

# His Government and Peace

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon delves into Isaiah chapter 9, emphasizing the prophecy of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. It highlights the darkness and turmoil in the world, drawing parallels to the current state of society. The passage reveals the promise of a great light, symbolizing Jesus, who brings joy, breaks burdens, and establishes an everlasting kingdom of peace and justice. The sermon stresses the importance of surrendering to Jesus as the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace, allowing His government to reign in our hearts for true peace and righteousness.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 9:1, Matthew 1:23, John 8:12, Revelation 19:16, Philippians 4:7, Isaiah 22:22, Revelation 20:4, Revelation 21:4

**Topics:** "Prophecy of the Messiah", "Surrender to Jesus"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So let's turn to the book of Isaiah chapter 9. Isaiah or in American Isaiah chapter 9. And I'm going to read verses 1 through 7. Isaiah chapter 9 verses 1 through 7. Now we did speak on Isaiah chapter 8 a few, I guess, months now ago, a couple of months ago. So you can find the context if you didn't, if you weren't here at that time or you've forgotten. It would be helpful to understand the context of Isaiah 8 in order for us to get to Isaiah 9. And don't worry I'm not going to preach through Isaiah.

It would take way too many years. So Isaiah 9 and verses 1 through 7. Nevertheless, the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first he lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed her by the way of the sea beyond the Jordan in Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. You have multiplied the nation and increased its joy. They rejoice before you according to the joy of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide to spoil.

For you have broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor as in the day of Midian. For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle and garments rolled in blood will be used for burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

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 to establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

And so we said when we dealt with chapter 8 that this is sandwiched between chapter 7 and 9, which are messianic passages, passages that speak about the Messiah, about Jesus. And of course in chapter 7 we read that verse that we read in our reading this morning in the book of Matthew. Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Immanuel. And then remember that Matthew adds Immanuel means God with us. And so chapter 7 speaks about Immanuel.

Then chapter 8 deals with the terrible situation in which Israel and Judah find themselves as the enemy surround them and as they are facing impending doom. And so they're in a very, very dark place. And remember that we drew parallels between Isaiah 8 and where we are at today.

The church is in a dark place today. The enemies are surrounding us. There are conspiracies and there are conspiracy theories going around.

And all of these things have resulted in a darkness that has come upon the hearts of believers as it seems that everything around us is falling apart. The questions about the future of democracy in America, the future of government in America, will we have peace for the next number of years, or will we end up in civil war? All of these things are very real possibilities. They are not conspiracy theories.

They are realities that we face. And so we find ourselves in a very, very dark place, just the same as Israel did at that time. And then so chapter 8 ends in verse 22.

Then they will look to the earth and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish, and they will be driven into darkness. This is where we are at today, exactly the same. If we're going to look to the earth, if you're going to look to the governments of this world, and I'm not just speaking about America, but right throughout the world.

South Africa is facing a potential civil war right now, as the previous president is about to be imprisoned for fraud and contempt, and South Africa is in a very, very dark place right now. If you look at what's going on in the newspapers or on the media in South Africa, it's dark. If you're reading the news and not just listening to certain media outlets, the situation in America is dark.

The future is not great at all, in spite of what the stock market is doing. And so if they look to the earth, you will see trouble, darkness, and gloom. That's the reality.

And so here's the problem, is that too many Christians, as we said when we dealt with chapter 8, are looking to the earth. They're looking to this world, and they are becoming discouraged and disheartened. They're seeing darkness and gloom and impending dark disaster.

And it doesn't matter which side of the political spectrum you find yourself, the future does not look good. And so there's gloom and there is anguish. The psychological impact, not just of COVID, but of the politics of current America is devastating people.

People are committing suicide. People are fleeing to antidepressants and to psychiatrists and to counselors. Marriages are falling apart as a result of the stresses and the pressures that we find ourselves in as we look to this earth.

And so as we look to the ground, as we look to this world, we will find darkness, and it will drive us into further darkness, further despair. There is no hope. Folks, this is the reality that we need to face.

There is no hope in this world. There is no hope in the Democrats. There is no hope in the Republicans.

