

## I. The Wisdom of Solomon and the Millennial Reign

If you have your Bibles this morning, I would like to invite you to turn over to the Book of Proverbs, chapter 6. Most of you probably are aware of this; maybe some of you younger Christians do not know this yet, but Solomon wrote the Book of Proverbs. In fact, when you start going through your Bible, you will find that there are five wisdom books, and Solomon writes three of them. He writes the Book of Proverbs, he writes the Book of Ecclesiastes, and then he writes the Book of Song of Solomon.

I think of all the characters to study in the Bible, Solomon has always been a favorite of mine. When I was a young Christian and I began to look at the different books of the Bible, it did not take me long to figure out that his books were something very special. Solomon reigns for 40 years, and his reign is a perfect picture and really a perfect model for what we know in the Bible as the Millennial reign of Christ. There are no wars during his period of time.

Thursday night, I told you and showed you how we talked about the pre-millennial return of Christ, and I showed you how with the beginning of the Kings of Israel, you see that very teaching all the way through the Bible: that Christ is going to come back before the Millennium. I showed you how the first King that Israel got was Saul. We know Saul was the wrong King; he was the bad King. Saul is one of the 18 men in the Old Testament who were a picture of the Antichrist. So Saul is a perfect example of how the Antichrist is going to come before the real Christ shows up.

The second King that they have was the man that God wanted them to have all along, and that was David. David is a type of Christ at the second coming of Christ. You will notice when they go into Joshua, when they go into the land, that they have all of these nations that they are up against and they have to fight. Many of those nations get subdued, but it is not until David comes to the throne that the last of the enemies that are in the land that was promised to Abraham are abolished and wiped out. Because of that, David is a type of Christ at the second coming, because Christ is going to subdue all of Israel's enemies.

Then the next King that they get is Solomon, David's son. Where Saul is a picture of the Antichrist and David is a picture of Christ at the second coming, then Solomon is a picture of Christ during the Millennium on the throne of Israel. After David wipes out the enemies, there are 40 years of peace, and it is a great picture of the Millennial reign of Christ. So to me, it is no wonder that you realize that in the Millennial reign of Christ, God's wisdom will be dispersed all through the world. You will find this in many places in the Old Testament; Zechariah 14 comes to mind. You are going to see that when Solomon reigns in 1000 BC, the world knows all about God, the wisdom of God, the knowledge of God, and the God of Israel.

As I said Thursday night, you do not get that in school today. In high schools or colleges, they will never talk about the nation of Israel and its impact. The devil has made sure that because we got into the times of the Gentiles, which is what we talked about Thursday night, we know now

that the whole thing has been covered over. The last thing the devil wants to do is to have anybody focus on the nation of Israel as the world power that it was, because it will lead you to the world power that it is again going to be. But at this particular time, the whole world knew about the God of Jerusalem.

There are many places in the Bible that show the depths of his wisdom and the impact that it had on this earth. As a young Christian, I recognized the importance of his books and how his books were chosen by God to contain not only the mind of God, but the wisdom of God, and all the other books in the Bible will go back to that.

I talk about character studies:

- If you want to study the character of God, you go to the five wisdom books.
- If you want to study the character of God's suffering, you go to the book of Job. In Job are the greatest passages in all of the Bible on the suffering of God.
- If you want to study the character of God as far as God's heart, you go to Psalms, because no book lays out the heart of God better than Psalms does.
- But if you want to do a character study on God for the mind of God, what we have been talking about, and the wisdom of God, then you go to Proverbs.
- If you want to study the character of God as far as the Holy Spirit and see the mind of the Spirit, then you go to the book of Ecclesiastes.
- And if you want to study the mind of God as far as Christ and His looking at the church, then you go to the book of Song of Solomon, which represents the mind of Christ for us.

## II. Simplicity as the Key to God's Wisdom

I think what really got me was the depth of Solomon's wisdom and the fact that the depth was based on simplicity, not complexity. When you look at Solomon's wisdom, as we are going to do today, and I am going to show you a great example of this that is in the passage here, he never looked at the world in a complex way. The marvel of the depth of his wisdom lies in the simplicity of it. That was a lesson that I learned.

I will tell you something else that I learned as a young man: the fact that he never looked outside of God's wisdom for any other wisdom. That was a great lesson for me, and for 40-plus years, I have not looked outside God's wisdom either. So I saw the value of his writings and yet also saw the key to God's wisdom was simplicity, not complexity.

The first thing I learned in life when I got really into this and saw it and got into the Bible was the fact that man will always take something that God lays out in such a simplistic way and try to make it complicated. Salvation is the number one thing. The easiest thing in the world to understand in the Bible is God's simple plan of salvation. But what man does is he takes it, he complicates it, he makes it in such a complex way that it is almost impossible to get to. When you go off to Bible college someplace, all you get is a system of terms that make everything so hard to grasp. They use words and terms that nobody in the Bible ever spoke of. They took the simple things of God, the wisdom of God, and put it on such a high level that man can hardly

ever attain to it. When you come through the Bible and you see it, you see how God will always make it as simple as it really is.

I think personally probably one of the greatest verses, if not the greatest verse in the Bible, that shows you the greatest single key of unlocking the wisdom of God and how simple it really is, is found in Romans chapter 1, verses 19 and 20. Even though I understand Solomon did not have the book of Romans, Solomon had this principle, and it was a model for him that he used, which serves as a model for me through all of his writings.

