

# OpenTheo

## The King and His Kingdom



### Isaiah: A Topical Look At Isaiah - Steve Gregg

In this talk, Steve Gregg explores the theme of the coming king in the book of Isaiah, focusing on the character and reign of his kingdom. He notes that while the New Testament frequently mentions the kingdom of God, it is important to also examine Old Testament predictions made about the king and his kingdom. Gregg discusses various interpretations of certain passages, including the meaning of "latter days," and concludes that the kingdom of God is a spiritual reality accessible to those who walk in the ways of the Lord.

### Transcript

One of the themes that we need to look at carefully in the book of Isaiah is that of the coming of the king, and if time allows, look at the passages that talk about the character of his reign or of his kingdom. Now, obviously when I say the king, I mean the Messiah, and as Christians we recognize that character to be fulfilled in Jesus, so we would say King Jesus, the king. That's who we understand the prophecies to be about, and in fact, I shouldn't say understand, that's who we know the prophecies to be about.

And any open-minded person who would look at the prophecies without a bias, contrary to it, and look at the life of Christ would know that he truly is the one who fulfilled the prophecies that are there in Isaiah and many other places in the Old Testament. Now, you might say, well, haven't we already talked about the Messiah? Yeah, we have. The Messiah has come up from time to time.

There have been occasions where passages in Isaiah did look at the Messiah, particularly in yesterday's class, the class about the servant of Jehovah. Obviously, we spent some time looking at Isaiah 53, obviously about Jesus, the Messiah, but there, although it mentions his being exalted very high, it is not in the role of king that he is seen in those passages, but in the role of suffering servant. And we know that the Old Testament prophets gave glimpses of both aspects of the ministry of Christ, that he would come and be a suffering servant, and he also is destined to be a king of a kingdom.

I mentioned in a previous class that the Jews often had trouble melding these two

thoughts into one character and sometimes even felt that the suffering passages should not be applied to the Messiah, only the king passages, and others felt like the king passages may refer to one Messiah and the suffering passages actually to another Messiah, two Messiahs. This is just illustrative of the difficulty that the Jews had in taking the whole counsel of God on the subject of the Messiah, and we might have the difficulty they had, too, did we not live after the fact, and if we were not willing to accept that Jesus is the fulfillment. Living before the coming of Christ, these passages could have given definitely mixed messages.

Having a faith in Christ now that he has come and understanding the historical life of Christ as well as the theological teaching about Christ in the New Testament, we understand that he is both the suffering servant and the king over his kingdom. Prior to his death, principally manifesting himself in the role of the suffering servant. Since his resurrection, he is the king on his throne and ruling over a kingdom.

Now, the kingdom of God is a theme of the New Testament that is so frequently mentioned that it would be counterproductive at this point to go through the New Testament passages and try to identify the kingly motif there of Jesus' kingdom. The kingdom is introduced in the earliest pages of the New Testament where John the Baptist announces that the kingdom of God is at hand. Later, when John is thrown in prison, Jesus is going about preaching that the kingdom of God is at hand.

Jesus teaches in his parables that the kingdom of God is like this and the kingdom of God is like that. There are many parables of the kingdom which are intended to portray the nature of the kingdom of God. Jesus sent out the 12 in Matthew chapter 10 and he sent out the 70 in Luke chapter 10.

In both cases, he told them they should go into all the cities and preach that the kingdom of God was near. Jesus said in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, 14 that this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations and then shall the end come. Obviously, the kingdom of God is the kingdom in view.

Here, he speaks of the gospel of the kingdom, the good news of the kingdom. Also, after his resurrection, it says in Acts chapter 1 that Jesus appeared to his disciples over a period of 40 days between his resurrection and his ascension, during which time, in summary, it says he spoke to them of things concerning the kingdom of God. Throughout the book of Acts, the apostles are seen preaching about the kingdom of God.

Even the final verse in the book of Acts tells us that Paul preached the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, no man forbidding him. That's how the book of Acts closes. From the earliest pages of the New Testament to the last verse in the book of Acts, the kingdom of God is the message.

Throughout all the gospels, it's a very strong emphasis. Now, to understand the kingdom

of God, we need to go back to the Old Testament prophets that spoke of the kingdom of God. Daniel, actually, in interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, in which Nebuchadnezzar had seen an image with a head of gold, a chest of silver, a belly of bronze, and legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay, and in the dream, a stone, not of human origin, that is not made with hands, came, I have the impression, flying through the air, although it doesn't say so specifically, and struck the image in the feet, and busted up the image and ground it small into powder, and the wind took it all away.

And nothing was left but this stone, which then grew into a great mountain to fill the earth. And given the interpretation of this dream, Daniel said, in the second chapter of Daniel, that the metals from which the image and the dream were made represent successive empires, and that the stone which struck the empires in the feet represent the kingdom of God. Precisely, he says, in Daniel 2.44, he says, in the days of these kings, the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.

Now, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom. The first reference to God having a kingdom is back at the Mount Sinai, in Exodus 19, verses 5 and 6, God told the Israelites, Exodus 19, 5 and 6, He said, if you will obey my voice and deed, and keep my covenant, you will be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all nations, for all the earth is mine, and a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. Now, He told the Israelites that they, if they were obedient, would be a kingdom, a kingdom of God, a kingdom comprised of priests.

And that being the first reference to the kingdom of God, we know that the kingdom of God is principally people, because Israel, the people, who at that time were not living stationary in any particular geographical land, because they had not yet come into the promised land, they were told that they would be the kingdom. They would be God's domain, His subjects, really. The king's kingdom is made up of subjects, and in the book of Isaiah, we are introduced in some passages to an actual king.

This king, though Isaiah doesn't say so, we know in retrospect that this king is the same as the servant of Jehovah. He is the Messiah. There are many passages that talk about His reign, and the character of His reign, and some of those passages are the passages I've made reference to so many times in the course of these lectures, what I've alternately called the kingdom passages or the golden age passages, the messianic kingdom passages.

I can't settle on one label for these passages, but they are a certain genre of passages in the prophets that all describe this age of the Messiah, this age of the reign of the Messiah. For the sake of consistency, we'll call them kingdom passages in this lecture, because we're talking about the king and his kingdom. So I'd like to look in Isaiah and see what kind of predictions were made about the king and the kingdom.

In some of these we've seen before, it's been unavoidable in studying some of the other themes, that we have, of course, come to see some of these passages already. The birth

of the king is mentioned twice in Isaiah, at least twice. One of those places is in Isaiah 7 and verse 14.

This passage, this prediction, we looked at before and saw that there was a partial fulfillment in Isaiah's own son, and therefore the actual wording of the passage does not give it away that this is a king that is being born. But a couple of chapters later, this is clarified. In Isaiah 7 and verse 14, Isaiah said, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. And it goes on, and we've read that passage and talked about it before. The context, both before and following the verse we just read, suggests a child will be born in the days of Ahaz, as a sign to him, and that that child's early years will not be past before the destruction of the kings of Syria and Israel that were at that time menacing Judah.

In other words, the context certainly gives us reason to believe this is about a contemporary child of Isaiah's own time. And when you go on to chapter 8, and find that Isaiah's own son was conceived and born there, and that the same significance is assigned to the birth of that son, as was assigned to the child in Isaiah 7, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that Isaiah's own son Meher Shalal HaShabaz was in some sense a fulfillment of this prediction. Now we talked about this before, so I'll try to avoid the temptation to get into all the issues again.