There is no hope in Washington. There is no hope in this world. That is just the reality.

And you may be offended. Well, everybody is equally offended by me. I don't care which side of the aisle you're on.

If you're looking for answers in this world, there are no answers to be found. And I think the message is beginning to—the penny is beginning to drop. I think people are beginning to understand.

Where do we go? What do we do? Things are just not looking good. But here's the good news, of course. And we thank God for his Word, which brings the bad news and the good news.

It brings the condemnation together with the solution that is to be found in the Lord Jesus. And so chapter 9 begins. And I'm not going to go through the whole of chapter 9. Obviously, I want to speak about the Lord Jesus, which comes down in verse 6. But verse 2 says, The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

A wonderful verse, if you're familiar with Handel's Messiah, who wrote a whole section based on this verse. And so the people who, in Israel's day, walked in the darkness of the impending disaster that they were facing—their king was corrupt, or their kings, the king of the South and the North, were corrupt. The enemy was coming against them.

The enemy was conspiring against them. Everything was dark, but the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Now, this is obviously prophetic.

It's not just dealing with what was happening at that time. It was also looking forward to the first coming of the Lord Jesus. And remember that in the history of Israel, spiritually, Israel was never in a darker place than when Jesus first came.

God had not spoken for 400 years, the longest time ever that God had simply been silent, because Israel was not listening. And God came to a point where he said, I'm not going to speak anymore. I'm done.

And for 400 years, there is no prophet. For 400 years, there is no light in Israel. And Israel is going from one level of spiritual darkness to the next.

And of course, we see, as we've been going through the book of Luke, the darkness in Israel as the Messiah stands before them, and they crucify him. They don't recognize him for who he is, in spite of the fact that he provides all of the evidence, all of the proof, by the signs and wonders that he does, by him

fulfilling all of the scriptures that have been prophesied in the Old Testament. In spite of all of those things, they are so blinded, they are in such darkness that they cannot see the light that was shining right in front of them.

But of course, this is not ultimately fulfilled in Israel, but it is ultimately fulfilled in the second coming of the Lord Jesus, because as you saw, and as we will see, that it speaks about the fact that of his reign there will be no end. Now, remember, Jesus came, he was crucified, he ascended, he didn't set up his kingdom. And of course, that was a disappointment.

So this cannot be fully explained by his first coming, because the government, in a literal sense, and this is speaking about a literal sense, was not on his shoulder at that time. He did not bring in his government at that time. So there is yet a further fulfillment.

So there's three levels of fulfillment. There was an immediate application for them at this time that Isaiah is writing. There is a second level of fulfillment in the first coming of the Lord Jesus, and then there is the ultimate fulfillment in his second coming, which we are waiting for right now.

And so the people who walked in darkness, and so it's writing to us. It was written to them, it was written to those in the first century, and it is written to us, have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.

And now remember that when Jesus first came, that light did shine. Remember that John says that he is the light of the world, that the light shined, but men did not comprehend it. They did not understand it.

They did not accept it, because they loved their sin. And so even though Jesus came, and he was that very light, this is the light that Isaiah is speaking about. Jesus was that light, and there was this great darkness upon Israel, but a few saw the light.

And this is the amazing thing about the light of God, is that even though it is the most brilliant light that you can imagine, those who are in darkness are so blinded that they cannot even see that light. But those who are looking for the light can see it. And you remember we've spoken many times about Simeon and Anna, those two old people who were in the temple, and they were just waiting to see the light.

They were just waiting to see the fulfillment of these scriptures, these very scriptures. And of course there were a few others also. And so it will be in the end.

So it will be today, even though the light of the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus is clearly seen in the word, it's clearly seen in the message that he's preaching to us today, many are not seeing, and many continue in darkness. And so the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.

And I believe that God's light is shining today still through his word. His light is still shining through the Lord Jesus. And the light is that is growing brighter.

Peter speaks about the fact that that light is growing brighter every day as we approach the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so as you, if you get up early in the morning and you look out, it's dark, but slowly it's getting lighter and lighter and lighter until the sun comes over the horizon and you see the full glow and the full glory of the sun. I believe that we're seeing the end of the night, not in the sense of the earth.

