

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG245 – I Stand at the Door and Knock

Hello, and thank you so much for joining me in this podcast. I have been thinking and praying a lot over this Scripture out of Revelation the third chapter, in verse 20 where He says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.” One of the things that has been so alive to me, and a point of just reaching in to the Lord to study what is being said here, is this idea of the Lord coming in and dining. It almost seems strange, in one sense, unless you really have an understanding and a grasp of this idea in Hebraic terminology and concepts about what transpired many times during a meal. It was at a meal time that covenants and agreements would be made; and I think this is what is alluded to here in Revelation where the Lord is saying, “Hey, I am standing at the door and knocking.” Of course, He is talking here in Revelation 3 to the church at Laodicea, which everyone, when we read about all the churches there in Revelation, we think that if we do not want to be one of them, it would be Laodicea. Yet, on the other hand, probably one of the greatest opportunities that is talked about to the churches is this idea that Christ is at the door, He is knocking. Whatever their violations were, their problems were – everything He is saying about them from a negative standpoint – here is Christ standing at the door and He is knocking, wanting to be let in; in a sense, asking to be let in.

I believe this really is pointing to the age that we are living in. It seems like we have gone so far away from some of the things of God. We seem to have lost, at least in America, our Judeo-Christian values and our way of relating to God as a nation, “In God we trust.” And yet, at the same time, I just had this feeling reading this that God is saying to us, “Hey, I am standing at the door knocking. I am wanting to be let back into your lives, into your society, into your world.” It does not matter what the violations have been, He wants to meet with us again. So, I just think that this idea of really dining with us is a key here, and I want to go to Corinthians, because we see this in the idea of Communion, don’t we?

In First Corinthians 11, verses 23-26, Paul says,

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

Here we see probably one of the greatest covenants in Christian faith, that of the Lord’s death and resurrection giving us Communion, the body and the blood of Christ to be partaken of in remembrance until He comes; and it is unique and interesting that this was made at what we call the Last Supper. So, again, it was made around a meal. I am using this illustration to emphasize the fact that in the Jewish culture and mindset, the meal was a place of making new covenants and making agreements between people; and this is what Christ did at the Last Supper. This is where He introduced the new covenant in His blood that He talked about. And so, it is something that we should recognize and remember, when He again comes in the book of Revelation, in chapter 3, to say, “I stand at the door and knock, and

anybody who opens the door to Me, I will come in to him and I will dine with him.” To me, Revelation here is pointing to the fact that not only does God want to come back into our lives, into our society, in a way that we have not allowed Him, He wants to bring with Him a new agreement with us. He wants to make a new covenant. He was talking to the church of Laodicea, which had seemed to stray very far away from the will of God and the things of God, and He is saying, “Look, let’s make a new agreement.”

This is the way that God is. He brings forth this idea of a new covenant, of a new agreement, because He is not looking to bring judgment and to have us fail. God, in His wisdom, already knows that we are going to fail. He knew that surrounding the children of Israel with the covenant that He made with them at Sinai. Uniquely enough, we recognize that this, again, was a covenant that was made surrounding a meal. Most people do not really catch this out of the Scriptures, but it is very plain that at Sinai, God made this covenant of what we call the Law with Israel during a meal covenant.

Let’s go to Exodus the twenty-fourth chapter, and I will start reading with verse 3. It says, “Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do!’” Now I am jumping down to verse 7 and picking it up there. It says, “Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, ‘All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!’”

We know that was not possible for them, they were not obedient. But let’s go on and read, because I want to draw in this idea that when He is going to make a major covenant like this, it is surrounding a meal that took place.

Exodus 24, verses 8-11,

So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.” Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. Yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank.

Moses took the elders, the nobles of Israel, with him up the mountain at the Lord’s command; and they had a meal with God where they beheld Him and saw God. The covenant that we talk about in the Hebrew Scriptures was a tremendous covenant, and it was made not with some aloof concept where the people did not know what was being said and did not agree to that covenant. I believe they did that with all of their hearts. And I believe that the elders went up, and from this point on, think about it – these elders, walking through the time of the wilderness, they had seen God. So, this covenant was not some arm’s distance kind of concept that was unrelated to them. As they walked through the days of the wilderness, as they walked with Moses, they had beheld God; they saw God, and they ate and they drank there in His Presence with Him. So, we recognize that when God brings this tremendous covenant, He does it in a very Hebraic concept surrounding a meal. And when Christ brings about a new covenant in His blood, He likewise does it at what we call the Last Supper, which was a Passover meal. He makes the covenant there at the time of that meal.

When Christ is standing at the door knocking, He is not just planning to come in to us and abide with us; He is saying, “I am going to dine with you.” I believe He is pointing to the fact that there will be a new covenant that will be made. What is that new covenant like? and why is there a new covenant? Well,

I think we go to Jeremiah 31, verses 31-32. It says, “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them.” We see that this is being referred to in the context of the covenant at Sinai that was made with the children of Israel. God is saying, “I am going to make a new covenant, because the covenant was broken.”

