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Sign of Jonah, Christs Brethren (Part 2)



The Life and Teachings of Christ - Steve Gregg

In this talk, Steve Gregg discusses the "Sign of Jonah" and its relevance to Christ's brethren. He argues that the demonic possessions described in the Bible were not mere illusions, and that the demonism prevalent during the time of Jesus was a sign of the wicked generation. Gregg also delves into the topic of Christ's family, stating that his so-called brothers and sisters were actually his disciples, and examines the connection between the gathering of the nations and the end time judgment.

Transcript

The blessing bestowed upon a man who was delivered of a demon. The power of the devil was, as it were, set at abeyance, was driven out temporarily while Jesus was there. The devil just couldn't face him.

The demons went out screaming whenever Jesus came. His presence in his generation was a temporary driving out of the power of Satan, and bringing in light where there is darkness, and giving the generation a chance to really clean up their act and accept Jesus and follow him. Now, he said, however, he makes this prediction.

He knows his generation is rejecting him. He just said so in the previous verses about how this generation is going to be condemned by the Queen of Sheba and the men of Nineveh because they're rejecting him. He's not under any illusions that there's hope for his generation.

He knows they're rejecting him. He knows they're going to. So he says this is what their fate's going to be.

It's gonna be like a man who got delivered, but the demons came back, and it was a lot worse than before. Now, the prediction then has to do with the latter end of his generation. He says the latter end or the last state of that man is worse than the first.

Now, that man is his generation. On several occasions, he said this generation, this generation. We know that in Matthew 21, this generation won't pass till all these things are fulfilled.

Or in another place, he said, some of you standing here will not taste death until you see whatever it was he was talking about. As you know, I think he's talking about 70 AD in many of those places, and it's not not coincidental that it was exactly 40 years after his crucifixion that this all came down. 40 years is a typical generation.

And so, I think that generation, from the generation that crucified him or that heard his ministry, to that which fell to the Romans, that was the generation he has in mind. His coming at the beginning of that 40 years was a ministry of deliverance to the nation, as it were, in shedding light and driving back Satan's power and so forth. But because of their rejection of Christ, the demons came back, and they came back in greater numbers.

Now, I sometimes appeal to Josephus, and I don't have him with me. I didn't bring the book Josephus with me this time, but you have read, previously in this school, you've read an abridgment of what Josephus said happened, and you will recall how insanely the Jews under siege behaved. One cannot read the accounts of the behavior of the Jews in Jerusalem during the siege without getting the distinct impression, if one doesn't believe in demons, that these people had gone mentally insane.

Or if one believes in demons, the first thing comes to mind, man, these people are demonized. These people are just acting irrationally. They're just acting stupid.

They're killing each other when the Romans are outside of the main threat. They're slaughtering each other. They're burning up the grain in their own houses so that others won't eat it.

And so far, they're just doing stupid, crazy things, eating their children. They're just not smart. You know, it just isn't smart.

It's just crazy. And I, my understanding is that demons were released upon these people. Jesus had driven back temporarily the power of demonism, and we know there was quite a bit of demonism in Israel when he came, because he was finding demon-possessed people everywhere.

But it came back stronger, sevenfold, worse than the first. And I think that the behavior of the Jews during the three and a half years of the Jewish war would definitely, could be diagnosed as just coming under total delusion from demons and totally demonized. The nation became demonized, I believe.

It's interesting that Jesus' ministry was three and a half years, and the Jewish war at the end of that journey was three and a half years. He had three and a half years of driving the demons out, and then there was three and a half years of them being afflicted by this latter end, and so forth. That was worse than the first.

Now, let me show you something in Revelation. As you know, I incline toward the view

that much of Revelation, not all of it, but I incline to the view that much of Revelation is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem in the first century, and not about some future things. I do believe some parts of Revelation are future, and I have a very, I have a very reasoned and systematic reason for identifying which parts I think are and which parts are not.

We'll get to that some other time. But, but in a portion which I personally believe is about the fall of Jerusalem, Revelation 9, we read of a the fifth angel sounding the trumpet of judgment, fifth trumpet. Revelation 9, one says, the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth, and to him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke, locusts came upon the earth, and to them was given power, as the scorpions that have power over the earth. And then it goes on and tells about them in detail, how they tormented men and so forth.