If you're going to look to the earth, remember here's this tension. If you're going to look to the earth, you're going to see darkness and more and more darkness. But if you look to the east where the sun is coming up, you'll see.

And so if you're going to look to the other side, it's going to remain dark until the sun is fully up. But if you look to the east, you begin to see the sky beginning to light up. Slowly there's a bit more light, a bit more light, a bit more light.

Those who are looking to the Lord Jesus are going to see more and more light as the day approaches until he appears in his full brilliance and his full glory. So how is he going to come? So in Isaiah 9, verse 6 then, and I want to dwell a few minutes on these two verses. So what is this light? And so this is the context, this is the background that we need to understand.

There's darkness, but there's light. And the light of course is the Lord Jesus. And the light is that unto us a child is born and a son is given.

A child is born and a son is given. I really believe that my understanding of the political situation in America right now is that everybody is looking for a man, somebody who can rise and who will bring peace, someone who will be able to settle the differences between the left and the right, someone who can rise from the left or can rise from the right and bring some answers and bring some solutions. But in fact we know that that's not going to happen.

But unto us, to the church, not to the world, but to us, the church, a child is born and a son is given. And of course we know that he is speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ. And so as we come to Christmas time, it's important that we remember.

We can get, and I've spoken about this so many times, we get so caught up in all of the logistics of Christmas time and of cooking and making tamales and making Christmas cake, if you're from our background, and organizing the trip and getting there and doing this and wrapping the presents and buying the gifts and all of these things. And then when the day arrives, it's all about the family and it's about the kids and it's about all of these things. And in the whole process, we forget what it's really all about.

And so as we get older, the material things and the material gifts, while we appreciate the sentiment and the heart with which we give, at the same time they become blasé, they become old. You can only get so many ties. Nobody gives ties anymore.

But unto us a child is born and to us a son is given. This is the gift. And of course we have it in the Christmas carols and we say, well, you know, Jesus is the reason for the season.

But all of these things just become words. They just become repetitive. They're empty.

But, folks, there needs to be a real joy in our hearts as we approach this time because we are remembering that to us, to us, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. And so the greatest gift was Jesus who was given to us. And it says the government will be upon his shoulder.

I suppose there's probably one of the things that there's most speculation about is what's going to happen in 2024. Who will be in the White House in 2025? And everybody has their ideas and everybody has their dreams and everybody has their schemes and their plans. But there's only one that matters, and it's the

Lord Jesus.

The government will be on his shoulder. Now, I'm not saying the government of America will be on his shoulder. It never will be, or of any earthly nation.

But the government of his kingdom that we're looking for will be on his shoulder. Now, what does it mean the government will be on his shoulder? Well, if you go to Isaiah chapter 22 and verse 22, you find a very similar verse. It says the key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder.

So he shall open and no one will shut, and he will shut and no one will open. So who's he speaking about here? And remember that those who were listening to Isaiah at that time had an immediate application. But clearly this is more than just then.

This has a further application. And of course, where do we find those words? He opens and no one will shut, and he shuts and no one opens. The book of Revelation.

And so it speaks about the Lord Jesus as the one who has the key, not just the keys to heaven. But the key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder. Now, today it's difficult for us to understand that because when we think of a key, we think of something that you can carry in your pocket or clip on your belt.

Those days, the keys were big things. They had keys. And they're quite fascinating.

I saw a model this last week on video of one of these ancient keys came from Egypt. And the fascinating thing is that, and I'm not going to get into the technical aspects, but exactly the same principle that works our modern keys, that you have pins that line up with the valleys or the peaks on your key in order to open the key. 3,000 years ago, 4,000 years ago, they had exactly the same principle with pins and with a key that pushes the pins up to level them out so that you can turn or that you can open the latch.

The problem was, of course, they didn't have the technology to make them this size. So they were this size. They were huge things.

And you, the doorkeeper would keep the key, would carry the key. It was hooked so that you could stick it through the door and unlatch it from the inside. And so it was like a curved thing and you would carry it on your shoulder.

