



The Sermon

Dr. Steven J. Lawson

Genesis 49:1-12

"The Future Unveiled"

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TRANSCRIPT

Well, here we are again. We have a great passage we're going to be looking at today, we have a lot of ground to cover with it, a lot of golden nuggets and truths that are contained in this passage, so this is, really, a red letter day for us here at Trinity Bible Church; and I know in a very real sense every Lord's Day is a red letter day. But I think this has some unusual power to it that we'll be looking at today. So, we are in Genesis chapter 49, and today I want to look at the first twelve verses, Lord willing, and as always, I want to begin by reading the passage: Genesis 49:1-12. The title of this message is "The Future Unveiled. The Future Unveiled." And beginning in verse 1, this is the word of the Lord.

"Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, 'Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come. Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; and listen to Israel your father. Reuben, you are my firstborn; my might and the beginning of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it - he went up to my couch. Simeon and Levi are brothers; their swords are implements of violence. Let my soul not enter into their council; let not my glory be united with their assembly; because in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they lamed oxen. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down to you. Judah is a lion's whelp;

from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, and as a lion, who dares rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. He ties his foal to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine; he washes his garments in wine, and his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are dull from wine,' - better translated, "darker than wine" - 'and his teeth white from milk,'" - better translated, "whiter than milk." This is the reading of God's Word, and it will be our focus during this hour as we study God's Word together. Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, our hearts are eager to dive into this passage. It is a feast, it is a banquet that You have prepared for us. It is more valuable than gold or silver, it is sweeter than the honeycomb. It is a lamp unto our feet and a light and to our path. It is milk that nourishes, it is meat that strengthens us. So all these things, Father, are what this passage is to us this day, to our hearts and to our lives. And I pray now that the Holy Spirit will be powerfully at work in our midst, taking this text, this passage, and bringing it all the way home to our hearts and to our lives. Grant us understanding, and give us the sense of the relevance for our own personal lives this day, in Jesus' name. Amen. [End]

In these verses we see Jacob revealing the future for his twelve sons and for future generations. This is the first prophecy to be found in the Bible that comes from human lips. God has spoken prophetically in the garden of Eden in chapter 3 and has already said that the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent. But this is the first time that a man opens his mouth and God speaks through that mouth to reveal the future. And so Jacob is enabled by God to pull back the veil to peer into the future and to see what awaits the twelve sons, but more than that, the future generations, the descendants that will come from these twelve sons.

And this is a display of divine sovereignty, because no man knows the future, only God knows the future; and the reason God knows the future is that God has foreordained the future. To use another biblical word, God has predestined the future. And so God now reveals to Jacob what God has

already planned for the future of his twelve sons and then their descendants and the descendants of their descendants for not just decades, but for centuries. What we see here is what God has pre-scripted for human history that will come from these sons.

And there's something for us to learn immediately before we even get into this text based upon what I just said, and that is that God has already foreordained your future as well. God has gone before you and God has marked out your path, and there are no accidents, there are no random events that will take place in your life. And God has already numbered the number of days that you have to live here upon the earth and He has already appointed the day of your death, and so God has gone into the future in your life as well. And it really is a mercy of God that He has not revealed all the details to us, because if we knew the day of our death, we probably would be somewhat paralyzed and panicked, especially if it was just right around the corner. And so God is a very good God to not disclose everything to us, or it would be very difficult for us to press on at times.

Now, I need to set the scene for us as we begin to look at these verses, and the scene is very simply this: the patriarch Jacob has come to the end of his life, he's on his deathbed, and at the end of this chapter he will die. So what we are seeing here is virtually the last words to come from his mouth. Last word should be lasting words. And he gathers his sons around him, and they draw near to him to hear the last words that their father will have to say. This is a very dramatic moment; and as we will look at this, we want to draw near as well and turn our ear towards these words and hear what Jacob the patriarch has to say to his sons.

