

H006 10-19-92 Hoeh Eugene Last Great Day

My wife and I would like to express our appreciation of the very fine organization and the general example of all of you brethren here, certainly not the least, those who have been working before and after services to see that everything is in good and proper order, which leads me to bring something to your attention that perhaps is more important today than any previous day of the festival. I notice a few of you are coughing. I did not notice that at the beginning to the same extent. Whenever we have a large group, there are always potentially those few who have some physical limitation, generally centering on a cold, coming to a new environment, perhaps not having adequate sleep, perhaps your food practices here are a little different than elsewhere. May I suggest in strong terms that you be aware of the fact that when you leave and greet others goodbye, that if you have been coughing or don't feel well internally from something that seems to be developing, that you don't embrace others.

In fact, that you don't shake hands. This might of course come as a surprise, but our western society doesn't realize to what extent things we do with our hands tend to transmit certain things of this nature, even the common cold. It is very important that you do take care of these things so that we go home in good health and be about to work. It needs to be done for the rest of autumn and winter till the coming of the next festival season. So please be careful about this. That's the best way to give others a goodbye greeting is to keep them well and not to transmit anything of that nature.

On this eighth day of the festive season, a separate festival, both in the description in the Bible and in Jewish tradition, one that Christians came to call the last great day based on things that Jesus said in his ministry, we should take a final look at what this festival means in terms of the overall plan of God. But to do so, we have to take a look at something long before the plan of God came to be revealed through the sequence of God's festivals. For this day, in a sense, wraps up the problem and the question that many people have had and have been troubled by for centuries. For instance, the Christian world must ask itself. Other religions have asked similar questions and come up with answers in accordance with their own beliefs. But the Christian world must ask the question, what will happen, what has happened to all those who lived and died before Jesus Christ was even born? What happened to all those who never heard the message Jesus brought since he did come nearly 2000 years ago? Are they unable to be saved? Are they going to be saved to use a religious term without knowing, without accomplishing, without doing, without baptism, without repentance, without belief, without the Holy Spirit? Because that is the question.

And there are millions today, of course, hundreds of millions under communism in China. These people have not heard the message. If Jesus said to the apostles, you must repent, believe, and be baptized, and then receive the Holy Spirit, how is God going to resolve the problem? That is the big question. For does he have another way of salvation than the way we are asked? If, in fact, Christians represent no more than, let's say, a medium fraction of the world's population, if we have a billion Christians on earth and more than four billion who are not, then I pose the question, if the four billion can be saved without being Christians because they didn't know, then isn't that method even better than the Christian method? Because the Christian method hasn't supposedly brought more than a billion people living on earth today into the Christian religion. How is it that the other four can be saved in their ignorance? Whereas only one, presumably, one billion is being saved in knowledge.

There is clearly something fundamental that must be addressed. The traditional Christian answer came to be in the Middle Ages, an interim place called purgatory. In the days of the Reformation,

other alternatives were proposed. The Church of God, necessarily, has many people who come in and face the question. What about my parents, grandparents, great-grandparents who do not know what I now have come to know? What is God going to do with them? How is he going to deal with, in fact, the overwhelming majority of human beings who have ever lived? For only a minority has ever been Christian, and for that matter, in earlier days, only a much tinier minority were ever Jewish. What answer is the answer? For some time during this festival, the answers have been generally alluded to or explained, alluded to, and looking at the millennium, the thousand years of the reign of Messiah Jesus of Nazareth, and this morning in the presentation of a time of judgment. But let me go back now much earlier in this story and pick up where one of our ministers left off a little time ago. We have to go back to a recognition that in a world it has been created. That's a premise which cannot be proved or disproved by science, because science does not have the answers either to prove or disprove a creation.

That is a matter of revelation. Reason might lead some to the conclusion that there is a creation.

Reason has led others to the conclusion that matter has always existed.

Revelation makes clear that there is not only a creation, but a Creator who sustains the universe.

That the universe cannot be wound up and forgotten, and the Creator walk off and let the universe run on its own. The universe is in fact dependent upon the Creator who upholds matter and energy as we have encountered it in the natural world. But there was a world, as mentioned to you, revealed by Revelation, a world of spirit before there was a world of matter.

In that world of spirit existed not only the Creator who made that world of spirit, but made a whole realm of angelic beings. That is, beings who could reason, who could think, an entire world in which there was the capacity of will to make decisions, to decide whether to go right or whether to go in the opposite direction or any other direction, whatever it might have been.

