

I. The Central Theme of the Bible

Daniel is probably the key book when it comes to understanding what the Bible is really all about. We know now that the Bible is about the Day of the Lord. That is the theme of the Bible. Many people are confused about the Bible's theme. Many people think it is salvation. Obviously, salvation is very important, and I am not minimizing that at all, but that is not the theme of the Bible. Some people think the theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ. Again, I am certainly not minimizing that, nor am I minimizing His place in the Word of God and what He is and what He does. But the truth of the matter is, the theme of the Bible is not Jesus Christ.

When you lay out the Bible, and as far as I am concerned, this is really the basic, fundamental key to learning your Bible, it is understanding that the key and the theme of the Word of God is the Day of the Lord, the Second Coming of Christ. I learned a long time ago, and you have heard me say this many, many times, and it always bears repeating. We all need to hear it again, and young Christians need to get caught up on it.

The bottom line is simply this: when you study the Bible, I have told you this many, many times, you never study the Bible from a Christian standpoint. That is a mistake that lots of people make. They look at themselves as a New Testament Christian. So when they read the Bible, they study the Bible from a New Testament Christian standpoint. That is a very limited way to do it. That is like if the whole Bible is a yardstick of 36 inches. Christianity is about 3 inches in the middle. So you are focusing on that 3 inches and then trying to define and interpret the rest of the yardstick by that 3 inches. That is not the way that you do it.

That is why many, many pastors today, if not most pastors, will tell you that the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are the same thing. They get that idea because that is how they were taught in a system that approaches the Bible from a New Testament Christian standpoint as far as laying it out. No, you never want to study the Bible or read the Bible or try to put the Bible together from a Christian standpoint. You always want to take a couple of steps back and you want to put the Bible together and study the Bible, not from a Christian standpoint, but from God's standpoint. Look at the Bible and ask yourself the question, "What is God doing here?"

You realize the Bible covers a span of about 7,000 years of history. You realize that in that 7,000-year span of history, New Testament Christianity only takes up 2,000 years of it. You realize there is a whole Old Testament where God was doing things that had nothing to do with the church. When we are done today with these next two books, you are going to better understand your Bible as you leave here today. You are going to have a better appreciation and understanding no matter where you are at. If you really get into this thing and you are doing what I am telling you to do, you are going to see how this thing really works its way together. You are going to go out of here a little smarter when it comes to the Bible and the Word of God than when you came in.

Of all the books of the prophets, there is no book that points more to the theme of the Bible than the book of Daniel. The book of Daniel and the book of Revelation in the New Testament go hand in hand. What Daniel does not have, Revelation finishes off. What Revelation does not cover, Daniel covers. So when you take the two and put them together, you have a complete picture of what you want to get done.

II. Christ Typified as the Smiting Stone

By the time we get into the Bible like this, the books of the Bible, we already know how important the names are. The book of Daniel means, "God is my judge." It is an incredible book that lays out, again, God dealing with the nation of Israel. Christ now, and this is what we are going to focus on today, Christ now is typified in the book of Daniel in Daniel 2:45 as Christ, the smiting stone. What does that mean? Let me explain it to you.

We have talked about this on Thursday night many times and we have laid it out on Sunday morning sometimes. There are four aspects of Christ as the rock.

Deuteronomy 32:4

He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

God is the Rock. When you look at that and take that concept and study it through the Bible, you begin to find out that God, Christ, is the Rock. Christ is typified four different ways as a rock.

1. The first way you find it is found back there in Matthew 26:42. In Matthew 26:42, we find that Christ is called a chief cornerstone. What does that mean? It means that when God began to build the nation of Israel, that nation of Israel is a picture of the temple. When God built the nation of Israel, whenever you build a building, you have got to have a stone, what is called a headstone or a cornerstone. What you do is you lay that cornerstone, you tie all the other bricks or all the other stones into that one cornerstone. So the picture is that the nation of Israel is like a building. It is a building of living stones, the Bible says in the book of 1 Peter. So when you look at that way and he talks about Christ, Christ was the central anchor point for the nation of Israel. The Bible says that in God's mind, when He built the nation of Israel, Christ was going to be the chief cornerstone. You find that in the book of Matthew.
2. Then we also find out as you walk through this that in Isaiah 8:14, you will find that the nation of Israel rejected Christ. When God sent His Son in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, they rejected Him. The Bible says in Isaiah 8:14 that at that point, the chief cornerstone became the rock of offense. In other words, Israel took offense at Him being God's Son and they rejected Him.
3. Then the next place you will go in Romans 11:9 and 1 Peter 2:6, you will now find the third picture of Christ as a stone. This will be portrayed as the stumbling stone. In other words, God took the central chief cornerstone, Christ, to build the nation of Israel. When they took offense to that, He became offensive to them, and then God took that same stone and made it a stumbling stone. For the last 2,000 years, since the nation of Israel has crucified the

Messiah and killed the Lord Jesus Christ, you know what they have done? They have stumbled over Christ time and time and time and time again.

The history of the Jews for the last 2,000 years is not pretty. It is basically one country after another banishing them from their country, one country after another murdering them and killing them by the hundreds of thousands. We talk about Auschwitz and Treblinka and all of those places in World War II that Nazi Germany did to the Jews. But let me tell you something, what Spain did to them, what England did to them, what Germany did to them way back in the Dark Ages, and what has happened all through the continent of Europe for the last 2,000 years is nothing compared. Hitler did nothing compared to what they did to them. It was not a real time. Time is relative to us. It is our time. We can identify with that. When I get up and talk about Auschwitz and Treblinka and places like that and Buchenwald, for most of us who have any understanding of history, it means something. But I talk about the Inquisition of 1500 in Spain, it does not mean anything. It is irrelevant. It is 1,500 years ago. It does not mean anything to me at this point.

4. So in the book of Daniel, we see that Christ is portrayed as the chief cornerstone, then the rock of offense, then the stumbling stone, and in Daniel 2:45, which is our key verse in Daniel, He is called the smiting stone. That smiting stone is a picture of the Second Coming of Christ. We are going to see it today when we lay this out in a little bit. We are going to see how the kingdoms of the world are portrayed as an image in Daniel, in Daniel chapter 2. The last part of that image is the Antichrist kingdom, and it is represented by his feet with ten toes. We are told in Revelation that those ten toes are the ten kingdoms that the Antichrist is going to run the world by. In Daniel 2, it is that smiting stone that smashes the feet of that image, which is the Antichrist's kingdom. That is a picture of the Second Coming of Christ.

III. Daniel's Exile and God's Plan of Restoration

The book of Daniel, as the book of Ezekiel, is a book that takes place during the exile. It is written to the Jews during the captivity. So you want to mark that out front. Daniel, we saw this last week, goes into captivity in 606 B.C. with the first deportation. Remember I showed you last week and I went into detail and showed you how they go into captivity in three installments. Daniel goes in the first, Ezekiel went in the second.

I have to just say this because this is the kind of stuff, this is sideline stuff that is very important in the Bible. You do not get this kind of stuff out of most books. You do not get this kind of stuff in most guys' preaching. They just give you the facts because they do not know it or they do not figure it out or how important it is. But in these books, there are a lot of side issues. Side issues will always kill us as far as getting through the book in any good time because it just eats up a lot of time. But they are invaluable.

Why did Daniel go into captivity in the first deportation? That is the question. Everything that happens in the Bible happens for a reason. The reason it happens in the Bible shows you and I then another gigantic concept to study in the Bible. If you go over to Daniel 1 and you look down

there around verse 3, you will find that the Bible says that Daniel was taken into captivity along with certain children of the king's seed.

Now stop and think about that. Let us step out of history for a moment and get back into the Bible. We know that the Babylonian captivity and what is taking place with the nation of Israel is just not the same kind of event like Hitler invading Poland or Russia invading Greece or Hungary. It is not the same event. We know now that the devil hates the nation of Israel. He is out to wipe out and destroy the nation of Israel. So his whole plan down through the history of the Bible and the history of man has been to wipe out the nation of Israel because he knows what you are going to go out of here learning today: that the promised seed, the Lord Jesus Christ, is going to come from the nation of Israel.

So what does he do? He takes in the first captivity children who were of the king's seed. What does that mean? The children from which the line of Christ is going to come. The first thing on his mind when he takes those Israel captive is to find out everybody who is going to be associated with this coming Messiah, who is going to be in his seed, and then bring them down first and let us destroy them. You know what chapter one of the book of Daniel is? Chapter one of the book of Daniel is basically how the devil wanted to intermingle and intermix the races of the Babylonians and the nation of Israel, and by that incorporating all of their things in and bleeding out the line of Christ. If there is any line in the Bible that has to be absolutely, absolutely pure and clean, it is the line in the Bible that deals with the line of Christ, and it is very important that you understand that.