And that was symbolic of the authority of the doorkeeper who had the key. You couldn't go to a locksmith and just have duplicates made, but it was a symbol of authority. The same way as in businesses sometimes, the manager has the keys and it's a symbol of his authority in a sense.

We speak about it in the same way of someone is given the key of the city, an honorary position of ceremonial authority, but no real authority. But anyway, the key then speaks about authority, speaks about not just the authority, but the right to exclude and to include. And of course, that's what Jesus does is he includes those who come to him into the kingdom.

He excludes those who do not come to him. And so the key, the symbol of power and the symbol of authority is laid on his shoulder. I think that there are other references at this time in the culture that kings also carried on their shoulders other symbols of authority.

And we still have that today in the military, where obviously it's different in different arms of the service. Some carry it on the, what do you call this thing, on the collar, but in many or on the sleeve, but in many it's carried on the shoulder. When I was in the Air Force, I carried my rank on the shoulder and you would immediately see the man's position, the man's authority.

So Jesus's authority is visible. He has the keys. The government is on his shoulder.

The government is not on the earthly government's shoulder. The government is not on the shoulder, the authority is not with the Antichrist. The government is not with a political party.

The government is with him. He is the only one who has ultimate authority. Human kings have limited authority, but he has ultimate authority.

He is the ultimate government. So the government will be upon his shoulder and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. So not just technically, he has four titles in this passage, not five.

The comma that you see on the screen and in the King James is, it shouldn't be there after wonderful. And if in fact, if you just look at the other titles, they're all two words to the title, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, and therefore it is Wonderful Counselor. So he doesn't have a title called Wonderful and another title Counselor.

His title is Wonderful Counselor. Wonderful Counselor. Now the counselor here is not a counselor in the sense of a psychiatrist or a therapist, but it is a counselor in the sense that we have city counselors, people who are in positions of power and of authority.

And so it's the same sense as a city counselor or a counselor in a position of governance. But he is a Wonderful Counselor. If you listen to politicians, they all think they're wonderful.

But the reality is that no one agrees that they are. But Jesus is a Wonderful Counselor. He's wonderful because his counsel is a hundred percent wise.

His rule is just. He is the only counselor when he comes into position, into his office, that everyone will agree that yes, he is more than his advertising said. Every other counselor, and as we come up to elections again this next year, all sorts of promises and we know that none of those promises will be fulfilled.

Everyone will be disappointed. Even their supporters are disappointed. But Jesus will never disappoint.

He is a Wonderful Counselor. And when we submit to his rule, his rule is wonderful. It is wise.

It is just. It is righteous. It is perfect.

And so he is a Wonderful Counselor. He is a mighty or the mighty God. The mighty God.

He is not just a God. Remember that these people had many gods. And today we have many gods.

We say, no, well, we're not polytheistic. We don't have many. Yeah, we have many gods.

The dollar is our God. Your political party has become your God to many people. The country has become a God.

People are their own gods. But there's only one mighty God. Not only is he a mighty God, but he is the almighty God.

He has all power. And remember that when Jesus, before he ascended, he says, all power in heaven and earth has been given unto me. One of the things that often fascinate me is the powerlessness of the American President.

Now, I'm not talking about Biden or Trump or any of these names. I'm talking about the office. And we understand that the founding fathers, in order to bring checks and balances, built these things in so that they don't have supreme power.

And that's a good thing. I'm not denying that. But even for them to change the smallest thing becomes impossible.

Even if it's the right thing that needs to be done, they are pretty powerless. And we say, well, here's the most powerful man on earth. He doesn't look very powerful to me most of the time.

And as I say, this is not against any particular president. It's just the way that the thing is structured. And we say, well, you know, are you for an autocrat? No, obviously I'm not for a human autocrat.

But when it comes to God, because he is a wonderful counselor, I'm quite happy with his autocracy. Well, obviously we don't call it autocracy. We call it a theocracy.

Because he's all wise. His counsel is wonderful. So I'm quite happy to submit to whatever decisions he makes, even without my vote for or against it.