But the main objection to Isaiah 7, 14 being about Isaiah's son is that it says the virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son. And quite obviously Isaiah's wife was not a virgin when she conceived. Isaiah specifically mentions that he had intercourse with her in order to conceive this son.

So she was not a virgin conceiving, and in that sense many have felt that means that that prophecy cannot be about that child. But as I say, the context of the prediction in chapter 7, verse 14, the proximity of that prediction with its seeming fulfillment in chapter 8, and the identical significance of the child predicted in 7, verse 14, with that child born in chapter 8, strongly incline me to believe that Isaiah's child is a fulfillment of the passage. But in that case the word virgin must be taken a little differently than we are normally going to take it.

We would either have to understand that the woman who conceived in chapter 8 was still a virgin when the prediction was made in chapter 7, which is not impossible. It is entirely possible that Isaiah predicted that a woman who is a virgin is going to have a child without in any sense implying that she will still be a virgin at the time that she conceives. But she was at the time of prediction a young virgin, and God was going to bring a child from a woman who was at the time of prediction a young virgin.

But she ceased to be a virgin when Isaiah went and married her and went into her. Now,

there is a problem with this, and that is that Isaiah already had a son by somebody when he made the prediction. Because in chapter 7, verse 3, God said to Isaiah, go out now and meet Ahaziel and Sheer Jashub your son.

Now, if Isaiah had a son by a woman, and he predicted a child by a woman who was not yet his wife, and then he married her in chapter 8, that is, his wife who bore him, Sheer Jashub, could not have been a virgin at the time he made the prediction. This would suggest that Isaiah maybe had more than one wife, that he took a second wife or a concubine. This grates against our Western sensitivities, but it in no sense would grate against any Old Testament teaching or norms or morality.

I mean, David had many wives, and many, many people against whom the Bible has nothing negative to say on this had a number of wives, and Isaiah may also. It is interesting that in chapter 8 of Isaiah, when God said to him, go into the prophetess, or basically God told him to do what he did in verse 3, then I went into the prophetess and she conceived. It is interesting that he does not say, my wife the prophetess.

Most introductions to the book of Isaiah that I have read want to give a little family background of the man as well as his historical setting and so forth. They always mention he was married, and he was married to a prophetess. They do not suggest that the prophetess may have been his second wife or even a concubine.

We do not know, and we cannot say. But if indeed the interpretation of Isaiah 7.14 in its first instance speaks of a woman who at the time of prediction was a virgin, but later Isaiah took her either as a wife or concubine and fathered a son by her, that would make the prediction easily applicable to Isaiah's own child, but it would mean that Isaiah took a second wife or concubine because he already had a son by somebody at the time. That is not inconceivable.

We simply do not have enough data to know whether that is correct. The other possible interpretation that would still justify a first fulfillment in Isaiah's own son would be to say the virgin. It refers to not just a virgin, but the virgin, the daughter of Zion, as Israel is called or as Jerusalem is called.

Elsewhere, even in Isaiah, where I pointed this out before, but it has been enough days ago that I could just quickly point it out again. In Isaiah 37.22, this message was sent to Rabshaker, to Sennacherib, by Isaiah. Isaiah 37.22, this is the word which the Lord has spoken concerning him, The virgin, the daughter of Zion, has despised you and left you to scorn.

The virgin here is the daughter of Zion. That is the people of Jerusalem. The community of God's people there in Jerusalem, the virgin.

Just like the church is a virgin bride of Christ, so the people of Israel are called the virgin.

And when Isaiah said the virgin will conceive and bring forth a son, he could have been speaking quite figuratively that the nation of Israel, or the nation of Judah, will produce a child. It doesn't necessarily mean that an individual, I mean obviously an individual would have to be the one who produces the child, but the individual will be a representative of the nation, will be someone in the nation, and the nation will thus see the virgin, you know, bring about, produce this child.

We would say that the German people or the Jewish people produced Albert Einstein. Both would be true, because he was a German Jew, but we don't mean to say that the whole nation literally produced him. He had one mother and one father, but he was a product of the Jewish race, we could say, or something.

So anyway, this is one possible meaning too. With either of these suggestions, we open the possibility of Isaiah's son being the first fulfillment. But the point I want to make is here, whether Isaiah knew it or not, whether anyone in the Old Testament times knew it or not, this was a prophecy about the Messiah, the King.

Now, there is a reference to a birth here. There is not a reference to this child being a king. Not here, but there is two chapters later.

What we see here, however, is that his name shall be called Emmanuel. Now, Emmanuel in the Hebrew can be translated God with us, or simply God is with us. If you look over at Isaiah chapter 8 and verse 10, the last line in Isaiah 8, 10 is translated God is with us, and properly so.

But in the Hebrew, it's just the word Emmanuel. So, Emmanuel can have an implied is. I prefer it without it, and in the New Testament, it is quoted without it.

Because over in Matthew chapter 1, when Joseph, well, after it tells of Joseph's being apprised of the nature of Mary's pregnancy and so forth, it says, as Matthew gives his commentary in Matthew 1, verses 22 and 23, Now, all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Lord through the prophets, saying, Behold, a virgin, actually in the Hebrew, the virgin, shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is translated God with us. So, Matthew translates into Greek the Emmanuel into God with us, though the Hebrew can mean God with us, or God is with us. Well, the birth of Isaiah's son being a token of God's favor, a token of the fact that God was going to eliminate the two kings threatening Judah, was a sign of God being with them.

And his name could be called God with us, not God with us, but God is with us, or God with us. But we know from the New Testament that Jesus was literally God with us. That the birth of Jesus was by a literal virgin who was still a virgin at the time she conceived.

And all of this does not take away from the possibility of that first fulfillment in Isaiah's

son. Simply that Isaiah's son was not a miraculous birth, but was in the wording of the prophecy allows that his son could have been the sign to Ahaz. But there is a greater sign to the house of David in the birth of the Messiah, the King.

Now, all of that is veiled, of course, in chapter 7 and verse 14. Because, as I said, one reading Isaiah 7-14 without the later knowledge of Jesus' birth by a real virgin would not, I mean, just as you read chapter 7 and chapter 8, you would not get the impression this is necessarily predicting some Messiah hundreds of years after Isaiah's time. We only see that in hindsight.

And you would not also get the impression from reading Isaiah 7-14 that the child is necessarily a king. But only that his birth is an indicator that God is on their side, that God is with them. But over two chapters later, almost immediately after the description of the birth of Isaiah's son, it is made plain in chapter 9 that there is another child implied here.

It is not just Isaiah's son that is in view, but another son. And there is more about this child mentioned than before. In Isaiah 9, verses 6 and 7, it says, For unto us a child is born.

Now, as near as we can tell, this prophecy was given on the occasion of the birth of Meher-Shelel HaShabos. The reason I say that is that the chapter divisions are artificial. And there was an oracle that began in verse 3 of chapter 8, or verse 5, I should say, of chapter 8. And it is relevant to the birth of Meher-Shelel HaShabos, Isaiah's son.

It goes to the end of chapter 8, but it continues into chapter 9. There is actually no break in the thought between chapters 8 and 9. So by the time you get to chapter 9, verse 6, you are reading about a child that is born. And the prophecy is given on the occasion of the birth of Isaiah's child. But there is no suggestion that the child that is born in Isaiah 9, 6 and 7 is Isaiah's child.

More that Isaiah's child is now here, but there is another child that is foreshadowed by this one. And unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. The government will be upon his shoulder.