So, beginning in verse 1, I want you to note first "the prophecy about Jacob's sons. One last time Jacob calls for his sons to gather around his deathbed. And beginning in verse 1, "Then Jacob summoned his sons." The word for "summoned" here is a Hebrew word that really means to lift up the voice. And so he rallies his strength and fills his lungs with enough breath as he's laying propped up on his deathbed to call with some sense of urgency his sons to gather around him. And this is what he said: "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come. I

want to reveal your future to you, and I want to reveal to you your descendants into the generations that will come." And so as he will now speak, it is as though God is pulling back the veil and allowing Jacob now to peer into the future and to relay to his sons what awaits them, that they would not otherwise see. Though it is not directly stated here, nevertheless it is true, there is a spirit of prophecy that now rests upon Jacob, and he is given the ability by God to foretell the future.

In verse 2 this is what he says: "Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; and listen to Israel your father." Israel is an alternate name for Jacob, and what he is saying is, "I want you to draw especially near to me." He's gathered them around him, but now he says, "I want you tighter around me, and I want you to pay very close attention to what I have to say." And this is wisdom, to listen to your father's final words. If your father is a God-fearing man, if your father is someone who knows the Lord, you need to pay careful attention to him, because he has your best interests at heart.

Proverbs 1:8 says, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction; indeed, they are graceful wreath to your head and ornaments around your neck." And so when a God-fearing father speaks wisdom to his sons, his sons need to listen very carefully. Well, that is exactly what Jacob is doing here. The sons are listening very carefully to what Jacob has to say. And before I move on I just simply want to say to you yet again, if you have a father who is still alive, and if he knows the Lord and if he is a God-fearing man, you need to honor him by listening to what he has to say to you.

This leads, second, to "the prophecy about Reuben." And so now Jacob goes from addressing all twelve of the sons to draw near, he will now begin to speak individually to each of the sons. We will only have time today to look at the first four sons. Next Lord's Day we will continue to look to see what he says to the rest of the sons.

But in verse 3, "Reuben, you are firstborn." He speaks very directly. Please note the word "you": "Reuben, you are firstborn." There are twelve sons, but he's looking into the eyes of Reuben now and he's speaking very

directly to him, and this will probably be the last thing that he will ever say to Reuben, "You are firstborn." And as was the practice of the day, the firstborn received twice the inheritance, the firstborn assumed the position of leadership over the other sons, and so it is assumed now that Reuben will step into the role of leadership of the other twelve sons. This is an amazing thing, because the patriarchs have gone from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob, and it looks like now the baton is going to be passed down to Reuben and he would be next. He's been groomed for leadership his whole life to be raised up for the moment when his father dies, and he will step into that leadership vacuum.

And he says to Reuben, "My might and the beginning of my strength," - which is another way of saying, "You are my pride and my joy. You give me strength. My life has been invested in you." And then he adds - "preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power." To repeat the word "preeminent" underscores what a preeminent place that Reuben has been assigned as the firstborn. The word "preeminent" actually means to have more than enough or to have excess, and the word "dignity" means elevation or exaltation or highest honor. "And Reuben, you have been elevated to the highest place of honor in this family, and preeminent in power. You have greater strength in position than your brothers." And so at this point Reuben's hopes have soared through the ceiling: "preeminent strength, preeminent in power, my glory." And Reuben can hardly wait for what his father will say next. I mean, "You are the leader of the pack, you are the leader of the next generation."

But he hears the total opposite. In verse 4, he now drops the hammer. In verse 4 he pulls the rug out from underneath Reuben. He says, "Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed." So he began with preeminence, he began with double preeminence, and now he says, "You have no preeminence." What a difficult thing to hear from your father the last time you will ever hear from him, and he says, "You are as uncontrolled as water."

The word "uncontrolled" here literally means boiling over like water. "You have taken the path of least resistance like water, and you have been

unstable in all your ways." And to be boiling over like water suggests the seething of lust that has come bubbling up in his life, unbridled sensual desires, undisciplined and unrestrained passions. He says, "You shall not have preeminence. You have forfeited your place at the head of the line."