So that is what we have here. The theme of this book, as the theme of all Old Testament books, is the Second Coming of Christ. That is the theme here, and Daniel deals with the coming Messiah to the nation of Israel. Daniel deals with that and writes that in their darkest hour of the Babylonian captivity. God tells them in this time when to expect the Messiah. Here again, and I told you this, this is a great theme that comes all the way through here, and this is one of the greatest concepts of God that you are ever going to see, and you certainly see it in this great book that deals with all these prophets: that He deals with Israel's sin. He deals with their sin and He deals with their indifference, and He is going to chastise them, but He always, with the judgment, shows the nation of Israel a way out of that judgment. That is the greatest single characteristic of God.

We have talked about it many, many times that the nature of God is restoration. God, even though He is going to judge the nation of Israel, and you see it in all of these Old Testament prophet books, even though He is going to judge the nation of Israel and He sunk them in the mire of the captivity of Babylon, He is still giving them the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel that God is going to bring them out because God always, with the judgment, it is true in your life and my life.

I deal with a lot of people throughout the week who have problems in their lives. Some of them are very basic problems that are easy to fix. Some of them are pretty complicated and require quite a bit of time to work it out. The success of my ministry, if there is any success in it at all, and the key to a successful ministry, is understanding that when you come into my office and you

sit down there and you kind of throw up on that little coffee table I have in there and lay out all your woes and problems and everything, you need to understand I do not have the power at that point to make all your problems go away. I just do not. There is no man on planet earth that does. God is not going to take all your problems away just like that. He is just not. He may forgive you of them, and He may, if you are unsaved, He may save you and give you a fresh start.

I was reading in the paper here a couple of weeks ago, most of you do not remember little Ann Harris that was murdered a number of years ago. Little Ann Harris was a little girl that was just sitting outside at her house, and two guys came along and abducted her. They took her to somebody's house and they raped her many, many times, and then they told her that they would let her go. They got her to get into the back of the guy's trunk. They said, "Well, you know what, we will just let you go and all that," to make her cooperative. Then when she got in the trunk, they cut her throat, they stabbed her a hundred times and butchered her, and then they found her someplace. They finally caught the two guys, and rightfully so, they both got the death sentence. One guy is scheduled to be executed Wednesday night at midnight this week, and so there is a lot of hubbub about it. The other guy, he had a stay of execution. He was supposed to be killed by now, but they gave him a stay for some reason.

I was reading all of that, and as I came down through that, I got the impression that people just do not understand how God works today. I mean, I read the guy's story, and the guy basically said he is sorry for what he did. This was in 1988 or something like that, it has been a while ago, and he says he is sorry, and he also says that he has found the Lord since that time. So there is a tendency, you see that when a guy gets saved, you say, "Oh, well then he is saved, then do not execute him. He is a Christian now." The problem with that is the fact that if I was dealing with him, which I am not, I would say to him this: "I am glad you got saved, and I am glad you got right with God, and I am glad you made this whole thing right, because next Wednesday night, if things go according to plan, you are going to go to heaven instead of going to hell." In other words, just because you say, "I am sorry," does not go back and undo what you did.

There are consequences to what we do and everything in life. Thank God that we have a God that will forgive us and will give us a fresh start and give us everything that we need, because that is what He has got with Israel. But Israel still has to pay the price. In other words, God says, "I am going to forgive you." God says, "I am going to take those things away from you and restore you," but look at what you have got to go through to get to that point.

When people come to my home, I do not have the ability to solve their problem, but you know what I try to do for them? I will tell you what I can do for you. I may not be able at that moment of time to solve your issues and solve your problems, but I will tell you what I can do for you if you really want to. You will walk out of my house with a plan to be able to get out of the circumstances you are in. Maybe you will not get out that night, maybe you will not get out in two weeks. If you have got some sin in your life that has got a real hold on you, you are not going to break that because you sit down with me for an hour. I mean, I wish it would work, but it is not going to. You have got to realize that when you get a great truth, it takes you a lot longer to get out of something than it took you to get into it. Israel took them what, six, seven hundred

years to get to that point. But every time God chastises them and deals with them about their indifference or their sin, He never does it without giving them a hope of getting up.

Do you know what it would be like in your life and my life? Because we are sinners and we have all done stupid things in life. If God would never give us that way out, that for the rest of our lives we had to, before God, God would not speak to us. God would not talk to us because of something we did 30 years ago that God just had an attitude about. How terrible that would be. If anybody God had a right to have an attitude against, you are going to see it before we get done today. This whole Bible is going to start to come into focus if you are just kind of halfway paying attention today because there are so many things out of Daniel here that are going to help you. All I want for you is to know that when you have issues in your life, there is a plan, there is a way out, because God in everything that He does, He makes that way.

Many times in Daniel, as you come through here, as the other prophets, you always see it going back and forth. He will talk about how He is going to chastise them, He is going to judge them, He is going to deal with them, He is going to whack them, and then in the next verse, He says, "But I am going to restore you, bring you back, and make you what you once were." That is just the character and the nature of God. He does that with Israel and He does that with you and me. But that does not mean that we do not have to pay the price for what we did. Many times we think because we got saved now that what I did, killing somebody back here, or if I am in prison and I have gotten saved, you have got to let me out now because I am saved, because Christ came to free the captive. That is not the kind of captives He is talking about. He freed you from the captivity of your sin. But that does not mean that they are going to let you out tomorrow now because you are a Christian. Those kind of things people have a hard time with sometimes, they just really do.

IV. Daniel's Prophecies and World History

Many things in Daniel, as the book of Revelation, we are told that Daniel and both John were told to seal up. They are not to be revealed yet. You will find that in Daniel 12:4 and in Revelation 10:4. In other words, I am saying you do not get all the pieces here. There are some things that God has decided that He did not want you and I to know that He is going to reveal to the Jew when they are in the Tribulation Period, that He wants them to see that He did not want us to see. So He says, Daniel there in Daniel 12:4, He says, "Seal up these things, do not make it known what it is." He told John, "Seal up these things, do not make it known what I am going to do."

It is very important because Daniel is a historical link that we all need. If we are going to figure out what God is doing with all the nations and figure out our perspective in history, not from our standpoint, but from God's standpoint. I think one of the biggest mistakes they make in public school, along with all other mistakes they make, is they teach American history. They teach world history, but they never teach Bible history. If you just got world history and American history, you are coming up short because history of the world is not about what man is doing, it is about what God is doing when you understand the Bible. The tragedy of that is in most churches you get American history and you get world history, you do not get any Bible history

either. You cannot separate the nations and what God is doing. It is very important, and Daniel is the key to understanding the history of the world and all that God is doing.

Let me talk to you about a couple of very important things in here, and you really want to get these down. The first thing is found in Daniel 9. Daniel 9 shows the nation of Israel. Here again, they are in captivity, the character and the nature of God. They are in the captivity, they are down in Babylon, and yet God in this book, when they are in the height of their darkness, God is giving them the greatest prophecy in the Bible about the coming Messiah under the great concept of Daniel's 70th Week.

V. Daniel's 70th Week and the Coming of the Messiah

Just about everybody has heard, if you have been in church at any time at all, you have heard the concept, Daniel's 70th Week. Most Christians do not go much farther than that. They have heard of Daniel's 70th Week, but they do not know what Daniel's 70th Week is. Well, let me tell you something, when we are done this morning, you are going to understand the concept that you will never have to wonder about it again. You may not get it all put together this morning, but I will give you enough of the basics the way I had to learn it to get it down.

You know what Daniel's 70th Week is? Wherever you find Daniel's 70th Week, it is simply the Tribulation Period. When you hear some preacher get up and he is preaching on prophecy and he talks about Daniel's 70th Week, or you get Larkin's book back there and he has a section on Daniel's 70th Week, or you hear somebody talking about Daniel's 70th Week, just already put in your mind: that is the seven years of the Tribulation Period, Daniel's 70th Week.

How do we get that? In Daniel 9, there is a prophecy given, and it says basically that Daniel's 70th Week is built on a system of 70 weeks, and each week of that 70 weeks is equivalent to seven years in history. Just that simple. Each week in that 70 weeks is seven years of history. So what you are coming up with when you multiply seven times 70 is you have got 490. Here is all Daniel's 70th Week is. Real simple. Just so you understand it from this point on, you never have to get confused about it again. What he is saying in the Daniel's 70th Week is this: once you understand the formula, you are dealing with seven times 70, 490 years. You know what he is saying? He is saying it will be 490 years from Ezra, where they start to rebuild the temple, to when the Messiah comes. That is what he is saying. He is giving the nation of Israel one of the greatest keys to tell them that the Messiah is coming 490 years once you guys get back and start to rebuild that temple in Ezra Nehemiah.