That world of spirit was given instruction. In that world of spirit, the majority of angels, that is, messengers, created spirit beings, have remained loyal and have paid respect to and obeyed the Creator, have shared life, if you please, that is, we might say day to day living, but enjoyed the experience of living by being in contact with the Creator all this time, from before any time that science might have imagined.

There came a time, as the church has been taught over a decade or two, there came a time that God chose to give angels an opportunity to show how they would administer God's government over the natural earth, in nature. We won't go into the details, science through geology has much to say on the subject as to the nature of the natural world.

The book of Job, of course, tells us that when the earth was created, the foundation of the earth was laid, which implies it was built up from a core and over an undefined period of time from the beginning came to be what it now is. And the angels shouted for joy, but we also learned that in the beginning, the one who was placed in charge over the earth, whose ways were perfect up to that time, came to pose a question to himself and for the angelic world. In simple terms, it was, but we are asked to administer the government of God's law, his ideas, his ways, the ways of cooperation, the ways of harmony, the way of love, the way of concern, the way of give.

But is that the only way? Is that the way to really get ahead? That was the question.

For God's way means the appointment of individuals who may or may not be the best, the most qualified. But competition can determine who's the most qualified.

Now, we can tell in a sports game, so here's logic. Is it not obvious that if you don't know about sports and if you can't decide on the ability of people to play in a game, that if you merely appoint someone, you're likely not to appoint the best one in the team.

You have to compete, let's say, on the playing field or on the sports floor to know who's likely to be the best, and then you choose the team from the best of the best. So competition makes sense, reasoned the devil. Because when he began to think these thoughts, he made himself into an adversary. You see, he overlooked the fact that God could know what was in spirits, that God could understand what was in the mind of spirits, that God who made spirits or angels knew what he was making when he made them. And so when he gave appointments to certain individuals, he knew why he did. Or to put it another way that might be of interest to you, God doesn't necessarily appoint the man or the, in this case, angel or woman, doesn't matter what area we're talking to.

God doesn't necessarily appoint the most able, the most qualified for every job. Did you know that? Or he wouldn't appoint it about half of you mature men as husbands now, would he? Or the other half of the mature women as wives? This is something we must learn. If God knows you're qualified, he may not need to have you do the job because he may be interested in seeing how somebody else can develop into the job. But the devil overlooked all of this because he was thinking only of getting ahead, not of giving the opportunity to others to improve, to grow, and develop. Now this is a very important reason as to why the devil's philosophy failed, because he only had self-aggrandizement in mind. Now he knew God's way, he knew what would happen to go contrary to God's way, he knew what it was like to live God's way, and he was not tempted by any, as we call it, pull or motivation in his spiritual nature.

He didn't have to reason and then decide. Now he could certainly think these things.

There's no reason to say God doesn't know good from evil. God can explain the way of love, the way of greed, and there is no doubt that the angels all heard what it was like to do the right thing. They had the experience over a period of what we call time, but they also must have been told, much like the commandments. The commandment says love your father and love your mother in the sense of paying them honor and respect. Without them you wouldn't be here. But at the same time it doesn't say love your wife, it says don't commit adultery.

Did you ever notice that? It doesn't say love your neighbor, it says don't steal, don't kill, don't do these things. So when God defines right from wrong, he often defines it in such a way that you know what is wrong and you know what is right. So it isn't that the angels didn't know what could happen and what the wrong attitudes were. But the concept that maybe you could get ahead of God, so to speak. Maybe you could prove your better. And since the devil came up with this idea, that's why he was a devil, he was originally a bringer of truth and light, and he came to be a bringer of darkness and confusion. He thought of himself as having now abilities that would give him the opportunity to challenge his Creator.

So that's how wrong ideas came to lodge over an unaccountable period of time that science can only comment upon, but not prove absolutely. But certainly no small period of time in the realm of physics, the angelic world ruling over the earth more and more came to accept the Lucifer, the light bringer, now the devil, the adversary, or Satan as the one to follow until one third of the angelic realm entered into a conspiracy based on the premise that God couldn't know what was going on in their minds, that they could take him unexpectedly and remove him from the throne and they could take over and rule over the natural and spiritual realms.