We ask, "Why? What's happened?" And he says, "because you went up to your father's bed." And this is a reference to earlier in chapter 35, verse 22, when Reuben tried to usurp his father's power and place by sleeping with his concubine, by sleeping with his maid Bilhah. What a disgraceful thing that Reuben has done, and he's done it to his own father. And so he says, "Then you" - he's speaking directly to Reuben - "then you defiled it." The "it" refers to his father's bed with his own maid. "You desecrated. You polluted it."

And I want you to note now the shift from "you" to "he" at the end of verse 4; surely you see this in your Bible: "Then you defiled it - he went up to my couch." And here's why I bring this to your attention. He has begun by directly addressing Reuben as you: "You, son. You, son." But now he says "he" as if looking at the other eleven brothers. And this is embarrassing, this is convicting, that he's being called out by his father to his other brothers in front of his other brothers, "because you went up to my couch and you desecrated my couch with my own maid who was a part of my concubine."

This one act of sin cost Reuben and his descendants greatly. When they would later enter into the Promised Land they never rose to prominence, the tribe of Reuben. In fact, there would be no prophets, there would be no judges, there would be no kings that would arise from the tribe of Judah. They have been cut off from a place of strategic position in the nation Israel over this one act of sin.

And there are times when just one sin can bring devastating consequences to yourself as well as to countless others. And sometimes people think, "Well, my sin, it only affects me." No, your sin always affects other people who are around you.

For example, the one sin of Adam, when he ate of the forbidden fruit, sent the entire human race into death and destruction. One sin by one man, and the entire human race has suffered till the end of the age. Moses led the nation Israel for forty years through the wilderness, and he struck the rock at the end, he became frustrated with this stiff-necked people, and God said, "That's it! Go up into the mountain and die. You will not enter into the Promised Land over one sin." And I think of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts chapter 5. They're in church and they lie to the Holy Spirit, and God strikes them dead over that one sin.

Reminds us of just how holy God is, and it reminds us how offensive even just one sin is to a holy God. Now it doesn't always happen this way, but there are times when God purposely brings the hammer down over one sin, so that everyone would have the fear of God in them and it would be a restraint to hold them back. So, "Reuben, you're forgiven, but you're forgotten." And there are consequences to sin. Just because you are forgiven sin does not erase the consequences that would come from that sin. He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Scripture is teaching here.

This leads, third, to "the prophecy about Simeon and Levi." Now Simeon and Levi, after they hear now that the firstborn son has been disqualified from leadership in the family, they are the second and the third sons in the family. This is their moment. It's like the first string goes down and you've been sitting on the bench all season, this is your time now to be elevated into the starting lineup.

So Jacob addresses them: "Simeon and Levi are brothers." And these are the only two brothers that are addressed together, they are the second and third sons of Leah. And this is addressed to the whole group. There's not a "you" here, it is "their swords." "Simeon and Levi are brothers; their swords" – and swords are deadly weapons of warfare – "their swords are implements, meaning instruments of violence." And "violence" here means cruelty, wrongdoing, and the reference is back to Genesis 34, when they sought vengeance because their sister had been raped, Dinah. And so they overreacted and took upon themselves to commit a massacre, a violent

massacre, a genocide of the unsuspecting male population in Shechem, and they just went in with their sword and they just literally slew all the men In Shechem to make up for what had been done to their sister Dinah. And so they're held accountable for this.

Ad so we read in verse 6, Jacob continues to speak, "Let my soul," – Jacob's soul, the father – "let my soul not enter into their council." There's now a firewall that's put up between Jacob and these two sons, "and I will not be meeting with them, I will not be engaged in council with them, because they have acted with such excessive ruthlessness; my soul will not enter into council with them. In essence, I'm breaking fellowship. Let not my glory be united with their assembly." When they come together and when they conspire and when they talk through their plans, Jacob says, "I want nothing to do with you sons and the way that you have assembled together. And you have desecrated my name, and you have desecrated my reputation." That's why he says, "Let not my glory be united with their assembly."

