ has just said that those of you who are overcomers (which John identifies and defines as those who have trusted in Christ as Savior) are to be given a white robe when He returns. And the Lord wants you to understand something else. Once He gives you that robe, He's going to tell you something else about your possession of that robe. It is permanent. So, he uses this strong negative to tell you in another way that you cannot lose your salvation. He says that He will absolutely not (and what this "not" refers to is the erasing your name from the roster of the saved) blot out.

The word "blot out" is the Greek word "exaleipho." "Exaleipho" comes from a preposition "ek" which means "out from something." It also comes from a verb "aleipho." "Aleipho" means to anoint. When they would anoint a king, they would use this word "aleipho." They would anointed by rubbing the oil on him, or by wiping the oil on him. So, this word "exaleipho" (these two joined together) carries the idea of "wiping out;" "to rub out;" or, "to obliterate." The "ek" part gives intensity. This is the Holy Spirit using strong words. He just got through using the strongest negative to try to tell you something. You have to really be awfully slow-witted not to understand this passage and what it tells you about the security of our salvation. You really have to be a rebel not to catch onto a passage that's as clear as this one, especially in the original languages. It uses the strongest negative. Then He uses the word for rubbing out; for wiping up; or, for erasing, and He throws in a word that has this little preposition "ek" on it which intensifies the concept of erasing from the book. The word means "to obliterate."

Just to illustrate this, we have this same word used in Acts 3:19: "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" ("exaleipho"). There is the same word "blotted out:" "When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." That means to erase them. You know what the Bible says about how God deals with our sins. God does not say, "Well, I'm going to forgive you your sins, but I'm going to keep a record of it."

Those of you who have been in the military service know that on every soldier (every military man), there is a service record kept, and your service record book goes with you. If you're an officer, you have a file. When you are transferred to a new post, you take your service file with you. When you check in with your new commander, you hand him your file. On that file, he can look and see that, periodically, you have received an evaluation of your performance as an officer on your service record. As an enlisted man, everything that you have done is there. You may have done some bad things. You may have gone AWOL. That's in there. You may have had the thing taken care. You may pay the penalty for it, but it isn't taken off the service record book. Anybody, under whose command you come, will open that book and look, and say, "Well, I've got one that likes to fly the coop once in a while." He knows exactly what your past is. That's not the same as with God. Everything you have on your record is blotted out. That's what that word means. It means it's out, and that "ek" means it's really out. You couldn't reproduce it in any way whatsoever. God says, "I put it behind My back. I can't even reach back there and look at it. I remove it as far as the East is from the West. I buried it in the deepest sea. It is gone."

So, you're still hanging on with a little edge of concern that when you get to heaven and you stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, they're going to put on a big screen and show all of your life. Forget it. Some of you have been looking forward to that on some of your friends, but you're going to be disappointed. You're not going to get it. God says, "I 'exaleipho' it. It's gone. It's out. I've rubbed it out. It's done with." That's exactly how He deals with sins.

That's what he's talking about dealing with here with what he calls, "Your name." The Greek word for "name" is "onoma." That is the term by which a human being is identified. "His name" – the word "his" refers, of course, to the person who has the white robe that He has just talked about. That is the one who possesses ultimate sanctification because you are born again. You are destined for ultimate sanctification. "His name" refers to all those individuals who have been born again.

**Eternal Life**

"I will not obliterate his name (representing the individual)." And again, you have this word "ek" for "out." Here, it means "out from within." It says, "Out from within (what He calls) a book." The word for "book" is "biblos." As you may suspect (you are correct), this is the word from which we get our English word "Bible." It refers to a written record. It refers to a volume. It is a record (it is a volume) which God keeps, and it is identified as a volume associated with "zoe" – with life. This is the quality of life which God possesses. What kind of life does God have? Eternal life. The book of life is a divine record of those in the human race who possess God's eternal life.