That is a great key, and that is, you know, guys want to make it so spooky and so this and because they like to hold that over you and, "Oh, well, I understand the deep dark secrets of Daniel's 70th Week." What secret? You mean the fact that there is 490 years from when he started to build a temple that he comes? That is some secret. There is nothing hard to it once you understand the formula and the key by which you work the thing out.

That is not all. What happens in this prophecy is this: Christ shows up at the first coming of Christ. Christ shows up on this 70th Week. Christ shows up the 69th Week. In other words, when Christ is born, He shows up 483 years from the building of the temple, or in a little formula here,

the 69th Week. Now, how many weeks is it until Christ comes and establishes His kingdom? Seventy. But when Christ shows up the first time, we are only at 69 weeks. We are still short a week. What happens in this prophecy is the Jews reject Christ. They crucify Him instead of making Him their King. So the whole thing, as far as God's concerns, stops at the 69th Week. Then God brings in the Church Age, which runs 2,000 years. Once the Rapture of the Church takes place, God turns attention to the nation of Israel and He fulfills Daniel's 70th Week. How many years in a week? Seven. How many years in a Tribulation Period? Seven. Daniel's 70th Week. See how it works?

In other words, the 490 years are built from the starting of the temple in Ezra Nehemiah, again, run up to the coming of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom. But after the 69th Week, or 483 years, they rejected the King and they killed Him. That leaves one week to be fulfilled, and that will be at the end of the Church Age, and Daniel's 70th Week is simply the seven years of the Tribulation Period. That is invaluable. If you can just take that and get the tape and listen to it over and over again, or come over and let me lay it out, or I will lay it out for you in detail.

The bottom line is what you are basically saying here is it will be 490 years from the rebuilding of the temple that is recorded in Ezra Nehemiah to the establishment of Christ's kingdom when He comes in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But it got postponed because of their rejection.

VI. Wise Men and Daniel's Prophecy

Let me show you how this thing works. Turn your Bible and turn over to Matthew 2. I am going to show you how this whole thing works. This is incredible. In Matthew 2, we have the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ around that time period.

Matthew 2:1-2

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

You have these guys. The Bible says they are wise men, and the Bible says they are wise men from the east. You know where they are from? They are from Babylon, right where Daniel was. How did these guys who were over there in Babylon know? Do you think they just started out and started walking and said, "No"? They are studying the Old Testament Scriptures. They are studying Daniel. That is where Daniel wrote the book. They are studying Daniel, and in that book, they are finding out the timeframe and the element, and they know exactly when Christ should be born, almost to a six months to a year and a half period. So they are heading for where the Bible tells them to go because they are reading in the Old Testament that that is exactly what they are supposed to do to find the Messiah. They are just using the Old Testament.

I love the fact that the Bible calls them wise men. Notice the Bible does not give them this, another great side aspect here. I mean, we will get sidetracked with these things, but these are absolutely great practical aspects that you have got to learn out of this great book. There is no

title given to these guys. They are not called Reverend so-and-so, Father shenanigans. There is no title given to them. They are not rabbis. They are not scribes. They are not Pharisees. The Bible just calls them wise men. What does that tell you? That tells you that they line up to the guys in Proverbs and Psalms where the whole theme of those two books are about a wise man and a foolish man. A wise man is someone who finds who the Lord is in the Bible. The foolish man never does.

So these guys here bring up a great aspect. These are just common men. They are not any religious notoriety. There are no kings here. These are not the Magi that came when He was born. This is some, Matthew 2 and Luke where He is born, there is about two to three years difference between those two passages. I know your Christmas cards always have the Star of Bethlehem over the stable. You have got the wrong Christmas card there, pal. Matthew 2 is about the time that He is born. It is some two years later, maybe longer, and they are coming to Jerusalem. In Luke, He is in Bethlehem, and so it is a thing where they are looking for Him. When you come on down through here, when they do find Him, He is in a house here. He is in a manger in Luke, not the same account.

These guys have no credibility as far as credentials. They have no title. They are just wise men, and it sets up for us the great example. The common man of Jesus' day who simply believed what God said and was not caught up in all the religious apostasy of the nation of Israel knew exactly where He was. They knew exactly where to find Him. They knew exactly where to go in the Bible to find Him, and they knew exactly what the circumstances were.

One of the greatest studies you will ever take in your Bible, and I think it is one of the greatest contrasts that you are ever going to find in a Bible in a study of people, and God set it up so one is in John 3, and the other one is in John 4. But it shows you and illustrates exactly what I am talking about. In John 3, you have Jesus meeting with Nicodemus. In John 4, you have Jesus meeting with a woman at the well. The contrast between those two people meeting with Jesus is so incredibly great that you cannot miss it. When it comes to the point that He is talking to Nicodemus, Nicodemus is a ruler of the Jews. He is a Pharisee. He is someone who is up the religious hierarchy all the way up almost to the top. He cannot figure out one thing that Jesus is saying to him. Jesus says, "You must be born again." The great philosopher Nicodemus says, "Well, how do I go back in my mother's womb?" Duh, you cannot. He is so educated beyond his intelligence, he cannot grasp the simple basic thing that Jesus is talking about. It always bothered me about Nicodemus. I know he gets it straightened out at some point because he is there at the crucifixion. So he gets it figured out. But here in John 3, it always bothered me that the Bible says that he, and the Lord does not miss any details, but it always bothered me that he came to Jesus by night. To me, that is symbolic of the fact that he did not want to be seen by a scrawny going there in the daytime. That after everybody was out partying or whatever they were doing, he snuck in under the cover of darkness because he did not want anybody to know, being the great scribe that he was, that he was going to talk about this man, Jesus. He is somewhat of a coward in his convictions. It always bothered me about it. But the thing that I look at there is he just simply cannot grasp the most basic simple truths.

Now the contrast is in John 4. You know what you have got in John 4? You have got the story of the woman at the well. She is just your good old garden variety sinner. She has no religious training, no religious background. Her great claim to life is she has got five husbands and the one she is with right now is not even her husband. I mean, she is a sinner personified. You know what? She understands everything He says. Nicodemus goes back and forth in the little conversation with Jesus. She does not say anything. She just takes what Jesus says and does it. Once she finds out that, you know, she comes back and says one thing to Him and He tells her her life pedigree, she says, "I perceive that thou art a prophet." Well, you got that right, sweetie. He was a prophet, all right. He has got your name, rank, and serial number. The contrast between Nicodemus and the woman at the well absolutely shows you why the scribes and the Pharisees could never get Him.

Jesus Christ was a man that came to common people. You know why the devil hates the Bible you have got in your hand? Because for almost 500 years that Bible was written to common men. It was a common Bible written to common men, and God took common men, not the great ecclesiastical minds of the day. God took common ordinary people just like you and me who had no titles, who had no great spiritual significance, that just loved God and loved the book, and God rocked the world upside down with a common man, with a common Bible. That is why when Jesus Christ came, He did not come with a robe. He did not come with a halo. Those pictures you see in the paintings, He did not have a halo. I know some of you think you do too, and you do not have one either. He did not have a halo. Wherever Jesus went, there was not an aura of light around Him. Wherever He went, rose petals did not fall down on the ground as He walked on them. He did not have an entourage and held court with all the people who were bowing down. No, He came as a common ordinary man just like everybody in this room. He wore the same clothes you and I wear. He went to the same places you and I go, and He dealt with people. He never spent much time with the scribes and the Pharisees. He went after the people who really needed help. That was their big concern.

But a common man came to common people. One time in Luke 5, Levi had made a great feast in his own house, and there was a great company of publicans and others that sat down with them.

Luke 5:29-30

And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

See, that is the scribe. That is the Pharisees. "What are you doing sitting here with all these sinners? What are you doing here? Well, if you really are who you say you are, why are you down here with the sinners?" Now you might think that was a valid point, but the Pharisees and the scribes, they never had a point because when John the Baptist came in Luke 7:34, John the Baptist was the other way.

Luke 7:34

The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

The bottom line is He could not have won one way or the other. The point is He came to the common ordinary man where they were, and that is how He reached them. These wise men, they do not have any religious titles. They are just like you and me. They are men who had a Bible, Old Testament. They are reading Daniel. They know how this thing lays out. They were told in Micah 5:2 that He would have to be born in Bethlehem. From the Old Testament, they knew He would be associated with a star in Numbers 24:17. So when the Bible says they saw His star, you know, Christmas time years ago when I used to do, I had a gospel and a star thing, I used to have seasonal deals with a constellation. One of the great messages that we would put on around Christmas was the Star of Bethlehem. That Star of Bethlehem was one of the greatest studies anywhere in the Bible.