But he is a mighty God. There is no, and there never has been, and of course the earth has known some pretty powerful autocrats. Remember that in Daniel's time, there was Babylon, the golden kingdom.

And then after that came media Persia, and then Greece. And we all know, and probably learned at school, about Alexander the Great, and the tremendous power and tremendous charisma that he had, and how that he just swept across the world and just brought the whole world under his control. So that when he was just over 30 years old, they say he sat down and wept, because he said, well, where do I go now? I've got it all.

The whole world is under my control, under my power. And of course in Jesus' day, the Romans, they had supreme power over the world. But Jesus is the only mighty God.

The gods of this world are weak. The gods of the Greek pantheon are weak. The gods that we set up for ourselves are weak.

But he is the mighty God. He is able to not just set up his kingdom, but he's able to defend his kingdom against the attacks of the evil one. And so he is the mighty God.

He is the everlasting Father. Right, now here we get into some difficulty, because are we saying then that Jesus, because we're saying this is Jesus. Of course this is Jesus.

He is the child that was born. He is the Son of God. He is the Son that was born in Bethlehem.

So why does it call him everlasting Father? Is he and the Father the same thing? We understand from our understanding of the Trinity that they are not the same thing, that there's a Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Three persons, one God. So is Jesus the everlasting Father? No, he is the eternal Son, if you will.

So what does he mean here? Well, it literally means he is the Father of eternity. The English doesn't really do it justice, because from that we get an idea that he is always the Father. No, he is the Father of always.

He is the Father of eternity. Before eternity began, Jesus said, I am. And so he is the Father of eternity.

Human rulers have a limited time in office, and they have a limited lifespan. There is no ruler in this world that has lived beyond 80, 90, 100 years. The time comes when they die.

But he is the Father of eternity. Eternity lies in him. He is the one who gives life, who gives eternal life.

And so he is the Father of eternity, and he is the Prince of peace. I don't know about you, but I long for peace. I long for peace with my neighbors.

I long for peace in this country. I long for peace in the world, because there's arguments and fighting and protests and all sorts of stuff going on. But he is the Prince of peace.

And of course, without him, there can be no peace. And that's exactly the problem. Why do we have wars? Well, James says, because of our evil desires.

That's where wars come from, because people have the wrong desires. But he has come to bring peace. And remember that that's the announcement of the angels, peace on earth.

So we say, well, where's the peace? He's been here for 2,000 years. There is no peace. But the peace ought to be in our hearts.

It ought to be in our hearts. And while we've spoken about the darkness that we find around us, here really is the nub, here's the crux of the issue. These things must be true in our hearts first, and then they will become true in the world.

Now, I'm not suggesting that the world is going to just gravitate, and I obviously don't believe in what we call dominion theology, that the church is going to take over the world and usher in this peace. He will set up his kingdom. He will set up the millennium, or what we also call a thousand years of peace.

And obviously eternity beyond that will be peace. So we have a spiritual peace now. We will have a literal political peace when Jesus finally comes, or when he comes.

But the problem is that many Christians don't have the peace of God in their hearts right now. We are disturbed by what's going on around us. And we've spoken many times before about the fact that we need to limit the amount of news that we read and watch and listen to, because it disturbs our peace.

I'm not suggesting that we stick our heads in the sand, but at the same time we need to preserve the peace that we have because of the Prince of Peace. But what disturbs me more is Christians who have no peace. Christians who are arguing and fighting and bickering because clearly they don't have peace in themselves.

Well, where Jesus reigns, because you see, all of these titles go together of the same person. And if he is not your counselor, if he is not your God, if he is not your Father, then you cannot have his peace. These things must happen in our lives, the same way as it's going to happen in the world.

Can you imagine? Well, you don't have to imagine. What happened 2,000 years ago when Jesus came? Was he the Prince of Peace? Yes, he was. The angel says, peace on earth.

So where was the peace? There was no peace. Why was there no peace? Because he had not set up his kingdom yet. You see, you can only have peace once his government is set up, and once he makes the rules, and once he puts down all opposition.

Then you'll have peace. But the same is true in our hearts. If there is opposition in our hearts to his rule, we will not have peace.