And he's saying this to the other brothers, and here's why: "because in their anger." Let me just stop right there. This Hebrew word for "anger" is the word for nostrils, and it speaks of the heavy breathing of someone who is in a rage like this, someone so furious and angry that they are out of control, and there is this heavy breathing, and they go forth now, and without thinking things through, they act according to their flesh. Their anger has a death grip on them. And that's exactly what happened to Levi and Simeon. And so Jacob says, "because in their anger they slew" – they murdered – "men." They just wiped them out. And there's blood and bodies and carnage and body parts and just the dead laying now in quite large numbers.

And then he adds, "and in their self-will they lamed oxen." It wasn't enough that they killed the male population in Shechem, but they then went after the livestock and they went in and cut the tendons in the livestock so that the livestock cannot move, they cannot get over to the green pasture, they cannot go over to streams of water, they can only just stand still and die. It's almost like they've been crucified, and there's nothing they can do but



just stand there and rot until they die. And this is what all Simeon and Levi did; and Jacob has not forgotten.

And so, verse 7, he pronounces this on these two sons: "Cursed" - which means judged and condemned - "cursed be their anger, for it is fierce," - the word "fierce" here meaning overpowering - "and their wrath" - it's a different word for wrath here and it refers to an excessive outpouring of anger - "and their wrath, for it is cruel." - meaning it is severe and it is hard. And so as a result of that, Jacob pronounces this, really, on behalf of God, "I will disperse them in Jacob," - "Jacob" referring to the nation Israel - "and scatter them in Israel." And this looks into the future, it peers into future generations over 400 years later, when Joshua will lead the people of God across Jordan and into the Promised Land, and they will divide up the Promised Land. There will be no land for Simeon and Levi. In fact, Simeon will become the smallest tribe in Israel, it'll literally just shrink up; and they will be omitted from the blessings of Moses right before he dies in Deuteronomy 33, and there will be no portion of land given to either tribe. And again, we see how seriously God takes sin.

We live in a day of what I want to call with many preachers preaching hyper grace, that obedience is optional, because God has forgiven all your sins, so you can just live however you want to live. It takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian, J. C. Ryle said. And it is passages like this that need to be incorporated into our understanding of the economy of God and how God works in the lives of people. No, there are consequences to sin, even when you're forgiven. And in this case, it would mean for these two tribes that there will be no land. They will just have to go - some of them live over here, and some of them merge in with this tribe, and others live over here. But God showed mercy to Levi's descendants, and they became the priesthood, the Levitical priesthood; and they had no inheritance but God, and God was their inheritance.

So this brings us now to verse 8 and "the prophecy about Judah." And as Jacob now comes to address Judah, Judah probably is swallowing rather hard. I would have been. I mean, Judah may have slipped back to the corner of the room, Judah may have gone to run some errands, because Judah didn't

have a clean slate either. Judah impregnated Tamar the wife of his deceased son. I mean, this sounds like a reality show. I mean, this is awful. Awful, awful, OK. No, this is awful. And so he impregnates the wife of his dead son thinking he was visiting a Canaanite prostitute. I mean, it gets worse the more you know about this thing. In fact, we don't want to know anymore about this.

So now Judah is next in line. He's fourth born. He can already begin to anticipate, "This is going south, this is not going to go well," because he has a track record as well that his father is all too familiar with his track record. So notice what he says in verse 8: "Judah, your brothers shall praise you." "Say that again?" "Your brothers shall praise you. Your brothers will show honor and preference to you, and you will now rise to the leadership of the twelve."

The name Judah means praise; and there's a play on words that's going on here: Judah, praise. "Your brothers shall - in essence - Judah, you; praise you." And please note, "your" and "you." This is so personal that Jacob, as he lays on his deathbed, is looking directly into the eyes of Judah and speaks to him as if there's no one else in the room.

And then he adds, "Your hand. Judah, your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies," and what this means as he prophetically gives this utterance, that "into the future your descendants will assume the role of preeminence and power over their enemies as well as over the other tribes," and there will be a near fulfillment and a far fulfillment to this. So it's like if I'm standing here and I am in the Rocky Mountains and I'm looking that way and there are some mountain peaks, all I can see is the mountain peaks, but I cannot see the valleys that are between the mountain peaks as I stand here. And so, as he looks into the future, Jacob, there is a near fulfillment and there is a far fulfillment. And Jacob has no idea how far those peaks are separated one from the other. In fact, the far fulfillment has two peaks. The near fulfillment will be in the day of the judges and in the day of David, who will come from the tribe of Judah, and Judah will rise to the place of prominence.