I have watched every time there is a television program on or somebody says, "Answers to the secret of the Star of Bethlehem," and they have got everything in the world. I mean, they have got to do it. They have got a conjunction between Jupiter and Venus. You know, a conjunction is when two bright planets come together and they look really bright, and all that stuff. They go everywhere from scientific to stupid. "Well, the people back then were really stupid and they could not figure out what all this stuff was. So they saw stuff in the sky so they did not know what it was." Do you realize that Bible says that it was not just any star? It was His star. It was His star. You know, in Revelation 9, you know what stars are in the Bible, do not you? Stars are angels. You see, you read that thing in Matthew there and he saw his star. Everybody thinks it was a brick on your Christmas card, a bright burning star. That is not what it was.

Revelation 9:1

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

You have got to read the Bible. You have got to see how the Bible lays out. Somebody says, "Well, you are trying to tell me that stars are angels in the Bible?" Absolutely. "I do not believe that." Well, I do not care. Where do you live at? "I live in Hollywood." Hollywood, California. "Yeah." Where do all the stars live in Hollywood? They live in Hollywood. Okay. Where is Hollywood? Los Angeles. You know what Los Angeles means? City of the angels. You cannot get around a book. That book fixed it, man.

So whatever this star was, they knew to look for it from Numbers 24:17. Daniel told them the timeframe. So these guys who are just no religious titles, just wise men who had everything that they needed in the book of the Old Testament that God gave them, or studying the Scriptures, they are reading Daniel. They are getting the timeframe. They are reading Micah, finding out where He is born. Then they are reading about Numbers, about a star and all the other things they are getting out of the Old Testament. They are on their way based on what the Bible told them to find the Messiah.

Do you ever notice out in Matthew 2:3-4 that Herod expects the Jews to know where He was born? Do you ever see that? He calls in the scribes and Pharisees and he says, "Where is He supposed to be born?" He expected the Jews to know because the Jews did know. They tell him Micah 5:2, they just did not believe it.

Now what does all this mean for you and for me? Isaiah 42:9 is a great verse you want to put down someplace. I would memorize it if I were you.

Isaiah 42:9

Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

You know what that verse says? That verse says that before some great event happens in the Bible, God is going to show you in the Bible that it is going to happen. It is just that simple. That is exactly what happened in the Old Testament. Now I am not a date provider. I am not going to stand up here and tell you that Jesus Christ is coming back next Tuesday at nine o'clock in the morning. That would be stupid. But I am a wise man, or maybe a wise guy, but in every case we have got some common there. I do believe the Bible is the Word of God, and I do know this: I know that just as God provided the wise men of the Old Testament places in the Scriptures to go to find out the approximate time element when Christ was going to show up the first time, that Bible lays out for you in the New Testament three aspects to figure out with an approximate proximity of where He is coming back in the Second Coming of Christ. One of them is a day system. One of them is a watch system. And one of them is an hour system right in your New Testament. The Bible very clearly teaches that these guys were looking for it. Just as the Holy Spirit of God revealed to the wise men through the Old Testament book of Daniel and the Old Testament book, the approximate time of Christ's coming through this book, He will also reveal it to anybody in the New Testament who is wise enough to follow the Word of God. That is the difference.

VII. Gentile World Powers in Daniel 2 & 7

The second thing Daniel does, and these are the main things, Daniel has a lot of things. The second thing Daniel does, it reveals to you and me who are reading the Bible, if you are wise, all the Gentile world powers that will dominate the world from the time Daniel writes in 606 B.C. up to the time that you and I live. You are going to find this in two places in particular, Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. Daniel basically cuts through the smoke and shows us the real threat and the real aspect of who is going to be in power, when they are going to be in power, and it shows you God's perspective of the world. God's perspective of the world is called in your Bible in Luke 21:24, "the times of the Gentiles." Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 very clearly lay out for you and for me, every Gentile kingdom and then shows you its connection with the Antichrist as you go right on through the Bible right up to where you and I are living.

You remember when we went through Bible basics, I gave you a great piece of information. This is crucial in understanding to keeping this before you. I told you that the two ways the devil works through the Bible. The devil has one plan in the Old Testament. The devil has another plan

in the New Testament. Those two plans are basically simply the way the devil works it out. In the Old Testament, the devil controls the world and he runs the world through nations. So it is no miracle that the first Gentile nation is found in Genesis 10:10 with Babylon. It is no coincidence that the first kingdom mentioned in your Bible in Genesis 10 is a Gentile kingdom of Babylon. The last kingdom mentioned in your Bible is the Gentile kingdom of Babylon, Revelation 18. It shows you that there is Babylon in the beginning and there is Babylon in the end. If there is Babylon in the beginning and there is Babylon in the end, there is Babylon in the... ah, you guys are not as dumb as you look. I guarantee you there is Babylon in the middle.

Now, keep that phrase because you are going to help me with this. I want you to get used to saying, in fact, let us try it one more time. You just say, "Babylon in the middle." Here, one, two, three. Okay, now you are not all together on it, but some of you are slurring your words. But anyway, we will get through it. You are going to have to help me down the line because we are going to have a little fun with it here in a little bit.

In Daniel 2, Daniel is in the captivity and Daniel is under Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar has a dream, pretty much a nightmare. In this dream, he sees this great image. He does not understand the dream. So they are trying to get all the magicians and all the men to come around and try to interpret the dream, nobody can. Finally, they say, "Hey, you know what? There is a Hebrew boy down here that is really good at doing dreams. His name is Daniel." They bring him in. Another side thing, we do not have time to get into this. This is why Daniel is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God in your Bible. There are three men in your Bible that picture God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God the Father is typified by Abraham, offers up his son Isaac. Joseph is a picture of Christ, he is sacrificed by his brethren. If Daniel is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God, he interprets dreams and tells stories that nobody can figure out.

So Nebuchadnezzar has this dream. This dream is about a big image. He sees all different parts of these images, the head, the shoulders, the stomach, everything right down from top to bottom. Nobody can explain it. Daniel comes in and says, "Okay, King, here is what you have got." In doing so, recorded in Daniel for you and for me, we now have the complete order of Gentile nations that are going to be in power from Babylon. Then it brings us right up to where we are living today.

The first thing he says is a head of gold. The head of gold he tells you in Daniel 2:31-49, he tells you that that is the kingdom of Babylon. That will be 606 B.C.

The next thing he sees, part of this is the image that has to be connected with silver. That will be Persia. Persia defeats Babylon in 536 B.C. and she becomes the world power with the devil running the world.

A little bit later on, he sees the breastplate of brass and the thighs of brass all there. He cannot figure that out. He tells him that that will be Greece. About 330 B.C., the great Alexander the Great conquers the Persians. You have seen it on the movies, on television with the 300 and all of those things. All built into that time period. Greece, through Alexander, he conquers the whole world. Now the devil runs it through Greece.

About 400 A.D., the Bible talks about the iron legs. Now legs are two. See everything up to this point has been in one single form. Now we have got two legs that represent Rome. Of course, that is going to be significant because Rome is going to have two branches. It is going to have a political side and a religious side. So now we have got the legs being Rome. Of course, about 400 A.D. to about 100 B.C., Rome runs the world. Rome is in power, we know that now, from when Christ shows up the first time. Rome takes over the world and the devil runs the world through Rome.

Then when you go over to Daniel 7, Daniel 7 we find the last three nations that make it all up. Rome stays in power from when she comes in power about 400 B.C. She is in power at the time of Christ. She is in power in 70 A.D. when Titus comes down and destroys Jerusalem. Then for those of us who study church history, and we have talked about it many, many times, an interesting thing happens around 300 B.C., does it not? About 300 B.C. there is a switch made in history that nobody ever sees. It is one of the most miraculous switches I have ever seen in my life in anything I have ever studied. This is where through Constantine the Great, the pagan Roman Empire now becomes a religious group. It went in a switch overnight from the pagan Roman Empire to the Roman Catholic Church. It moves in that direction from there. All because of one man, Constantine. We know that takes place around 313, 330 A.D.

From that point on, we find the second great thing. The devil may run the world in the Old Testament through nations, and you want to learn that and I just showed you a good example of that. But in the New Testament, he does not run it through nations. He runs it through religion. You are going to find that that is the big difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, he will run it through nations. In the New Testament, he will run it through religions. In the Old Testament, he had men and kings on the throne that were his pawns who did whatever he said. They would kill God's people like Pharaoh, like Nebuchadnezzar, like Sennacherib, like Darius. They would do whatever the devil's bidding. In the New Testament, he cannot get away with that. So he establishes his churches. Through his churches, he has countries put in church-state religions that when you are born in that country, you are born of a certain religion, and therefore he operates it through the religion. That is the way he does it. It is pretty simple, pretty basic, not hard at all.

