

The Voice of Truth # 533

Christ's Earthly Rule

The times of the Gentiles is fulfilled. In our study of the Book of Revelation now, Satan's dominion of the nations is over, and we come now to one of the richest and most magnificent sections of the Book of Revelation, that is, John's vision of the first resurrection, over which the second death hath no power.

In our last study, we saw heaven opened and the Lord Jesus Christ riding forth as King of kings and Lord of lords with his risen glorified saints to meet the beast, the Antichrist, and his confederation of kings with their armies in the great day of his wrath at the mighty battle of Armageddon. He has come to set up his kingdom, and his first work is to completely clear the earth of all opposition and rebellion of mankind motivated by Satan, headed by the Antichrist and gathered by the false prophet. He does this by meeting the armies of the Antichrist and arresting the Antichrist and casting him and the false prophet alive into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the final hell. Then he slays his confederated kings and their armies with the sword of his mouth, which is the sword of judgment. After this, according to Revelation 20:1 and 3, he gives orders to a lone angel to arrest Satan, bind him with a chain, and cast him into the abyss or bottomless pit, and put a seal upon it. Last of all, he brings before him all the nations for judgment, according to Matthew 25:31, 46, when he places the sheep nations on his right hand and the goat nations on his left, and passes judgment upon them on the basis of their treatment of his people, the Jews. I wish I had time to go into that study, it'll take one or two messages, to clarify that study. That's one of the richest studies of God's Word, the prophecy concerning the Jews.

Thus he puts down all opposition and rebellion from off the face of the earth. I mean, he crushes every rebel. Christ, before he sets up his kingdom on this earth, will crush every rebel on this earth.

This brings us to the revelation of the first resurrection and the beginning of the kingdom age when he takes over the kingdoms of this world and makes them his kingdoms. He becomes sovereign of this earth, and for 1,000 years he rules this earth with a rod of discipline, according to Psalms 2, and Isaiah 11, and Isaiah 25. I wish you'd read these passages carefully. Christ becomes supreme ruler and enforces his laws with justice and strict judgment and with capital punishment. Turn with me now to Revelation 20:4-6, will you? Revelation 20 and the fourth verse.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Now I want us to take up and show you from God's Word that this is one of the great teachings of the Word of God, that Christ will reign here on this earth. Just as the armies of the saints in heaven followed him in victory over the enemy, so they shall reign with him. This is clearly set forth in Revelation 20 and the fourth verse, **I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.** This definitely sets forth Christ's resurrected saints sitting on thrones with Him, ruling with Him. **Judgment was given unto them,** means authority is invested in them to execute God's laws in strict justice.

God's Word throughout speaks of the saints ruling and reigning with Christ. John here says that he sees **thrones and they sat upon them.** Daniel said in Daniel 7:9, he saw thrones but they were empty. He said, **I beheld till the thrones were cast down,** that means cast down, were placed in place. At the end of the tribulation period, John saw these same thrones set up and occupied by the saints who are invested with the same authority that God has invested in Christ according to Daniel 7:22-27. Listen, listen to God's Word. **And judgment was given to the**

saints of the Most High, and the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdom unto the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Then let me call your attention to this most gracious scripture that the average individual has overlooked, found in Romans 8:17. **And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.** That expression, **joint heirs with Christ**, means co-heirs with Him. It means that the born-again believers will inherit with Christ His kingdom, and as a co-heir they will rule with Him with the same judgment that He has. You see, the scripture says, we shall be glorified together with Him, which means we will be raised with the same glory that He has, and we will reign with Him and wherever He is, we are. Isn't that marvelous? Isn't that grace? In Matthew 19:28, Jesus said, **Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** He was speaking here to his disciples and telling them that when the kingdom comes, they will sit on thrones, invested with the same authority that Christ has, and with Him glorified, they shall rule the world. When the saints are invested with the authority to judge the world, what is it that qualifies them to exercise administrative justice? What is it that qualifies that believer to execute administrative justice? Now, you get this truth. Brother, listen. Hold your seat now. If you ever listen, you listen here. Get this great truth. In the regeneration of the individual, that sinner's first case to be tried was his own. He became his own judge; He became his own executor. God's glory and holiness and majesty had been offended by himself, and he was the guilty one. By God's grace, he took sides on the side of truth, the side of Christ, against himself, and he sentenced himself to die, thereby learning obedience unto death and suffering. In the light of the glory of Christ, he sees his true condition, discerns himself, acknowledges what he sees. In his zeal to uphold justice and vindicate God, he passes judicial sentence upon himself and consigns himself to death. That means hell. The word "judge" means to decide or form a right estimate, discern, pass sentence. Therefore, in regeneration, that sinner took sides with Christ in his judgment against himself. And from then on, he always finds himself on the side with Christ

