

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, June 26, 2022

“... what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matthew 24:3)

Before I get to anything else, I want to bring a reminder to the ears and minds and hearts gathered here this morning. A reminder of what I believe scriptures require that we should be looking for to come soon upon this earth. This question I have quoted above was from the Jewish disciples standing with Jesus the Christ in His flesh on Mt. Olive – directly across from Mt. Zion and the second temple that had been erected there and was undergoing a spectacular renovation at the direction of the Roman ruler Herod. It was just days before His crucifixion. When Christ made clear that He was not going to stand up His earthly kingdom then and there, the anxious disciples asked this critical question above. The language ***“thy coming”*** and ***“end of the world”*** needs to be properly understood by the saints of God who are walking the earth in this generation – very likely the generation that will see the implementation of Christ’s answer.

Since it is a popular notion that some generic conflagration will occur ... ending in a nondescript dissolution of the inhabited globe ... we need to look to the Word of God to be more precise than that. What is coming upon our creation next is a transition – in the way God is worshipped in the earth. Each dispensation of time that we can be instructed on by the Bible, the distinction is in the manner that men use to worship the Creator. From the time of the fall in the Garden of Eden, the sacrifice of animals was required, as a symbol of the blessed ***“Lamb [that was] slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:8)*** We know it had to be an animal because it was the distinction between the bloodless ***“fruit of the ground”*** that Cain brought to sacrifice and the ***“firstlings of his flock”*** that Abel brought that made the difference between God having no respect for the former and respect for the latter – resulting in Cain’s murdering of Abel (Genesis 4:4-8). No blood ... no proper sacrifice ... no lawful worship of God.

So for the first about 2,000 years of the human experiment, this patriarchal process – as in the father passed it to his son through generations of time – was how the required mode of the public worship toward God was shared among humans, up until the establishment of the Mosaic dispensation, in Mt. Sinai. That dispensational transition fell hard on the heels of the deliverance of the Jewish nation out of Egypt ... a chaotic time filled with death, trauma, and amazing works from God’s throne. The majority of those Jews were faithless souls who could only see (and even now **can only** see) the earthly interactions between governments and peoples. Among them, however, were bright shining elect spirits who were given to clearly understand that a transition was taking place. A transition between the patriarchal dispensation and the more structured dispensation of the law being written – both the law called in Latin *mala in se* and the law called in Latin *malum prohibitum*. There are laws that address behaviors that are absolutely and in all times wrong for a human to engage in (*mala in se*) and there are laws that address behaviors that are only wrong because the law makes them wrong (*malum prohibitum*). This is a universally understood notion ... unless you are a God-hating pervert who wants to muddy up the waters by pretending that eating shellfish (*malum prohibitum*) is the same as sodomy (*mala in se*). The Jews were given the law ... distinguishing them from all the other nations or peoples in the earth, as Paul indicates:

“¶ What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” (Romans 3:1-2)

So for about 2,000 years, the proper way to worship God was established in the Mosaic law. Moral law remained; ceremonial law transitioned. The sober examination of that ceremonial law should be a work that every living soul has interest in. But not so we can chase that nonsense like the Jews of this age. There is no blood sacrifice ... no Levitical priesthood ... no temple ... no holy of holies ... no mercy seat upon which the blood

of the sacrifice can be sprinkled once yearly for the sins of the people – in a ceremony. Yet, that ceremonial law instructs in the character and attributes of the Redeemer and therefore increases our understanding of and love for that Lamb and His sacrifice.

Then another transition came. Jesus the Christ came in the flesh, born of a woman who conceived Him by the Holy Ghost, so that there was no Adamic sin flowing through His blood. That Christ established what is generally referred to as the “New Testament Church” period or dispensation. The priesthood of the Mosaic period passed away ... the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies **“was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” (Mark 15:38)** Now there was no human intercessor between man and God, because Jesus the Christ became that intercessor. Now the elect of God – who were the only people for whom this transition had any real interest – were given a clear template for the proper public worship of God. It was disruptive and distressing for the people who lived in that region of the world. Extraordinary events marked that transition period, of which the apostles made clear record. This period was appointed to last 2,000 years.

6,000 years. **“[B]e not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (2 Peter 3:8)**. Six days have nearly passed. Time for a day of rest. A sabbath. Perfect symmetry.