So when you get into Daniel 7, you find that the last three nations that are there, and one is represented by a lion, one is represented by a bear, and the other one is represented by a leopard. You cannot miss those three unless you just got a college education.

England is represented by the lion that had to breed from 1600 to 1900.

The bear is represented of Russia about 1900 with the Bolshevik revolution right up to the 1980s when the wall came down and Israel ceased to be a world power.

An emerging from the demise of Russia is the single world power today by which will usher in the Antichrist and bring about everything in the United States of America.

You have every Gentile nation listed for you. I showed you last week how that Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Lamentations and how that God used an unsaved Gentile nation to judge His unfaithful people.

VIII. Lessons from Noah and Lot: Preparing for God's Judgment

A couple of weeks ago we had Roy here, Roy Schenkel, and I told you I am going to have Roy back on Thursday night. I want to hear his whole story of World War II and how God saved him, and he is now working for the Gideons, and just a great, great, great guy. I just really am excited to have him back. I did not know who he was. I did not know, I mean you had talked to me about it was coming, but I did not know who he was, and I was not even sure who he was when I was preaching. I thought he was just a nice guy that was in World War II that bailed out and got shot down over France or wherever he was, and he got POW for the rest of the war. Just a nice guy, and I would like to meet him. I had no idea that he was a really bona fide on fire Christian for the Lord. It was not afterward that he pulled me over and he said, "That was probably one of the greatest messages I ever heard." He said, "That is exactly what I am going back to my pastor in my church and tell him that is exactly, in fact he got a copy of it, that is exactly what we had to hear." I had no idea that he was as plugged in to where we are at as he was.

We both said it at the same time because I had talked that morning about God judging the nation of Israel. He said to me, and very clearly he always took the words out of my mouth, and that is the fact that I guarantee you just as God judged His people the nation of Israel with Gentile nations in the Old Testament, God is going to judge His people, the church, the same way in the New Testament. We both looked at each other and smiled and said it at the same time, "9-11, you ain't seen nothing yet."

Let me tell you something. There are two things in your Bible you better get down.

5. The first thing it says is, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man."
6. The second thing is, "As it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man."

Those two statements are classic statements when you put them into the context of where we are at. Because the Bible says that the day and age that you and I are living in is likened to the day of Moses. The day and age that you and I are living in is likened to the day of Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet if you want to really grasp this thing in a total concept, turn over at some point, you do not have to do it today. Hebrews 11:7 is a great verse that puts all this into your world and mine.

Hebrews 11:7

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Now if that verse means what it says, and if true when it says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall be in the coming of the Son of Man," and "As it was in the days of Lot, so shall be in the coming of the Son of Man," do you know what happened in Noah's day, as in Lot's day? Do you know what took place? I will tell you what took place. God's judgment fell on this planet. God's judgment fell in Genesis 6 in the form of a flood. It was a worldwide flood. In Genesis 19, God's judgment fell in the form of a fire in Sodom and Gomorrah and burned out the city and destroyed the city as God's judgment because of their wickedness and ungodliness.

My point is this: if that is true and God judged the Old Testament nations of Israel with Gentile nations, I guarantee you God is going to judge us, you and me, and you better put together in your life a Christian survival kit. You better find out how you are going to survive as a child of God when you are doing what is right in a Christian world where God is judging everybody else who is not doing what is right. You better figure out how to put a Christian survival kit in your life for your family.

You know what that Bible says that Noah did? He built an ark. He prepared an ark to the saving of his household. You know what you ought to be doing as mom and dad today? You ought to be preparing an ark that is a saving of your household because God's judgment is coming. It is going to come in our life just like it came in 606 B.C. Look at me just as a prophet, and I am sure that there are many people that would blow me off like they blew off Elijah and all of those prophets back there. They just blew it off because they just could not see how God was going to do that. But God did do it. Then He gave you and me the example in history, gave us the picture of Noah who is going to, God is going to destroy that planet. He is going to wipe it out because of its wickedness. He told Noah, "Build an ark to save your family." You better have the plans already laid to build the ark that when God's judgment falls, your family is in that ark, and that ark is a type of Christ. I am telling you, man, there is more in these books than you will ever get your fingers on.

I believe the reason why He gives you the example of Noah and the example of Lot is very clear. I believe that there are some moms and dads who have such control over their children that they will build the ark, they will build that relationship in their family, that family becomes the ark. Dad is the Noah, she is Mrs. Noah and everybody else. You even got the animals, a lot of you. So you are in good shape. You build that thing and that thing is your protection. When God's judgment falls like it did in Genesis 6, they survived it because they had built an ark. God did not give them the ark. This church here is not the ark. God did not give them the ark. God did not say, "Noah, go into your backyard, you are going to see what I got for you. Whoa, where did that big boat come from? Oh, I dropped it down here last night." No, no, no, no, no. He built the ark. You have to build the protection of your family based on what you know the Bible says God's coming judgment, and just as Noah prepared an ark in the saving of his household and God's judgment fell in the world that we live in, the only thing that is going to save your family and keep your family is you understanding what I am saying and building an ark.

The other one is Lot. Lot finally got the message that God's judgment was going to fall. He finally believed it. He is living down in Sodom. He has been involved in just about every ungodly thing that you could think of. He looks at the Sodomites as brethren, if you read the

account in Genesis 19. He is such a sorry individual that when the angel and the two angels are going down to get him, the Lord will not go. The Lord stays with Abraham and He sends down the two angels to get Lot. Now get this, when those angels get to Lot's house, Lot wants them to come in and stay. They are in Sodom and Gomorrah, the most ungodly city on the planet at that time, and the angels do not want to go into Lot's house. They would rather take their chances in the streets of Sodom. What does that tell you? You have got to read these stories.

Lot finally gets it. He gets it like a lot of God's people get it, too little too late. When he finds out that God is going to destroy the city and God is going to wipe it out, you know what he does? He gets in the family station wagon. He drives over where all his kids are living and he goes up there and he says, "Oh my God," he is knocking on the door, ringing the bell. He says, "Come on, we have got to get out of here. God is going to destroy this city. He is going to wipe it all out. Get in the car. We have got to get out of town. God sent two angels down. They are going to destroy the city. We have got to get out of here. We have got to get out of here." The Bible says that when Lot went beating down their door at three o'clock in the morning and he told them about God's coming judgment, they looked at him and his message as one that mocked. You know why? They thought, knowing their daddy the way they did, he would have been the last guy in the world to get a message from God. His family got killed. His wife came out and the two daughters who were living in the home came out. Wife did not make it very far. She turned around, looked at that old city and all. I mean, she is done, Bible has already said, they are out there hiking it out, man. They are on a 20-mile bivouac getting out of that place. They are on a forced march, and she is just dawdling behind. "Oh, I just got a new, I just got that new car. Oh, and what am I going to do? Wednesday I was supposed to give the talk of the garden party for the ladies, and oh, just what now we are out here in this old wilderness. Oh, I just, I miss my home. We had this beautiful home, and now I had to leave it, and out here there are rocks and there are scorpions." The Bible says as she lingered behind, she took one more look at Sodom. See, there comes a time. When you take your last shot at the world, God says, "That is it." Turn to a pillar of salt.

Lot got out of there. I told you what kind of guy Lot was. Lot finally got out of there, went down to a cave by around Zoar. They are in the cave down there, and so they are all hung up down there and hiding out in there, and the two daughters, they get the idea, "Well, you know, we are without seed. We are never going to be married now. We just wiped out the whole world. So we have got to have children. So, oh, I know what to do. Let us get our father drunk and you have sex with him tonight. Then we will get him drunk tomorrow night and I will have sex with him, and then we will have, our seed will be preserved." That is great. God is great. That is a great value system you have got there. Of course, the two boys, Ammon and Moab, become the two greatest enemies of the nation of Israel in the next 3,000 years. Great principle.

The problem with Lot is like the problem of a lot of God's people today. The problem was not, the issue was not getting Lot out of Sodom. The problem was getting Sodom out of Lot. That was the problem. Geographical locations and changing them never solve your problems. It has got to be changed on the inside. He says down through there, "You know what, prepare an ark." Noah prepared an ark. He prepared an ark to the saving of his household. If you have got one thing you ought to be doing today, if you have got any brains in your head, spirituality, I mean, I

know most of God's people, if you had a thought, it would lose itself and bore them. But I am telling you, I mean, like a guy said one time, if she ever had a thought crossed through her mind, it would be the fastest trip in America. I am telling you, man, but I am telling you, if you have got any brains at all, you better understand where you are living, where you are at, get the Bible together, see these things and realize that just as God sent judgment to His people in the Old Testament, for their disrespect to God and what they did, we are not any better, and God is going to send the judgment through the Gentile nations around, they are all around us. They hate us. Every nation on this planet hates us. We only inflame it more with our arrogance as a country.

