

Verse by Verse: Q & A Louis T. Talbot

And thank you Mr. Announcer. Good morning, my radio friends and friends of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. This is Louis T. Talbot greeting you and giving you welcome to another study by way of radio. And I welcome you in the wonderful name of our wonderful Lord.

I do trust that all of you folks had a blessed day in worship and in service yesterday. It was my privilege yesterday morning and evening to be in the First Brethren Church of Long Beach preaching for the pastor, Dr. Charles Mayes, who was a present in the Holy Land. God was certainly in those services yesterday and mainly because that congregation is made up of praying people. And you know it's a very very easy thing to preach in a church like that.

Now I wish to make a special announcement, my friends of the, of the annual Christian Endeavor Convention. That is to be held in the North Long Beach Brethren Church, beginning Friday night, May 1st. That is next Friday night. And it will continue through Saturday and until Sunday evening. It's going to be my privilege to give the keynote address on Friday night. And there will be, eh, concep-, consecutive sessions all through Saturday and Sunday. Dr. George Peek is the pastor of the host church. And I just make this premature announcement so that members of your family may plan to be there. The church seats about 1200 people, but accommodations are going to be made to take care of another 600. And the theme of this conference is Christ our pilot.

And my dear friends, we need a pilot especially young men and young women in, in this confused world. I was listening to a news analyst a few days ago and he referred to this world as

a cockeyed world. Now I do not know what that "cockeyed" means, but I guess it was just his way of, just expressing, eh, the confusion that is in the minds of young men and young women today. And not only o-, young folks but also old people as well. And you know that young men and young women need a pilot, especially is will you see the human wreckage around us everywhere. And so I am going to address, eh, young people on Sunday, on Friday night in that keynote address on the Christ our pilot in desire.

And now to the lesson. You know, I'm going to devote today and the rest of the week, just one more week, to the answering questions. I fully intended to take up Colossians this morning, but I was going through last night and this morning a pile of, eh, questions on my desk. And, and I could have answered them all by mail, but they are questions, my dear friends, that have been in the minds of many many people. And I know that they would interest everybody, and especially the questions that, eh, that have to do with text that seem to contradict other text. And if any of you folks, my dear friends, have sent in questions and, and I do not get to them this week, I will be answering them by mail in so far as possible. There is a good pastor in Escondido, the pastor of the First Baptist Church down there, who has written me a long letter in regard to prophetic events. And I felt a little ashamed of myself this morning when I was reading this letter and note that have been on my desk for about three weeks and I hadn't been able to get to any of the questions that he has put, eh, to me. But I will get to them possibly this week.

It does encourage my heart, my friends, to note a number of people who turn to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles for spiritual enrichment and enlightenment on problems pertaining to Christian life and Christian faith. Now just before we go into the lesson, I want to express my,

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my deep gratitude for the assurance of your prayers in behalf of my wonderful wife Mrs. Talbot. I appreciate your interest more than any word of mine can express. Many folks have asked if they could get information by telephone. Well, you can call my office, which is here, the Bible Institute Medicine 51641. But I am glad to report, my dear friends, that she came through surgery very very well. And she's very very radiant because of a deep consciousness of the presence of the Lord. I shall ever be thankful and grateful to you for your personal interest.

And let me tell you that your letters mean more to me than any word of mine can express. It's just wonderful thing to be tied together in an eternal bond. And so just continue to send your letters and address them to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California, 17 California. My friend, if there is a personal thing, eh, that is that you want to present, that is an-, and way of questions that you can just put my name on the envelope. But, but all the gift for La Mirada and especially that memorial building, in memory of the many many members of this Bible class in days gone by that are now in the heaven, just send that to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Los Angeles 17, California.

Now the first question that I have to answer this morning is this. Somebody writes, "How would you reconcile the conflicting statements made by Christ and John the Baptist, concerning the coming of Elijah to prepare the way of the Lord?" For instance, the questioner says, "In, in John Chapter 1, verse 21, we read this, 'and they asked him,' that is John the Baptist, 'they asked him, what then? Art thou Elias or Elijah? And he said, I am not.' Then they ask for emphasis, 'Art thou that prophet?' And he said no." Now this question was asked of John the Baptist whether he was the fulfillment of the prophecy in Malachi that Elijah would come and prepare the way of the

Lord. And John emphatically in this verse declares that he was not. But when we come to Matthew Chapter 17 verse 10, you read this "and his disciples," that is Christ' disciples asked Him, eh, "saying, why then say the scribes that, that Elias must come first? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall, eh, first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is already come and they knew him not, but had done unto him whatsoever they listed... Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

Now the questioner says here are two conflicting statements: John the Baptist said that he was not the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning, eh, that Elias should come and Christ said that he was. Now how are these two statements to be reconciled? Let me, my dear friends, answering this question and I want to make it as brief as I possibly can. But let me say that you must put together all the passages that referred to this prophecy that you'll find in Malachi Chapter 3 verses one and two, in regard to Elias, that is Elijah coming. And the verse, my dear friends, that ties in and harmonizes these two statements concerning, eh, John the Baptist and Elijah is found in Matthew Chapter 11 verse 14. Now you make a note of that, will you? Matthew Chapter 11 verse 14, where Christ says this, "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which should come." I want you to note those words "and if ye will receive it."