There is another transition soon coming. It has been prophesied to tear down the current dispensation and stand up the next dispensation. It will be spread farther and will be more violent than the previous transitions ... though not as severe as the flood of Noah’s day – yet! The word “world” used within the disciples’ question – **“the end of the world”** – is not referencing the cosmos being destroyed or coming to an end ... but rather the era of time coming to an end. The disciples were thick in the transition between the Mosaic dispensation and the New Testament Church dispensation. They hoped the reign of Christ was upon them. So when Christ told them that was not so, they asked when His reign was coming and how they would know. The book of Revelation – specifically chapters 4-19 – articulate the severe events that will bring a violent end to this dispensation and introduce the dispensation of the millennial reign of Christ.

All of these things were appointed – down to the flutter of a fungus gnat’s wings – by a sovereign God before the world began. These matters should be exercised in our minds. We should be clear that the chaotic times that are right near upon us will not bring the physical destruction of the earth – because that is clearly said to come *after* Christ’s millennial reign (Revelation 20). We are expecting to soon see the violent transition between two dispensations. When Christ will call forth His people, end the six thousand years of failed human experimentation, and set up His earthly kingdom of peace.

So with that reminder discussion, let us move forward with the primary focus of today’s sermon.

“That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25)

We are now continuing our consideration of the Judgment seat of Christ, as distinct from the final judgment before the throne of God. Christ’s second advent brings forth a judgment as part of the process of the **“kingdoms of this world [becoming] the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ” (Revelation 11:15)** which culminates in the battle at Armageddon and then the setting up of the millennial reign of our Redeemer. In two previous sermons, we looked at Christ’s judgment as it pertains to the living and dead saints who are appointed to meet Him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17), and then as it pertains to the living Jewish saints who remain in the earth

through this period of time when the earth is transitioned to Christ's rule. Now we are turning to a look at the judgment of Christ as it pertains to the reprobate. I believe scripture teaches that Christ's judgment of the wicked at His Revelation is in the earth and in the grave ... and is final.

One clear aspect of this judgment is that Christ will not lump in the righteous with the unrighteous! The quoted passage is from a well-known account of Abraham talking with Christ, one of the three "men" who appeared to him on the plains of Mamre before heading down into Sodom to destroy it. The sins of that place were "**very grievous**" (Genesis 18:20) and the time had come for the matter to be resolved. We know that Lot was plucked forth from the destruction, his hand taken by the angel, and then that place was immolated with fire and brimstone from heaven. That is the context in which we find this instructive verse. The severity of the sins of Sodom – "**pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness ... neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy**" (Ezekiel 16:49) – made it one of two historic events that Christ made direct reference to in connection with His second advent.

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." (Luke 17:26-30)

Please understand this, my friends – the more learned and the less learned. You are not to envision that Jesus Christ scratched around for a couple of historic events to add some drama to His words about His return. In this passage, the Lord of providence is addressing His disciples. The same Power that prepared the flooding waters and the destructive fire is bringing those horrifying historical events forward to put them into relevant context for His people. The flood of Noah's days and the destruction of the whole population of a great metropolis ... were kind and merciful gifts from the God of heaven to the entire world – in preparation for this coming event. Check it out:

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrhah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude 1:7)

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"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Peter 3:5-7)

The entire race of humans, going forward from those two events, were to be educated on the certainty that there was a consequence for flipping off the God of eternity and pretending they might ever again ask the question "**where is the God of judgment?**" (Malachi 2:17). Rather than heed the warning, the reprobate are cursed with a willing ignorance of the lesson ... a traitorous rejection of the gift. They obfuscate; they mock; they pretend it is a fairy tale to be occasionally toyed with in the convenient seasons, then put away for real life situations. But the elect saints love the gift they have received. They have been given the wisdom of the fear of God before their eyes. So they joyfully take the lesson and prepare for the return of the King.