The description of the locusts is really fascinating. We'll talk about it in detail when we get to Revelation. We won't now.

Let me just give you a sneak preview of what I understand the locusts to represent. The fact that they come out of a bottomless pit sort of removes all mystery as to what they are. They're not helicopters.

They're not jets. They're not rockets. The bottomless pit, the Greek word is the abyssos, or the abyss.

It's the same word which the demons begged Jesus not to send them into. When Jesus was facing the man of the tombs, it says the demons begged him, says, please don't send us to the abyss. Have you come to Tormentus before the time? In fact, the demons were frequently asking Jesus that question.

Have you come to Tormentus before the time? The abyss was the place where the demons would be incarcerated and tormented. And I believe, though I can't, I wouldn't swear to this with my life, but I personally believe that when Jesus died, that this was when they were consigned to the abyss. He, you know, they said, have you come to Tormentus before the time? Have you ever wondered why Jesus humored them when they said, please don't send us to the abyss.

Could you send us to the pigs instead? Why did he do what they asked? Why didn't he send them to the abyss? Why did he give them their request? Perhaps because it wasn't time. Maybe they were right. It is a little premature.

It wasn't yet time for them to be consigned there. But the cross was the time. And I would like to suggest that that's when it was fulfilled.

But of course, there'd be many possible other interpretations of that. That's not the most important thing I'm saying. What I would say, however, is that it is clear in the Bible that whenever the abyss is spoken of, the abyssos, it is the habitation of the devil and demons.

The demons don't want to go there. When the pit is open, they come out. As soon as they're unlocked, as soon as their prison is open.

By the way, in Revelation 20, where Satan is locked in a bottomless pit for, you know, a thousand years, that's the same Greek word, the abyssos, the abyss. So it's the place where Satan and the demons are incarcerated. Now, the imagery of Revelation is not to be pressed too literally, in my opinion.

Some would disagree and not everyone would agree to what extent symbolism is to be applied. I personally don't believe these are locusts. You know, I believe they're demonic.

I think the description of them is locusts with scorpion tails and hair like women and face like men and all these other features all have some relevance to their demonic character, which we'll take time to go into on about another time. But I want to point this out. The pit is open and a horde of demons is unleashed on somebody.

Okay, someone gets tormented for five and a half months, approximately the length of the time of the siege of Jerusalem, as a matter of fact. And one of the things that happens when the pit is open in verse 2, smoke arose out of the pit and darkened the sky. The sun and the air were darkened.

We've taken time on other occasions to point out that there are such images of the sun being darkened with reference to the fall of Babylon, the fall of Egypt, the fall of Edom and the fall of Jerusalem in other passages in the Old Testament and even in Jesus own teaching in the Olivet Discourse. In fact, Peter on the day of Pentecost, quoting from Joel's prophecy about how God would pour out his spirit on all flesh, said, and he said, I will show signs in the earth and in the heavens and and he says, on earth fire and blood and pillars of smoke. The sun should be turned to blood and the moon to darkness before the great and dreadful day of the Lord and so forth.

All of these I take, as you know, to be references to the judgment that fell on Israel within a generation of the time that these words were uttered by Jesus and the Apostles. Now, the darkening of the sun, of course, doesn't have to refer to the fall of Jerusalem. It's used in a variety of generic ways with reference to the fall of other kingdoms elsewhere.

But, if one were convinced that there's strong evidences in the book of Revelation to apply these prophecies to the period of the fall of Jerusalem, it would certainly fit well that we have here again the image of the smoke, the darkening of the sun, and the

torment for five and a half months of the people that weren't killed. They were tormented. The nation didn't fall during that period of time.

It was just in torment from demonic sources that had been unleashed from the pit of hell upon them in hordes like a horde of locusts, overwhelmed. Well, you know what I'm saying. I mean, what I'm saying is this is the fulfillment of what Jesus said.

Jesus said, this generation is gonna be like that man who had the demons, but seven worse ones come. They're gonna be invaded by demons, and that was certainly the latter end of them. There can be little doubt about that.

So, that's what I understand Jesus to mean when he talks about this demonized man coming under demonization a second time, and they say, so shall it be with this wicked generation. One only needs to read the history of Josephus to be convinced that an unusual army of demons were unleashed upon the people of Israel, especially during the siege. Okay, we're back in Matthew 12 now.