That's the story of Ezekiel 28, the story of Job 1, Isaiah 14, the story of Jude's account in his one chapter, letter, and other places in the Bible. Now in the realm of spirit, there are angels that can get control of people who let their wills become subject to another power.

There is also an influence in the realm of spirit that we must take note of.

The Holy Spirit of God proceeds from God throughout the spiritual realm. The natural realm, if you please, David said, how can I ever get away from your spirit, whether in the air, beneath the waters, in the ocean, in a cave, wherever he might have imagined, your spirit is there. I cannot hide from you and hide my thoughts from you so that God's spirit is able to know what is in human minds and for that matter angelic minds.

But in the world of spirit, there is also an influence that proceeds from spirits so that when an evil spirit is around, it is possible to sense the presence of such a spirit.

Now the devil, who was a cherub or a being, an angelic being, but in a much higher office and with greater abilities than the angelic world as a whole, he has certain influences and power that he can exercise at a distance.

And so we read an interesting verse about this in the New Testament in Ephesians 2-2.

If you would turn to the book of Ephesians, chapter 2 verse 2, and we read, wherein in time past the Greek Gentiles walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air. Now we learn from this, this is of course, the devil made clear in other verses in the Gospel of John, who extends his power. We're not concerned whether he's also the prince of the power of geological formations below us. We don't live down there. We live in the world in which we breathe air. We live in a world in which we communicate by air. Without air, you would not hear me. Without air, we would not be alive.

So he has power. In this case, he is the prince of the power of the air, as Paul would word it, because he can do certain things as God allows. And he also, through the air, is able to influence, that is through the world, from wherever he is, he is able to influence humanity.

The prince or the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conduct in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh. And if you please, by way of explanation, the vanity and the pride of mind, and where by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and he speaks of we, so he meant Jew or Gentile, Israelite, barbarian, whatever it may have been.

In a sense, we have defined it by way of analogy with broadcasting.

Herbert Armstrong came to comment on this as like a radio station beams certain waves that are interpreted vocally so that we hear it, or with television interpreted visually by technology so that we see and hear.

The devil can influence governments by influencing minds and crowds.

The devil can influence social organizations. He influences individuals.

In a sense, he implants his moods. Now we're going to see a classic example of ideas and moods.

Given in the early chapters of Genesis, but let me illustrate a more modern one.

You heard, of course, a quotation from Theodore Roosevelt that to be educated in the intellect without moral character is to train a people or a nation that is a very grave danger to the world.

There was just such a nation in Europe. There was, in fact, a corporal in the Kaiser's army in World War I, who saw that the efforts of many came to nothing because there was betrayal in 1918. And he ultimately joined a party called the National Socialist German Workers Party. There were a few people in there and there were about four other leaders, and he came and he was accepted because he had a remarkable voice and personality for projecting that voice. And so there were five men. I want you to think about it. Five men who came to guide a party that ultimately got control of a nation and got control of other nations and the world was at war in the greatest crisis to beset this world until this day. It was World War II.

Even so many as five, that's all there were in the leadership of the National Socialist German Workers Party. I'm going to make a mistake in there. There was one other. He is called the Devil, and he was working through the mind of this one man in particular, Adolf Hitler.

And from that one man and the influence on his mind, a whole nation was swayed, men and women and children. And they were swayed not just by what he said, but by what others who looked to him said.

And by media, until the nation was in a mood, thinking that it was indeed the master race, that it had the answers to Europe's and the world's problems, and that Europe needed to be cleansed of people who did not belong there, political parties who did not or that ought not be there.

And you know, or should know the rest of the story, that all who are older in this large congregation understood. That was an experience that essentially everyone over 55 must have some awareness of by way of personal experience and real consciousness, and maybe even some as young as 50 by the end of the war.

Yes, it is possible to influence a mind, to influence a people as a result of what the devil is able to implant by spiritual forces that we don't need to define in detail, but we know as results. Let us take the story of the first human being. We're all familiar with this, but I think it is very important so we understand appropriately the significance of Christ's atonement.

God spoke to Adam in the Garden of Eden. And in the material that is given here, the Lord God commanded the man a certain number of things. And then we learned that the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, out of which God made woman, that is the one whom we know as Jesus the Christ, and presented her to Adam. Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, verse 23, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.

Now what you have in any discussion implied in chapter one, and clearly here in chapter two, it was simply a give and take conversation. God told Adam to name the animals, and Adam named them.

God brought a wife, and Adam didn't argue. He accepted her.