*Romans 1:19-20*

*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.*

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

He simply says there that you understand the wisdom of God, you understand the complexity of all that God did, by simply looking at the things that He created. The wisdom and the depth of Solomon was his ability to see all that God had created and then seeing God's pictures and models through all of that. This will be the pattern of the Bible. This will be the model that when you study them, you will see the things revealed that God wants us to see.

### III. Learning God's Wisdom Through Creation

It is like when you study the Ark of Noah and you see it as a type of Christ. You want to study Christ, and you look at something that God told Noah to make. We look at the Tabernacle, and you want to understand what your life really should be with God and your relationship with God. It is a very complex thing. You could buy a thousand books written by a thousand different men, and it all would lead you down to the endless reams of volumes of paper. Yet you go to that Tabernacle back there, and you will simply find that there are seven furnishings in that Tabernacle, and if you want to understand what your relationship should be with God, simply look at that model. Take those seven things, find out what they mean in your life, and you are there.

We have the Tree of Life, how complex it is. Everybody said, "Well, what was the Tree of Life, and how is this and how is that?" People say, "Well, it is a very complicated thing." The Bible says, "The fruit of the righteous is as a tree of life." That is a great model for understanding how to win people to Christ. Trees in the Bible always represent people.

We can talk about the sun and the moon and the stars. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 15, "If one star differs from another star in glory, some are bright, some are medium bright, some are very faint. If one star differs from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." You want to study the judgment seat of Christ? Study stars.

Job, another wisdom book and certainly one that Solomon would have had, told him in Job chapter 12, verses 7-9:

*Job 12:7-9*

*But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:*

*Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.*

*Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?*

He says here that we can learn from the animals. They will teach us: the birds, the earth, the fish of the sea. It was no accident that Jesus, when He started to send out His twelve and gather His apostles to reach man, He got commercial fishermen, and then He told them, "I am going to make you fishers of men." That model is a model for soul winning all the way down through the history of the world. It is no accident. Verse 9 says, "Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Well, today, unashamed man does not know it. College professors do not know it. Ninety-eight percent of God's people and the pastors in this country do not know it either. So Solomon in his wisdom talks about all these things, for he knows that in their creation was the wisdom of God's hand that will teach us.

I want you to look for a moment over in 1 Kings chapter 4, verses 29 through 34. Here is a passage that shows you the depth at this particular time, around 1000 BC, how Solomon's reign affected every other nation on this planet. It is incredible, but then I want you to see this.

*1 Kings 4:29-34*

*And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.*

*And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.*

*For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.*

*And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.*

*He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.*

*And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.*

There is a classic example of what he is talking about. His wisdom came from understanding that great principle in Job 12 and Romans 1:20, because verse 33 says he talked about trees, the hyssop out of the wall, the beasts, the fowls of the air, the creeping things, and fishes, because he knew that they all represent something that God wants to show us. He realized that the wisdom of God lies in the simplicity of the things that God created. If you want to learn about all that God is doing, then study His creation, because in there will be the answers and the wisdom that you are looking for.

## IV. The Ant as a Model for Perspective

Now our text today is in Proverbs chapter 6, verses 6 through 11, and this is my famous message on ants, and I want you to see why Solomon was so interested in watching ants. My goal today is to get you interested in watching ants, because you can learn a lot from an ant.

*Proverbs 6:6-11*

*Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:*

*Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,*

*Providet her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.*

*How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?*

*Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:*

*So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

Now Father, we ask You today to help us to see the wisdom in this simplicity. Help us to quit looking for wisdom outside of God and help us to start seeing and looking for the truth and the wisdom of God in the simple things that God created. Lord, we do love You and we thank You for all that You do for us, and we pray now Your blessings upon this time and let us leave here a little smarter, Father, in how to grasp and to look at the things that You have created and to see the things that You want to teach us from them. We will be careful and thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it, Amen.

Let me say this: in life and the issues of life, the key word for you and for me as a Christian is simply one word: it is the word "perspective." If we lose our perspective, everything else goes. We can talk about a thousand things a Christian ought to have in their life, but it all boils down to one word: perspective, and losing our perspective. You never want to lose sight of the perspective of what God is doing on planet Earth and how you and I fit into that. You find a Christian who has gone by the wayside, so to speak, and they are no longer involved in what God is doing, and they are out there in "La La Land" someplace, and they have lost their fire, they have lost their drive, they have lost that. They do not go to church as much as they should; they do not do anything when they go there; they just kind of hang out. If somebody would say, "What is that person's problem?" We could look into that life and we could probably find in different individuals a thousand different things that we would say was the problem. The problem is they have lost their perspective. When you lose your perspective, you have lost everything, and this is what happens to people. It happens to saved people, but it happens to unsaved people. We live in a world today where everybody has lost their perspective, and we are as lost as we can be. I must admit that for most Christians, that is the number one issue, because everything goes back to that: losing their focus of what is really important and what is not.