There are people while you are sitting in church and you are sleeping tonight, there are people in this country who are laying awake at night praying to their God for the chance to kill you. You go to Bible studies on Thursday night, they go to meetings on how to blow themselves up to kill you. Now we have got this country of what, 275 million people, and it comes, the borders are like sieves where you can come in anywhere you want. We have got this little group of people out there running around Homeland Security who are going to protect us. You have heard it many, many times, they are not telling you, you know what, we have got to be right 100% of the time. They only have got to be right once. One time they are right and 30 people, 30,000 people get killed. One time is all they have got to be. You and I have got to check everything, check the back door, the front door, the upstairs windows, lock everything. They only have got to look for one opportunity. While you are having fun, watching the Chiefs game this afternoon, kicking back, thinking about your cruise, thinking about your vacation, thinking about this, thinking about that, they are thinking about how they can kill you. They are thinking how they can come into your office building and put sarin gas into the air conditioning system and kill 6,000 people at one shot. While you are thinking about, "Oh man, I am going to go buy this and I am going to get that and I will look really good in that." Yeah, right when they close the lid, all they do 24/7 is have meetings and talk and pray to their God about wiping us out. What do we do? "How did the Chiefs do? We won the World Series." You see this? "Look at this. Look at this. I am going here. I am going to get to do this. Wow."

You know what? I would tell you the truth. I would not go any place in this world today. I mean, they want it down in Mexico. Some guy was water skiing with his wife. But another thing, they come up and they killed him. There is no safe place today. You cannot stop those things from happening. God's judgment is going to fall. The only thing you can do is realize that in the Old Testament when God's judgment fell, even though they went into captivity, He took care of the people who loved Him and got them through. I am telling you, the model said, "Build an ark. Build an ark. Build an ark." I have watched God's people all my life, 40 years of ministry, bring their kids up. This kid goes to hell. Next kid goes to hell. Next kid goes to hell. I am in there out there doing everything in the world. Mom and dad just cannot get their head out of wherever it is at and just think, "Oh, are not they the cutest thing in the world?" Yeah. When they are screaming their lungs out in the lake of fire, how cute will they be? People just do not get it.

Now, I am going to revert out of my prophet mode. I am going to come back to my sissy-fied to latency and pastorship now. So here we are. It is okay. I got it out of my system.

Proverbs 28:5

Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.

Psalms 9:17

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

All right. There is the book of Daniel.

IX. Hosea: God's Judgment and Restoration of Israel

Now let us go to the book of Hosea. This is another great book. Something happens after Daniel. Daniel is a high mark in your Old Testament for the prophets. I will tell you why. The book Daniel, excuse me, the book Hosea. Hosea means "God is salvation." Once you get past Daniel, once you get past the book that lays all the keys out to Christ's return, it gives you the time element. It gives you the nations and the order that they are going to rise up in history so you know exactly where you are at. Once you get past the book of Daniel and you now realize that everything has been given to you on a silver platter, all the prophets from here on have one theme and one theme only. It becomes so predominant that it overshadows all the other prophets. That is every one of them, it is the strangest thing you ever saw. Every one of them take the position now on the Day of the Lord. Every one of them preach the Second Coming of Christ. Every one of them.

In the book of Hosea, Christ is typified as the Lord of Hosts. You know what the Lord of Hosts means? The Lord of Hosts means the Second Coming of Christ 280 times in the Old Testament. You will find that term. The host is all the heavenly host, and it is Lord of Hosts. In other words, He is Lord over everything, and that will take place at the Second Coming of Christ. Over 280 times in the Old Testament you find that term, "the Lord of Hosts." From this point on, everything in these prophets, the context is going to be the Second Coming of Christ, the Day of the Lord, that day, over and over and over and over and over again. Everything in this book. Revelation 19:1-11 may be the definitive passage in the New Testament on the Second Coming of Christ, but the meat of the bones is found in these Old Testament prophet books where you get all the insight that you need to get. We are going to go through them as best we can.

Historically, Hosea is a pre-exilic book. It is right before the exile. It is during the time of, he preaches for about 70 years. He has a long ministry, and he preaches God's Word to the backslidden nation and some of the worst kings that Israel has. He preaches to Uzziah. He preaches to Jotham. He preaches to Ahaz, the wickedest king that ever had. He preaches to Hezekiah, who most people think was a good king. But when you study his whole life out, you realize that because he could not trust God in what he did and he asked God for more years, God gave him those more years and then he produced Manasseh, who was one of the worst kings Israel ever really had. He should have just went home to be with the Lord. It is a terrible time. It runs from about 689 B.C. to 611 B.C. His message, as the other prophets, is one of gloom and doom, but also hope. Again, we find it through all of these prophets. Following the pattern of prophets is the restoration that God always wants to restore. God will judge you, but God will restore you, and you find it throughout the whole book of Hosea.

I told you a while back that each, not every prophet, but many of the prophets have object lessons that God gives them. Hosea's object lesson is found in Hosea 1:1-3. I want you to turn there and we will kind of look at it together and show you get a handle on where it is at here. This is kind of a rough one.

Hosea 1:1-3

The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD.

So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.

Now his object lesson is pretty rough. He says, "Go find you a whore who everybody understands she is involved in whoredoms, and I want you to marry that woman." First of all, that is a violation of the Old Testament law, but God told him to do it. If that was not enough, he says, "And by the way, you are going to have some kids from her and they are going to be children of whoredoms." That is verse 2. So she has a boy, Jezreel, and then she has a girl in verse 6 who is Lo-ruhamah, or something like that. Jezreel means "God scattered," which is exactly what God is getting ready to do. The girl's name means "no pity." So, I mean, this is not a good thing any way you can look at it. God even gets the kids involved. He not only calls the wife a whore in whoredom, but he calls the children, "children of whoredoms," and then he uses the children as an object lesson just like he does the wife.

Personally, I would have thought that just marrying a wife named Gomer would have been enough of an object lesson. I do not know what she looked like, but to me, I mean, could you imagine, "Hi, how are you? My name is Hosea. Have you met my wife? No, what is your name, dear? Gomer." Gomer. Golly, I do not know, man, but it is, you know, it is, I guess that went along with it.

Here again, I want you to notice something down here and you need to see this and you want to mark this. I told you this Thursday night, but here we are here. Look at Hosea 1:2 again.

Hosea 1:2

The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD.

See that thing? "The land hath committed great whoredom," the land. I want to tell you something that is very important in your Bible. You are going to find in the Old Testament that the nation of Israel as a people and the land are one and the same. So you are going to find it used interchangeably. You are going to find one place where he has a problem with the people, a controversy with the people. Then you are going to find other places where he has a controversy

with the land, and somebody says, "What is the difference?" There is no difference once you understand the Bible. It is a difference between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God, which most people do not understand. The Kingdom of Heaven was a literal visible piece of land that was given to the nation of Israel that you cannot have the Jews without the land. See what I am saying? You cannot have the land without the Jews because the Jews were given that land, and when God looks at the Jew, He sees the land. When He sees the land, He sees the Jews. That is the problem in the world today. You want all the turmoil in the world today because the whole world sees the Middle East over there and sees the Palestinians and the Arabs, and when God looks at the Middle East, all He sees is the Jew in the land. They are not there yet the way they need to be. So, when you find the word "land" and "people" used interchangeably, that is the way it is used. That is very important when you get into different places in the Bible that you want to remember that.

Again, I mean this thing will fix a Pharisee, an legalist down the line. Again, all the liberals, you see, all the stupid Baptist preachers that just cannot believe the Bible, they just fall apart at the thought of God telling somebody to do such a thing. I mean, "How could God? Oh, how could God?" I mean, I got my tie on, I got my suit on, I crossed all my T's and dotted my I's. "Oh, I just do not understand. How could God tell some Christian? How could God tell somebody to go out and violate His own law and tell him to go out and marry a wife? Oh, I just cannot get there. I just cannot get there." No. So, you try to make it something that it is not, you say. That is what happens. I mean, they just fall apart at the thought that God would tell somebody to do such a thing. You know what your problem is? Most of God's people probably, you do not know anything about God. You do not know anything about how He works. Some of God's people, I mean, they just do not have a clue.