There entered the power of the devil into the nature of man. And when it was all said and done, let us look at what happened to Adam's mind. Chapter three, verse nine, the Lord God called to Adam and said, where are you? Now Adam said, I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid and hid myself. So he had to have an explanation. And God said, now who told you the condition in which you were? Have you eaten of the tree whereof I commanded that you should not eat? Now notice the attitude of the man. The man didn't say, I indeed ate of the tree. I am sorry. I did wrong. He said, the woman, ah, there's the source of your problem, gentlemen. The woman, notice Adam's attitude,

whom you gave, one, you were to blame for giving her, and she was to blame for trying to get me to eat it. Gave it to me, oh yes, incidentally, I did eat. But that was, you know, that's not the problem. The problem is you and the problem is that woman.

Now this was clearly a change of nature. This isn't the only kind, because then God talks to the woman.

And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat. That is, I allowed myself to be seduced.

I was deceived. I was beguiled. So now you discover that a part of human nature is magnified, that has never been seen before, that capacity to be hostile, that capacity to be gullible, not merely to believe but to be gullible, not merely to reason but to argue and get in a bad attitude. This is what happens when the devil entered the scene. So what we must not forget, and what some are sometimes capable of forgetting, is that human nature that leads to sin is not solely the nature that man and woman were created with at all. There is something that is added, the presence of the spirit of the devil. So Jesus addressed a nation that was a part of, if you please, that seventh lampstand on that candlestick that was in the temple.

For remember in the tabernacle and in the temple was a lampstand with seven lamps. We call it candlesticks, but they were lampstands. They didn't have candles in those days. They had a clay, a vessel in which there was olive oil and a wick, and it was on a stand.

And beginning with the days of the establishment of the nation, with the period of the judges, with the period of the united monarchy, the period of the divided monarchy, the period of the governors, and then the priest kings who were the Levites, that is, the Maccabines, and finally the scribes and Pharisees, and you have seven sequences of government in the congregation of Israel, and those who were a part of and who dominated the synagogue, who were writing the scriptures, copying them, teaching in the synagogue.

Some of them also as Pharisees were also priests, and Jesus said of them, you are of your father the devil. They said why we are born of Abraham.

By flesh they came from Abraham. By spiritual attitude they had allowed another father to dominate their minds. There was something in their nature that was not in the nature of Adam when he was first created. And the story of the day of atonement is the story of two things that need correction and not one. The Christian world that thinks only one thing needs correction sees only Christ in the story of the day of atonement and doesn't see the role of the devil in human sin.

So one goat on that day, this is recorded in Leviticus 16, tells us how human sins can be forgiven by the shedding of blood, but Christ did not come into the flesh to pay for the sins of angels who sinned.

He came into the flesh to pay for the sins of the children of Adam.

But the children of Adam have sinned not merely on the basis of their own volition, but because there has come to be a part of human nature as a result of the presence of the devil in the world, influencing society, influencing what we hear from parents, what we hear from peers in school, what we read, what we see, and what we allow ourselves to think.

There is a part of human nature that is not the nature of Adam and not the nature of God, and that's why Jesus said, even of those who were in the congregation of Israel, that is the Jews, in New Testament times, the only congregation or church to which he came, you are of your father the devil. Now, he didn't say that to everyone.

He didn't say that to Elizabeth. He didn't say that to John the Baptist, because some of them sought the truth and sought to do the will of God.

The others were deluded like Eve or knew better as Adam.

Christ did not pay the penalty of things that are done in human flesh for which the devil is ultimately responsible, and that's why there was a goat that was not slain, a goat that removes the devil's role from human misconduct, but was not paid for by Christ because the devil plays a role in what we do in society.

The Jews are going to wake up sometime to realize that many of the deeds perpetrated in the German nation, the Croatian nation, and any of the others that cooperated with Nazism and fascism in the last war. Some of those deeds were perpetrated either directly by demons or the influence of the devil so that sometimes people did not even realize what they were doing when they did it, and only came later to see their appalling acts.

The Jewish nation living in the first century AD is someday also going to wake up and realize they did not know what they did. As Jesus clearly said of the Roman soldiers, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Let us look at a couple of other verses in the Gospel of John.

It's important that John understood this question, and of all the New Testament gospel writers at which we have four, he is the one who addresses it most bluntly.

And this is what needs to be corrected in the whole human family and why a judgment is coming.