**Holiness**

God's eternal life is tied to His Holiness. Eternal life is not mere eternal existence. Everybody, whether you're in heaven or hell, exists forever. Nobody is obliterated. Eternal life is not just eternal existence. When the Bible talks about eternal life, you must remember that it is associated with one quality and God, and that is holiness. That is what eternal life is. Remember that holiness refers to absolute righteousness plus perfect justice. That's what constitutes the holiness of God. Existence minus divine holiness (which is what the people in the lake of fire have) is not eternal life. The Bible calls that eternal death. If you have eternal existence minus God's holiness, you have eternal death. But when you have eternal existence plus divine holiness, then you have eternal life.

In the fall of Adam, mankind became alienated from the life of God. That is what Ephesians 4:18 teaches us. Because we were born in Adam, we're alienated from the life of God. But then John 3:15 tells us that, through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, a person is restored to God's life. You are restored to eternal life. Jesus Christ, to whom the believer is permanently united by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, is actually the believer's eternal life. Colossians 3:4 tells us that. This eternal life is actually a present possession of every believer. Your eternal life is not something that you're going to get in the future. Here, again, is a very serious mistake that a lot of people make. They're looking forward to an eternal life that they're somehow hoping they'll come into. But the Bible says you have it now. John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My word and believes on Him that sent Me has eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death unto life."

Someday this eternal life is going to be extended to your physical body. 2 Corinthians 5:4 tells us that. 2 Timothy 1:10 tells us that. So, you will live forever. This is very important to understand. Sooner or later, people are faced with funerals. People are faced with loved ones going on. It is important for us to understand just exactly the way God works in terms of the life of a believer. To have eternal existence (which everybody has), plus divine holiness (which only believers have), equals eternal life, which is, in time, applied to the physical body. So when a Christian dies, he is going to be raised to God's kind of eternal life. When an unbeliever dies, he is going to be raised to eternal death – to the life which is other than the kind that God has.

**The Book of Life**

What the Lord Jesus Christ tells the church of Sardis is that, to those who have been close in the white raiment of ultimate sanctification, He also promises, therefore, that their names will not be removed from what he calls the book of life. What is the book of life? The book of life is a concept of a divine register of the saved. It is reminiscent of the ancient custom of keeping genealogical records. In Nehemiah 7:5 and in Nehemiah 7:64, for example, you have reference to keeping genealogical records in order to authenticate those who are eligible for the position of priesthood. It is also used for the recording of a person's performance and the judgments against him. In Scripture, God keeps records. So, the book of life has behind it this Old Testament concept.

One very interesting example of this kind of record-keeping on the part of God, which then expresses itself in this concept here in the New Testament in the book of life is relative to one of the very last kings (the next-to-the-last king) of the southern kingdom before they went into Babylonian captivity. This man's name is Coniah. He also is known by Jeconiah, and his other name is Jehoiachin. They're all the same person. He was king of Judah. He was in the line of King David, but he came under divine judgment. 2 Kings 24:8-9 tell us why. It says, "And Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he began to reign. Any he reigned in Jerusalem 3 months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all his father had done." His father had not been a good example. His father had been an example of an evil king. The son comes along, and he does the same as his daddy does. Coniah, therefore, was rejected by God from being in the royal line of the Messiah. He was placed in a position of a divine curse.

So, in Jeremiah 22:30, we read, "Thus says the Lord, "Write this man (he's talking about Coniah) childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days, for no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon his throne, sitting upon the throne of David and ruling anymore in Judah." So, we had David the king. David the king had a great son, Solomon. He also had another son, Nathan.

When we were in Jerusalem this summer, we had a guide who was very knowledgeable. I was surprised that when I discussed Nathan with him, his first response to me was, "David had no son by the name of Nathan. Nathan was a prophet." I said, "Yes, there was Nathan the prophet, but David had a very important son named Nathan, because Solomon got in very bad trouble with God." God keeps records, and, therefore, Nathan came under a position of blessing that should have gone to Solomon.