"Well, I do not believe God would send," I had somebody tell me last week, I was witnessing to a little girl up at the fitness center, and she was a legitimate time. This Mormon guy came over, and I will tell you what, and I am trying to, you know, we are all kind of friends. We know each other, but he does not really, I mean, he pretends he likes me, and he really does not. He has been to some funerals that I have done, and he knows where I am staying, and he is a Seventh-day Adventist. This little gal, this little gal is, I think she is one of the sweetest girls in the whole wide world. She has got a mouth like a sailor. That is not what endears her to me. I mean, she cannot say a sentence without four or five cuss words. I got a little notebook because I hear ones that I have not heard before, and I just kind of write them down because I ever need to use it. Sometimes your sermons get dull, you have got to flash it up a little bit. This gal, the thing I like about her, she is a hundred percent honest. She never pretends she is not anything, and she has had a rough life.

We have got a guy there that is about ready to die. We all know him, and I am going to get a chance to do his funeral when he dies. We were talking about it there. She said, "You know what," she says, "I have been raised Catholic all my life." She says, "The thing that bothers me," she says, "it bothers me that," she says, "I believe in God. But," she says, "then sometimes I do not." She says, "And I know I have done some terrible things." You cannot get much more honest than this. This is the place, man, where you are just ready to, I mean, you are just letting her go a

little farther. She is basically saying, you know, I could just hear the angels up there. Just as I am with all the ones, everybody in the 50s, every head bowed, every eye closed. Well, this Seventh-day Adventist guy pipes in and he says, "Well, God is not going to send anybody to hell." My blood, I do not know how my face looked, but my blood was rushing to my feet. I mean, I wanted to just bite his throat out. I mean, I am not kidding you. I just, I am thinking to myself, I pray for this little gal. I want to see her saved. Here I got a chance, and the devil brings in 300 pounds of encased blubber here who is going to tell this little girl that there is no hell. She is standing there and she says, and she said, "Well," she says, "I worry about it." You know, she says, "I worry about it." He says, "Well, I have done a lot of things too." Here is what he said. God got, well, I have got to tell you the whole story. I am just trying to get ahead of myself. I am really upset about this. Can you not tell this?

So anyway, he starts laying it out and he starts saying, "You know, I have done things wrong too." But he said, "Come on." He says, "God is a God of love. And God would not send anybody to hell. You may have to, you may have to do some penance for your sins when you get up there. But this idea of God sending somebody to hell is just," and now, now I am mad at myself because I feel like, "Bob, Bible Bob, why are not you ripping this guy's head off in front of everybody in this place? Why are not you hoisting him up, putting him on that machine over there and dropping 600 pounds of steel weights on his head? Why are not you tearing into his face? Why are you standing here like a coward and not saying anything when you know he is telling this girl that there is no place called hell?" I am telling you what, my emotions were flooded. I mean, I wanted to kill him. I wanted to say something, but underneath all God was saying, "Shut your mouth." And I did. Then God gave me the opportunity. After he was done with this little spiel, she looked at me and she says, classic thing, "What do you think?" See? Now, if I had shut him down and killed him, she would not have asked me that. I would be in jail this morning and somebody else would be preaching. You would be seeing on the news, "That is my pastor. Pastor kills man with 500 pounds of dumbbells," or "Dumbbell pastor kills 500 pound man," or something like that anyway. But you know what? I just, I kept my mouth shut. Then she looked at me and she says, "What do you think?" I said, "You know what I think? I think that God is a God of love, as he said, but I also think He is a God of judgment." I said, "I do not think it is a matter of what you did wrong or what you did not wrong." I said, "I think it is a matter of have you ever put your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus?" I can see this guy kind of tighten up over here on my peripheral vision, you know? So I am talking this way, but I am clenched my fist this way, because if he makes a move, I am going to cock another spot. I am ready. I am ready. So, and I said, "I will tell you what I will do." I said, "Here is what I will do." I said, "I got a little book back in church." I said, "I am going to go get this for you." It has got all these little books we give out, you know, the subjects of how you, you find out where you are at a subject, and you go to the page, and it has got 40 verses that give you the subject. So I said, "I am going to bring you one of those." I said, "You start with that." Then I said, "You look through that." I said, "And then when you do," I said, "Let me know, we will sit down sometime." I said, "I will walk you through it." I said, "Your fears can be taken away just like that." So I brought him into it, because I did not want to alienate him. Because, you know, I do not think you will ever get saved. But the last person you want him going around and cutting your legs up behind your back. So, you know, I mean, he is old, God is going to kill him any day, anyhow. So it will not be any

problem. But I told him, I told him, I said, "You figure this out, you look at it." I said, "And you know, and he told you the truth. That is good. God is a God of love. But He is also a God of judgment." This thing will tell you, and then we will sit down, we will talk about it. Well, he had nothing to say. He had nothing to say, because he had nothing to give her. I had my New Testament in my pack. I had this, I had Bible basics. I had thought of studying the Bible, I could have dumped out the whole library. You know what he had? He had a pack of cigarettes. Push comes to shove. You all have got to work that thing.

So anyway, I kept my mouth shut. I am praying for her. I think she is going to, I am going to get an opportunity to witness to her. But sometimes it takes people, my really deal is to get the preacher's guy's funeral, because they will all be there. I will be able to lay out the salvation plan of salvation. I mean, just like, but my point is this. I had a point. I am not even sure what the point is anymore. But I am telling you, people says, "Oh, I remember it was, God would not let a man go to hell." Sure, He does all the time, man. All the time. God said one time, "Well, I just do not believe that God would let those little babies and those little three or four year old kids back there in Genesis 6 just drown there." Yes, He did. Grounds screaming for their mommies, running for cover, and the water coming down and drowning them. You bet He did on a regular basis. People are naive, man. They do not have a clue how God does things. They are so caught up in their own little plastic world.

Hey, boy, I will tell you something. The God I know in World War II killed 250,000 Americans, 8 million Russians, 2 million Poles, 22 million Germans, 18 million Japanese, a million Italians, a million British, six or seven, about another 8 million Czechs and Frenchmen and Croatians and Slavs and Australians and New Zealanders and Greeks and Hungarians and Chinese, and then find out killing six or seven million of His own people just to get them back in the land in 1948. You do not even know what you are talking about. Do you ever read a book called *The Fear and Practices of the Hell* by Eugene Copeland? I did not think you did. You ever read the book *Stalingrad*? I did not think you had. You ever read the book *Escape from Serbia*? Did not think so. You ever read the book *A Rape of Nanking*? Somebody says, "Who is she?" It is a city, you idiot. When the Japanese were finished with Nanking and they raped the city of Nanking, when 16,000 Japanese soldiers went into that city, they killed every male. After they raped and ravaged the women, they cut their breasts off with bayonets. They hung them upside down. They raped them repeatedly. They took little babies and threw them up in the air, laughing and caught them on the edge of their bayonets. Do not tell me what God lets go on. I will tell you something, if He put His Son on the cross, let Him agonize and turned all His back on Him and paid the price for you, you would be surprised what He lets go on. You are just naive, man. That little plastic world you live in kind of makes you kind of naive.

Somebody said, "Well, a righteous God would never tell a man to take a wife of whoredoms." He did. He did. Somebody says, "Oh, I think that is symbolic. That is just figurative. That is the allegorical way they did things back then." Oh yeah, I know. We studied a couple of weeks ago. Like Isaiah really was not naked. He just went around his underwear and socks. Over there in Judges, you have got a guy by the name of Jephthah. One of the greatest stories in the Bible. Jephthah is a hothead, Pharisee, equal Christian. Jephthah has got a guy always shooting his

mouth off. Jephthah, one time, the big guy wants to pretend he is spiritual and everybody else. He says, "I am going to vow to God. God, you give me a victory and I will sacrifice to you the first thing I see and I will give it to you on the altar and I will kill it and give it to a sacrifice." That was the stupidest thing he could ever say. You know why? Because when he got the great victory and went home, guess what the first thing he saw was? It was his daughter. You know what Jephthah did? Killed his daughter.

Now the liberals just have a tough time with that. "Oh, God would never let a man do that." You are nuts. I know God's people all the time that God let them send their kids to hell like a bullet. So the liberals try to help God out. "Well, he really did not." I was in a class one time and talked years ago and the guy said, "Well, now, do we know that that is not true? That, you know, Jephthah, God will not permit Jephthah to kill his daughter." No, but Jephthah killed his daughter. "You know, they get a lot of things down wrong when they wrote the Bible so many hundreds of years ago. And really what he did was he offered up a chicken." So I am sitting in the class and I raise my hand. He said, "Yes, sir." I said, "Was it really a chicken?" He said, "Yes, it was." I said, "Could you explain to me two verses down where it says for 30 days that chicken went up and down the mountain bewailing her virginity?" How did that happen? It was not a chicken. He really killed his daughter. Yes, God allowed him to do it. Yes, God allowed you as a born again child of God to send your kids right to hell if you so desire to do it. You would be surprised what God does.