This passage from Luke 17, though, helps us in our current examination of the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. The context of Christ's words should be sufficient proof of that, but the words themselves help us to begin our discussion about Christ's judgment seat as it pertains to the reprobate humans who are in existence at that fateful time of His second advent. On January 1 of 2022, the world population was calculated at 7,868,872,451. It is projected to reach 8.5 billion by 2030, 9.7 billion by 2050, and 11.4 billion by 2100 – all assuming that those calculations have any credibility. Other calculations show a more robust increase rate, showing well over 8 billion by end of this year. But by any calculation, it is evident that the consequences of the coming judgment will be profound in scope – by human standards. What will happen to those billions of human beings? The flippant tone with which this incredibly profound truth is discussed by our current generation distresses us. We say in a simple way, with a tender heart, on harmless pieces of foam board that the world is on the precipice of horrifying consequences. We report God's prophetic promises that the world population will first rot from the core in idolatry, then the conflict will consume all their waking thoughts, then the food supply will buckle and fail, then diseases will overrun the population, then the physical world itself, together with the atmosphere, will begin to literally come apart in a mad shaking.

In response, we get mocked and dismissed as lunatic.

So what will be the reaction when the bodies begin to pile up? When the very things we have told them begin to unfold before their angry, obstinate eyes? That's a good thing to consider, as we look at these words from Christ telling us that it will be just like it was when the flooding waters and the raining fire and brimstone **“destroyed them all”**. We know this. We know that even after the billions that are slain by the seals and six of the seven trumpets have blown,

“[T]he rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” (Revelation 9:20-21)

We know that much because we're told in the plainest language of our mother tongue. We know that just as the world's population ignored and mocked the 120 years of warning from Noah, and the filthy sinners in Sodom ignored and mocked the warnings of Lot; they will ignore the warnings that the humble elect souls will give them right up to Christ's second advent.

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3)

This will be no Jonah and Nineveh moment. If any soul here believes that such a thing is possible, I humbly submit that soul is not paying attention to either history or scripture. The time of repentance as a community-wide, city-wide, state-wide, nationwide, or worldwide has passed. The providence of God is set, and He has given us the guideposts to see and to know when the world is on a sprint to the second advent of Christ. So our job is to learn and to prepare. Because while the living Gentile saints, together with those who sleep in the dust at that hour, will **“receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4)**, they will still be engaged in the action:

“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.” (Revelation 2:26-27)

So when Christ returns, **“revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, [i]n flaming fire”** the process begins for His **“taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not [His] gospel” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8)**. This 2 Thessalonians passage shows, like the passage from Revelation 2 just quoted above, that the saints are right in the middle of it – but rather than receiving vengeance they are glorifying Christ and admiring Him (2 Thessalonians 1:10). The passage declares that at least one component of Christ's handling of the reprobate

rebels is that they ***“shall be punished with everlasting destruction [coming from] the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power”*** (2 Thessalonians 1:9). [Interestingly, the Greek word translated “everlasting” is *“aionios”* (*“ahee-o’-nee-os”*), which if you loved ones practice enough will make you solid as the very throne of God in your understanding of the twin doctrines of election and reprobation – two sides of the same coin that can never be altered. The word is used 69 times in the New Testament and in every instance it communicates the same message and has to do with this doctrine pairing. It means not just that a thing will go on forever ... but that it is *“without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be”*. So. Two (and one of only two) conditions are applied to each and every human in the creation. Which of those two would be granted to each human was established before the world began and is as unchanging as God Himself. The glory that will be given to the elect began before time was, and will go past the end of time and into eternity. The destruction that will be given to the reprobate began before time was, and will go past the end of time and into eternity.] What is beginning at the second advent of Christ (in this regard) will be the execution of that eternal destruction in a display of His vengeance against their unchecked rebellion.

There is more to be mined from this passage, both in the nature and source of the punishment.