But coming down the line here, over the centuries, you come to Coniah. This man followed the same evil that was characteristic of his father. So, God said, "The Messiah has to come through this line. Here's where Jesus Christ has to come from, but you're out. You will not be the man." God records this. He says here in Jeremiah, "Declare this man to be childless." Well, actually, he was not childless. 1 Chronicles 3:17-18 indicate the children that he had. Matthew 1:12 also indicates that. But as far as God's records were concerned, he didn't have any descendants to follow.

Jesus Christ (you remember) was announced to His mother as being the child who had come to fulfill the promise of things through the line of David. It's amazing how at Christmas time, this particular important truth is ignored. Luke 1:32-33: "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David." The Bible calls a person a father if, someplace along the line, you are in his line of descent. It could be somebody toward the top of the genealogical tree. Solomon could be called the father of Jesus Christ. David was called the father of Jesus Christ. "And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and over His kingdom there shall be no end." Of course, Jesus Christ is not reigning over the house of Jacob (that is, over the Jewish nation). That's what's coming in the millennium. And the kingdom of the Jews will go on forever. It will never come to an end.

So, here's the picture that you have of a God who keeps records. David is the line through Jesus Christ must come, and Coniah has been cut out of that line. Notice the amazing exactness and care of God in His dealing in accordance with His records. You know that the foster father of Jesus was the man Joseph that Mary was going to marry, and did marry. Joseph was the foster father. Joseph was descended from Coniah. The foster father of Jesus Christ came through the line of Coniah. You'll find this in Matthew 1:12-16. Again, he sometimes is referred to as Jeconiah, which is the same person.

So, Jesus could not be born through Joseph for this reason alone. There is another reason that He couldn't (in order to avoid the sin nature), but this is the cursed line. Joseph is descended from the line which is under God's curse, and God has made a record of that. Instead, Jesus Christ descends physically through his mother Mary. And Mary comes down through the line of Nathan.

Coniah is not only under a cursed line; so was Solomon. Did you realize that? Solomon was that splendid, splendid young man that God said, "What do you want? I'll give you anything in the world." Solomon said, "I want to be the man with the greatest amount of divine viewpoint wisdom that has ever walked the face of the earth." God said, "You've got it. Because you've asked for that, I'm going to make you rich; I'm going to make you famous; and, I'm going to give you everything else." This was the man.

But the Word of God tells us something very sad. Solomon didn't know how to deal with women, and he was the smartest man that ever lived. You can see what a problem is involved there to begin with. But Solomon made a very, very bad mistake. He was not satisfied to follow the order of monogamy that God had established for the human race. When he got out of fellowship, he ended up with 700 wives and 300 concubines: 1,000 women floating around his household. Imagine that. 1 Kings 11:1-8 describe for us the situation, which basically was that he kept marrying foreign heathen women. He kept getting associated with women who came from heathen cultures, and they brought their pagan gods with them. Would you believe it? This man, with all the divine viewpoint in the world, ended up worshiping these demon gods. He ended up creating places of worship for the gods of his wives so that they could feel at home in his household? And the result was that God said, "Solomon, you're out. You will not be the line of the Messiah." Instead, that honor went to David's other son, Nathan, and Mary was in the line of Nathan. Mary was the physical provider. Jesus Christ physically descended from Mary. Luke 3:31 tells us this, indicating that Nathan was the son of David.

So, Jesus Christ received the legal claim for the throne of David from his foster father, Joseph, who descended from Coniah, the line which was cursed. However, His physical claim to the line of David came through his mother, who descended from Nathan – the line which was under blessing.

So, God has a book. He keeps records. And all of this is in the Old Testament. This is just one example of it. It is a careful record that God keeps, and He acts according to the record. That's why you have a record at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Just count on it, folks. It's going to be there. We're not going to escape it. The record is there. It's not only those who are in the book of life relative to eternal life to salvation, but it is also your performance as a believer that's involved here.

Jesus says here, "I'm not going to remove your name from the book of life." That implies that a name can be removed from the book of life. Does that imply that a person can be lost? It sure sounds like it. If you'd like to find the answer to that, see the next session, and we'll tell you about it. The nature of the book of life is, a fascinating area of Scripture.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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