

Rod Of Iron

John O. Reid (1930-2016)

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Hebert Armstrong used to always stress the importance of God's word, and he said that if the scriptures repeated more than once, we better pay particular attention, as in Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25:

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Proverbs 16:25 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

If you look at the environment of our country and what is taking place, we can see that man is not doing a thing for it, or for us.

There are four sets of scriptures that are even more in number and in importance, and they all have to do with governing with a rod of iron. The chief direction of these scriptures is toward the nations and the people on this earth, it is for us who live at this time of our nation letting down. Nationally, we are coming apart.

What is Jesus going to have to change when He begins to rule? It is much more than I ever thought. I went to Google and I asked the question, "How many religions are there in the world today?" Best guess is 4,200. The leading statement in the article reads as follows:

Religion is a collection of cultural systems, beliefs and world views that establishes symbols relating humanity to spirituality and, often, to moral values. While religion is hard to define, one standard model of religion, used in religious studies courses, was proposed by Clifford Geertz, who simply called it a "cultural system." . . . Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the universe. They tend to derive morality, ethics, religious laws, or a preferred lifestyle from their ideas about the cosmos and human nature. . . .

The word religion is sometimes used interchangeably with "faith" or "belief

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system", but religion differs from private belief in that it has a public aspect. Most religions have organized behaviors, including clerical hierarchies, a definition of what constitutes adherence or membership, congregations of laity, regular meetings or services for the purposes of veneration of a deity or for prayer, holy places . . . or religious texts.

My wife and I were back in New York, and there was a big cathedral. They were carving by hand the doors that were in the cathedral, and this was going to do so much more for the services—that type of thing.

The practice of a religion may also include sermons, commemoration of the activities of a god or gods, sacrifices, festivals, feasts, trance, initiations, funerals, marriages, meditation, music, art, dance, public service or other aspects of human culture. Religious beliefs have also been used to explain parapsychological phenomena such as out-of-body experiences, near-death experiences and reincarnation, along with many other paranormal and supernatural experiences.

All of this is what is in the mind of the people that Jesus Christ is going to have to work with.

Some academics studying the subject have divided religions into three broad categories: world religions, a term which refers to transcultural, international faiths; indigenous religions, which refers to smaller, culture-specific or nation-specific religious groups; and new religious movements, which refers to recently developed faiths. [They even have anti-God religions.]

One modern academic theory of religion, social constructionism, says that religion is a modern concept that suggests all spiritual practice and worship follows a model similar to the Abrahamic religions as an orientation system that helps to interpret reality and define human beings, and thus religion, as a concept, has been applied inappropriately to non-Western cultures that are not based upon such systems, or in which these systems are a substantially simpler construct.

What he is saying is the religion that we worship applies to those who have small

groups that are in foreign countries and things that their belief systems operate with. I will give a small list of different religions out there. There is more than one type of Judaism—Orthodox Judaism, Hasidic Jews, Modern Orthodox Jews. There are Indian religions. We do not think of having tribal religions. We have non-religious groups that are considered religion; they are totally against God.

This, brethren, plus dirty, corrupt politics, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life in every nation and culture in the world is what Jesus Christ is going to have to overcome to bring peace and harmony to this world prior to His presenting it to His Father.

I Corinthians 15:24-28 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For “He has put all things under His feet.” But when He says “All things are put under Him”, it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Now how is He going to do this? Please turn over to Psalm 2:1-12.

Psalm 2:1-12 Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.” [They do not want anyone to tell them how to live or what to do. They have their own way of thinking. They have Seventh Day Baptists and Sunday Baptists, and they do not talk to each other.] He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure; “Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.” “I will declare the decree; the Lord has said to Me, You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.” Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

Note verse 9. He will crush and subdue all His foes. He will rule as the Shepherd to properly lead and protect His flock. The entire earth is His flock. Jesus Christ will lead us and protect us and much of the world is not going to like it.

He is known as Prince of Peace. He is also known as the Sovereign, with all power and authority. This is Jesus Christ. With this power, all leaders who wish to retain control will be crushed as a potter's vessel; therefore, they are counseled to submit. What is the lesson for all of us? All rebellion will be quelled, thus, we must work to bring ourselves into alignment with God. That applies to us.

Revelation 2:27-29 He shall rule them with a rod of iron; As the potters vessels shall be broken to pieces as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

He will rule them with a rod of iron. He has listed the problems with each church.

Revelation 2:4 "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."

Revelation 2:14 "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality"

Revelation 2:20 "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols."

Revelation 3:1 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars; I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead." [Neither hot nor cold]

Revelation 3:15 " I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot."

The two mentioned in a positive way are Smyrna and Philadelphia, as being close to being right. Even here we have corrections to make on ourselves. Though this aligning applies to the world, it also applies to the church to make sure we are where we should be.

Why is it so important that we who are called at this time are brought into alignment with Jesus Christ?

Revelation 20:4 . . . they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

When will this take place? At the end of His coming when the world is a mess, torn to shreds. We will be there to rebuild it and to help the people. It will be exciting. What will a large part of our work be?