Now, that is a way of saying that the responsibility for ruling will be his. The government will be on his shoulder. So here we have a new feature.

This child is born to rule. And his name should be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Now, if I were a preacher instead of a teacher, I could go through and give sermons on how Jesus' name is properly called Wonderful.

We could go into how wonderful it is. And we could talk about him as the Counselor, and there is a great deal we could say about that. And also as the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace.

I can imagine five good sermons out of this clause. But I can't, I can imagine them, but I can't give them right now. We don't have time.

But I would say this. It is quite clear that this child, though born of a human, is God. Now, when it says his name will be called, that echoes the language of chapter 7, verse 14.

His name will be called. In Isaiah 7, verse 14, his name will be called Emmanuel. Here, his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Now, what we have to understand about the way the Hebrew is talking about names, is that neither Isaiah's child nor the Messiah were really literally named Emmanuel, nor Wonderful, or Counselor, or Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Those are not really his name. Isaiah's child was named Meher Shalel HaShabaz, and the Messiah's name was Jesus of Nazareth.

These, when it says his name should be called, it doesn't really mean this is what they'll name him. It means, a name to the Hebrews just refers to a person's actual identity. And to say his name will be called this, is to say, this is telling you something about his character and who he is.

Later on, Isaiah talks about how his people will be called Hephzibah. Well, I don't know any of his people who are named Hephzibah, but the name, it says your name should be Hephzibah. Well, Hephzibah means married, and it's just pointing out that he was married to his people.

To say your name will be called, is just to say, I'm about to tell you something about the character, and the nature, and the identity of the person. We're not really talking about the name that will be on his birth certificate. I would have told you had I known.

Let me see, I think I can find it. I don't think it will be too hard to find. It's in the latter parts.

Okay, it's in Isaiah 62. I'll show you what it says. Beginning with verse 4, it says, You shall no longer be termed forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed desolate.

But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah. Actually, Hephzibah, I was, I think, wrong about that, means my delight is in her, and Beulah means married. He says, For the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.

For as a young man marries a virgin, so your son shall marry you. And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. So, you'll be called this, doesn't mean that you'll really have this name.

It just means that you'll, your circumstances, your character, your identity will change.



Okay, now, the Messiah here, the child that is born in Isaiah 9, 6, is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. All of these things tell us, at least some of them tell us, that he is God.

Mighty God, Everlasting Father. So, there is, this is probably the clearest Old Testament statement of the deity of Christ. Some would find it equally clear in Isaiah 7, 14 where it says his name should be called Emmanuel, God with us.

But as I said, that allows of more than one interpretation, could be God is with us. But here, what can you do, you know, when it says his name would be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father. There's just no getting around it, this is a declaration that he is God.

And, it goes on to say in verse 7, of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it in judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Now, after this brief reference to the Messianic Kingdom, it goes on and talks about the judgment of Samaria by the Assyrians. So, we have a very brief description of the character of the king and of his age.

His character is that of a wonderful counselor, he is God, the Everlasting Father, he is the Prince of Peace, which means that he rules over a kingdom of peace. Peace is the product of his reign. If you come under the reign of Christ, you will experience peace.

In fact, Paul said in Romans 14, 17, he said, The kingdom of God is not food and drink, but it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy. Now, righteousness and justice are interchangeable words in the Hebrew and in the Greek.

Here, when it says, the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end, verse 7, Now, you've got justice, which is the same as righteousness. You've got peace. Paul said the kingdom of God is righteousness, or justice, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

We find in many Isaiah passages that the fruit of the blossoming desert is joy. And we even sing, Isaiah 55, 12, You should go out with joy and be led forth with peace. These are, of course, figures that refer to the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit that Christians experience now, which means we have the kingdom.

The kingdom is a spiritual reality with us because we have these things in the Holy Spirit. Now, I would say that a lot of people feel that this passage we've just read in Isaiah 9, 6, and 7 is about the millennium because it talks about Jesus sitting on the throne of David over his kingdom. It is a major contention of pre-millennialists that there must be a future earthly kingdom in Israel for Jesus to reign on because he has never yet fulfilled

those prophecies that say he will sit on the throne of his father David.

And this distinctly, and other passages distinctly say that, in fact, in the very promise that was made to David by Nathan, it says, a son that was born to you out of your own body, after your death, when you sleep with your father, shall sit on your throne, and I'll establish his kingdom forever. So, here also the kingdom is forever. So, the argument of the pre-millennialists is, well, David was told that this Messiah would sit on David's throne.

Jesus, in his first coming, never had the opportunity to sit on David's throne. He was crucified and then he ascended into heaven. Therefore, there must come an age when David's throne will again be set up for Jesus to sit on so that these prophecies can be fulfilled and this age is the millennial kingdom, the thousand-year reign of Christ after his return in pre-millennial exegesis.

Now, there are several things about this I would like to suggest. One is that the very passages that speak of the Messiah sitting on David's throne speak of his kingdom being forever, not a thousand years. I would think that the New Testament cheats us if in the Old Testament it keeps saying this reign of the Messiah is going to be forever and ever without end and then the New Testament says, well, sorry, I'm cutting back to a thousand years because the thousand years is found only one place in the Bible and that's in Revelation 20.

So, almost you get to the end of the Bible and say, sorry folks, I've been talking about this eternal kingdom forever and ever and now I just want to tell you I've changed my mind, it's going to be a thousand years now. I figure a thousand years should be long enough. But nowhere in the Bible, except Revelation 20, do we read of a kingdom that is described in terms of a thousand years but as here, the increase of his government and peace of that, there should be no end.

And it says from that time forward, even forever, he's going to sit on the throne of his father. It's an eternal session on the throne. If you look back with me also at the original promise that Nathan made in 2 Samuel 7. 2 Samuel 7, verse 12 is where the prophecy begins and Isaiah is simply alluding back to it.

Nathan said to David, when your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seat after you who will come from your own body and I will establish his kingdom. He will build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. Now, it also says at the end of verse 16, in your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you.

The throne shall be established forever. The kingdom of the Messiah, David's seat on David's throne, is a forever kingdom, not a thousand year kingdom. So that's one of the problems that arises with the premillennial interpretation of this session of the Messiah

on David's throne must be the thousand year reign of Christ when he comes back to earth.

A second problem with it is, in the passage we just read in 2 Samuel, because Nathan says in 2 Samuel 7.12 that the setting up of David's seat on David's throne will happen when David is resting with his fathers in the grave. He says, when your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, that is, while David is dead, I will set up one of your seat after you on the throne. Well, David is dead now.

David was dead when Jesus came. But in the millennium, David will be alive if there is such a millennium, because this millennium is alleged to happen after the second coming of Jesus. On premillennial presuppositions, the second coming of Christ is that which precipitates the millennium.

And if that is so, then David, along with all other righteous persons, will be raised from the dead prior to the millennium and will not be sleeping with his fathers during that time. Now, that would suggest that if indeed this prophecy must be fulfilled while David sleeps with his fathers, it must be fulfilled sometime between David's death and David's resurrection, which will occur at the second coming of Christ. So the fulfillment has to be before the second coming, not after.

There is one other problem with the premillennial argument on this that says that, well, Jesus never sat on David's throne, so there must be a future millennium for him to do that. And the necessity of taking the throne of David literally. For one thing, David's throne is probably not around.