The text stands in the AV 1611 as it always does. It means what it says and it says what it means, plain and simple. The object lesson is Israel hath committed whoredoms against God. Now the object lesson in their face, so to speak, is real. I love object lessons. Jack Hyles was a great preacher. He is dead now. Jack Hyles is a guy in the sixties and seventies that I grew up with who was one of the, I thought he was one of the greatest preachers that I have ever heard. Jack Hyles was fearless. He had his problems, but he was fearless. Jack Hyles got the idea some day when he was in church, they would have Sunday school in the morning and people would come to Sunday school. Then they would have church, and you are supposed to come to Sunday school and then stay for church. Well, obviously human nature, you know, they are going to come to Sunday school, think they had enough of everything. They are going to go home. Well, Jack Hyles, that was not his plan. His plan was we are going to have a Sunday school. You go to Sunday school and then you come into church and we all get preached to, but people were leaving. You know what he did? Object lesson. I love this. He got two deacons, dressed them up in devil suits, red suits, big horns, pitchfork, had them walking around the parking lot right after Sunday school. Family come out and get into their car. The devil come up and says, "I am sure glad you did not stay for church today. I am glad you did not stay." You know what? I got the guts to do that. But that is an object lesson. You imagine how many people get upset when somebody come up in a devil suit and said, I mean, you know, if I have somebody follow you around on Thursday night when you are out doing something on Thursday, instead of being at Bible study and you are in a grocery store, you are in God knows where and you are walking around someplace, you know, putting one-arm levels down there and somebody comes up to you in a big devil suit and says, "I am really glad you are not at Bible study tonight." Everybody, "I am glad." Oh, you will be upset. I love object lessons. Hosea is an object lesson as Isaiah was an

object lesson. Jeremiah was an object lesson. He says, "Israel hath committed whoredoms against Me." Now here is the object lesson. Here is in your face. This sets up a great key to the Bible.

X. God's Eternal Plan: The Wife, The Bride, and Happily Ever After

I told you early and I am going to go through this quickly. Here is the key to figuring out your Bible. I mean, you want the basic fundamental, get it down, have it in your pocket. Here it is plain and simple. The Bible is not hard. In the Old Testament, God called out a nation unto Himself. He wrote 37 books to that nation. In the New Testament, God called out a church to Himself called the Body of Christ. He wrote 27 books to that church. Somebody said, "Why is there 66 books in your Bible?" Because the nation of Israel in the Old Testament is like unto God's Son. In the New Testament, the church is like unto God's Son. Revelation 13:18 says the number of man is six. So you have got one man in the Old Testament, one man in the New Testament, six here, six here, got to have 66 books. See how it works.

When God called out the nation to Himself back there in the Old Testament, God said, "That is My wife." He made Israel, the nation, His wife. He looked at her as a husband and her as His wife. You will find it in Jeremiah 3:1-14. God, Israel says, "I am the married wife unto you." Isaiah 54:1, it talks about that Israel is called the children of the married wife. Isaiah 62:4, "The Lord is married to the land." Ezekiel 16:32, Israel has a wife that came into adultery. In the book of Isaiah, she has been unfaithful to God. She stepped on Him with all the other Baal worship gods and all of those things. Now in Hosea 2:2, it says, "Plead with your mother; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband." In other words, they are back together again. They are back together again. God's plan for us will always be one that He may chastise us, but then He restores us.

You saw it last week. Now, during this time when God has put the nation of Israel aside, God now begins to turn His attention to His Son. He says, "I got a wife and she is the nation of Israel, but My Son needs a bride." So He calls out in the New Testament, the church. So you want to understand your Bible? It is real simple. In the Old Testament, God called out a nation, Israel, made it His wife, and likened it to itself that He is her husband and she is His wife, and then was very jealous over her. She stepped out on Him with all the other gods, Baal worship and all of the things, the God of Zionists and everybody else in the world. He got so fed up with it, He finally gave her a bill of divorcement and separated Himself from her. Then for the next 2,000 years, called the times of the Gentiles, you know what He did? He called out a bride for His Son.

Any moment, I mean any moment, any moment. The Rapture is going to take place. We are going to go to be with Christ. God then is going to turn His attention to the nation of Israel to do what? To bring her into that wilderness and to restore her. When they get all back together in Revelation 19, and you know what the story is. Every story you heard as a kid growing up always had a happy ending. Every one of them. Every story you heard. What is the number one phrase, this is where I need your help now. What is the number one phrase that was said at the

end of every story you ever read, when it looked like it was a bad deal, it looked like it was not going to work out, and then at the end it all did? And then it says, "And they lived what?" Happily ever after.

This whole world system is a picture of God calling out His nation, His wife, and then calling out the bride for His Son, going through the trials and tribulations of His life while God establishes His kingdom. Then when He comes back and takes us out, we go to the marriage. He brings Israel through the Tribulation Period and puts them back. At the end when it is all done in Revelation 19, 20, and 21, we move out of eternity. It is all done. No more tears, no more heartaches, no more sin, no more nothing. We just simply live happily ever after. Everything you ever saw in your life, every story you ever told your kids, every movie you ever watched follows that same line of reasoning.

My kids liked Snow White. Snow White ate a forbidden fruit and died from the wicked witch. She died when she ate that piece of fruit with an apple. She died, and she is laying there dead. She is laying there dead until one day her prince showed up. When that prince came in and saw Snow White laying dead, what did he do? He knelt down and he kissed her. When he kissed her, she came to life. Hey, there was a day in my life that the whole world because of sin poisoned me and I was dead. I was dead for almost 20 some years of my life. Then one day, one day my Prince came and He knelt down and He kissed my soul with that Bible. I came alive in Christ Jesus. Yes, yes, just like the movie, Him and I are going to, here it comes, live happily ever after.

Every movie you ever saw had a good guy and a bad guy and a woman. The good guy is the hero. The bad guy is the villain. The good guy wears white. The bad guy wears black. The woman is always over here fearful. You saw it everything you want. When I was a kid growing up, most of you young kids do not see this anymore. The greatest hero on TV was the Lone Ranger. He was a type of Jesus Christ in the Bible. He rode a white horse. He wore a mask. He was a mystery man. He showed up at the right time and the right moment to fix everything and then scattered off again, leaving everybody to wonder, "Who was that masked man?" I know who he was. You ever notice back then, he never, no sex involved in the movies. He never kissed anybody. Is that his horse? Always did right. Nobody ever got killed. Guy Robert Bank rode off his two miles down the road. He picks out his six-shooter, shoots up in the air. It goes about a mile, hits a tree, comes down, hits the guy on the arm, falls off the horse. He picks him up. He is on a white horse. He was a mystery man. He is always showing up. He is always doing good and he is always helping out the woman. Then he had another guy, if you are paying attention, he rode a black horse. He wore a black cape. He wore a black mask. He had a certain religion he was part of down in old Mexico. You know what this guy did? He went around putting marks on things. That thing works? Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

In any movie you ever saw, it all starts out, here is the woman, the bad guy comes in, he kills the good guy, looks like he is out of the scene, he ties the woman to the railroad tracks, and I am oversimplifying it, but you know it is always the same plot. He puts in a track because she will not sign over the deed and the train is coming around the track and he is standing there twirling his mustache and she is saying, "Oh help me." Then as the old song says, "And along came

George," you know that smooth talk enjoy. Good guy shows up, kills the villain, takes the woman and he gets her off the track and just as they are riding up in the sunset, it comes on her screen. Here it comes and they what? They lived. You bet you they did.

God has got a wife. Christ has got a bride. His bride stepped out on Him and committed adultery against Him. God put her away, turned His attention to the nation of Israel in the Church Age. Now He is bringing it all back to you and me. But even these days that Rapture is going to take place, I am going out. God is going to restore His wife to Himself, move out into eternity. Come on, everything you ever saw. I mean, do not you remember growing up? "Mary had a little lamb. Its fleece was white as snow and everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go." Mary did have a little lamb and its fleece was as white as snow and it paid for the sin of this world. Once you get that thing and you realize that in the Bible, Mary is a type of the nation of Israel, that is exactly right. Wherever Mary went, Israel, the Lamb was sure to go. Cannot beat it.

I could take you this morning and run you through every plot in this world. I could show you Frankenstein. I can show you where somebody creates life and at the end of the movie, the creation kills the creator. I can walk you through everything in this thing. It goes back to the Bible and everything, the Bible ends. It may have turmoil all the way through it. Every sin may be listed. Every problem man may have. Everything that it may fall down and the whole thing may look like it is a shipwreck from one end to the other. But when God gets it all set and you focus on His people in the Old Testament, Christ's Church in the New Testament, and when it is all said and done, God's plan is fulfilled and then out into eternity, we live happily ever after. The end, or in our case, the beginning.