It is very important that you recognize that this covenant in Jeremiah 31:31 is being referred to as a new covenant. Many times we can confuse that, or not know exactly how to relate to that in what Christ was saying about this being “a new covenant in My blood.” Are we talking about the same covenant? Is this a different covenant that is yet to come with the house of Israel, with the house of Judah? Well, I do not want to go into the details of that, because it will take us a little off of the point of the message. It is enough to say that the covenant was made at Sinai, and God is making it very clear that the covenant was broken. Now, people use this occasion and this Scripture to talk about the fact that Israel broke the covenant, they broke the Law, and God rejected them because they violated the covenant. But we do not really see that in the writings of Paul. We know that God was bringing forth Israel, and said that Israel would be saved, and talked about the future of Israel. We see this in Romans the eighth chapter, at verse 3: “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin....”

We have to get this very clearly in our minds: God brings a promise, God makes a covenant; He makes an agreement with us, as it was at Sinai, and everyone agreed to it. Christ brought a covenant to, you could say, to Christianity, if you want to put it in that terminology; I believe it was broader than that. But He brings a covenant, and I think it is questionable whether or not we have been able to walk in that covenant. But what God does is to not look to bring judgment and rejection, just like He did not reject Israel because of the covenant at Sinai. He fixes it. And that is what Paul is talking about here, for the Law could not work because it was weak through the flesh. There was nothing wrong with the covenant, the agreement that God made; there was nothing wrong with everything He lined out in His Word that was to be done, that they were to walk in – how they were to live, how they were to act, how they were to worship. All of that was made very clear through what Moses wrote down in the instructions from God at Sinai. The weakness of the Law was not the Law, it was not the teaching; it was the flesh, it was the flesh of man. And we can easily point the finger, if we want to, at Israel, saying that they did not keep the covenant. But I would have to look at a few thousand years of church history in Christianity, with our behavior and our actions, and ask the question, “Have we been faithful to keep the covenant, to love one another, to walk in all that He was instructing us to do?” He said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” Has Christianity kept the commandments? Have we walked in the instructions that He left for us? You must consider that if you want to try to make a dividing line that clearly between Judaism, with the covenants and the promises to them, and Christianity.

I believe that He was bringing forth one new man; and as Paul said, we as Christians, believers in Christ as the Messiah, are grafted in to all of these covenants. They are speaking to Israel, and Jeremiah 31 is very clear about the fact that it is being spoken to the house of Israel, to the house of Judah. But I feel that I am grafted into this covenant, because of the words of Paul and because of the cross of Christ; that is the position that is given. But we do not eliminate Israel from it by saying, “Well, they failed, and therefore they are eliminated,” and then we go into the whole theory about anti-Semitism and we get into the rejection of the Jewish people, which is just absolutely incorrect. The whole theory of supersessionism is wrong. So here in Jeremiah we have something spoken again to Israel, that there

is going to be a promise of a new covenant, something more; and I believe God has for us in this age something more.

I believe that is what is being pointed to in the book of Revelation, in chapter 3. Christ is saying, "Look, I am standing at the door and knocking; and you, Laodicea...." See, He is not talking to Israel here in Revelation chapter 3, He is talking to a church. He is talking to the Christians, saying, "You guys have really failed Me in this. But I am not rejecting you, just as I am not rejecting Israel. I am standing at the door knocking. I am waiting for you to open the door. If you open the door, I will come in to you and I will sup with you, I will dine with you." I believe He is pointing to the fact that there is a new impartation to us. You say, "There can be no other covenant with Christ other than the cross and His blood." Well, I think that there is an impartation level that can come that is beyond that – "Things that eye has not seen and ear has not heard, neither has it entered into our heart, all that God has for those who love Him." Now, I believe also that we see this alluded to very much in Jeremiah and this new covenant that is promised to the house of Israel and Judah. So, let's read it again.

Jeremiah 31:31-34,

"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

There are elements in this covenant that are very striking to me, personally, and very much something that I want to see in my own life. I want His Word written on my heart. I want Him to be my God on a level that I have not attained to yet. I also want to come to the place where we do not have to teach our neighbor, saying, "Know the Lord"; and I think Christianity is all about that. I think the history of Christianity is a history of preaching. It is a history of church. In that atmosphere, you teach each man your neighbor and each man your brother, saying, "Know the Lord." And I think that we come out of that day in this promise, because there is a point at which we will all know Him; from the least to the greatest, we will all know Him. And I believe there is something there that can be for us in this day as Christians, as well as for the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

I believe Christianity has something to reach for in this covenant, to say, "We are all going to know the Lord, know God." Christ was very clear when He came: "No one knows the Father except the Son." But He came to open the door for us to know the Father. I think that is what is expressed in Revelation 3, that if we will open the door to Him and He will come in and sup with us, that there is an impartation of knowing Him, of knowing the Father, on a level that we have not; where we no longer need to be taught by someone else, by something else, by the history of religion or doctrine; but we literally come to know the Lord, know the Father, as Christ knew the Father when He was here.

I believe there is more for us. I believe there is a meal that is waiting, a time of dining with Christ where He will bring an impartation to us that will be a new knowledge, a new understanding of Him, and a new way of walking with Him and the Father; and we will be one with Them as they are one. We believe for this with all of our hearts. Amen.