Isaiah 30:18-21 Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers. Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

No two ways about it, this is exactly what He is going to be saying. There is one way to walk, that is the way of God, this whole world is going to walk there. Wherever you turn your right hand or your left hand, that will be there. This is what we are going to be doing, part of it, and this is what we better be saying.

What will the large part of our work be? Please turn to Genesis 6:5. God realizes that people are not going to mature or grow after fifteen hundred years, roughly. They will continue on in their terrible ways, with the exception of Noah. This is where the transition comes.

Genesis 6:5-7 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thought of his heart was only evil

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continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

The reason He was so grieved was that the wonderful future He has planned for mankind would never come to pass unless things were done differently. Thus, the transition to the third use of the rod of iron.

Revelation 12:5 And she bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. [Jesus Christ was being born] And her Child was caught up to God and to His throne.

This of course was the birth of Jesus Christ, the One who would wield the rod of iron concerning all the beliefs, perversions, religions that were against the truth that would save mankind.

The final one of the verses concerning the rod of iron is found in Revelation 19:15. It tells us of the final act of saving all of mankind.

Revelation 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Barnes' Notes had quite a bit on this. That "out of His mouth goes sharp sword"—the word seems to be an emblem of His words, or doctrines, as penetrating the hearts of people. Here it is the emblem of a work of destruction worked on His foes.

"He should smite the nations"—The nations that were opposed to Him, to wit, those especially were represented by the beast and false prophet.

"He shall rule them with a rod of iron"—the allusion is to the Messiah as reigning triumphant over the nations. To rule with a scepter is not to rule with a harsh and tyrannical rule, but with power that is firm and invincible. It denotes a government of strength, or one that cannot be successfully opposed; one in which the subjects are effectually subdued. When we think of a rod of iron we think of people being hit, crushed and battered, but it brings out that there will be a steady confident rule that is there all

the time.

"He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God"—it means here that His enemies would be certainly crushed before Him as grapes are crushed under the feet of him that treads in the wine vat.

This is what Christ does at the end of this time and there is a new world order.

Zephaniah 3:9 "For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one accord."

Jeremiah 31:33-34 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord; I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they all shall know Me, from the least of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

This is the harsh dealing with the rod of iron. Jesus is very merciful.

As I prepared this message I began to wonder was there any time in my life, where I had to submit to rod of iron control?

In 1951, I was 21 years old. WWII was over, but we still had the Korean war. The draft with a total of eight years of reserve was still in effect. I did not want my eight years in reserve. The army was offering a three year hitch with no reserve for volunteers. I enlisted in what was called the Golden Gate Freedom Volunteers, in Oakland, California. Basic training was not too difficult, but then I volunteered for Airborne after basic training. In those days, no one was jumping out of airplanes; it was not popular except in WWII.

I had never been up in an airplane, and for my first five flights, I never landed in one. I jumped out. Today we have paragliding plus all types of parachute jumping, but back then that was not the case. Out of every class of 400 roughly 200 could not exit the door of the 35-foot tower, even though they were with all types of harnesses to protect them. About half dropped out in WWII days. Those who dropped out became soldiers in a glider, a place you would not want to be normally.

The training was hard in all we had to do. As I recall, if one got three gigs against him, he was washed out. I received two, one for allowing my head to hang down after 60 pushups, and I believe the second one was for not having the side of my belt buckle shined—the side that pressed against my trousers, the part that no one could see. If I got one more gig, I was out. That is how they did things. They were really tough in those days.

Graduation came, and it was very emotional. The sky was blue, with beautiful white clouds. The weather was perfect. The Airborne band marched in front of our formation with the American and company flag flying, and the sergeant that had been so tough on me stopped in front of me to pin on me my Airborne wings. He looked at me and said, “Reid, I did not think you would make it, but I am very proud of you.” Needless to say, emotions filled up in me and I was really moved by that graduation.

Why did I mention this? Because for us that are governing ourselves with the rod of iron of Jesus Christ, there is an awesome graduation awaiting for us. No one gets resurrected by themselves. The most awesome graduation for you is coming.

Hebrews 11:39-40 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

I do not know how often you read that or consider it, but what he is saying here is that nobody gets resurrected by themselves. It also means that we are resurrected with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the apostles, David. None of these have been qualified, but will be changed into spirit beings before you. We will all be there together. I am not sure what it would be like, but its got to be better than the Airborne graduation.

Revelation 19:7-8 “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Brethren, I know we cannot begin to comprehend what that graduation is going to be like, the Airborne was pretty moving—pretty special—because I worked so hard to get there. This graduation is going to be bigger because we have to work hard as well.

I cannot begin to comprehend the banquet that is awaiting those who rule themselves

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individually with a rod of iron. Do not let ourselves be sucked into this world because of what it does to people.

We will be with God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the twenty four elders, and all of our fellow saints, not to mention how many rejoicing angels, who have been working to protect and keep us.

What is our part in this? We have to work to rule ourselves with a rod of iron. Do not let down.