Let us face it, we have talked about the issues of life. You know what the devil does? The devil's main sphere for a child of God—he does not care about the unsaved people, he has got them—but he does not have you. He knows that if you would ever get on track and ever give God

everything that you need to give Him, you would probably turn the world upside down. But what he does is he takes the issues of life and he makes them so complicated and he makes them so volatile in our lives. We have got so many other issues falling on us in our lives that we just lose the real reason that God saved us, and the devil makes sure that we never get past that. He makes sure that no matter what you do or where you go, you just never really plug into the Word of God. There is always going to be something holding you back, and you will get to the end of your life and you will scratch your head and you will wonder why your life is a tragedy, why you have lost this, you have lost that, you do not have this, you do not have that. You will whine and you will complain and you will sit down with people and try to explain it to them, and the bottom line is simply this: God saved you for a purpose, and that purpose comes with a perspective. You lose the perspective, you are done. It is just that simple. It is not hard. It is not hard. For all of us, it takes an eternal vigilance to not get pulled off track, for it is the little things that can do it, and that is the real danger. It is never the big things, just the little things, like the old-time story I told you last week about "for the want of a nail, the shoe was lost," and you walk all the way up and see that it is the great consequences of the battle.

I read a story one time of a man who had a flight. He went to the airport, and he had checked his bags, and he was walking down to the gate, and he saw this machine with this sign that said, "Know your future for 25 cents." Well, he could not resist. So he went over and he put a quarter in it, and immediately the lights flashed, and it came up and it says, "Hello, John Phillips, you are on Delta flight 253 to Boston." Well, he was amazed. How did they know who he was? All he did was put a quarter in. How did this machine know that? Well, he saw one of his buddies he was flying with, he brought him over and he said, "This is the greatest thing you ever saw in your life." And he put another quarter in, and up again it popped, "Your name is John Phillips, and you are on Delta flight 253 to Boston." He says, "Look at that." Well, his buddy did not think much about it, but he was just captivated by this. So he says, "I have got to do this one more time." He did not have a quarter. He was out of quarters. So he runs on down to the newsstand, and people are getting their coffee and getting a newspaper, and the line was quite long. So he is standing down there, and he is waiting, and finally, after a while, he gets up there and he gets change. He buys some gum or stuff, but he gets a quarter. He runs back up there and he says, "I have got to do this one more time." He puts his quarter in, and it says, "You are John Phillips, and you have missed your flight to Delta 253 to Boston." My point is this: it is easy to get sidetracked and miss the real plan of God in our lives. It does not take much to pull us off. It does not take much to get us out of where God wants us to be.

Now we have been talking about the issues of life in Proverbs and how it relates to God's wisdom. I know of no greater example of how a saved man can lose his perspective better than a study of ants. Years ago, I did a lot of—I am the kind of guy who just believes what the Bible says. I do probably what a lot of people look at for thinking stupid. Back home, when I had just gotten right, we had a guy back in Canton Baptist Temple that everybody thought was a little off, and everybody thought he—everybody just kind of made fun of him, and he was kind of slow, but he was at church every Sunday, and he took notes as best he could. He had a Bible, and I always kind of watched him. I was going out of the church one night after some kind of practice or whatever we had, and I saw him over there along the bushes, and there was a bunch of shrubs

there, and he was down on his hands and knees, and I thought he was looking for, that he was pulling out weeds or doing something to clean the church. But I wanted to make sure he was all right. I cannot even remember his name now. I walked over to him and I said, "Hey, are you okay?" And he said, he looked up and he went, I said, "What are you doing?" He said, I looked down, it was a little dead bird there. And he says, "I am just being here. The Bible says that not a sparrow falls to the ground that God does not know it. I am just kind of spending some time where God is at." Now, people think that was stupid. That old boy had something. From that point on, I thought we were deranged and he was normal. But that is the way it gets sometimes. That is the way it has gotten in Christianity. A hundred years ago, what we believed was normal, and everybody else was out in left field. Now we are out in left field, and everybody else thinks they are normal. That is the way it goes in life.

I learned. Years ago, I took Solomon's advice, and I spent a whole summer studying ants. I really did. You do not have to go anywhere; they are right in your backyard. Today, I still look at them when I am mowing the grass or taking the dogs out. It is just ingrained in me. I am constantly looking at all the little anthills in my yard. Sometimes when I have time, I will just sit there for a while in the afternoon, late afternoon, have a cup of coffee. I will just sit there and I will watch those little guys. I do it because Solomon said that is what we are supposed to do, that there is something we can learn from that. I am here to tell you, I know of no other species of insects or animals for that matter that match man and life on planet Earth better than the ant. I am here to tell you this morning, and you will understand what I am about when I am done saying what I am saying, Solomon was right on the money when he said to keep our perspective on the issues of life. He said, "Go to the ant, consider her ways, and be wise." So allow me for a few moments, since we are in this chapter today, to show you my findings.

Now this is called my "ruminology" in the big world; it is a study of ants. You may not know this, but everybody here, you have at least one million ants in your yard, a normal yard. They live in what is called colonies, much like in the state of Missouri, we have cities. In your yard, there may be 20 or 30 different colonies. Just like us, ants have their own social system. No other animal has the social system like the ants do.

- You have worker ants; you will have 200,000 of them in any colony, and they do the work.
- You have ants that are called drone ants, and they are there for the queen. They attend her and they do whatever needs to be done.
- You have soldier ants; they fight and protect the colony.
- And then of course, you have the queen ant. She lays the eggs, and she is the center of the colony, the queen ant. Everything centers around her.