And remember that even in the millennium, at the end of the thousand years, Satan will be loosed, and he'll go about deceiving the nations, and there'll be a rebellion against him, against the Lord. And he'll put down that rebellion and crush it. But folks, unfortunately, Christians are rebelling against the Lord in their own hearts and lives, against his requirements, against his rules, against his laws, against his government.

You're not the boss of me. So we make our own decisions, and we don't have peace. Well, we won't have peace until he is our God, in a true sense, unless until he is the one who calls the shots, until he is the counselor who makes the decisions in our hearts.

And so we can speak about the millennium, we can speak about the thousand years, we can speak about his government. But folks, it needs to begin here, amongst us as Christians, and it needs to begin in our own hearts. These titles of the Lord Jesus need to become more than just ideas, philosophical ideas.

They need to become realities in our heart. And more than ever, and my prayer for you this year, as we go into 2022, is that you will know the peace of God, which passes all understanding. And remember that before, when we began with this journey through COVID almost two years ago, a month short of two years ago, we began to speak about this idea of the need for us to have peace with God during this time.

And unfortunately, some Christians, peace has been greatly disturbed. Fighting for vaccines, against vaccines, for mosques, against mosques. Christians fighting Christians, churches divided.

Where's the peace? Clearly because Jesus is not reigning in those churches. Jesus is not reigning in the hearts of those believers. You see, you can't have his peace without his rule.

Those two things go together. And the problem is that the world wants the peace. Everybody is singing at this time, even unbelievers, peace on earth.

But they don't want the rule of the prince of peace. You see, he's not, and remember that when it uses the word prince here, it's not a prince in the same way that we think about it, that you have a king and you have a prince, which is below a king. A prince those days would be equivalent to a king.

So you can call him the king of peace. You can't have the peacemaker as a diplomat without him as having him as the king of peace. Those two things must go together.

And so he's the wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace. And of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end. Now, of course, you know by now that we're talking about the millennium.

We're talking about when Jesus comes very, very soon and he sets up his kingdom. But we must ask, does this then not also have a spiritual application? Of course it must have. And as I've said earlier on, these things need to be true in our hearts.

And so is his government increasing in your life? We want his government in the world. We want his government to increase in the world. But it needs to increase in our hearts.

Remember John said, I need to decrease that. He might increase. The increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end.

Can you see the connection of those two things again? We saw that in the previous verse. Here it's connected again. His government and his peace.

And folk, until we learn to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, we will not have peace. Speaking about personally, speaking about the church, speaking about the country, speaking about the world, we will not have his peace unless we have his government. And to the true believer, his government will grow more and more.

And as his government grows in our lives more and more, peace will grow more and more. And upon the throne of David, and this is where it gets literal, and we know that this is going to be true in the thousand years and the millennium, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice. We need justice.

We can fight for social reform. We can fight for the reform of laws. And it doesn't matter how just the laws are, they are always applied by men.

And men are by definition flawed and unjust. But God's justice is perfect. I don't know the answers to many questions.

Is this man guilty? And we've seen the nation divided over people like Rittenhouse and others. Some say he needs to hang, he's a murderer. Others say, no, he's a great freedom fighter.

What is he? Well, it depends on where you're at. Everyone's judgment is tainted by their own ideology, but his judgment is perfect. He knows exactly whether that man is guilty or not guilty.

We see cases happen all the time. I suppose we all remember OJ. What happened with OJ? Did he do it or didn't he do it? God knows.

And God's judgment is just. Folks, there is little justice in this world. And I'm not talking just about courts of law.

I'm talking about the way people treat one another. I'm talking about the disadvantaged. And you know the difficulty when we talk about the disadvantaged.

Are they disadvantaged because they're lazy or are they disadvantaged because of factors outside of their control? I've told you before, I don't know. I don't know those answers. I don't know how to deal with that

problem.

But God does, and his judgment is just. And I long for that kingdom in which righteousness and justice will dwell, where people will be treated rightly, fairly, where wrong will be dealt with, and where right will be rewarded. And so upon the throne of David of his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from that time forward.