They shall be ***“punished”*** with ***“destruction”***. Greek *“olethros”* (*“ol’-eth-ros”*) is the term here translated “destruction”, and is defined as a noun that is a *“prolonged form”* of the verb *“ollumi”* (“destroy”). A prolonged form because it does not carry with it the notion of ending. This is an expression of doctrine surrounding the treatment of the condemned of our race that removes the last shred of hope that there will be even the least relief from God’s wrath. When Daniel’s last prophetic vision is ended, he sums it up with a similar expression. After declaring the time just preceding Christ’s return – when the Jewish people will endure ***“a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation”*** (Daniel 12:1) – Daniel announces what we colloquially say “good news and bad news”. Those, he says, that ***“are found written in the book”*** – think of the removal of the seals from off the Book of Life in Revelation 6 – ***“shall be delivered”***, and ***“shall awake [] to everlasting life”*** (Daniel 12:2). Then, the bad news. Others ***“shall awake [] to shame and everlasting contempt”***. Those, quite literally, *“repulse”* God eternally! They don’t just get written off and are done with ... they go on forever being repulsive to the God of heaven! ***“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still”*** (Revelation 22:11). The filthiness of the unsaved continues in degrees forever! Christ says thrice ***“their worm dieth not”*** (Mark 9:44, 46, 48), referring to that worm *“which preys upon dead bodies”*. It dies not, because the body is forever dying, but never consumed. What should be understood of this state is the mirror image of the glorified state of the eternally blessed. As the body increases in the capacity to experience suffering and to blaspheme God, so too does God increase that human’s villainy and suffering. A never-ending cycle of sin and retribution. As a person who does not like to feel pain and despair, I cannot conceive of a more horrifying and helpless – though imminently deserved – state.

And it is coming from the very presence of the Lord! An aggravation of any suffering is that it is in the direct presence of the power executing it! This accentuation of the punishment is what was promised!

“Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.” (Deuteronomy 7:9-10)

How many times has some soul who passes us by on the streets, sees our signs that declare how furious unrepentant, proud sin – of ANY kind – makes the eternal God, and says something like *“I think God has more important stuff to deal with than to worry about who I’m sleeping with!”* How many ways has it been expressed

to us that human beings believe and **“say, the LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not”** (Ezekiel 9:9)? It’s a loud lie! What saith the scriptures?

“Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?” (Psalm 94:8-9)

Their thoughts of God – to paraphrase what Martin Luther said to the aging sodomite Erasmus, when debating the heathen notion of man’s free will – are too human! As with their arrogant pretense that God will not pay attention to their rebellion and impudent sins while they live this fleeting life, they also think that God is not going to be really involved in the punishment that He has ordained for them when Christ returns or at the end of their fleeting life; whichever comes first. But we need to have a better knowledge of these things. We need to know for certain what God has said about His disposal of that issue.

“¶ But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother’s son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.” (Psalm 50:16-22)

It’s personal. It’s intimate. It’s detailed. It’s perfect in its completeness! This punishment is not “group” discipline, where some slight reduction of suffering might be expected because one rebel is lumped in with another rebel; **“though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished”** (Proverbs 11:21), i.e., “left unpunished” or overlooked. This punishment is going to be infinitely individualized and brought down upon every rebel’s pate! (Psalm 7:16). What we also must understand about this action by the Creator is that God is in fact the only being with both the power and the prerogative to individually dispose of every member of His creation, as He sees fit. **“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?”** (Matthew 20:15) That’s the rhetorical question of Christ with regard to how he disposes of humans (in the context of the parable), because next He says **“So the last [laborer] shall be first, and the first [laborer] last”** (Matthew 20:16). So when we articulate what has *happened*, what is presently *happening*, and what is prophesied and (therefore) guaranteed to *happen* to humans by an avenging Christ and God ... it is important that all humans (the saint *and* the reprobate) be clear that we are not the ones with the prerogative – or any business – executing on those promises of vengeance. That is the Trinity’s doing. Our duty is to preach and praise!

One final thing that has to be said regarding the nature of this vengeance articulated in Paul’s words to the Thessalonians. This punishment comes from the presence of the Lord ... and is also coming **“from the glory of his power”**. What does that mean? Why would that be a necessary element of this action for human beings to understand? Friends, we talk about this issue all . of . the . time! Every time a thing that God has done among the children of men comes to our attention – whether through the main stream media, or through social media, or through word of mouth – we have one dominant thing to say: That thing was an expression of God’s glory! That shooting was so that men would sit up and take notice that God will not let them have peace while they sin. That phenomenal expression of horror in nature (earthquake, tornado, hurricane, fire, flood, etc.) is God’s immediate work among men! They should, therefore, first and foremost give God the glory for it. But the overwhelming majority of this generation mocks us for saying so. They pretend that it is some nondescript natural force, or some dysfunction of human society that needs to be worked at by humans to fix ... it. When Christ returns, it is time to make this truth crystal clear for humanity. Their punishment is evidently coming **“from the glory of his power”**. Of course, we know that until those three-and-one-half years come to the violent

conclusion of Armageddon, the rebellious race is still imprisoned by the will of Satan, so they ***“blaspheme[] the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repent[] not to give him glory”*** (Revelation 16:9). This is in the midst of the bowls of unmixed plagues pouring upon their heads in the run up to Armageddon. They absolutely know where their punishment is coming from, but they refuse – yet – to relent in their rebellion. We know, however, that this reality changes once Armageddon is resolved and Satan is imprisoned for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3). Then things transition in the earth, and is a different kind of punishment ... which we should now take up to complete our discussion of this subject.