Now when the Lord Jesus Christ said if you will receive it, then this is Elijah. He was referring to the kingdom that was offered to Israel at the beginning of Christ' ministry. You will remember that Christ was born the King of the Jews, and His earthly ministry and the earthly ministry of the twelve apostles was distinctly to the nation of Israel. The Lord Jesus Christ told his disciples, when he sent them out, not to go to the Gentiles and not even to go to the Samaritans. But they

would confine their ministry to the lost sheep of the House of Israel and they would preach repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Now the Kingdom of Heaven was the rule of the heavens over this earth in the person of God's anointed King Christ Himself. And my friends, if the nation of Israel had accepted Christ their King, then John the Baptist would have gone on to fulfill those prophecies in Malachi concerning, eh, the forerunner of Christ. But they did not reject, accept the Kingdom. They did not accept the King. They rejected the King and the Kingdom. You remember how that they said we will not have this man to reign over us. And consequently they rejected the Kingdom in the person of the King. And consequently the prophecies concerning Elijah slide forward two thousand years or more until the church is translated, and then this prophecy concerning Elijah will be fulfilled by Elijah himself. And he will come. Either he will come personally or somebody in the spirit and power of Elijah. I personally think that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses that are going to have, eh, their ministry during the Great Tribulation.

But my friends, eh, getting back to the point, to the verse that harmonizes these two statements. Jesus said if they will receive it, that is the Kingdom, this is Elijah, eh, that was to come. In other words, John the Baptist would fulfill that prophecy concerning the coming Elijah if the nation of Israel had rejected, accepted the King and the Kingdom. But they did not. And therefore that prophecy slides into the future. Do you see, my dear friends, there is no contradiction there? You have to take all the verses that refer to that prophecy and Malachi 3 concerning the coming of Elijah, and you will see that they blend in a very very harmonious way.

Now here is another question that have interes-, interested me a great deal. Somebody writes this, "I have been interested in your studies in the plan of the ages, and especially the changes that will take place in the animal kingdom and the deserts, eh, that are going to blossom like the rose, when the Lord Jesus Christ come back to rule and to reign. But there is one statement in Isaiah Chapter 65 that, eh, that has interested me. It says there, 'And the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt or destroy in my holy mountain, said the Lord.' And my question is why is the serpent omitted in these physical changes? Why is it that the animal kingdom is changed and the desert is going to be changed and everything else is going to be changed, an-, and the, the atmospheric conditions are going to be purified, but here we find right in the midst of all of that description something that is like a fly in the ointment and the dust shall be the serpent's meat?"

Well, I think, my dear friends, that is a very very good question. And it's a very very interesting question. You know that when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to rule and to reign during the thousand year reign of Christ, this earth, my dear friends, is going to be marvelously changed. And as that verse says, the animal kingdom is going to go through a, a transformation. The Wolf and the lion shall feed together. You know that that's gonna be something, isn't it? You know that where there are sheep, the shepherd is out all night, because especially there are any wolves around. And you cannot change the instinct of a wolf to kill the sheep. And then even the lion is going to eat like straw, like the ox. And then in the middle of this, you'll find that the serpent shall, eh, eat a-, eh, shall eat dust, and the dust shall be the serpent's meat. In other words, my dear friends, the serpent is not going to be changed at all, even during the glories of the millennial reign of Christ. The serpent shall still crawl on its belly as it does today.

You know that before the fall, my dear friends, the serpent must have moved in another way altogether. It may have been erected, may have had wings, but the curse put it on its belly as we read in the 3rd chapter of Genesis, and here in the millennium is going to still crawl the way that it does and dust shall be the serpent's meat. And this person wants to know just why the serpent, eh, is not changed. I'll tell you why my dear friend. And that is in spite of though that millennial kingdom and all lives glory, God is going to let the serpent just move the way it is, is, just as a warning to the nations. Just to warn them that there was a time when the earth was just like the millennial reign before, eh, sin came into the world. There was the God of Him (inaudible) everything was beautiful. And then the serpent came in and destroyed it all. And you know that the serpent is going to move in the o-, in the millennial reign just as it is today, as a warning to the nations concerning what happen before. And my dear friends, the nations evidently are not going to, eh, profit from that warning because of the way that the millennial kingdom is going to reign. But we read that the devil will be loosed and the nations, the apostate nations are going to surround the, eh, the beloved city evidently, my dear friends, to do with the Lord Jesus Christ, what they did within 19 years ago. Now that is rather going into a great detail in regard to answering a question that possibly could have answered in just a few sentences.