The actual chair, the physical seat upon which David sat, the upholstered chair, I seriously doubt that that chair is still around. It's almost, well, I mean, moths would have probably eaten the upholstery, termites and bugs and worms would probably have eaten the wood. But very little wood products have survived 3,000 years.

And while some may say, well, someday the archaeologists will find that chair of David and by golly, it's going to be intact and we'll set it up during the millennium and Jesus will sit right on the throne of David, the very seat that David sat on. I don't even know any premillennials who's holding out for that literal an interpretation. What they want to suggest is that another chair that David never sat on will be set up in the place where David sat, that is, in Jerusalem.

And Jesus will sit on that and they'll call that the throne of David. And I say, well, wait, if it's going to be the literal throne of David, it's got to be the literal throne of David if we're going to be literal. If we depart from literalism and say, well, it can be a different chair that David never sat on.

It's not his actual throne, but a throne which is in principle is like David's throne. Well,

then we open up the door for a variety of possible fulfillments, including the one that the apostles interpreted as the fulfillment, which is nice. Nice that we can be open to the apostles ideas about things.

In Acts chapter two, Peter on the day of Pentecost filled with the spirit and therefore, I believe, correctly interpreting scripture. He's talking about David in Acts chapter two and beginning at verse twenty nine. Peter said, Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried and his tomb is with us to this day.

Therefore, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne. He foreseen this. Foreseen what? Foreseen that God would raise up his seed to sit on his throne.

He spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses, therefore being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the father the promise of the Holy Spirit. He poured out this, which you now see in here for David did not ascend into heaven, but he says himself, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool.

Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now that God has fulfilled the messianic prophecies of the exaltation of the Messiah to the throne. But this throne, of course, is at the right hand of God, according to verse 34 here, which is a quotation of Psalm 110, verse one, where God said, the Messiah actually says, the Lord said to my Lord, David says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand.

That's where the throne is. That's where David's Lord sits. Now that this could be called David's throne is not too far fetched.

David ruled over the kingdom of God. Jesus rules over the kingdom of God. In principle, the throne upon which Jesus sits is the fulfillment of the type that David's throne was.

David sat over the earthly kingdom of God. Jesus rules on a spiritual throne over the spiritual kingdom of God at the right hand of God. Now, to suggest that that's not good enough, that Jesus sits at the right hand of God, but he still hasn't had all his privileges yet.

He still has to sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem. I say, that looks to me like a demotion from where he now is. I mean, if Jesus, after his resurrection, said, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me, I don't really know that any has been withheld from him.

I don't know that to move his throne to Jerusalem and say, now you have the privilege of sitting on David's throne, would be a coveted honor to one who is already seated on God's throne at the right hand of God the Father. And I believe that Peter is suggesting that as David knew that God had promised him that the Messiah would come from him and would sit on his throne, this has been fulfilled in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, who is at the right hand of God. Therefore, he concludes, God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Look over at Paul's interpretation of this in Acts 13. In Acts 13, Paul is preaching and sitting in Antioch. And he says, in verse 32 through 34, Acts 13, 32 through 34, And we declare to you, this is Paul talking, the glad tidings, that that promise which was made to the fathers, God has fulfilled this for us, their children, in that he has raised up Jesus.

As it is also written in the second psalm, You are my son, today I have begotten you, interpreting Psalm 27 as a prophecy about the resurrection of Christ, and, note 34, that he raised him up from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken thus, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Now, that statement, I will give you the sure mercies of David, is from Isaiah 55, 3. It is speaking to the Messiah, saying, I'm going to give you the things I promised to David. I'm going to fulfill those merciful promises I made to David in you.

Paul says, that the merciful things God promised to David, that are fulfilled in Christ, were fulfilled in his resurrection from the dead, because he says, and that he raised him up from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken thus, I will give you the sure mercies of David. He interprets that fulfillment of God's promise to David, in the Messiah, as taking place in the resurrection of Christ, not in the second coming of Christ. Therefore, it would appear that Jesus already is seated on David's throne, in every sense that the prophets intended us to understand it.

He is seated, actually, at the right hand of God, on God's throne. And he is ruling, his government has been going on forever, well, not forever, for 2,000 years, and will go on forever. Now, he will return at some point, but that won't end his reign.

His reign is forever and ever. Now, what we see here, then, in Isaiah 9, 6, and 7, is a prophecy about this child that was born. The child was mentioned in chapter 7, verse 14, and even hinted that he was God with us.

But here, in chapter 9, verse 6 and 7, clearly he is God with us. He is God incarnate in human form, and more than that, he is going to be the ruler. The ruler of a kingdom of peace and justice.

That will have no end. Now, those thoughts, that the Messiah will rule over a kingdom of peace and justice that will never end, they recur a lot in the book of Isaiah, and those are where we see the kingdom passages that we've alluded to before. Let's look at some of

them, okay? The first of them is in Isaiah chapter 2. We get now to some of those things I've been putting off all this while.

Every time we've mentioned it, I say, well, we'll talk about that later. Well, we don't have much later to do it, so we'll talk about it now. Isaiah chapter 2, verses 1 through 4. The word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

Now, it says that this prophecy we're about to read is concerning Judah and Jerusalem. There are some who say this must, therefore, be fulfilled in natural Israel. And since the thing described has not been fulfilled in natural Israel, it is no doubt to be fulfilled in the millennial age, the kingdom age they interpret as beginning when Jesus returns.

And yet, as I've tried to point out in many cases in Isaiah, especially those that have to do with the Messianic age, Judah and Jerusalem are the spiritual Jerusalem, the spiritual Judah, the spiritual Jews, the spiritual Mount Zion. So, anyway, these are the two options in interpretation here. It says in verse 2, Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on top of the hills, of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it.

Many people shall come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we shall walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many people.

They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Now this is a passage that pre-millennialists think very fondly of.

A time is coming when Jesus returns where there will be no more war. Weapons of war will be destroyed or transformed into peacetime implements. All the Gentiles will flow into Jerusalem to receive instruction from the law of the Lord.

The mountain of the Lord's house, which is Jerusalem, Zion, where the temple is, will be exalted above all the hills. There are actually some dispensationalists who say, This is speaking of actual topographical changes in the Middle East, where perhaps through an earthquake or something, Mount Zion, which is currently not one of the major mountains in the world in terms of size, will actually be forced upward and will become the tallest mountain in the world. Now you might say, Does that mean that Mount Zion, with Jerusalem and the temple on top of it, is going to be taller than Mount Everest? Well, they would say, Well, who knows? Who knows? Mount Everest might not be so tall after that happens.

Maybe a major change in the earth's crust, and maybe all the other mountains will be small, and Zion, without being excessively high, may still be the highest one. But let me

just say this. This interpretation is, to my mind, a desperate attempt to hold on to a commitment that they profess to have to a literal hermeneutic, a literal process of interpretation of the passages.

They say you can't do justice to the Scripture unless you take it literally. I say you can't do justice to the Scripture unless you take it the way it's intended to be understood. Literally, if it's intended to be literal.

Figuratively, if it's intended to be figurative. And there are many things about this that simply no one takes literally. I pointed some of them out earlier.

Beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks is a lovely image of destroying all the weapons of war and replacing them with implements of peacetime. But swords and spears, really? I mean, if this is a future thing, if we're talking about something that will happen following the Battle of Armageddon or something, which they take to be at the end of the world, and that Battle of Armageddon is to be fought with missiles and tanks and with jet airplanes and with satellites with laser beams and things like that, where are they going to get this profusion of swords and spears to remanufacture into farming implements? I mean, no one I know really believes that literal swords and literal spears, they say, well, that's symbolic of weapons of war. Oh, symbolic, is it? Well, okay, now we've opened a door here.