in judgment against himself. My friend, whether you are a saint or a sinner, there are no two sides. Can't be. If there is, you'd better get off your side and get on God's side. Because in Revelation 2:26 we find these words, **And him that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.** Did you get those statements, those words **And keepeth my works unto the end.** Another place he said, **he that endureth to the end shall be saved.** Now let me read that again, **He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule,** And that word "rule" means shepherd them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my father. Now, where did he learn that thing? Where did you learn it? You learned that at the feet of Christ when you tried your first case and your first case was yourself and you tried it in the light of God's word and you sat in judgment against yourself and you came to the right judgment of your own heart and life and condemned yourself to hell because that's where you deserve to go and God accepted that judgment and that's the reason he can place in your hands the right to rule. Did you ever stop to think of that? Believers are under-shepherds of the great shepherd. The good shepherd gave his life for his sheep. The great shepherd leads his sheep. The chief shepherd returns to shepherd his sheep in person. So believers are under-shepherds and rule of the same strict justice, judgment, and love that the chief shepherd does because 1 Corinthians 6:2 says, now brother you listen to me, will you? **Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world,** or rule the world as shepherds? Again he says in 1 Corinthians 6:3, **Know ye not that ye shall judge angels,** that is angels will then be inferior or take a lower place in God's economy, than the saints. And this scripture appears to teach that the saints shall shepherd angels. I know there's another meaning there, that they will judge those fallen angels, they'll set in judgment against them. But the saints will take their place next to the Lord Jesus Christ, and will be co-equal with Him, and co-heirs with Him. And the angels will take then the lower place, and the saints will shepherd the angels.

Then again in Revelation 3:21, Christ said, **To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am sit down with my Father on His throne.** The overcomer here is the born-again believer, 1 John 5 verse 4, who's learned to sit in judgment against himself, against sin, against the

things that Christ hates, who has learned to love the things that Christ loves, has learned to suffer in Christ's stead, has become so identified with Christ that he suffers with Him until he has learned obedience to Him. He has the same faith Christ had, and has come to rest everything in the hands of his Father, and has learned contentment in whatever state he finds himself as he battles the elements of this wicked world on his journey from time to eternity with Christ. He has overcome through regeneration, born of God, and therefore in the regeneration of this world order and world organization, when the Son of Man sits upon the throne of His glory, the saints glorified will judge with Him. Isn't that grace? Have you been regenerated? Have you taken sides with Christ against yourself? Do you know yourself? I've been asking the question, do you know Christ? This morning I ask you the question, do you know yourself?

Now notice that he is to shepherd all nations with strict justice and judgment as well as love. **She brought forth a man-child who was to rule, shepherd all nations with a rod of iron**, Revelation 12:5. Listen also to the message of the angel to Mary, the mother of Christ. **He shall be great and shall be called the son of the highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.** Christ inherits that kingdom. The Father gives it to him. What a misconception of the Scriptures man betrays when he thinks he will finally "bring in the kingdom" through the preaching of the gospel! The scripture says plainly, **and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.** There are no ifs about it.

We have from Revelation 4 throughout the first verses of chapter 20, through Christ, the Father has poured out judgment after judgment until he has literally wrecked and destroyed all Satan's great society, religion, and world order, and buried it completely. He has confined the Antichrist and the false prophet to the lake of fire and imprisoned Satan in the abyss. He's judged the nations with respect to their relationship to and treatment of his people, the Jews, and he has put down all rebellion worldwide. And then he and his saints walked into a new world, similar to the one Noah walked into after the flood. My friend, I just believe God's Word. I take Him at face value. I have no trouble believing God. I've read many commentaries on the book of Revelation, and the controversy among

scholars who deny this or spiritualize that and don't believe this and won't have that, but I have approached this book with one thought, I believe what God says. My friend, I've weighed every word of this book, every phrase, every sentence. I've read it, I've re-read it, and I do not find one contradiction. I just believe it. There are a few things I don't understand, but I accept them at face value. And you see what a glorious book it is. It is the consummation of all the ages. It is God's final destruction of Satan and everything that he's ever had anything to do with. He must do it. He will do it. He does not pour new wine into old bottles. It's the revelation of the Lordship and the Kingship and the majesty of our Lord in the destruction of Satan.

Let me tell you something right here, my friend, I know revelation is true from my own personal experience. Just as God won't have one thing in the world to do with anything that Satan has touched, So when he approached me to save me, he wouldn't have one thing in the world to do with anything I had or offered to him. He showed me what a wretched, ruined, wicked sinner I was, because I was a child of Satan, and I was wrecked by Satan, world without end. In the fall, I lost everything that God had given humanity, all righteousness, all natural goodness, all true wisdom, all knowledge, all love. I was alienated from God, dead in trespasses and sins, and when God found me, He destroyed the works of Satan, set aside everything that I was by nature, and made me a new creature in Christ Jesus by grace. When the Lord comes back to this earth, he'll destroy everything that belongs to Satan, all of his works, all of his world order, all of his government, all of his great society, all of his religion, all of his idolatry and philosophy and wisdom. He'll literally wipe the earth clean and set in to rule only with those in whom he has destroyed every vestige of Satan's work and rule and image. That is his saints whom he has created in the image of Christ, adopted as His children, made co-heirs with Christ, and invested with the same discernment, the same wisdom, the same knowledge, the same counsel and authority, the same power and fear as the Lord Jesus Christ. Won't that be a glorious age when He comes? He's coming.