Verse 46, while he was still talking to the multitudes, behold, his mother and brothers stood outside seeking to speak with him. Now, Matthew has not recorded previously, but we read in Mark's parallel yesterday in Mark 3, I think it's verse 20 and 21, it points out that Mary, or it doesn't actually say, it doesn't actually say his mother and brother, it just says his own people. They heard that he was going without meals, probably going without sleep.

They thought he was going berserk. He was somewhat fanatical. He's gonna injure his health.

He's gonna bring shame on the family or whatever. It says, they said he's beside himself, so they set out to go and take him into custody. They actually were gonna take him against his will and lock him up at home until he came into his right mind.

Well, he had no intentions of letting them do that. But here we read of their arrival. While he was still talking to the multitudes, behold, his mother and brothers stood outside seeking to speak with him.

Then one said to him, look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak with you. But he answered and said to the one who told him, who is my mother and who are my brothers? And he stretched out his hand toward the disciples and said, here are my mother and my brothers, for whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother. Now, there's not very many times in the Gospels that we read of Jesus interacting in any way with his mother.

A few times. At the first miracle, where she approached him and said, the wine is gone. He said, woman, what have I to do with you? My hour has not yet come.

Or on this occasion, we read of his mother wanting to see him, saying, your mother's out here wants to talk to you, son. Who is my mother? And it sounds like he just ignored her request and didn't grant it at all. Well, of course, he no doubt had it revealed to him by his father that this was not a friendly visit.

This was his mother and brother and others, no doubt, coming to take him away. Ha ha. And to the funny farm.

And so, so he said, no way, I'm not coming. And he actually disavowed any relationship to these people. He said, who is my mother and who are my brothers? And he answers his own question.

And the way he answers his question suggests that the people who are calling themselves as mother and brothers are not really in the category. The ones who are my real mothers and brothers are those who do the will of my father in heaven. Well, that would make sense.

I mean, in a family, it's the role of a mother and of the siblings to do the will of the father. The father's the head of the house. And so one could recognize, for example, who a man's family is by who's submitted to his father.

His mother and his brothers would all be under the same father he is. And he says, you know, I have a father in heaven and all of my real brothers and mother and so forth are submitted to him like I am. And these people outside asking for me apparently are not in that class.

It's not my father who sent them here for me. You know, they're they're on another errand. They're not doing the will of my father.

Therefore, they are not entitled to be called my mother and my brothers. Now, of course, Mary and Jesus brothers came around later and became believers, as I pointed out, I think yesterday. John chapter seven, I think, around verse four or five mentions that Jesus brothers didn't believe in him.

Mary no doubt believed in him, but may have been, you know, had her moments where she wasn't sure he was doing the right thing. But we know from the book of Acts in chapter one of Acts that Mary and the brothers of Jesus became converts and were there in the upper room when the spirit fell. And certainly they were part of the early church.

But they had their times when they didn't do the will of the father. And when they didn't, Jesus didn't grant them anything. Now, this is this is fairly important, this story, because there are so few like this of Jesus interacting with his mother in the Gospels.

This story is one of very few. And it is important because, of course, it has a lot to say

about the Catholic conviction that Jesus would never deny a request from his mother. Now, I want to say something.

I do believe that Jesus today would include his his natural mother and his natural brothers in the category of his mothers and brothers, because they became believers. They eventually did do the will of the father. But the Roman Catholic position is not really based on on that fact, when it says we could talk to Mary and Jesus would not deny her.

They make the issue of the fact that she is his mother, physical mother. She's the mother of God. She's she's the Virgin Mary and the mother of Jesus.

And on the basis of that relationship, that biological relationship, we would certainly expect that he would not turn her down. By the way, if someone wants to say that Jesus would never turn down a request from his mother, Mary has no more claim to that by Jesus' own words than any of us who do the will of the father. Any of you girls are his mother or sister or brother.

I mean, or us men, too. I mean, he just he just throws the whole the whole bunch of them. Mother, brother, sister, my family, in other words.