We're talking symbolism. If this can be symbolic of that, why can it not be symbolic of something spiritual? Now, let me suggest to you what I understand this to be. First of all, it says this will come to pass in the latter days.

We are, unfortunately, unnaturally biased by current religious publications and propaganda and so forth to think that the latter days refer to these days we're in, or even later days than these that we're in. The end times, the time just before the Second Coming and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, but past days and end times and final hour and so forth are terms that are used frequently in the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament, they usually apply to these kingdom passages.

In the New Testament, they always apply to the age of the apostles, always. I gave you a number of references on an earlier occasion. We won't look at them again now, but if you want to jot them down in the margin of your Bible, if you don't already have them there, Acts 2.15. Peter quotes a passage from Joel that says, In the last days, and Peter says this is that, Acts 2.15. 1 Corinthians 10.11. Paul speaks of himself and his generation as those upon whom the end of the ages have come.

That's 1 Corinthians 10.11. In Hebrews 1.2, it says that God in these last days has spoken to us by his Son, Jesus. In these last days. Hebrews 1.2. In 1 John 2.18, John says, Beloved, this is the final hour.

And as you've heard that Antichrist shall come even now, there are many Antichrists whereby we know that it is the final hour. It's the last hour. In his own time, he's speaking of.

1 Peter 1.20 says that Jesus was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. Now, Peter says these last times. This is that which Joel spoke of saying in the last days, I will do this.

Paul says we are the ones upon whom the end of the age has come. The writer of Hebrews says in these last days, God has spoken to us by Jesus. John says it is the final hour.

Virtually every one of the apostles that wrote anything on this subject said they were living in the time called the last days, the last hour, the end time, whatever you want to call it. They saw it as their time. And there are two ways to understand this.

I think taking full stock of what the apostles said on that. One way would be to say they're referring to the whole church age. The whole church age is the last days.

They began when Jesus came. God in these last days has spoken through Jesus. In the last days, I'll pour out my spirit.

Well, that happened at Pentecost. So the last days then would refer to that which began with the ministry of Jesus and the outpouring at Pentecost, the beginning of the church, and runs to the end until Jesus comes back. That's the last days.

And it could mean that. I must say that I for some years thought that probably is what it must mean. Because of these passages, it didn't occur to me any other interpretation would make sense.

Therefore, I figured the last days is just the whole church age, which, of course, has been not only days, but now years, in fact, centuries, in fact, millennia. It's been 2,000 years almost. And while it is not inconceivable that God might speak of a period 2,000 years long as the last days, last in relation to what? Well, I guess the former times.

Well, the former times before Christ were a few thousand years. If the last days are a few thousand years, too, it's, you know, why don't you just say the last age or something rather than last days? Anyway, it is possible that the latter days, the last days, can simply mean the whole church age. I have moved in my own thinking a few years ago to the thought that it's referring to the last days of the Jewish order.

And that would agree with all the uses in the New Testament, too, that the apostles saw themselves living in the end of one age and in the inauguration of another. That they were living, in fact, in the last days of which the prophets spoke, the last days of the Jewish order, of the old covenant order, which the prophets indicated would bring about



the inauguration of a new order. And that they were living in that transitional time.

The new order had come, and the old was vanishing away. They were seeing the end of it. They were seeing the vanishing of it.

They were living in the last days of that system. Now, either that view or the view that the last days refers to the whole church age would fit better, the biblical data on that subject, on that terminology, than the view that the last days are sometimes yet future to us. So, in either case, if the latter days means the whole church age or if it means the last days of the Jewish era, it makes little difference for the interpretation here.

It means something that was inaugurated when Jesus came the first time. Now, it says, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills. That I don't take as a topographical change or an elevational change, but more in terms of its figurative of being exalted in terms of significance and importance.

Now, mountains and hills, in the Old Testament especially, in fact, in the New as well, can refer to kingdoms. In Revelation 17, to give a New Testament instance, there is a beast with seven heads. It is said in one place that the seven heads are seven hills, and then immediately afterwards, and they are seven kings or kingdoms.

And so, hills and kingdoms are sometimes interchangeable things. In Jeremiah chapter 51, the kingdom of Babylon is called the destroying mountain. I am against you, O destroying mountain, meaning the kingdom of Babylon.

In Daniel's prophecy about the stone that hit Nebuchadnezzar's image in the feet, that stone grew up into a great mountain to fill the whole earth. And Daniel interpreted it and said, and he shall establish a kingdom that shall never end, and it shall consume all these kingdoms, represented by a mountain. This does not exhaust the cases, but these are just ones that come to mind as I stand here.

But there are many times when mountains and hills represent nations or kingdoms. And to say that the mountain of the Lord's house will be exalted above all the other hills, it means that in terms of significance, that the kingdom of God will surpass all other kingdoms. Which is also what Daniel said in another way, that this stone will grow into a great mountain to fill the whole earth and crumble up all the other kingdoms.

Now, it is called the mountain of the Lord's house because the church is the house of God. That is, the people of God are living stones built into a spiritual house. We could take a very long time exhausting the New Testament material, identifying us as the temple of the Holy Spirit or as the house of God.

Paul said to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3.15, So that if I am delayed, you may know how to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church. Hebrews 3.6 says that Christ

is the ruler over his own house, whose house we are. We are his house.

We are the house of the Lord. We are the habitation of God through the Spirit, and therefore the spiritual mountain, Zion, is the mountain of God's house, God's spiritual temple, the church. There are some who would interpret this exaltation of the church above all kingdoms in terms of political exaltation.

Either the Reconstructionists today or even back in the Middle Ages, in the days of Constantine and so forth. They were all millennial back then and they interpreted this as a passage about the church age and predicting that the church would rule over the kingdoms of the world politically. And so it did.

But that's not what I think is predicted here. I think it's simply talking about spiritual significance that God would exalt the church to be his special kingdom above all the other kingdoms or hills of the earth. The figure being a mountain taller than the other hills.

At the end of verse 2 it says, In other words, not just Jews, which in the old Jerusalem, the Jews made pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Particularly on the Feast of Tabernacles, the law was read to the whole congregation. They were taught his ways so that they could walk in his path.

This was something generally Jews did. But this prediction says, no, Gentiles, all nations are going to come and receive instruction here. At this spiritual Mount Zion, at this spiritual Zion, spiritual Jerusalem, the spiritual house of the Lord, it will be a source of instruction to all nations.

So it's speaking of Gentiles relating to this Zion the way the Jews related to the natural Zion. What do people go to church for? To worship God and to receive teaching. To be disciples.

To be taught how to observe all things Jesus commanded. And people of all nations are coming into the church and have been ever since it was established. It says in the end of verse 3, This would simply mean, by the way, the word law is Torah, it literally means instruction.

Instruction will go out from Zion. The church. The church is there to teach all nations.

To make disciples of all nations, as Jesus indicated in the Great Commission in Matthew. Now, it says in verse 4, Now, some might say, well, Jesus doesn't do that today, that's what he's going to do when he comes back, he's going to judge the nations. Well, I don't know that that isn't true.

I think Jesus judges nations. I think the nations come under judgment. I believe a great number of nations have come under judgment.

For one thing, Jerusalem came under judgment since Jesus was here. Rome came under judgment, if I understand Revelation correctly. Rome has come under the judgment of God, the Roman Empire in its fall.