John 2.25 In AD 28, at the Passover, or the first Holy Day, the Passover season, many believed in Jesus Christ, Jesus as Messiah, when they saw the miracles which he did, verse 23.

Jesus, however, didn't commit himself to them. That is, he didn't tell them all the things that God had sent him to do. He didn't essentially reveal everything because he had more work yet to do.

And in addition, he also knew what was motivating them to believe him.

For most of them really didn't when it was all said and done. They left him.

Because he knew all men and needed not that any human being should have to testify to him to explain what was in man. For he knew what was in man. He understood to what extent people could believe on him and still not believe. Because they were motivated by aspects of their own nature that they didn't understand. Later on, Jesus said, you believe in me because I did miracles and fed you. It wasn't spiritual food you were interested in. It was material food.

He knew what was in man. And what entered into human nature enters into every human being over time. Because we are all influenced with the around. Some have much more of a problem to deal with than others. It all depends on the role of the devil in society and the corruptions of society in which we live. There was a time when people could keep their hands off things and not steal. We happen to be in a motor hotel they call it here. And in a parking lot unrelated to the motor hotel, but to a shopping center, we came back the two days ago.

And there was a modern sports car and the extensive back window, you know, in these sports cars, these low slung cars, the whole thing had been smashed in. And undoubtedly somebody wanted the equipment that was in the back in terms of the music and sound system.

They had broken into it. Today you have a nation that is very, very likely to lay its hands on what it should not. Things that would not have been dreamed of. Then there are parts of this country like this yet where you leave your house and your door is unlocked.

Not only do we not leave our houses with the doors unlocked, but we often have an alarm inside because of the state of society. Now Jesus knows even today what is in man.

Let's look at another verse in terms of how Jesus compared himself to man, John 14.30.

Verse 29, just to give a bit of background, John 14. And now I have told you before it come to pass that when it comes to pass, you might believe, hereafter I will not talk much with you.

For the prince of this world comes and is going to influence the leaders of the Jewish community and one of my own apostles. And I'm going to be betrayed to the Romans and they will execute me because of the influence of a mob. That's just a quick summary of the whole thing.

And Jesus was going to be crucified. But notice, the prince of this world comes and he, the prince of this world, has nothing in me. He's going to try to bring me to trial, which he will succeed in doing, and he will try to accuse me through witnesses, but he cannot substantiate anything because he has never been able to implant an aspect of his ideas, his moods, his nature in me. That's what Jesus said of himself.

It took Herbert Armstrong decades to think this problem through of how to explain the errors of the idea that man inherits a fallen nature from parents, which is the way the Christian world explains it. This nature is what develops in every human being because every human being is influenced by the presence of the spirit of the devil.

Those who have the best teaching and instruction morally and spiritually have much less to wrestle with, just as those who are hooked on drugs, who become liars, perpetrators of moral crime, murderers. I was almost going to say politicians, but I won't because they're our honest politicians. I've always wished to meet one, but we won't go any further on that. We might say the same of farmers almost, and of labor men, and of capitalists, and of communists. There is hardly an area where anybody is free from all corruption and certainly not the theologians. But it is important to recognize that we all have yielded to a greater or lesser degree. The great tragedy is the degree to which some people have gone all the way over the cliff. Be thankful if you are not subject to some of the terrible tragedies that crack babies are, who never have seen and cracked children, who are now entering schools, never have seen their fathers or only heard about them. Maybe the mother doesn't even know anymore who's the father.

What a way to grow up. But here are some very important verses for us to remember.

The devil had nothing, not one of his thoughts ever lodged in the mind of Jesus.

But human beings have let those thoughts and moods of the devil to a greater or lesser degree otherwise become a part of our thinking and make-up and reasoning. We have three things basically to overcome. Through the power of the Spirit of God we must overcome the devil and or his demons. We must overcome the world and you must overcome yourself. The degree to which you have allowed yourself to sin, all those sins Christ paid for. But there are sins that we commit, that Christ has paid for, that in part were perpetrated by the devil. And the devil has to bear that iniquity. He has in a sense a part in every sin for which Christ died.

And a part of all the sins for which Christ died are going to be placed back on his head because Christ did not come to die to excuse the devil's role in human nature. And the devil has accused us before the throne of God as if we were solely responsible for everything we have done.

And Christ does not accept that. He charges the devil as being in part responsible.