I do not know if you know this or not, ants have an incredible ability to communicate with each other. They can communicate over great distances by sending out some kind of ultrasound waves through the little antennae on the top of their head, and they communicate. Next to man, or maybe it is reversed, the ants are the greatest builders and the architects on planet Earth. You see, we do not see this because we never study it. But when you study the ant, you see that they are unparalleled in what they do. When you want to talk about life on planet Earth, they are just like us, because next to man, they are the greatest builder and architect on this planet. They build an

underground system or complex that defies belief. A series of tunnels that sometimes when you see it on the top there with that little mound, it will go down two or three hundred feet, or maybe a hundred feet in each direction, of chambers and tunnels and passageways with rooms. There are rooms for eggs in the egg chamber; there are rooms for food in the food chambers. They even have it set up so that when it rains and the rain comes down, ants do not do well with water. They breathe through their sides, so they cannot deal with water. So they build an elaborate system as the water comes down and the water comes in and it begins to come down and get into their holes. They have built-in water traps that take the water off to keep it from drowning out the ants. Incredible.

They have a tunnel system that is unbelievable. They have chambers for where they live, chambers where they store their food. They have work areas. The worker ants are continually cleaning it out, expanding it, repairing it, just like I-435 and I-70. It is an ongoing process, and the soldier ants, while everybody else is working, they are standing guard, operating patrols, making sure that the other colonies do not attack. Ants, like man, have a unique system of working together to solve problems. You ought to watch them when they have to unplug a tunnel that gets stomped in or crushed in, moving large objects. You ought to watch them sometimes when they have to cross a river. They will work together where the larger ants will go up and chew off a leaf. 20 or 30 of them will drag it down to the water's edge. 20 or 30 of them will get on the leaf and let the current carry it across. It is incredible what they do.

Worker ants are incredibly strong. One ant can lift 20 times its own weight. That would be a ton and a half for you and for me. Ants are the only insects other than man that plan, organize, and carry out structured warfare with other colonies. The soldier ants, they are ferocious fighters. One time, scientists were filming a battle between two soldier ants; they were locked in combat for 72 hours. That fight went on between those two. There is a movie out from the 50s with Charlton Heston called \*The Naked Jungle\*. If you ever get a chance to watch it, it is one of the greatest; it is based on a true event in Africa. If you have never been to Africa, which most of you have not, if you go over there, you go in your backyard, you see the little ant colonies are about that high or about that high. You go to Africa, they are 20, 30 feet in the air. I mean, those suckers look like condominiums. Years ago, before they got control of it, every 30 or 40 years, billions of ants would congregate together and go across the land, and they would eat everything, kill everything. Those ants would be so many billions of them, it would be 20 miles deep and two miles wide, nothing but ants. It would just come across and eat everything. That is what that movie is about. It is hard to believe that an ant could kill an elephant, but when a hundred million ants get on an elephant, that elephant may kill 10,000 ants with each foot, but in the end, the sheer number of the ants win, and the elephant gets killed. Incredible what they do. They make captives and slaves out of the other ants they do not kill when they win. It is an incredible thing to look at. They are like man in every way, in every aspect of the ant world. It is just like man on planet Earth and his world system.

Now this is why Solomon said, "Look, study the ant." If you want to get wisdom about perspective, then you go and study something that God created. Did I forget to mention that ants have a religion? They all have one female deity. One queen, one queen of heaven, Jeremiah 36.

One female queen ant that every other ant is subservient to, and everything they do in that kingdom and that colony goes back to that one female deity that they hold up as the queen. Put that someplace in your notes. It is incredible. Everything they do will be for her, just like the Baal worship in the Old Testament or the false religions today. She is the center of the ant world. Just as we have been studying it, the evil man and the strange woman, just as the strange woman is the center of the world today and represents religion, this society of ants that is just like man has a female deity that they all look to and they all serve. I am telling you, Solomon knew what he was saying when he said, "Consider the ant and be wise." In every way, they illustrate and show us our world system that blindly follows the queen of heaven or some man-made system and never sees the reality of the situation and never gains perspective.

## V. The World's "Flavoring" and Lost Perspective

Now, I cannot speak for anybody here today other than myself. I know that many, many people like to live in a dream world. I get that. I understand. I deal with them all the time. Obviously, some of those dreams have turned into nightmares, but I understand. But for me, and I cannot speak for you, but for me, reality is everything. Perception of my situation on planet Earth is paramount. As a child of God mandated by God with a commission of God, I can never afford to lose my perspective.

You go out to Bill O'Reilly on Fox News at night around seven or eight o'clock, and he does a great job, and I like to listen to it. But he talks about, he builds his whole program, and he calls it the "No Spin Zone." By him saying that, what he is saying is this: "You are going to get all the other news media and all the other out there, and they are going to get the news and they are going to spin it your way. But I, Bill O'Reilly, am going to take all of that, sort it out, and what you get from me is going to be the bottom line truth without any spin." Well, I have got news for you, Mr. O'Reilly, there are no spin zones in this book, not on your TV program. You just spin it from your perspective because of what you want to do. Reality starts with an absolute final authority. You can never have reality without absolute truth. Reality depends on absolute truth, just as absolute truth has to have reality, and that goes back to the Bible.