Let's look further at the believer's relationship with Christ in His earthly reign. Luke 20:28, **"Ye are they which have continued with me in temptations. And I appoint you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat**

and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

The Apostle Paul emphasized this great truth in 2 Timothy, **If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him**. This is not a maybe-so, a might-be, but it is one of God's "shalls". We "shall" reign with Him. Yes, the resurrected saints will be granted the great privilege of reigning with the Lord Jesus Christ during his reign on earth for a thousand years, according to Psalms 149:9, **To execute upon them the judgment written: This honor have all the saints**. Isaiah set this great truth forth so clearly in Isaiah 9:6-7, **For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.**

Christ taught his disciples to pray, **thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven**. Believers have prayed that prayer for 2,000 years, yet many, many of our leading preachers do not believe that prayer. It has become a form and has no meaning whatsoever. They are not looking for the kingdom of Christ to come on this earth as it is in heaven. But my friend, that prayer will be answered, and the Lord Jesus Christ will take over the sovereignty of this earth, and rule it or shepherd it, just as he does in heaven now, and every individual on this earth will be in absolute obedience to him as king on the throne. When we study his reign, we shall show you something about the government of his kingdom, how he will build his great society according to God's Word. The average one of you fellows listening to me don't believe God's Word, but the Bible is so, and every prophecy within the lids of this book will be fulfilled literally, exactly as it says.

Look at this, **And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them**. 'Thrones' means seats of authority. These thrones are not empty, for it says they sat on them. Judgment was given unto them, means the judicial administration of justice, which includes discerning, sentencing, and executing the punishment. Can you conceive of this great truth, that we who are

now living, that is, born-again believers and those who have died through the ages, will one day be raised from the dead, given bodies like unto our risen Lord, and then set with Christ in His kingdom on thrones here, all over this earth, and rule and reign with Christ for 1,000 years in our resurrected, glorified bodies. Christ said we are heirs and joined heirs with Christ. We shall be glorified together with him. Yes, it is our fate now to be judged by the ungodly, worldly powers, to be misunderstood, persecuted, put to death. But there is coming a day when this world shall be judged, ruled, and shepherded by God's people. The Lord Jesus told His followers that they would be brought before councils, before governors and kings, and the time would come when men would think they were doing God a service by putting them to the sword or in prison. But listen, listen! Man's day has a limit. The new order of things is coming when the born again one shall be raised from the dead and shall sit in judgment or places of authority and rule and reign on this earth with Christ for 1,000 years. Daniel 7:18 says the saints shall take the kingdom and shall possess it forever and ever. Over again, Christ said, I will give you authority over the nations to reign with me. Think of it. Not so hard to believe, is it?

When we see wickedness enthroned, and the world given over to the devil, and ungodly men in places of authority, with the result that nothing but corruption, dishonesty, greed, and gain, and covetousness prevails everywhere, and justice is perverted, then to think that according to God's unbroken, eternal, verbally inspired word, you and I, and others who have been born again will be given places of authority during the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, and the world will know the peace and prosperity that only a reign of righteousness can bring. You know, my friend, the wonder to me is that I'll be there. I'll never cease to praise Him and wonder that He saved me. I've often thought and said, I hope He makes me janitor of His office where I can be close to Him, and see the nail scars in His hands, the scars from the crown of thorns upon His brow, the scars in His feet and His hands, and praise Him, and praise Him, and praise Him forever, without ceasing, for dying for me, for paying my sin debt in full, giving me grace to sit in judgment upon myself, justifying Him and condemning myself. I have reveled in the grace of this pardon, in the grace of my new body, in which there will be no pain, no deformity, but a perfect, sinless, holy, righteous body, made in the likeness of my Lord. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know

that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 1
John 3:2

My citizenship is now in heaven, from whence I look for my Savior, the great God of my redemption, and this vile body, the body of my humiliation, shall be changed, transfigured into the likeness of His risen, glorified body. What grace! Will you be there? It'll be a wonder! Oh, the wonder of wonders! I've had folks to say to me, why did God elect Judas to be one of his disciples. That's a mystery. I don't understand it, but the greatest mystery is that he elected me to save me. That's the greatest mystery in all the world, that I'll be there. I'll be there with him, will you?