And that's why Paul said what he did. The spirit of the devil, of the prince of the power of the air, and that prince of course is Satan, works in the children of disobedience.

And that we have to uproot. We will never uproot it entirely because of the kind of world in which we live. That's why on the day of Pentecost when two loaves are presented, those are the only sacrifices that are ever or offerings that are ever presented with leaven and leaven there is a type of sin. Because even to the end of life we have sin to wrestle with in ourselves as a result of having allowed as infants and children and teenagers and adults influences to enter our minds.

That we came to accept and to think about from that perspective. You look at the problems of the world in Somalia, in South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, the remnants of the USSR and Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Los Angeles. You name all these places and you will see that people look at things from a perspective that is not God's perspective. That is it's warped in some way by their backgrounds and their thinking and what they've learned.

And they have not known how with such warped backgrounds to learn to be at peace with their neighbors. And suddenly you have these awful crises that we call unaccountable. What you heard in a census afternoon was simply a look that was unaccountable into the heart of a part of Los Angeles.

It was amazing what people reasoned in order to justify what they did at all levels for good or evil. You know, we often call evil good. And that's what was being justified in many cases. Evil was justified as being good. What people deserved. This is the world in which we live.

This is the world God describes. Therefore it is unreasonable that a world in which the devil has influenced humanity and they have died in ignorance, died with hates, lies in their minds, fiction, moral corruption, sometimes honesty. What a mixed up world of good and evil.

Those people will never inherit the kingdom of God by rising in a resurrection to life.

They cannot live because they have never lived eternally because they've never had the spirit of God and cannot have the spirit of God in that state of mind. Which is why Jesus said what he did in John 5. You are already aware of this. Let's have it clear, John 5, 28, 29. Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice. That's where the consciousness is. When you hear the voice of the Son of Man, you will not suddenly become conscious in heaven. You will not suddenly become conscious in another realm. It's those that are in the graves will become conscious. The spirit in man is not conscious apart from the body.

I've often said, my wife and I were discussing this, how remarkable that people should ever have come up with a doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

If while the soul is in the flesh and somebody hits you hard enough on the head and you are knocked unconscious, if while you're still as a soul in the body, while the body is alive and you're unconscious, and your soul is unconscious because you're unconscious, right? How do you think you're going to become conscious when finally the body dies? Well, of course the theologians can't answer that. If you can be knocked unconscious while your soul is in the body, how is it ever going to become conscious when your body is dead? Do I have to repeat that a third time for all of you, or is it clear where the world has gone wrong? So the spirit in man that does separate from the body is not conscious, but

when a resurrection occurs, there's going to be a body. Now note carefully the nature of the resurrection, for there are two kinds of resurrections, not merely two times of resurrection.

All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, not at the same time, and not coming forth to the same kind of resurrection. They that have done good to the resurrection of life, these are the people in whom Christ lived, in whom Yahweh adonai the God, the Lord of the Old Testament, the one who was the Word, dwelt in an individual like David, Moses, Miriam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. David said, Take not your spirit from me. He had the spirit of God administered by the Word. Hence it is called in the New Testament the spirit of the Messiah, because the Messiah or Christ administered it. Here are people who had done good, not because their nature let them do some kind of good, but because God through his spirit did good in and through them as they yielded to him, responded to him, and made their will, let's say, equivalent to the mood, the influence, the power, the presence of the spirit of God.

They're coming to a resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to a resurrection and the older translations often had damnation, because the word damnation was the way that the judgment was described, the thought being that you either live or you go to hell. That's not the Greek.

The Greek is a resurrection to life or a resurrection to judgment, a crisis if you want to translate more literally the Greek, as you heard already today and before.

It is a time of crisis. Now the Chinese have a nice word. I don't want to be explicit. I am not a person who has studied Chinese, but those who have in the church have commented, and you can read it otherwise. The sense of this word here judgment in Chinese has the thought of difficulty, and at the same time opportunity. For any crisis is the result of some major difficulty and an opportunity to make the right decision to solve it.

And so the judgment in that sense is a time in which there will be an opportunity to resolve problems. It's a time of decision making. God makes decisions, finds you guilty, offers forgiveness, you make the decision whether you will accept it or not and what you're going to do with it.

Are you going to run with it and become a different kind of person or cast it aside? So there is a resurrection to judgment. This resurrection to judgment is for the overwhelming number of people who descended from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the 12 sons. For the vast majority were not called. Remember there were only 7,000 who hadn't bowed the knee to Baal in northern Israel, the northern house of Israel, and there were far more who had.