If if we could argue, which we cannot, that Jesus would never say no to his mother, that would not say anything particularly about Mary, because Jesus in this statement makes it clear that Mary has no more claim to being his mother than any other believer does. Insofar as Mary became a believer, she has the right to be included as among his mother, brother, and sisters, but but not on the basis of her biological relationship, but just like any other believer. Jesus doesn't treat her with deference or special status.

In fact, there's another place. I've shown it to you before and I don't remember where it is. It's in Luke.

I don't remember the passage where a woman in the crowd said to Jesus, blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you. And he said, rather blessed are those who do who hear the word of God and keep it. Again, suggesting that any Christian, anyone who hears and obeys the word of God, is every bit as blessed as Mary is.

Because when the woman said, blessed is the womb that bore you and the breast that gave you. That's certainly, that's exactly what the Roman Catholics say about Mary. She's the womb that bore him.

There's no question about that. But Jesus pooh-poohed the ideas. No.

More blessed, more blessed than anybody who hears the word of God and does it. So Mary is not more blessed than any Christian is. She obviously doesn't have any on the basis of her biological relationship to Jesus.

She doesn't have any special claim to his attention as this story points out. Who is my mother, my brothers? Only those who do the will of my father. And all of those are.

So that you have as much access to God and to Jesus as Mary does. That's the point. If you are obedient, if you do the will of the Father, then you are... Mary's not a wit above you.

You're not a wit behind her. Now, there's another thing that this statement of Jesus affects. Essentially what Jesus is saying is, he defines his family, not in terms of biology, but in terms of his spiritual family.

My father in heaven, you know. Those who are connected and born of and submitted to and part of the family of my father in heaven. That's who I'm identifying as my family.

Very clearly, the only people in that category could be Christians. Because any Jew who rejects Jesus is certainly not doing the will of the Father. Therefore, the only people who are really Christ's brothers or sisters or mother are Christian people, his disciples.

Now, I say this because and now we take a hack at some evangelicals, not Catholics. If you wait long enough, I'll shoot at everybody from this public. I'm no respecter of persons.

Take potshots at everybody equally. Although the dispensationalists come in for a little more often than most. And this is a case with them.

They, the dispensationalists of course, urge that the Jews, Jesus' biological race that he came to, are still in some sense special. And they apply it in particular in a passage which would otherwise be embarrassing to them in Matthew 25. And that is the passage, Matthew 25, beginning at verse 31, which talks about the sheep and the goats.

And I won't read the whole passage because it's long, but the first part is important to look at. When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

And then he sets the sheep on right hand and goats on the left, and he talks to them individually. And basically he relegates them to their fate based on how he treated his, how they treated his brethren. In as much as you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.

He says in verse 40. And then he says to the goats the opposite in verse 45. In as much as you did not do it to the least of these, you did not do it to me.

But he identifies these as his brethren in verse 40. So here we have sheep and goats, some lost and some saved, and the basis of judgment he gives is how they treated his

brethren. Now, let me just, you know, take another swipe at dispensationalism if I can here.

You know by now that dispensationalists and other premillennialists believe that there are two resurrections and two judgments. That the believers will be resurrected before the millennium and will reign with Christ during the millennium on this earth. And that the unbelievers will not be raised until after the millennium.

I'm not teaching anything new. You should know this by heart, okay? The dispensational view is believers are raised in the resurrection of the just before the millennium. They live and reign with Christ a thousand years during the millennium, then the unjust are raised for judgment at the end of that time.

Now, this chapter does not seem to say anything like that because it says when the Son of Man will come in his glory, verse 31 says, he did call all the nations before him and they're all going to stand there, the just and the unjust. And this is just one of many passages that we pointed to on other occasions. We won't survey them all again now.

But just one of many passages that points out that there's a single resurrection and judgment that where everybody's there, the just and the unjust, the sheep and the goats and so forth, they're all there at the same time. And this of course interferes very drastically with the notion of millennium that divides the first and second resurrections. Now, historic Christianity, which is in modern times called amillennialism, though I don't know that it was called that all the time, but the view remained the same throughout history, was that there's one resurrection, one judgment, no millennium in between.

This passage appears to support that view. It appears to support amillennialism, not premillennialism. Now, what does a premillennialist do with this then? Well, what a dispensationalist does usually is this.