What time? When he sets up his kingdom forever. So the millennium is not just a temporary thing. And of course, I've just told you that at the end of the millennium, there's going to be a rebellion.

He's going to deal with that. And then we see the new Jerusalem. So this is not a temporary thing.

This is not a four-year term. This is an eternal term. There will be peace forever.

It's never going to be disturbed again. There's never going to be injustice ever again. There's never going to be war again.

It's going to be eternal. But folks, here's the thing. Eternal life begins for us the day we get born again.

We're not waiting to get eternal life one day. We have it now. Paul says we have passed from death into life.

But if that is true concerning eternal life, that needs to be true concerning the life that we live in eternal life, the life of peace, the life of having his government. It needs to begin now. It's no good waiting for it when Jesus comes.

And then finally, he says, the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. There are many Christians who believe that they're going to set up the kingdom of God. They're totally deluded.

They have no clue what they're talking about. The church has been working at this for 2,000 years or 1,700 years since Constantine, and we have never seen peace. We've never seen the church take over the world and fix the world.

In fact, the church can't even fix itself. And I'm talking about the visible church. But the Lord of hosts, he will perform it.

He will set up his kingdom. He will do the most impossible. So folks, it's no good us fighting to try and set up some kind of earthly kingdom, because Jesus will set up his.

He doesn't need our help. In fact, he's exactly the opposite, because where we try and help, we just mess it up. We've tried for thousands of years to rule ourselves ever since Adam, and we've never done particularly well at that.

But when Jesus comes, he will set up the kingdom. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform it. But I just want to emphasize as we close that little word, because remember these little words that we forget and that are so important.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. He will do it. This is the reality.

This is the light that is shining. And remember again the context. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

This is the light. This is the light of the world. This is the hope that we have.

And folks, if your hope is in 2024, or if your hope is in 2028 or whatever, no, it's not going to get any better. It's going to get worse. Mark my words.

But the light that we have is Jesus coming. Let's have our eyes fixed on that hope. Let's have our hearts fixed into eternity, and let's begin to live as we get into this next year.

Let's begin to live as though we are already in that kingdom, because we are in that kingdom. It just needs to become literal, but it needs to be spiritual, and it needs to be true in our hearts and lives. Father, we pray as we come to the end of this year, and Lord, we face Christmastime in a few days' time.

Lord, we pray that you'd help us to remember the great gift that you've given to us in the form of your Son. And to us, a son is born, and to us, a child is given. And Lord, that he has not been given as a son or a child, a baby in Bethlehem's manger, but he's been given as the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

That he is the one upon whose shoulder and the authority of government lies. Lord, I pray that as we have spoken about these things this morning, as we go into this next year, Lord, there are so many uncertainties. Every day, there seems to be a new version of the virus.

There seems to be a new threat. Seems that the vaccines don't work anymore. Seems there's this problem and that problem.

There's threats of insurrection in this country, and threats of insurrection in other countries. Governments are being toppled and overthrown. And Lord, it's easy for our hearts to be gripped with fear, and we know that one of the signs of the end of time will be that men's hearts will fail them because of fear.

But Lord, I pray that we may not be those who are driven by fear, but Lord, that we may know the peace of God that passes like human understanding. Lord, that that peace may rule in our hearts, and that Jesus may be our King, and as he's our King, that he settles all the disputes. He deals with all the contradictions, and he brings peace.

And so Lord, I pray that as we go into this new year, that we may know your peace in our hearts individually, in our families, and in our church. Lord, that that peace may shine out to those around us, that they may recognize that we are different because we have peace, and we're not running to and fro like chickens without heads, as everyone else is, because we are settled under the rule of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. So Lord, I pray that these things may be real, and Lord, that they may somehow be translated from the pages of the book or from the lips of the preacher to realities and substance in our hearts and in our lives.

I ask this in Jesus' name. And so Lord, as we part, we pray that you'd go with us. We pray, Lord, for those who will be traveling to visit family.

We pray that you would be with them, keep them, and protect them. Lord, we pray that you'd protect us from the virus, and Lord, that you'd protect us from stupid people on the road, and that you'd bring us together again safely on your appointed time. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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