What of the Gentiles who weren't even called in those days? And what of the overwhelming number of people today? The four and a half billion almost versus the one billion approximately who were Christian. But you must ask yourself, what are these Christian nations doing in Latin America? Are they really Christian? What are they doing in North America? What are they doing in Europe around the South Pacific or in Africa? You could say what you want to about Muslim Somalia, but what about Christian Ethiopia? What about Christian Mozambique? What about Christian Angola? These people had heard Christianity from the Portuguese or other people for centuries.

What have they done? What about Christian as well as Muslim Yugoslavia? What about Christian Armenia and Georgia and Muslim Azerbaijan? Certainly something is wrong.

Even in the world that is Christian, not to mention the world that is not.

Now, when is all this to occur? Well, we have celebrated that in a sense by taking a clear note of Revelation 20, where we have the second coming of the Messiah.

Now, for the church, the Messiah has come to dwell in us through the Holy Spirit. That's not His second coming. That is His return to be present, but His coming to dwell as a personality on earth, not in the flesh, but as the Spirit, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, manifesting Himself so that He may be seen as He was, not only seen by the disciples, but He is going to be seen on television. He is going to be heard on radio. He is going to be seen so that there will be no doubt who the ruler of earth is for a thousand years.

The return of Christ is pictured here in Revelation 18 and 19. Then comes chapter 20, and we are introduced to the restriction of the power of the devil, where he is restrained for a thousand years. Then we learn that there is going to be a resurrection, and individuals who were murdered for the truth, who bore testimony to the truth, are going to live and reign for a thousand years. Verse 4, the remaining dead, however, will not be raised, because at the beginning of this lengthy period of time is only the first resurrection.

This is the resurrection to life. It's called the first resurrection, and it occurs at the second coming. Then there is no life for the rest to have died, but of course, multitudes will be on earth. Living will come to no truth, will multiply, and of course, will understand salvation, and will be reaped into the kingdom of God. But when the thousand years are finished, Satan will be loosed out of his prison. And the first thing he does, as you learned, is going to do the very same thing that he did before. He has not changed his mind, he is still an accuser, a deceiver. He will be dealt with, and though he has been judged, the final sentence has not yet been announced. The thousand years of imprisonment is not the final sentence. He is simply held there, awaiting final sentence with the demons, and they are going to be cast into a lake of fire that ultimately consumes whatever was once their inheritance. And they are going to be tormented day and night forever and ever.

These are spirits. The devil and his demons cast into the lake where earlier a mortal beast and a mortal false prophet were cast. And the earth that they knew is ultimately going to be burned up, and the remarkable thing is they are going to be tormented in mind because they will be unable to do anything that they have wanted to do. Never again will they be able to deceive others.

They simply will be out of it entirely. They will be cut off forever from the presence of God and his kingdom, and will have only the presence of themselves and their own thoughts.

This is what was going to happen. They decided to abandon their inheritance, the book of Jude, the only chapter. And so it will finally be so changed that the earth as we know it won't be the same anymore. But in the meantime, after they are put in a lake of fire, and nothing more is said here than their state of mind, then we have of course the story of the rest of the dead who didn't live for the millennium. At the end of the millennium, the surprise is not a surprise because there will be people living who will simply have taken the millennium for granted. And they will be deceived and deluded, some of them, and some of them will be willful in their attitude. At the end of the millennium will be infants, teen-agers, young men and women, older people. And if they lend themselves to be seduced by the devil, God is going to punish them, for fire came down out of heaven and consumed them. Now the second resurrection has not yet occurred, only the first. And in that second resurrection will come up all who have not been in the first.

And who have not been made mortal and who died. There may even be some of these without any question. Not everybody at the end of the millennium, every child has been ready to understand full spiritual truth, and some will be deceived. And just as people have been deceived before, they can be deceived then. The second resurrection will include any and all who are now going to be held

accountable absolutely for what they did. And given a final opportunity to life, that is the story, of course, of the books that were opened so they can understand truth.

And the book of life, where their names will be found written, that has already been explained.