Yet the world system can look so convincing, can it? All that is going on around us, all that is being laid out in front of us, all that we are seeing, all that we are part of, everything that you want to hear, everything that goes on, it is all about it. A great example of this is, if you pay any attention to this—I do not get to watch it a lot, but sometimes I catch it—is that guy who is President Obama's press guy, Jay Carney. No matter what goes wrong, whether it is Americans killed in Africa or this or that or something that somebody screwed up someplace or the IRS keeping out certain organizations and targeting them, no matter what it is, he has got the hardest job in the world. He has to go in and portray that everything is rosy when everything is a mess.

I went to the pharmacy a couple of weeks ago, had to get some medicine. Really, I was looking to see if they legalized marijuana yet, but they had not done that yet. But I went in there, and I am waiting in the pharmacy, and there is a little sign that said, "Do your child a flavor." How many have seen that? A couple of you. "Do your child a flavor." What the sign was is that when you get medicine for your child, most medicine tastes terrible. So now you can get flavor that

you put in the medicine to make nasty tasting medicine taste okay. So you have got to give your child the medicine. It tastes terrible. Do your child a flavor by cherry flavor. Put it in the medicine. The kid will take it. That is exactly what the devil does on planet Earth. Every bad thing that is out there that is a disaster, everything that threatens every liberty that you have, everything that is out there that is going to take away and destroy what you have in God, to keep it looking like what it really is, and for you to lose your perspective, the devil just flavors it. He just flavors it. That is all he does.

You see it in churches. You go there and sit in large auditoriums when you have big screen TVs. Iris is right behind me here, and you will see everything up there. You will see the preacher when he is preaching. You only have to look at him. You can look off to the side. They have praise bands. They have choirs that sing beautiful songs. They have worship services. They have everything except the Bible. For me, reality is the Bible. What good is it to have a lot of fluff at the end of the day when you get down to business, you do not have what God said, but it is flavored. It is flavored.

You see it in politics. Obamacare is the greatest thing in the world. We have shined up eight million people who did not have healthcare. And yeah, you have got 10 million other people who lost theirs. Spin it. Flavor it. You certainly see it at work, do not you? All the drama that goes on and unfolds. You see it in world affairs. Russia wants to invade the Ukraine. She knows she cannot do that. She knows that if she just overruns the borders and takes it all, that the outcry of the world would be terrible. So what does she do? What does Putin do? I will tell you what he does. He says, "These poor Russians that are down there in the Ukraine and the Crimea, down there they are being persecuted by all the other non-Russians. Because they are Russians, we are going to go in and help our people." That is how you do it. You flavor it. You just add a little spice to it. Put a little cherry vanilla in it. Make something that is terrible taste good.

You see it in every news media on this planet. They control what you hear. I will tell you right now, it does not matter how you vote. It does not matter what you and I think. It does not matter what is going to take place or transpire. Hillary Clinton will be the next president of the United States. It will only be because the powers that be in this country want her to be. They will flavor it all. I am telling you, and I am not a prophet nor am I a son of a prophet. The UN. The UN was started around 1918, around 19 after World War I, what was supposed to be the war that would end all wars. They built a big building in New York, and they put on it a quotation out of the Bible that talks about the Millennium, "beating your swords into plowshares." That is a verse on the Millennium in the Old Testament. There have been 348 wars since it started. They did not do a thing. They just flavored it all. Peace talks, cease-fires, Peace Corps, United Way, FEMA, World Council of Churches, National Council of Churches, the Ecumenical Movement. It is all a flavoring to cover up and mask what God is really doing.

## VI. God's Hidden Hand in the Current Age

I think the book of Esther is probably one of the greatest single books in the Bible when you understand it. You know it is the only book in the Bible where the name of God is not mentioned. Only book. The only book in the Bible where there is absolutely no mention of God in any way,

shape, or form. You know, most people have read the Bible all their lives and never seen that. When I saw that, I said, "There is something special about this. There is something special about a book that is in the Bible that is written that does not have any reference to God in it." Then I began to see where Esther fit in. I began to see how the book of—when you put the orders of the books in the Bible, you have got to see the book of Ezra. Ezra is a beautiful picture of how the Jews go back. You have got to see the next book, which is Nehemiah, and how that is a beautiful picture of how the Jews rebuild like they did in 1948. And then your next book is Esther.

You know, in Esther, there is a wedding in a king's garden for seven days and seven nights. You know, in Esther, there is a man by the name of Haman who is a type of the Antichrist. You know, in the book of Esther, you have got a period of time where God is not mentioned anywhere at all. You cannot find God on the surface of that book anywhere, but if you look underneath, you will find that God is in power, and He is doing and structuring everything underneath. You just cannot see it from the top. You know what that is a picture of? That is a picture of the age we are living in right now. You cannot see God in the government. You cannot see God in churches. Some of you cannot see God in your own life. You cannot see God in what He is doing. We live in a world that has an absent mindset when it comes to God, and yet I am here to tell you, God is much at work today. The fact that we will not mention Him in schools, cannot pray to Him in Congress, the fact that we cannot put up 10 Commandments in our courthouse, we cannot pray before ball games, means absolutely nothing. God, like the book of Esther, is in power. He is underneath the surface, and He is doing what He is doing to get ready for the next book, which is Job, the Tribulation, and then the next book, which is Psalms, the Millennium, and then the next book, which is Proverbs. I am telling you, it is all around us.