I would dare say that the Soviet Union has come under the judgment of God. And who knows, maybe America will come under the judgment of God. But, that Jesus rules from heaven means that he is dispensing judgment as he sovereignly chooses.

And I don't think there's any problem with seeing that as his present rule. But it says, And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

We have the passage that the premillennium says, Aha, you may play fast and loose with those earlier things, but you certainly can't say we're living in a time where nation does not learn war anymore. That people don't learn war and nations do not rise up against nations. Well, we're talking here about the nations that have flowed into Mount Zion.

We're not talking about a universal thing necessarily. I mean, we may. I guess the question is, what is meant in the end of verse 2, all nations shall flow into it.

The Amillennialist believes that all nations simply means representatives of all nations. Just as when Jesus said, go and make disciples of all nations. We don't understand it to mean that the nations as national entities are disciplined.

But that individuals out of every nation go and make disciples of all nations. Just means individuals from all nations will be disciplined, not every individual in each nation. Likewise, when all nations flow into it, Amillennialists, I think, tend to see this, and I do, as saying representatives of all nations.

Not just Jews, but people of every tribe and nation and people and tongue will flow into it. And those who do will be transformed. They will sit under the teaching of Christ.

They will be instructed in his ways. They'll walk in his paths. They'll be disciplined.

And one of the things, he'll rebuke them for their past behavior. And one of the things that is a product of that is they'll give up their warlike ways. They'll take those things that were the implements of war in their lives.

And now that they're under the Prince of Peace, they will conduct themselves peaceably among themselves. Now, I personally, of course, as a pacifist, believe that this suggests that the Christians who learn Christ's law, who learn Christ's ways and walk in his paths, will actually not participate in war. But I would say that even among those who do believe that Christians should participate in some war, I'm not one of them, but some who do, they would still be able to say, well, this just means they won't war with each

other anymore.

That is, people who were hostile to one another before becoming Christians are unified in Christ. Their alienation is put aside. The middle wall of partition is removed, and one new man is formed of the formerly hostile powers.

Now, I mean, if you look around this room, you've got no grudges against anyone here, I dare say. In fact, you probably feel, after living with them as much as you have, and worshipping and sitting with them, you probably feel quite bonded to them. But if you really look at these people and say, what would I think about these people if I was not a Christian, and they were not a Christian? Would these be my friends? Would these be the people that I would choose? I'm not saying that any of you are not attractive people or anything like that, but you're very different kinds of people.

And the thing that unifies people who would otherwise be at odds or alienated is Christ. And so, whether a person is a pacifist like me or not, they could understand this passage to say that those who were once hostile to one another are now cultivating relationships with each other. The implements of war have been replaced with the implements of farming.

The kingdom of God is not extended by the sowing of seed, the seed of the Word. And therefore, instruments of cultivation represent the more agrarian approach to producing the fruit of the kingdom, as opposed to the warlike approach that prevailed in the Old Testament. I personally would go so far as to say that when people learn to walk in Jesus' ways, there's not going to be much room for them making war with anybody, because they're supposed to love their enemy and so forth.

It's a little hard to do that and participate in war, but obviously some Christians see that differently. Let's look at chapter 11 then. Well, chapter 4 is actually the next kingdom passage, but we've looked at everything in it before.

We're going to pass that up. We've talked about that. Chapter 11, we've also looked at a great deal, piece by piece, but we've never really taken it as a whole.

And I promised we would, and I think we should. Chapter 11 is the longest kingdom passage up to that point in Isaiah. There are some long ones, maybe longer than that, later.

But up to the point that one reaches when they come to Isaiah 11, they have not yet found such an extended description of the kingdom. And here, unlike some of the passages, the focus is not just on the kingdom, but on the king himself. Now, you may notice that, if you think about it, when we read chapter 2 of Isaiah, we read about the kingdom age, but we didn't read any focus on the king himself.

There's no reference to the king. There is reference to the Lord, but it wasn't stated that

he would be the king on the throne or whatever. But here we have a kingdom passage that begins with the description of the king himself.

In chapter 11, there shall come forth a rod from the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. Now, in mentioning that the Messiah springs from the stem of Jesse, obviously Jesse was David's father, and it's simply a way of saying this now is the one that was predicted would come out of David. This is David's descendants, David's seed that would rule.

We're about to read of the fulfillment of the promises God made to David, how the Messiah would come from his roots and would do such and such. So, this is a picture of the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. And a branch shall grow from his roots, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, even as the Spirit of the Lord rested upon David and the prophets in the Old Testament.

The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Now, if one wished to count them up, you'd find that there are seven designations for the spirit here in verse 2. The spirit of the Lord is the first. Then you can call them the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of might, the spirit of knowledge, and the spirit of the fear of the Lord.

This is not, to my mind, significant, but some think it is because they, in an attempt to try to identify the mysterious personages called the seven spirits of God in Revelation, three or four times mentioned in Revelation in the most mysterious sort of way, the seven spirits of God which are before the throne, most interpreters would cross-reference here to Isaiah 11 to say, well, the seven spirits of God is just a way of saying the seven-fold spirit of God. The one spirit of God who is this seven spirits in one, as it were. He is the spirit of the Lord.

He is also the spirit of wisdom. He is also the spirit of understanding, and so forth. So they would understand this passage to be interpretive of who the seven spirits of God are.

They are just seven ways of talking about the one spirit of God. The important thing about 11.2, however, is that it says, The spirit of the Lord will rest upon him. In the synagogue of Nazareth, Jesus read from Isaiah 61 and said, The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

Obviously, this applies to Jesus at his first coming. By the way, many of the things later in the chapter are thought to point to the millennial kingdom by the premillennialists, but that would require that we are reading of that which is inaugurated by the second coming of Christ, not the first. And at the second coming, Jesus is not going to spring from Jesse's roots.

That was his first coming. He grew from that genealogy, from that family tree. He is not going to come from that family tree when he comes from heaven.

He has already done that. Been there. Done that.

It was his first coming. Everything in verses 1 and 2 clearly are fulfilled in his first coming. But as we go along, some might find some things difficult to harmonize with his first coming.

Verse 3, his delight is in the fear of the Lord. And he shall not judge by the sight of his eyes, nor decide by the hearing of his ears. That doesn't have no problem there with the first coming of Christ.

Jesus wasn't fooled by people's appearances. The Pharisees looked to be very righteous, but he was not fooled. He didn't judge by the sight of the eyes.

In fact, he said to his disciples, do not judge according to appearances, but judge righteous judgment. No doubt he considered that he was already in the process of doing that. He was a righteous judge.

He didn't judge by sight or appearances, but he walked in the fear of the Lord and judged righteously. Actually, it says his delight... Well, actually, we won't go into that issue there. Verse 4, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

Now, if you picture Jesus seated on an earthly throne in Jerusalem, and people come and bring in their cases to him, like they used to come to Moses, you know, at the Tent, meaning before Jethro had him delegate all that responsibility, you might get the impression that judging with righteousness the poor and deciding with equity for the meek of the earth is something that's going to happen in a courtroom somewhere during the millennial reign. You know, the poor and the meek, you know, they're being oppressed and they need someone to judge in their favor, which is something that rarely happened to the poor under Israel's judges. And it's saying that the Messiah will be a different kind of judge.