But there is coming a greater son of Judah. There is coming the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and there are two peaks associated with Him. There is the first coming, when He comes as a lamb. There will be the second coming, when He will come as a lion. And so all of that has to be taken into consideration to understand this prophecy, as Jacob looks into the future to see what is coming through the loins of Judah. It looks ultimately to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and it will become very obvious as we will look at these next verses.

So at the end of verse 8, "Your father's sons" - that would refer to the nation Israel, that would refer to Jews, "your father's sons." "Jacob's sons shall bow down to you." Now there's a near fulfillment for this and there's a far fulfillment for this, and the near fulfillment is that the tribe of Judah will have the largest population when Moses takes the census in Numbers 1 and Numbers 26. And the tribe of Judah, when Israel marched through the wilderness for those forty years, the lead tribe was the tribe of Judah. They were the tip of the spear. They were out front leading the procession as it was going in circles for forty years. And so the other tribes and the other descendants acknowledged the preeminence of Judah, just like Jacob had relayed to them.

But there's more going on here. There is also a far fulfillment - and I want you to think through this with me. This far fulfillment is realized in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was in the tribe of Judah, or of the tribe of Judah, and this foreshadows at His first coming there will be Jews who would believe in Him and put their faith in Him and bow down to His lordship and submit and surrender their life to the Lord Jesus Christ. I mean, there were some fishermen: Peter and Andrew and James and John, who surrendered their life to the Lord Jesus Christ, and they were of the nation Israel. There was a tax collector named Levi, or Matthew, who did the same. And there was Nicodemus, who was born again by the end of the book. Joseph of Arimathea. There were others. And so this is fulfilled at the first coming of Christ.

But there would be more. Peter would stand up on the day of Pentecost and he would preach to thousands of Jews, and there would be three thousand

Jews who had come to celebrate Pentecost who repented of their sins and were sovereignly brought into the kingdom of God. But there's even more as you look all the way to that next mountain peak just right before the next mountain peak arises for the second coming of Christ. The Bible says in Romans 11:26 that "all Israel will be saved." And I take that as a hyperbolic expression, that there will be vast numbers of Jews who will come to faith in Jesus Christ at the end of this age. The scales will fall from their eyes and they will recognize the nail-pierced hands of their Messiah and they will mourn for Him as a father would mourn for his only son, and there will be an extraordinary evangelistic harvest that has yet to come of Jews from around the world immediately before the second coming of Jesus Christ. That's pretty good. And all of that is found right here at the end of verse 8, "Your father's sons" – again, that's the descendants of Jacob – "shall bow down to you," – in saving faith, in repentance; and they will humble themselves and confess their sin and surrender their life to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

But there's even more. Philippians 2:9-11 says that at the very precipice of eternity, that "every knee will bow, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." And that will include every Jew who has ever lived in the history since Genesis chapter 12, all the way to the end of the age. Every Jew will bow the knee to Christ, some in saving faith in this lifetime, others in their damnation because they have apostasized and have not believed in Jesus Christ. But every Jewish knee will bow to Christ and acknowledge His sovereign, supreme lordship. This will be fulfilled. And also every Gentile knee will bow. There'll be no atheists in hell. Everyone will acknowledge the deity of Jesus Christ.

But there's more here. Look at verse 9: "Judah is a lion's whelp." That means a young lion. A young lion is the hunter, is the prowler, is the stalker who goes out and hunts for the older lions at night, and is full of courage and strength, and is at the head of the food chain. And he says, "Judah" – referring to a descendant of Judah. We know who this is. It is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey," – and that's what the lion goes to capture – "my son, you have gone up."