They say, well this, when Jesus comes back this is not the final judgment. The sheep and the goats are not individuals at all, but they are nations. Note that Jesus says he will call all nations before him.

In verse 32, all the nations will be gathered. So they say this is not a judgment of individuals like the great white throne judgment of the last day. This is the judgment of nations.

And they say the judgment, what's going on here, it's not that some, what is, Jesus is deciding which nations will be allowed to go into the millennium. Salvation is not the issue here, but the question of which nations will, God will allow them to go into the millennium and have another thousand years of history before the great white throne judgment and serve and reign under Christ's rod of iron for that thousand years. So they would say, the criterion for this judgment is how did each nation treat the Jews, Christ's

brethren? Therefore a nation like you know, Hitler's Germany, they didn't treat the Jews very well.

So that they, they're gonna, you know, they won't get to go into the millennium. A nation like, you know, Great Britain or America or something that's been a little more favorable toward Israel, well, they'll probably get to go into the millennium and so forth. I mean this, this is a judgment, they say, of nations as national entities based on how they treated the Jews and they, and the fate is not eternal, it's a matter of who goes in the millennium and who doesn't and continues to have another thousand years of national existence.

Now it, the fallacy of this interpretation should be transparent, you know. This is a bizarre interpretation of the passage and I'll show you all the reasons why it's an impossible one too. But you can see that they have to resort to this bizarre interpretation because otherwise they're stuck with the plain teaching of the passage, that there's a single judgment, a single resurrection, it happens when the Son of Man comes in his glory with his angels, that's his second coming, and that the eternal fate of all people is decided, that there's no thousand-year millennium involved.

Now, let me show you, first of all, why the view is impossible. The only thing in favor of the view is the fact that verse 32 says all the nations will be gathered, they say, therefore it's a national judgment. Really? Is that how we understand or are forced to understand when the Bible says go and make disciples of all nations? Teach all nations? Does that mean that whole nations as political units are going to become disciples? Some say so.

Not, I mean, the, you know, the post-millennials believe that, but I don't, I don't think the Bible teaches that. And certainly the wording doesn't require it. When Jesus says go and make disciples of all nations or teach all nations, as the King James has it, it doesn't necessarily mean that as political entities, these nations as a whole are going to be disciples, but rather disciples from every nation.

Not just Israel. See, until that time only Israel had had the Word of God. Now he's saying his disciples ought to go to all the other nations, all the Gentile nations, and make disciples from their ranks.

But the disciples are made individually, even though it is said to be of all nations. Here also, all nations will be gathered simply as a way of saying all people, regardless of their nation. This is not just a judgment of Israel.

This is a judgment of the whole world. All nations. There's nothing in the wording that excludes the possibility that this is a judgment on the basis of individual behavior and individual faiths.

Secondly, there is no suggestion that the parties that are sheep here are going into a thousand-year millennium as opposed to eternal life. In fact, the opposite is stated. It says in verse 34, the King will say to those on his right hand, Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

I was hungry, you gave me food, etc, etc, etc. And then he says to the others, depart from me you cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, and tells them why. And he says this in verse 46, and these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into a thousand-year millennium.

Oh no, I'm sorry. I'm reading the Scofield Bible here. It says these, meaning the goats, will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous, the sheep, will go into eternal life.

Well, where's the millennium in this picture? You got eternity in both directions here. You don't have any millennium for them to go into. Now, this in itself proves that the premillennial interpretation of the passage is flawed.

It simply assumes to be true what is not stated and what cannot be fit with what is stated. But there's more. There's more problems with it.

For one thing, let us assume logically that they, I mean, assume that there was exegetical grounds for what they said, and that this is in fact a judgment of nations as national entities. What about Germany? What if there was a time in Germany's history when they were good to the Jews, and a time in Germany's history when they're bad to the Jews? Then where does Germany as a nation fit in to the picture? Or America, for that matter? America has been historically pretty good to the nation of Israel, but what if America turns anti-semitic? It's not impossible. It certainly cannot be said that every nation that's ever existed has been consistently good or bad to the Jews.

Think of the, you know, the Babylonians or the Persians. I mean, the Babylonians at one point sent messengers to congratulate Hezekiah for his recovery. They were friends of the Jews.