He'll judge righteously for these people. But I don't think it's safe or necessary or helpful to see this as a courtroom scene, although the imagery may suggest it. Jesus did make judgments when he was on earth, and he did judge in favor of the poor and the meek.

He said, Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, but woe to the rich. And, you know, it's quite clear that Jesus did speak up for the poor. He did speak up for the meek, just as it says he will.

There is nothing in the first four verses, at least such as we read so far, that we have any problem applying to the first coming of Christ. But the second part of verse four, I think,

is tricky. Not a problem to me, but for some I can see how it would be.

It says, He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Now, most people would say, well, heck, clearly he didn't do that when he came, he's going to do that when he comes back. He's going to slay the wicked.

He's going to smite the earth with the rod of his mouth. Actually, the image changes in Revelation 19. It's the sword that proceeds out of his mouth that he strikes the nations with.

But we need to stop a moment before we just jump to the conclusion that while the earlier verses talked about his first coming, we've now jumped to his second coming. We need to ask, is there any sense in which this could apply to his first coming? Look at Hosea chapter six, verses four and five. God says, O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like the morning cloud, and like the early dew, it goes away.

Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth. And your judgments are like the light that goes forth. Now, what's he talking about there? He says, I have hewn them.

The word hewn is a reference to the act of chopping wood with an axe. I've hewn them by the prophets, and I've slain them by the words of my mouth. Has anyone really physically died that he's referring to? Probably not.

I mean, he's not talking about that. The prophets didn't go out killing people with axes. They weren't axe murderers.

He's speaking figuratively. That the words of the prophets have cut them deeply. The words of the prophets have condemned them.

They are slain by the words spoken by the prophets. It's figurative. Obviously, very few people dropped dead when prophets spoke.

There were actually a few who did. But I don't think that's what's being referred to here. I think what he's saying is the words of the prophets have cut like a sword.

And cut them to the heart and condemned them. It's as if it killed them. You know, the apostle Paul said in Romans 7, I was alive once without the law, but when the law came, sin revived and slew me.

Remember that? He says, I died. That which was meant for good slew me. Well, he's not talking about physically dying.

That's in Romans 7, verse 9 and 11. Verse 9 says, I was alive once without the law, but

when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. Verse 11, for sin, taken occasion by the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me.

Now, obviously, he's speaking figuratively. And the exact meaning of his words are interesting to discuss. But we can't do that now.

One thing is clear. If he says that knowledge of the law of God killed him, in some sense, it certainly is not out of bounds to say that the words of the prophets coming to the wicked Jews of Hosea's time killed them. Nor that the words of Jesus to the wicked of his day slew them.

I mean, if we say, well, I wouldn't say it that way. The question is not whether you'd say it that way or not, but whether the prophets would say it that way. And there's evidence that they would on occasion.

So, in Isaiah chapter 11, verse 4, where he says, he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth. What comes out of his mouth is his words. And with the breath of his lips, which in the poetry, in the parallelism there is simply another way of saying his words that come out of his mouth.

He shall slay the wicked. By the way, his breath of his lips doesn't speak of his bad breath and it kills everyone that he breathes on. But it's just a parallelism for his word.

I would just point out in Psalm 33 and verse 6. Psalm 33 and verse 6, we see the same poetic parallelism there. It says, by the word of the Lord, the heavens were made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Okay.

The heavens were made and the host of them by his word, by the breath of his mouth. So, the breath of his mouth speaks of his words. So does the rod of his mouth here.

His words are like a rod disciplining, striking his hearers. Especially the scribes and the Pharisees. You read Matthew 23 sometime and you'll feel like you got a good beating if you're a Pharisee.

I believe this is talking about the fact that he speaks up for the righteous, poor and the meek. But his words are condemnation and death to the wicked. Verse 5. Righteousness shall be the belt of his loins and faithfulness the belt of his waist.

This is figuratively, I believe, but it just means that he is righteous and faithful. Now, a passage we've dealt with before, verses 6 through 9. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand



in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Now, we've talked before about the carnivorous, unclean, wild animals in many places in the prophets, including probably elsewhere in Isaiah, but certainly in Ezekiel and Daniel and some other places, representing the Gentiles, formerly hostile, formerly oppressors, formerly damagers of Israel.

The domestic, clean animals, lambs, goats, calves, these are not infrequent images used of Israel. The Jews, they were the clean people. They were the ones who were cleansed by the word, by the law.

They were God's sheep of his pasture. They would leap like calves in the stall, it says in Malachi. They are clean animals always, unless God is speaking of their corruption.

But to say that the carnivorous animals, the earth wild enemies of the sheep, will be peaceable with the sheep, is a figure, I believe in this case, to speak of the Gentiles and the Jews in Christ, in the new covenant, under the king. Under that rod that has come from the stem of Jesse, they will find reconciliation. They will be no longer alienated.

They will not oppose one another. They will, as it were, lie down peaceably next to each other. It says then, in verse 8, the nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.

Now, cobras and vipers are very deadly snakes. The last place you'd want your child to play today is by the hole of a deadly snake. But what this is saying, of course, is that even a child will be secure, even in the presence of deadly snakes.

That the serpents will not be able to hurt even the children. And it says specifically in verse 9, they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. Now, there's something that I think in the New Testament, Jesus alludes back to this.

In Luke 10. And I think that in so doing, he helps to tell us how he interpreted this passage in Isaiah 11. In Luke chapter 10, verse 17, the 70 returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name.

And verse 19, Jesus said, behold, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. And notice that last line in verse 19, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Now, I give you authority to trample on serpents.

Nothing shall hurt you. Sounds very much like an echo of the child playing by the serpent's hole, and they shall not hurt nor destroy them in the holy mountain, which is the church, the Zion of God. The serpent and the scorpion, in the context of Jesus, is the spiritual powers of wickedness, the demonic forces.

Serpents and scorpions are linked with all the power of the enemy. I give you authority

over serpents and scorpions, over all the power of the enemy. This is spiritual enemies.

Demons' powers. And he says, they won't be able to hurt you. They've been hurting people before, but I'm giving you authority over them, and they won't hurt you anymore.

And to portray this as the child playing by the cobra or the snake's hole, and not being hurt by it, is, to my mind, a duplication of the same imagery. What's interesting, though, also, is in 1 John, chapter 4, John is talking about the spirit of Antichrist and the demonic spirits that animate the false prophets that have come into the world, he says. In 1 John, chapter 4, he says, in verse 4, You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Now, you have overcome whom? Well, just earlier, it says in verse 3, Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. This is the spirit of Antichrist, which you have heard was coming and now is already in the world, and you have overcome them. The spirit of Antichrist, the evil spirits that do not confess to the gospel.

You have overcome them, little children. Interesting that he says that, because Isaiah said, A little child shall play at the hole of the snake, and it will not hurt them. They have overcome them.

Anyway, it then says, in Isaiah 11, 9, At the end of 11, 9, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Could be translated the land, but I'm not sure that it needs to be in this case. If land, then it would be the spiritual land of the spiritual Israel, since that's the context we're talking about here.

The spiritual Israel under the king. In which case, the land, or the spiritual land, the kingdom of God, the spiritual Israel, will be filled with the knowledge of God. That is a possible and not even an improbable interpretation.

As the waters cover the sea, the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord. Look over at Jeremiah 31. In Jeremiah 31, beginning of verse 33, he says, But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord.

I will put my law in their minds, and write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord.

For they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more. Now, a lot of people thought, well, how can this be true? The new covenant has come, but it says, They shall no longer say to their neighbor, Know the Lord, because they'll all know God.