Solomon was right on the money when he said, "You want to understand the world system? You want to understand why people are all messed up and have lost their perspective? They are just like the ants."

- Ants are a picture of the world system.
- They have order.
- They have structure.
- They have an army.
- They have a religion.
- They have families.
- They have connection or communication.
- They have highly skilled labor.
- They have an order within their society.
- They are always expanding their world.

You will learn a lot by studying. Ants are always working. Ants are always alert. Ants are always communicating. Ants are always populating. Their work is endless and tireless to attain a goal of a very high standard of society, more like man than any other creature that God created.

## VII. The Futility of Man's Efforts: Lessons from the Ant

But here is my question, and here is the real sermon this morning: But to what end? But to what purpose? The race that they are in, the goals that they have, have no finish line, no clear objectives. Their conflicts that they have with the other colonies, there are no absolute solutions. Their wars never bring peace. Just like our world system, it is just an endless multiplication and duplication of effort that brings no final end to anything until you die and step out into eternity.

Oh, Solomon was right. I can see him out there on the grass of the palace, on the grass with his hand on it, watching those ants come in and out, watching them build those things. I watch him one day crush that thing with his thumb and sit down the next day, and it is built back just the way it was, if not better. I think of him sitting there watching that and saying, "How foolish they are." I look at him sitting there and watching that and saying to himself, "How foolish they are," and then putting it into perspective and saying, "How foolish man is."

Because as good as the ants are, and in my backyard, they are everywhere. They love my yard. Some of those other people put chemicals on that makes your grass look good but kills the ants. They all move to my yard. I have an ant sanctuary in my backyard. I watch them all day long. I have watched them come out of my driveway, this total cement, out of a crack where I have got the wall coming down to the side, and I have watched a stream of about 5,000 go up, another one coming down, all day long. They are going somewhere under my house. A few of them show up at our sink. She wants to kill them. But as good as they are, and in my yard, they build the most elaborate systems of living. At the end of the day, it is still my yard. Their purpose and the labor and all their structures is all for naught. Those ants never get it. They are building and building their little worlds in my yard.

By the same token, as good as man may be at building and setting up kingdoms and governments and democracies, setting up one nation that for a period of time will conquer all the other nations until another greater nation comes and rises and conquers them. As good as man may be at building and buildings and bridges and tunnels under rivers and oceans, computers that will do our thinking, air conditioners that will keep us cool, flying six times the speed of sound, sending robots to Mars. Come on, man. How fast his cars will go, all of his marvels, how high his planes will fly to the moon and outer space, no matter how big his army may be or how powerful his king, his queen, or his president. I mean, the race to be the most powerful nation today is America, Russia, and China. China is leading the pack. Russia is second, America is third. Not according to Jay Carney. But in the past, it was Germany and Japan, was not it? Before that, it was France, and then it was England, and it was Spain. Before that, it was the Greeks, it was the Persians, it was the Romans, and it was the Egyptians, was not it? But at the end of all the kingdoms, no matter what man builds, no matter how good he is, in the end, it is still God's planet. And man who builds like the ant on another man's property has lost his perspective that somebody else owns the land that I have claimed to be mine. Just because you think you are all powerful and have lost your perspective and forgotten the One who is all powerful, it makes no difference.

## VIII. God's Ownership and the Call to Wake Up

I think every Christian ought to have an ant farm. I had one when I was nine years old. Looking back now where I stand with the Bible and God and what God has shown me, it probably was one of those things that was the greatest thing. Edmund Scientific Company. Remember them? They were out right after the Civil War, I am not sure what your problem is. Edmund Scientific, Jim remembers them, Edmund Scientific Company. Sends your catalog every three, four months. All kinds of scientific things in it. I started out with a chemistry set, blew the back porch off, that was done with that. Five dollars and fifty cents, I bought an ant farm. An ant farm was about that big, about that wide. You filled it with dirt. You got ants that came, had water, put them in the thing. You would stand there, and they would tunnel down along the glass. You would actually see a whole structure of their system. You could watch the queen lay her eggs, and you could watch the worker ants doing what they are doing. You could have fun and cover all the holes up and watch them get up there and dig it all out with a little hard half. They get up there and they chisel all that stuff out. They were one of the most incredible things I ever saw in my life. They still make them; they are just not like they were when I was a kid.

Then one day, I got that when I was 1959, 1960, I was nine years old, somewhere around there. One of the most impressive things I ever saw. But one day I grew up. I tired of the ant farm. I hit 16 years old and saw there were girls. One day I went into that bedroom with that ant farm, and they had worked on it now for five or six years. I looked at that thing and I said, "You know what, I need more room here. I have got this and I have got that, and I have got to get rid of this." I just picked up that ant farm. I walked out the front door down to the trash in the back. I just threw that thing away. I never stopped and asked the ants one time what they thought about it. I never thought for a moment. When I took that down there, I tired of it, and I threw it away because I had a fuller life now. I had bigger dreams now. I just walked down there to the trash and I threw that ant farm away.