Now what does this mean? This is what it means. In this imagery, this young lion tracks down, seizes and kills its prey, and then drags that prey up into its den to have the meal by himself, and he plops down the dead carcass in front of him and he strips it down to the bone. That's the imagery here of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, that He will come and track down and stalk His enemies, and He will strip them down to the bone, and then cast them into hell.

The second half of verse 9 gives us more insight, says, "He" - referring to Judah, really a descendant of Judah who will come in due time - "he crouched, he lies down as a lion," - and that means up in the cave, for he has brought his prey. He rests on his haunches and begins to pick the bones of his prey clean - "and he lies down as a lion," - and while he is having his meal, this question is asked - "and as a lion, who dares, who dares rouse him up?" You don't want to mess with this lion. You don't want to go into that cave and try to pull back part of that carcass, or you will be the carcass, and he will devour you. That is exactly what this is saying. And so no one dares to invade His space. No one dares to trifle with the Lion of the tribe of Judah. And we need to see how masculine the Lord Jesus Christ is. We need to see how aggressive the Lord Jesus Christ is. He is no longer the meek messiah. He is no longer the humble carpenter from Galilee. He is now a devouring lion.

So look at verse 10. This continues to build out, verse 10, "The scepter," - which is a symbol of kingship. It's what a king has in his right hand when he sits upon his throne - "the scepter shall not depart from Judah," - which is to say there will be perpetual eternal preeminence given to a descendant of Judah, who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. "The scepter shall not depart from Judah." He'll never be impeached; He'll never be put off His throne; He will never be put out of office. "He has established his throne in the heavens, His sovereignty rules over all," Psalm 103:19.

And then he reinforces it with this parallelism, "nor the ruler's staff" - that's the same as the scepter - "from between his feet," - and the imagery is back to the lion who has his prey that has been killed, and it's

right there between his feet, and you'll never walk in and pull away and reverse what he has done. And now he concludes with this in verse 10 - "until" - looking into the future, this preeminence of the tribe of Judah. David came from the tribe of Judah. Christ at His first coming came from the tribe of Judah. Now this looks all the way to the second coming - "until Shiloh comes."

Who is Shiloh? Shiloh is a proper name for the **Mashiach**, the Messiah. And this name stresses His absolute sovereignty and His unrivaled right the rule and to dominate every life and every square inch of creation in the universe. When he says, "until Shiloh comes," it looks prophetically to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And this word "Shiloh" is one of the most difficult words to translate out of the original Hebrew. The ESV translation translates it "until tribute comes to Him." The NIV translates it "until He comes to whom it belongs." It could be translated "Him to whom it belongs." But to put it in simplest terms, what it means is everything is the possession of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when He's coming back, He's coming back to rightfully claim His authority and His possession over everything that He created in Genesis chapter 1. He's coming back for it all. That's what the name Shiloh means. It means until the tribute comes to Him, and everything that is rightfully His comes to him. And it will come to Him.

And at the end of verse 10, "and to him" - referring to Shiloh; now watch this at the end of verse 10, this is unbelievable - "shall be the obedience of the peoples." "Peoples" here can be translated, should be translated "nations," that all the nations at the time of the second coming of Shiloh will be subjected to the supreme lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the entire planet will be under the paws of the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

In Revelation 5:9 it's explained as "every tribe, tongue, people, and nation." This is breathtaking that there will not be a person who will not be brought low in utter submission and surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself

when He returns. And He will do with the peoples as He pleases, and they will all be brought in subjection to obey Him.

Verse 11, it gets more interesting. Verse 11, "He ties his foal to the vine." A foal is a male donkey, and he ties it to the vine. The picture here is of a vineyard that produces grapes, and the grapes produce wine. "He ties his foal to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine." So he's walking up and down in the vineyard inspecting the branches and inspecting the fruit.

And it says in the middle of verse 11, "he washes his garments in wine," – that the wine will be so prevalent and so overflowing with vats upon vats upon vats, that it'll be more prevalent than water, and that the Messiah will wash His own garments in wine – "and his robes" – referring to his garments – "in the blood of the grapes." The blood of the grapes is a reference to the wine that comes from the grapes that are deep red and a very rich red color. And the grape juice before it ferments is actually produced by putting it in a vat, and a person with his feet tramples the grapes under his feet until all the grape juice comes just flowing out; and then it will ferment.