Later, they took the Jews into captivity. The Persians, depending on which ruler you look at, were either good or bad to the Jews. The Greeks, likewise.

The Syrians. The Egyptians. Even, how about Egypt? Pharaoh, in the days of Joseph, was mighty good to the Jews.

But there was another Pharaoh later who wasn't very good to the Jews. Now, where's Egypt going to fit in this national judgment? Were they good to the Jews, or were they bad to the Jews? Or do we grade on a curve, or do we just put the good and the bad on both sides of the scales and see which is heavier? I mean, it's an absurdity to suggest that God could judge nations in terms of their, I mean, or that this is how he would, as

entities, especially in view of the fact, suppose you were a German in Nazi Germany, and therefore, as a German, you were doomed, you know. But you personally had been a dissenter and had hidden Jews and helped them get smuggled out of the country during the war.

Now, suppose you weren't a Christian, so you didn't automatically have a ticket to heaven. But the question is, are you going into the millennium or not? Do you get another, you know, do you have another thousand years or not? You're a German, and Germany is up for consideration here. Now, Germany didn't do very well toward the Jews, so they go to hell.

But what about those German citizens who stood and lost their lives for supporting the Jews? Would they be separated from the nations? If so, then you've got an individual, not a national judgment going on. If it's national, then the righteous and the unrighteous perish together, which is something Abraham protested against as an injustice. But what I'm saying is, to me, it's just a concoction of convenience to suggest that this is a national judgment, judging national entities on the basis of how they treated the Jews and so forth.

And, of course, the basic assumption that the brethren spoken of here are the Jews is the whole reason we turn to this passage. Because Jesus tells us in this other passage, Matthew 12 and the parallels and Mark 3 and elsewhere, who his brethren are. When I say my brethren, who do I mean? He says, well, who are my brethren? Who is my mother and my brothers, my sisters? Those who do the will of my father.

Those are my brothers and sisters and mother. So when he later says, the way you treat my brethren is the way you treat me, he can't be talking about Jews. He's disavowed any biological family ties, even to his own mother and brothers, much less the more extended race of Jews.

He says, my family, my brethren, are my spiritual brethren. The brethren in Matthew 25 are the Christians. The way that a person is treated, the brethren, is going to be an important factor in the way they are judged in the end.

Now, as far as where they go, after that judgment, they don't go into a thousand-year millennium. It's quite clear. Some go to everlasting destruction.

Some go into eternal life. I would remind you that this passage, although it's not one of the ones I always bring up when I talk about these different eschatological views, this is a key passage, because there can be no doubt that Jesus says, this is what happens when I come back, and he doesn't say anything about a millennium. He talks about eternal damnation, eternal life, and that's all there is.

When he comes back, the eternal issues are solved. There's not another thousand-year

waiting period or test period or something like that. And because taking it at face value is so damaging to the dispensational view, they have to postulate these impossible and absurd reinterpretations of it that just, you know, that fail at every point to be consistent with the rest of Scripture.

Okay. You may get the impression I don't agree with dispensationalism or Roman Catholicism. There's a very close connection between the two, actually.

Although Catholics are not dispensational, the whole futurist approach to the book of Revelation, which the dispensation is based almost everything on, came out of Jesuits. The Catholic Church originated that. Anyway, that's another story.

The point is, Jesus made it very clear that from that point on, or even possibly prior to that point, he had already made this decision, he's identifying as his family, not those who are biologically related to him. Which really, really undermines the idea that Mary has a special relationship with him now that others do not have and is a special mediatrix and so forth. Okay.

That's about as far as we can go. I was hoping to go into the next portion. What we covered today is really what should have been covered included last time.

So we actually ended up taking two sessions on what should have been taken one. But looking at the clock, I can see we really don't have any freedom. Man, the tape has a lot of room on it, but the clock doesn't.

I don't know what's going on. Do we start five minutes late? It says that we got 14 minutes late on the tape. That's amazing.

But I'll tell you what, I'll give you a break. I can't cover... What we come to next, chronologically, what we come to next are the great parables of Matthew 13 and the parallels in Mark 4 and Luke 8. The so-called parables discourse of Christ. The next thing we will be looking at is the parable of the sower.

And that will take much more time than we have. So we'll just go ahead and stop here.