I am going to tell you something: just as I cast off that ant farm when I got to a point in my life when things changed, so God will cast off and tire of this old Earth. There will be a day, common Revelation 19 and 20, that all kings of the Earth, all the nations, all the presidents, all the kings, they will be cast into hell. Psalms 9:17. There will be a time when the King of kings and the Lord of lords comes back. The fact that we have lost our perspective in America, He will establish His kingdom, a new heaven and new earth, a kingdom of righteousness, a kingdom that is based on truth, His rule, His government with His standards, and He will care absolutely nothing who built what, who made what, or who was president when He came. You know why? He owns the Earth. It is His. Just as I bought and paid for my land at 8308 Woodson Drive and bought my ant farm for \$5.50, God bought and paid for this planet. He holds the title clear.

*Colossians 1:16*

*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and He is coming to claim His kingdom, and He will not ask one president. He will not ask Obama. He will not ask Putin. He will not ask

Muhammad. He will not ask the Pope. He will not ask the queen of England or the Dukes of Hazzard. He thinks He is coming back, and He is going to claim it. It will be His plan, His way, without consulting you or me or anybody. He will simply throw out the ants on the ant farm when He is ready. How foolish we are. How foolish we are that we think we can live our lives without the impact of the perspective of what God is doing.

Look at Proverbs 6:9-11:

*How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?*

*Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:*

*So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

He says, "How long will thou sleep, O sluggard?" This is the state of the world. This is the state of the majority of God's people. He simply asks, "When will you wake up and see that all of our labor, all the things that we do, are simply in vain?" You know, there is a great question asked in Isaiah chapter 55, verse 2:

*Isaiah 55:2*

*Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.*

He says, "You know what? We spend all of our money on things that have nothing to do with the Word of God. We do not invest in the souls of men or the ministry. We labor all day long. We go home bone tired, and we labor, and yet there is no satisfaction in the labor." There have been times that we had a killer of a day. Sunday morning, going down to turn around and going out there and doing everything we are doing, and I know you are tired. I am tired, and I have driven home, and I thought to myself, "I am about as tired as I know how to get." The Lord always whispers in my ear, "But it is a good tired, is not it, Bob?" And I say, "Yeah, it is, Lord." Then I will remember. I remember there are times that I played with the devil and for the devil that I was really, really tired. There were times when I gave all my energy to the world and all the things that there, and I went home tired. But you know what? If I can do it for them and give it to the world, I can certainly give it to God, and it is a good tired when you labor for something that means something.

My mother always had a way of bringing things into perspective. She was a very comforting mother. I went in one time, and I had fallen down as a kid, and I hurt my arm, and I said, "Mom, I fell and hurt my arm." Her answer was, "Well, you did not hurt it doing anything for me." See, your mother's day, Mom. But she was right because I was doing something stupid when I fell. I think you are laughing at that; it is funny, but I think God looks at us sometimes when we complain how tired we are, and God says the same thing, "Well, you did not get tired doing anything for Me." My mom had a lot of wisdom. I do not know that she studied ants. I caught her eating them a couple of times; maybe that helped out a little bit, I do not know.

We have simply lost our perspective. We have become like the ants. We go through the endless duplication of everything today, making the world better, fixing what is broken. The other thing is having children, fighting wars, defending ourselves, doing this, doing that, worshipping the queen of heaven, going through all the things, but nothing ever happens, nothing ever changes. The last part of that verse in Proverbs 6:2 says, "Harken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Proverbs 6:11 says, "So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man."

You have been robbed, folks. The devil and all that he did and all that his plan was, his main focus was to steal from you the one thing: not your health, not your wife, not your husband, not even your kids. He knew that if he just took one thing from you, that all of that would take care of itself, so he just came down and stole your book. He stole the only thing that gives you perspective. When you lose your perspective, you marry the wrong person, you do not train your children right, you do not do the things right in your life, you do not treat God right, and the rest of it just takes care of itself. The world system robbed you of your Bible and perspective, and now you are just slumbering in sleep. You look at the things out there, and it is so bad, we do not want to deal with it because it is bad, and the devil just keeps dumping that flavor in it, and what tastes terrible without it suddenly tastes better with it.

Today, the world is so far from the reality of the true God and His coming plan to rule this world. We live our lives and run our country void of any idea of a holy God, His judgment, and His wrath. We are oblivious to His power to destroy all nations. The Bible says in the book of Isaiah 40:15 that all the nations are as a drop in the bucket to the Lord. We are oblivious to His power in dealing with all the nations and judging them in His righteousness when He comes back. Look at Matthew 25:31-32; it is called the judgment of the nations, and yet as God's people, we are fast asleep, we are slumbering in sleep. We are missing every opportunity that God has for us and losing every reward that could be ours at the judgment seat of Christ. Where the world and the nation and the presidents and the kings and the queens and the potentates, where they think they are the only important nation or power on this Earth, all self-serving and all self-satisfying, we as God's people have fallen into the same trap. We live our lives totally unto ourselves without any real acknowledgment of God.