Now here is another question. A person says, "If God exercises general government and control over the entire universe, how do you explain the apparent dominion and the dominance of sin? Does not this seem that God is indifferent to the conditions that prevail in this world of ours?" Well, my dear friend, my only comment is this. You know it is only over this earth that sin is apparently dominant. And you know that this earth is a very very small portion of God's great

universe. It seems that this earth is the only part of this universe that has clamored for home rule. Have you ever thought of it, my dear friends, that the earth is the only part of God's universe as far as we know that has clamored for a home rule. It's just the same old saying "we will not have this man to reign over us," and the earth today as home rule. And what does the four thousand years of man's government teach us? While just teaches two things; first that man cannot govern himself. Do you know, my dear friends, that 4000 years of government in the hands of man just proves that man cannot govern himself and government is breaking down in the hands of man all over this world.

But my friends, God is not indifferent. My friend, in regard to what is going on I want to tell you this that God is wonderfully patient. I tell you that the one thing that amazes me and makes me marvel in these days as I study world conditions is the marvelous patience of God. But you know that God, one of these days, is going to take a hand in things and very soon He is going to give this world a thorough housecleaning. And He is going to send His son into this world to rule and to reign. This earth is just a little speck in God's universe. But my dear friends, God is not only the God of great things; He is also g-, the God of the little things. He is not only the God of the great mountains, but He is also the God of the little flower, eh, that grows in the desert. My friends that God He is cognizant of what is going on in the world and He is not indifferent to things. You know that h-, He allows the things to go on because He is a patient God. And He is not willing that any should perish. That you can put it down as a dead sure thing, my dear friends, that one of these days He is going to take, eh, a hand in things.

All right. Now let me go on to next question. "If anyone is eternally lost, has not Satan then gain the victory over Christ? And is he not stronger than Christ?" Now that is a question, my dear friend, that comes from a thoughtful person. If anyone is eternally lost, has not Satan gain the victory over Christ or is he not stronger than, than Christ? No, my dear friends. When a man is lost, if a soul is lost eternally, Satan has gain no victory at all. You must remember that it is not Satan who determines that one shall persist in sin; it is the individual himself that determines that. And if he persists in sins, Satan has gain no victory.

And on the other hand, the Lord Jesus Christ is not conquered. You know that you, and I need to remember that the Lord Jesus Christ will still be glorified and God will be glorified even in the punishment of the wicked. You know that God's holiness is manifested and God Himself is glorified as truly in the punishment of the sinner as in the salvation of the believer. You know that a righteous government here on the earth is vindicated as truly when the offender is locked up in a penitentiary or even executed on the gallows as when an offender is brought to repentance. You know that many people seem to have the idea that hell is going to be a place where the devil is going to sit on a throne and reign over. But my dear friends the Word of God teaches no such thing. And in the hell, Satan is not gonna rule at all. Satan himself is gonna be one of the prisoners and his confinement will be the testimony that God has conquered.

All right. Now let me go to another one. Somebody says, "I've been brought up to believe in the doctrine of soul sleep. And I have read in the Bible so many passages of Scripture that seem to teach this doctrine that the soul sleeps at death. For instance in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 4, we read that when Christ descends that He is going to bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. Are

we not to believe these passages that distinctly state that the dead in Christ are asleep?" Well, my answer of that, my dear friends, is just this that soul sleep, that expression soul sleep is foreign to the Word of God. You never find such an expression within the covers of the Word of God. As those two words "soul sleep," my dear friends, that there is no such teaching in the Bible as soul sleep. There is no such teaching that the souls of the believers, eh, sleep.

The word sleep, my dear friends, always refers to the body and never to the soul. For instance, you take those verses that are connected with Christ death at Calvary that just before he died. You'll remember that He cried, "It is finished." And He commended His spirit into the hands of the Father. And then we read this Matthew Chapter 27 verss 50, you read this, "Jesus, when he had cried with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks are rent; and the graves were open." Now I want you to know what happened, my dear friend, "And the graves were open; and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the grave after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

But my dear friend, I want you to know what it was that slept. "Many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose." What was it that slept, my dear friend, it was not the souls of these folks. It was the body. "Many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose." Why you can't get soul sleep? My dear friend, in the statements like, eh, Philippians Chapter 1 verse 32, where the apostle Paul says, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better." My dear friends, the apostle Paul had along, he had what we call home sickness that the Lord had called him up to the third heaven and he saw the wonders of the glory.