“¶ And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.” (Zechariah 14:16-19)

I have in many sermons addressed the conditions of Christ’s millennial reign over the earth from His throne on Mt. Zion. Because there are so many prophecies that describe that reality, and because I believe that every member of this church either already has a conversant understanding of that truth. Or can readily lay hand on those multiple sermons – and the scripture itself – regarding that truth. So, there is no need to recite those passages again here. There will be peace, of course, and there will be glory poured out upon the nation of the redeemed Israel in the land originally promised to Abraham. The nations of the earth – that population left of those ten kingdoms that sent their armies to fight along side Antichrist at Armageddon – are now given to Christ to rule with an iron rod. They will bring their best to the Kingdom of Israel and serve them in every respect that can be identified. That all is good, and that all is promised and understood.

What might still need some more examination is the consequences for any nation or people who have the audacity to even test the waters and see if they might be able to disobey in some minor degree. The passage above from Zechariah addresses that. There are consequences that continue to flow directly from the earthly throne of Christ. He is an actual King and rules with perfect knowledge and power. Those who will not worship Him as He institutes in that kingdom, will be consumed with the punishments identified ... no rain and ***“the plague”***. That word translated as “the plague” is *“meggephah”* (“mag-gay-faw”) and is not just describing a generic sickness like we might in this generation see that word. It carries with it the notion that there is death and slaughter.

So we would have to conclude that there are punishments imposed against rebels – even though they are not under the influence of Satan or have the benefit of his wisdom and strength – because they imagine inventions and rebellions. There is also clear authority for the proposition that one of the distinctions between the elect who are blessed mightily during this period ... and those who are reprobate ... is that the reprobate live a much shorter life. As the expositor John Trapp says of the prophecy regarding age differences during this millennial period at Isaiah 65:20 shares: ***“For the child [of Israel] shall die an hundred years old,] i.e., He that is now a child, shall live till he be so many years old. ... But the sinner, being an hundred years old, {a } shall be accursed.] And the more accursed because so long lived, and yet dieth in his sin, going down to the grave with his bones full of the sins of his youth.”*** The idea is that those blessed of Israel under Christ’s reign will live so long, one there will still be considered a child at age 100, while those who are reprobate will (through the spoliations of sin)

wither away and die at much younger age. So we must conclude that reprobates face punishment and death during the millennial reign of Christ.

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. [] And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. ¶ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:5, 7-15)

Those rebels who are slain in the period of time between Christ’s second advent and then at Armageddon, are with those specifically identified as among ***“the rest of the dead [who] lived not again until the thousand years were finished” (Revelation 20:5)***. Once that millennium is finished, Satan is loosed and makes a final assault on God’s saints. The result is that all of humanity who are not the elect prophesied to remain with Christ and God in the earth for eternity – are slain. They then are left to be among them who are called before God to be subjected to the final trial and sentence, resulting in the final solution to reprobates, Satan, death, and hell – they are all cast into the lake of fire for an eternity.

In general terms, we know this as doctrine. There is a great deal more to understand of these post-millennial events, but for purposes of our discussion today we have sufficiently looked at the authorities available. I shared this portion of information only because it lets us see what the final outcome is for those who are specifically dealt with by Christ as He takes His throne of judgment upon His second advent. The way I have put it in previous examinations, Christ takes rule over the earth for a period, and then the kingdom is given to the Father to establish His judgment throne for eternity. While both are God, it is clear in scripture that a distinction is made – and thus we should make that distinction. That judgment of Christ – as it pertains to the reprobate who are in existence at His second advent – is in the earth and in the grave and is final. Some will live through the second three-and-one-half year period and will not die until the millennial reign has begun. Some will be slaughtered in the time of the seven bowls of unmixed wrath, or at Armageddon. All will die and all will come before God’s throne after the millennial reign. Then all will be put into their final place of punishment, the lake of fire.