I showed you Thursday night Psalms 78, the great chapter in the Bible about the kingdom being taken from Israel, and I go through there and I broke it down for you and showed you the three or four different sections there. It went all the way back and started what God had done for Israel, and then God talked about how Israel responded. When I look at Israel and all that God had done for them and how they responded, I will be honest, I cannot help but see us in that same boat. I cannot speak for you again, nor will I presume to, but I can see my own self in it. I can see how all the things that God did for me, I have the ability now at 63, quick to be 64, looking back and seeing God's hand in things in my life when I did not even know He was in my life. I see God's hand molding me and bringing me along every step of the way. Sometimes He had to drag me, sometimes I followed farther behind, and sometimes I walked alongside of Him, and sometimes I even got ahead of Him. But I am telling you, I look at all the things that He did for Israel, all the things that He did for me, and if you are sitting here this morning and you cannot

look back in your life and think of all the things that He has done for you, if you are a Christian, you are in sorry shape today.

Yet in Psalms chapter 78, verses 36-37, God looks at all that He did and all that Israel took from Him, and when Israel comes back to God, here is what God says:

*Psalm 78:36-37*

*Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.*

*For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.*

That is Israel. That is us. That is exactly where we are at in our lives today. Perspective: never losing your ability to see things as they really are, not as the world flavors them to be, but as they really are. To see Christianity for what it really is, oh, I should say what it really is not, not with the flavor of the big concept of making it look so grandiose and so beautiful. Solomon has a great lesson for us in the ant: getting the wisdom of God in the simple things of life, just watching the order and the structure of all God's creation, seeing how it parallels man and Christianity in our relationship with God. The wisest man that ever lived, that ever walked the planet, that all the nations of the world looked to for wisdom, said, "Go to the ant, consider her ways, and be wise."

Now when I did this study years ago, like many of the other studies that I did, I used to think about where the Bible talks about meditating in God all day long. I would think to myself, "How do you do that and work a job? How do you do that?" I used to read about the old-time preachers; they used to pray, they used to talk about praying eight or nine, ten hours a day, and I think to myself, "I would love to be able to do that, but how do you do that?" And then one day I figured it out. I see, I was looking at it without a perspective. I was looking at it without an understanding. I was thinking that when Charles Wesley or Whitfield prayed nine, ten hours a day, that means he was on his knees by his bed with his hands folded, but it was not. He was conscious of God from the time he got up to the night when he went to bed. He was thinking of God and the things of God all day long. On his journey from riding on a horse from one town to another, with maybe 30, 40 miles, he had a conversation with God about everything he saw.

I am telling you, when you get this like I got it, there is not a time that I am not mowing along, there is not a time that I am not taking the dogs out, there is not a time that I am not in my yard and I see those anthills that I am not thinking about God's creation, what it means. There is not a time that I look at the moon and I do not understand it is a type of the Christian. There is not a time that I do not see the sun come up in the morning and it is blood red and I do not think of the blood of Christ that cleans us from all sin. There is not a time that that sun goes down at night that I do not see it blood red and God does not remind me what He did for me. There is not a time that I do not look at the stars at night and see the bright ones, the mediums, and the small ones, and I do not think of that thing in 1 Corinthians 15, "so also for the resurrection of the dead." There is not a time that I do not see a rainstorm or watch the weather on channel nine and say, "There is a tornado coming," I do not think of the second coming of Christ. There is not a time that I do not see the thunder clouds blowing on the eastern sky, blowing up, and a lightning

and a thunder, and I do not stop and think about how that is a picture of the second coming of Christ. Everything that God created, if you get it and you pay attention.

There is not a time that you do not see the birds fly or the birds sing and you do not think about God. There is a time that I do not look at some gigantic oak tree and I do not think of God and family trees and trees being like men. There is not a time that you do not look at something God created, when you understand it, that you do not think about God. That is how you meditate Him all day long. You learn these things, you understand these things, and then you never look at them the same way again. You do not see a spider weaving its web out there with the dew on it in the morning as you do not think of Ecclesiastes and Proverbs where he talks about spiders. Everything: the rabbits, the deer, no matter what it may be. Once you see how the Bible defines it and you understand it, it is the way that you go through life and you see everything that God created and it relates back to something that He gave you. That is meditating all day long. You ought to be able to spend 15-16 hours a day just meditating with Him. You could be going on and on your work and doing whatever you want to do, and somebody can say something over here, because you know the key in the Bible, you think about God and what God's Word says. You may not answer him, you may never even look at him, but you are thinking all the time, your thoughts are toward Him. You are sitting down there to do a job and you have got something to do, and you are saying, "Lord, this is a tough thing, I need You to help me." I do not know how many times I was looking for something in a sermon to put in there, and I am still trying to work, and I am saying, "Lord, I know I had that someplace, I do not know where it is at. God, just give it to me when I need it." Those are the things you have got to do. Those are the things you have got to follow.

Meditate, the Bible says, day and night. You see the sun, you see the moon, the birds, the stars, the rain, the snakes, the rabbits, the deer, the flowers, the trees, the flies, the mosquitoes—everything is a picture that Solomon was sitting down there, and this is why in his wisdom, the simplicity of his wisdom was simply looking at the Earth, the creeping things, and all the things that God created, and the Bible says he looked at ants. You want a perspective of life? Study the ant, because it is just like our lives where we go through everything we do and do it the way we do it without any purpose, and we think we are building our dynasty down here. We have got millions of dollars in the bank, or we have got this and we have got on this or own that corporation or own this, and we have got more money. Hey, when God decides to throw away the anthill, it is not going to matter, and He will do it. Every head bound, every eye closed.