This must be speaking of something like millennium or something. Not necessarily. In the

new covenant, they will all know God.

Those who have had their iniquity and their sin remembered no more and forgiven, they are the ones who will all know the Lord. The new Israel will all know the Lord. And this is in contrast to the old Israel that didn't all know the Lord.

The old Israel had to be taught the laws of God, because they weren't written in their hearts. The Levites and the priests had the law, and they had to read them and teach them to the people, because not everyone had first-hand knowledge of God. But what Jeremiah, I believe, is saying is that in the new covenant, the law will be written in the hearts of all the covenanters.

Everyone in this new Israel will have the law. They won't need somebody to tell them, Know the Lord, because they have an innate knowledge of the Lord. They all know Him personally.

Unlike the Jews of His time, where most of them didn't know the Lord, and the Levites had to try to teach them the knowledge of the Lord, that would be innate in all the brethren and all the neighbors in this spiritual Israel. That could be what Isaiah 11, 9 is saying, if earth is land, and the land should be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Universal in other words, universal knowledge of the Lord.

Now, I really have no problem translating that word as earth in this case, because, of course, that is the result of the gospel going out to all nations, is that the earth is becoming filled with the knowledge of the Lord. That which was confined to the borders of Israel for so long throughout history, is now extending to every part of the earth. So that the result is that the earth is becoming saturated, filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

That again doesn't mean every individual knows the Lord, necessarily. But geographically, the knowledge of God is spreading throughout the whole world. So it could be taken either way.

In either case, it applies to the church age, I believe. Verse 10, now we get some places where it becomes hard to deny this proposition. Verse 10 says, And in that day, this is Isaiah 11, 10, there shall be a root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people.

For the Gentiles shall seek him, and his resting place shall be glorious. Now, in that day, if we are talking about the millennium in the first nine verses, we are talking about the millennium in verse 10, because it says, In that day, the same time. However, if we are talking about the church in verse 10, we must be talking about the church age in the previous verses, because verse 10 is in that day.

The same day has been discussed in the earlier verses. What is the time frame to which verse 10 refers? We fortunately have the word of an apostle to answer that question for

us. In Romans 15, in Romans chapter 15, verse 12, maybe I should read the verses before, because it is part of a string of quotes that Paul gives.

Maybe we will just start at verse 8, Romans 15, 8. Now, I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. Now notice, Paul said that Jesus has come for two reasons. To confirm the promises of the fathers, and Jesus has come that the Gentiles might glorify God.

In other words, in the church. As it is written. And then he quotes several Old Testament passages.

The first one is from Psalm 18. The second one in verse 10 is from Deuteronomy 32. The third one is in verse 11, he quotes from Psalm 117.

And in verse 12, he quotes from Isaiah 11, 1 and 10. He says, and again Isaiah says, verse 12, There shall be a root of Jesse. That is Isaiah 11, 1. Then he combines it with verse 10 of the same chapter.

And he who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him the Gentiles shall hope. Now this statement, he who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles hope, is a different rendering of Isaiah 11, 10. Which says, who shall stand as a banner to the people, for the Gentiles shall seek him.

There is no question about it, Paul is referring to Isaiah 11, 10 here. And he applies it to the Gentiles coming into the church, since Jesus has come as a servant to bring this about. Paul sees it as Gentiles today, and in his day, coming into the church.

And he applied Isaiah 11, 10 to that, showing that Paul believed that Isaiah chapter 11 is fulfilled in the church age. We cannot do justice to Paul, without acknowledging that this is what it reveals about his thinking. When he looked at Isaiah 11, he saw, ah, the church.

The church age. Therefore he felt quite justified in quoting a verse from that, to make a point about the church age. Now we'll clean up the rest of Isaiah 11 here real quickly.

Isaiah 11, 11 through 16. It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not harass Ephraim. That they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west.

Together they shall plunder the people of the east. They shall lay their hand on the Edom and Moabites, and the people of Ammon shall obey them. The Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt.

With his mighty wind he will shake his fist over the river, and strike it in the seven streams, and make men cross over dry shod. There will be a highway for the remnant of his people, who will be left from Assyria, as it was for Israel in the day that he came up from the land of Egypt. Obviously you've noticed a lot of the themes that we've talked about in previous lectures here.

I might just say this, those who are not all millennial, that is those who are pre-millennial, often say, look, verse 11 says it, It shall come to pass that day that the Lord shall set his hand a second time to recover the remnant of his people who are left. Now that emphasis on the second time God will recover the remnant, they think the first time refers to the return from Babylon. They will acknowledge what I say, that God drove the Israelites out of their land in the Babylonian exile, and he did it again in 70 A.D. But they say, see, he drew them back from the Babylonian exile, and he claims he's going to do the same thing again a second time.

Therefore they say this is predicting a return of the Jews to Israel from the dispersion of the past 1900 years, in the last times. This is a reference to a future for Israel, because God has yet to gather them again a second time. The first time was when he gathered them from Babylon, and the second time is yet to come, they say.

Well, one of the serious problems with this is that they missed the whole point. The first time is mentioned in verse 16. It will be as it was for Israel in the day when he came up from the land of Egypt.

The first gathering of his people was gathering them out of Egypt, the exodus. The second time could be, of course, the return from Babylon. But in this case, it's referring to a different kind of gathering.

A second exodus. He likens it to the first exodus in verse 16, and therefore it is like a second exodus. We talked already about many passages in Isaiah that talk about the kingdom age of the Messiah, the church age as a second exodus.

All these ancient nations that are mentioned here, most of them don't exist anymore. I pointed out in earlier lectures that often nations like this are mentioned in Isaiah and the prophets as simply representative of Gentiles in general. So that this would be a way of saying that the Gentiles will be gathered.

This is a reference to the gathering of the Gentiles into the church. How do I know that? Because it says in verse 12, he will set up his banner for the nations. Well, isn't that what he said in verse 10? Who shall stand as a banner? The root of Jesse will stand as a

banner.

That's Jesus. And Paul said that was fulfilled now with Gentiles coming to Jesus. Therefore, the same thought in verse 12 must mean the same thing, it would seem.

It talks about Judah and Ephraim flying down on the Philistines and the Moabites and the Edomites and the Ammonites in verse 14. We talked about this verse too when we were showing how the battles in Isaiah are often spoken of in terms of natural battle when they're really speaking of spiritual battles. The people of God having victory over their spiritual enemies.

And then those closing verses, of course, as I said, liken it to the Exodus. So really, we've looked at an awful lot of the portions of Isaiah 11 in previous lectures. In this lecture, we just put it all together and see how thoroughly it all works to show a picture of the kingdom age, which is the church age.

Now, by looking at chapter 2, looking at chapter 11, looking at chapter 9, and seeing how these passages are brought out in the New Testament, we've seen that the kingdom age, the Messiah, he received his kingdom when he came the first time. He came to reign. He came to reign through death and resurrection.

But upon his resurrection, he was exalted to the right hand of God. He has been reigning there ever since. He is reigning over his kingdom, and these passages describe basically the conditions of the people of God in the kingdom of God that they receive instruction from God, they walk in his paths, and they give up their warlike ways, and they have victory over serpents and scorpions, they have peace with one another with whom they were formerly at odds.

These are all just descriptions of the character of the kingdom of the Messiah, who is the prince of peace, thus we expect these images of peace to be found in his kingdom. We must stop there, because we're out of time, and we'll pick up on another theme next time.