But let me tell you a little something here so that you do understand it clearly. Revelation 11 and 12 is not the story as the millennium is over, and not the story as if one is looking forward to that period of time which Isaiah 65 correctly defines as 100 years when you take the literal translation. It's a time like the millennium, but it's afterward. But Revelation 20, verses 11 and 12, is not looking forward to that judgment, not looking forward to the second resurrection, which is described by Jesus in John 5, 29, and alluded to in Revelation chapter 20, when it says in verse 5, the rest of the dead didn't live again until after the thousand years. Verse 11 is not the story of the beginning of 100 years of judgment, the beginning of the resurrection to a judgment, but it is the story of the conclusion.

We are before the throne of God. Heaven and earth are vanishing.

They have fled away from the presence of God, certainly no indication that this is the beginning, this is the conclusion. This is that point in time, if you please, where all who have lived again and come up in the resurrection to judgment are now standing before the throne of God.

God, you can't stand before the throne of God with the earth gone.

Fled away, unless you are now also immortal and about to receive your reward, as in the first resurrection, we rise to appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive our award.

This is the story looking back at what has happened following the millennium.

The dead, small, and great are standing before God. Now, no man can see God and live, but here they are in a sense standing before the presence of God.

The truth of the Bible has been made known, those books are open, the book of life is there, and the dead were judged out of those things written in the books according to their works.

What did you do in your life? This judged according to their works is not something looking about their past as they are ready to live a hundred years. This is the story of what they have done concerning their past and during that time of judgment when they lived, their work in the flesh is over. They are standing in God's presence and the earth essentially is seen as fleeing away, being consumed by fire that will melt it with fervent heat until it becomes a new heaven and a new earth. Now, incidentally, verse 13 mentions the rest of those who come up to judgment, but not in the second resurrection. There is a second resurrection. There is also a third, but the second and third are the same kind of resurrection to physical life.

One, to a time when salvation is made available because they never had an understanding, but there are always those spiritually who have made shipwreck. So there are those who died and perished in their spiritual error, who were in the sea, or who were simply left dead on the earth, or buried in the grave. That is, wherever you can imagine the wicked having been.

In the ocean, on the earth left unburied or given some honorable burial despite their evil, they were all delivered up and they were simply judged according to their works.

And even death now perishes in the grave as all these who come up in that third resurrection to judgment perish with the earth because they did not hold that the kingdom of God was something to be sought. That's the story here. So that the whole of nature is so changed, this is the second death, it says in verse 14. Anyone not found in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire that consumed

the whole earth. Peter describes the whole earth as melting with fire and heat, out of which there will be a new heavens and a new earth, the one that was really promised Abraham, to which the new Jerusalem comes and God finally makes his dwelling and this becomes the center of the universe and just as the tabernacle in a sense was superseded by the temple, so the heaven of God's throne is now superseded by the great and new Jerusalem also described in part during this festival, which will be on earth, which will be indeed God's footstool forever and this will be his throne. And we will be there with the angels and the whole of the human family is going to understand what it means to have been born of God.

Today there's much confusion about that in the world, but tomorrow it's all going to become clear and for many it's going to take quite a bit of unlearning at the end of the millennium in that hundred years, but they're going to see what it means to have had God as father finally, to have his spirit, to have his nature as we define in our literature. If we have his eternal seed abiding in us, we are his heirs, we are a part of the God family after whom the whole household is named. The angels who were called sons of God by creation, the human family which came from Adam and in a sense is adopted into the family of God because we have a new father, but that adoption is not simply a paper adoption, that is one in which he actually makes us his father and a whole new birth occurs, that is the new, the inner man, the new, the inner woman.

And when the time of resurrection occurs, the mature individual who grows to the stature of Christ, who develops the character, if you please, that is Christ's character, whose attitude must conform to the last verse in Matthew chapter 5, for no one will be in that resurrection and will live forever who does not have as his or her goal. What Jesus said in chapter 5 of Matthew, be you therefore perfect even as your father who is in heaven is perfect.

That is your goal, not because you can achieve it, but because Christ forgives and as long as we demonstrate that we are willing to make that the goal and willing to overcome ourselves and willing to ask forgiveness, as you heard in the sermon at this afternoon, so that you can stand before God freed of sin, having as your goal the perfect character of Jesus Christ and of God himself. That's what's going to make it possible for love and harmony and righteousness to fill the universe, the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwells only righteousness.

Please drive safely, make no hasty decision, it is better to be safe than sorry.

We want to see all of you as many as God gives life for the rest of this coming year back for another feast of tabernacles.