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (1 Peter 4:17-18)

I love you all.

Amen

Lord's Supper – June 26, 2022

There is a brief thought that I wanted to share with my friends here with regard to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. For some weeks, I have been looking at that beautiful love song between Christ and His Bride. In seven places within that blessed book, there is a reference to breasts relevant to what I bring to you today. Here they are:

“¶ While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.” (Song 1:12-13)

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“Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.” (Song 4:5-6)

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“¶ How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman. Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins. Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus. Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries. How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples; And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.” (Song 7:1-9)

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“¶ We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar. I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.” (Song 8:8-10)

Growing up, with the folly of my own youth and the stupidity with which the world around me approached this blessed writing, I felt a certain agitation of mind whenever I read of or spoke of these verses. It's only an embarrassment to me now to think of it, because to look at these words with such a childish lens makes a mockery of God, Christ, and the solemnity of the New Testament Church – to say nothing of the eschatological importance the book has.

So I want you to go with me on a short journey to a much clearer understanding of these passages. Since the whole of the Song of Solomon requires extensive searching and parsing of so many metaphors, I cannot in this short time give you a comprehensive exposition of them all. I can, however, present to you what can be a significant improvement in your grasp of the book – each time you read one of the references to the church's ***“breasts”*** in this love song.

There are two ... always clearly. Plural ... twins ... betwixt. These are a source of comfort ... a source of strength ... clusters of grapes ... appended to a belly of wheat ... and a thing that the little sister is without, i.e., *only* the New Testament Church is given this. All of these identifiers might have been a clue to me about what is referenced. I have spoken in my sermons about the relationship between this love of Christ's and the **"daughters of Jerusalem" (Song 1:5)** who are referenced ten times in the song, including that this **"little sister"** is the same entity, in a different metaphor. It speaks to the relationship between the New Testament Church and the Redeemed of Israel to be called in the Day of the Lord.

But, I have never explained what the breasts are in and of themselves – in this glorious song. Consider these words of exposition:

Gill: *"rather these "breasts" may point at the two ordinances of the Gospel, baptism, and the Lord's supper; which are breasts of consolation to believers, out of which they suck, and are satisfied; and through feeding on Christ in both, they receive much nourishment and strength; and are very amiable and lovely to the saints, when they enjoy the presence of Christ in them, and have the discoveries of his love to them; and may be said to be "twins," being both instituted by Christ, and both lead unto him, and require the same subjects; and are received and submitted to by saints"*.

I know there are other views of various expositors ... though they seem frequently to be categorizing all of the supposed messages or applications of the type, which gives me pause in placing too much upon any one of them without testing the exposition in the light of what I know to be the subject matter of the song. For example, many suggest it may be a reference to the two "testaments". Problem is, the "little sister" clearly had at least one of those testaments; she being the Jews. That would, at best, keep these breasts from being **"twins"** as one would be shared with the sister and the other not. Further, the two testaments are part of the church's body? The metaphor limps too badly to trust. I'll not pursue that further right now, only say that I find similar failure points in other suggestions by expositors.

But the breasts as representing the ordinances lands squarely. It is the nourishing essence of the church. Christ is centered and resting there – as in we are closest to the breaking of His body, the shedding of His blood, His death, burial, and resurrection there. They are joined with the other delightful characteristics of the church, in the eyes of our Christ and in every respect, but when he is in repose with us it is between these ordinances. The Jewish remnant will be called forth – as I have extensively preached about – and be taught how to show proper worship of Christ in the earth during the first three-and-one-half years of the Day of the Lord (this very Christ of the Song). When she is redeemed, she has no breasts – i.e., has no proper understanding of or application of these two ordinances that replaced the dead, bloodless types of the Mosaic law. So, it is a key component of our teaching her, that we demonstrate the breasts that have been given the church **"like towers"** in distinction to her being without them altogether.

Christ is with us most intimately when we conduct this ordinance, and every time we get opportunity to visit the **"song of songs, which is Solomon's" (Song 1:1)** we should rejoice in the gift the church has been given with these two breasts.