You'll remember when he said that there were no words that he could, eh, that he could use that would explain, describe the glories of the Eternal City. And I think that ever since the apostle Paul was caught up to the third heaven that he had a home sickness in his soul. And he said to the Philippians "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire and depart," and what? And to be in the grave and go to sleep? My dear friend, he does not say that. Why it would be better to stay upon this earth than depart and go into sleep? Who in the world wants to sleep for 18 centuries? And some folks they, eh, who takes the doctrine soul sleep say that the apostle Paul has been asleep for 18 centuries. But the apostle Paul knew absolutely nothing about the doctrine of soul sleep because he says "I, I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better."

You know that the apostle Paul gives us the old Christian doctrine of death. In 2 Corinthians Chapter 5 verse 8, he just gives us that whole doctrine in just a few words. He says "absent from the body, present with the Lord." The whole verse in 2 Corinthians Chapter 5 verse 8 is this. "We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." I want to say my dear friends that the doctrine of soul sleep is one of that brood of darkness that the devil has put into this world that is made the world of confusion such as we see today. But the word of God teaches that when a child of God closes his eyes to earthly seems he immediately opens them into, into heaven, you see. I could read many passages of scripture, my dear friends, that just show the fallacy of soul sleep, by just putting before you the plain facts in regard to what happens when a believer dies.

Why when the Lord Jesus Christ said to the thief on the cross, "Today thou shall be in me, with me in paradise?" That was "today," my dear friend, you can't get soul sleep or purgatory or any such thing. And to that day "today," that very day, he was with Christ in paradise. And when your loved one die, my dear friend, when that mother, father die, the moment she close her eyes or he close his eyes to earthly things and immediately open them, eh, in, eh, to heavenly things and in the presence of the Lord. I say hallelujah to that. And I'm sure you do too.

Now here is another question. And reads on this wise, "Before I became a Christian, I lived a very wicked life. And though I am now a Christian, my past still haunts me, even though I have confessed my sin to God many many times. I guess that is because so many of my loved ones were hurt and they were and they have suffered even to this day because of my sin. How can I blurt out these things from my mind? Why is that the specter of a, of a wasted life still haunts me? Am I to go through life with an accusing conscience? I-, is it God's will that this should be my, a state of mine?" Well, my dear friend, I want to say that I guess that every one of us carry to some extent regrets. And I guess that though we'll carry regrets to, eh, mar-, to our grave, especially when our past sins have injured the lives of people that we love.

And my friends, I really am glad to some extent that you feel the way that you do. That is as deeply as you do about the things that you have done. And I think my dear friends that, eh, that some folks could think more deeply and, and dwell more deeply upon the things that they have done in order that they might magnify the wonderful grace of God in a greater way. But I want to say to this person that you are making one great mistake. And that is in your letter you say that you are confessing your sins again and again to God. I guess you mean by that you're confessing

the same sins. And my dear friends, if you mean that you're confessing the same things to God, let me say that you're doing something that God does not want you to do at all. For instance you take 1 John Chapter 1 verse 9, and you read there this, this statement, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Now I want you to get the significance of that statement. John says "if we confess our sins." Now when John says that, he means that when we confess our sins before God in detail, that is marking them out and putting before God just how it happened, and telling the Lord just all about it. Then He wants you to believe Him when He says that "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And my dear friends get this into your mind, not only the person who wrote this question but also all of you. That when you fail and you go into the presence of God and confess your sin, He wants you to believe what He says He'll do, that is He'll forgive you your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. And when you have confess it to Him, puts it away and my friends, He never never never want you to mention that again.

And when you come and confess the same sin again and again to God, do you know that you hurt God? Why it would seem as though you don't believe what God says that He is going to do? For instance, if you and a little child, and that child did something wrong. And the child came to you and said "Mummy, Daddy, I'm so sorry that I did this and I want you to forgive me and I'll try never to do this again." And you just take the little child in your arms and kiss away the tears and say, "Now Mary or Johnny, I have forgiven all this and so on." And the little fella goes away. And then in an hour's time, he comes back and he says, "Mother, I've still got this thing in

my mind and I do want you to forgive me." And you would say at sure that child that, eh, you have forgiven the child. And suppose that the child kept that up, my dear friend, every day and coming to you and confessing the same thing, my dear friend, why that would wound you to the deepest depths of your heart?