And it is a foreview of the second coming of Christ, when Jesus returns. And He will gather together all the unbelievers, and it will be as though they are put into the vat, and He will trample them under feet until their blood comes flowing out, and then their dead carcass with their soul cast down into the lake of fire and brimstone. This is a graphic picture. And one thing I love about the Bible, it tells it like it is, it doesn't sugarcoat the message.

And so, verse 12, "His eyes are dull from wine." Better translated – the word actually means dark, I looked it up. It means darker than wine. There's blood in His eyes, and His eyes are ruby red with wrath and vengeance at the time of His second coming. No longer the humble messiah/carpenter; now the dominant Lion of the tribe of Judah.

"His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth white from milk." No, whiter than milk, indicating that everything that comes from His mouth, every utterance and every word that He speaks will be unvarnished, it will be true, it will be inerrant, it will be an infallible, it will be authoritative. It is pure white, undiluted, that proceeds from His mouth. So this obviously points ahead to the time of the return of Christ.

But before that, Jesus inaugurates His public ministry in John chapter 2 with His first public miracle. And Jesus with the disciples go to a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and there they run out of wine. His mother comes to Him and says, "You must help them." He says, "Woman, it's not yet My hour." He then says to the servants, "Take six clay pots, fill it with water," and just with the authority of His own thoughts and mind, He transforms that water into pure wine in such abundance that everyone had all that they would desire to drink. And when the head waiter tasted it, he said in John 2:10, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

And that was a picture of the messianic kingdom that would come, that it would be a kingdom into which we will one day enter that will be like a wedding feast. In fact, it's called the wedding feast of the Lamb. And there, there will be an abundance of everything that would satisfy our heart's desire. There'll be drink, there'll be food, there'll be happiness, there'll be merriment. And so this first miracle is really just a foreshadowing of what is to come, as Jesus provides not even diluted wine, the very best wine that the head waiter had ever even tasted.

And as it foreshadows into the future, I close with this from the second coming of Christ in Revelation 19. I want you to hear the words, I want you to hear the imagery, Revelation 19:11, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire," – this text says his eyes are red like wine – "and on His head are many diadems," – there are so many diadems that are stacked up upon His head, it's diadem on top of diadem upon diadem, many diadems to the heights of



heaven. It pictures unlimited sovereignty, supreme authority beyond our wildest imagination - "and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself." Only He knows how sovereign He truly is, we can't even begin to comprehend.

"He is clothed" - listen to this - "with a robe dipped in blood." It's not His blood, it is the blood of His enemies, anticipating the battle of Armageddon and anticipating the final destruction of the human race. "And His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron," a rod of iron was used to smash clay pots into a thousand pieces. Now listen to this, "and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty." He treads down His enemies and bringing the full force of the wrath of God upon them. "And on His robe and on His thigh" - that place of strength - "He has a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This is the Lion of the tribe of Judah that Jacob makes known to his sons.

You want to be on the right side of history with this line, because it will determine which side of eternity you're on. There are those who believe in Jesus Christ, and they have received grace and mercy and forgiveness, and those who are unbelievers, and when they die in their unbelief they will be trampled under the heels of the Lion of the tribe of Judah and stripped to the bone, and they will be cast down into the lake of fire and brimstone. And the Bible makes no apology for this; neither will this preacher.

So, do you know Jesus Christ? Have you come to Him? He's your only hope. He is your only salvation. There is salvation in no other name, for there's no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. And to reject Jesus Christ is to trample underfoot the precious blood of Christ and to insult the Spirit of grace. I would not want that to be brought up on the last day when you stand before the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Today is a day of grace. Today is a day of mercy. And you may have the grace of the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world; but if you reject the grace of the Lamb, you will find the violence of the Lion. Which will it be for you this day? Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, cause these verses that we have looked at today to sink deeply into our hearts and souls. Let us never forget what Jacob said to Judah. And until Shiloh comes, may there be our obedience to Him this day. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.