

02-08-25b Revelation

God calls us. These are the letters to the churches. Hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Job was consistent. He kept on being faithful. He kept on trusting God.

He would not curse God and die like his wife suggested. All he did was endure. He recognized that it is faith and patience that leads to a promise.

Remember what he says? I know that my Redeemer lives and I will see Him from my flesh on the last day. And he clung to that. He has questions.

He has dialogue. He gets depressed. He gets discouraged.

There is a difference between being discouraged and having your faith fail. You will have tribulation. You will have thlipsis ten days.

And that proving out of those ten days is like the proving out of Daniel and his three friends. When they went without, they were captives in a strange land. But they would not compromise.

They trusted that God would vindicate them. God would sustain them. And they would not have to compromise.

They would not have to eat the king's food that was not kosher. It was not allowed by the law of Moses. And they were faced with a choice.

You eat this pork. You eat this unclean food that we are feeding everyone else. Or you are in big trouble.

And they said, look, let us be faithful to our God. And I promise you, it will turn out fine. And that period of testing was ten days.

And it vindicated their faith. And it demonstrated the power of God. And that is what testing in our lives does.

The reward for faithfulness in testing is the crown of life. We saw that in James. James chapter 2 and verse 5. Listen, my beloved brethren.

Has God not chosen the poor of this world? Remember the poverty of Smyrna? God has chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. That is not just a turn of phrase that sounds good. God has chosen those of us who suffer loss in this life to be heirs of the kingdom.

This is a concrete, literal inheritance in the age to come. Heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him. The kingdom is promised to those who love him.

Is your salvation predicated on your love for God? It is not. It is your faith in Christ that guarantees your salvation. What hinges on love for God? Inheritance in the kingdom.

God has promised the kingdom to those who love him. The poor in this world... And it doesn't matter what your relative degree of possessions is. You count yourself poor.

What you do have by way of possessions you look at as a stewardship. These are not my things. I don't have anything that belongs to me.

Anything I have, be it a big bank account or small, be it a big house or small, a great car or a lousy one, great notoriety and opportunity or little notoriety and little opportunity, whatever I have is just a stewardship. I am a custodian of something that does not belong to me. That's what it means to be poor.

You don't attach yourself. You don't claim things as your right and as your possession. You say anything I have is just custodial care.

I am poor. And when we live in that life, those who are poor in this world, are rich in faith, and are heirs of the kingdom which has been promised to those who love him. Well, we're going to pause here and take our break.

It took us the whole lesson just to do our scripture reading. But, it's critically important. People just read the letters to the seven churches and gloss right over the most critical point that's being made, and that is, what you do today determines where you will be tomorrow.

It's not a matter of, well, just kind of do the best you can, but everybody will be happy over there. This life is like a transistor. The tiny little ups and downs of this life have huge consequences in the next.

Everything about our existence in the millennial kingdom and the kingdom of the Father is determined by the choices and the priorities, the goals and the values that we pursue in this life. You just can't emphasize that too much. We're not just here to get little tasks done in the day.

It is how we do them and why we do them that is sorting out the geography of God's kingdom. It's sorting out the population list for Jerusalem. You're deciding which telephone book you're going to be in.

Are you going to be in the Timbuktu directory, or are you going to be in the Jerusalem directory? Are you going to reflect God's glory like Moses' face, or are you going to be Korah, Dathom, and Abiram, showing the power of God as the earth splits open to swallow you up? The little choices you make about what people say and what people do and the circumstances you face today are determining position between those two extremes. Well, something worth thinking about, isn't it? Let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we will actually get back to Revelation

2. Anybody that's following along with us on tape and wonders why they heard the same song two times in a row, it's because I asked for it.

And I really enjoy that. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation. Wonderful arrangement of that great hymn.

I really enjoyed that. Let's return now to our study in Revelation 2. We have fairly well covered our second letter, the letter to the church at Smyrna in verses 8 through 11. He who has an ear in verse 11, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death. Now, as I mentioned last time, actually time before last, if you don't count this morning, or if you do count this morning, the word there for hurt is unusual. It isn't the word for an injury.

It is the word for a wrong, for a violation. I think probably *adikethe*, *dikaio* is the word for righteousness, put the A in front of it and it makes it negative. If you make *dikeo* a verb, it means to do right or to do the right thing.

And *adikeo* means to do the wrong thing. If you put it in the passive, it means to be wronged. And that's what we have here is the passive of *adikeo*.

And the idea being that to have the right to something, to have the potential for something in terms of inheritance, and then to lose it, there are people who are going to feel the pain of violation. They are going to suffer the loss. It's such an irony.

Paul says we have suffered the loss of all things for the sake of Christ in this life, and yet you can imagine that the despised, rejected, imprisoned, beaten apostle is not going to be anywhere near the least in the kingdom that is to come. He suffered the loss of things here, but it is a hundredfold and more better in the resurrection. And yet there are people who line their nest here in this earth and who take advantage and seize and lay hold of things in this life who are going to suffer loss.

You remember the stand up, stand up for Jesus, the hymn, ye soldiers of the cross, lift high his royal banner, it must not suffer loss. And the idea of suffering loss, when do you want to take your losses? Do you want to take your losses now for the short duration of this life, or do you want to take your losses in eternity? It's a simple matter of calculation if you think about it. He says they will not be hurt by the second death.

Well, it's important for us to understand the second death, and at the risk of repeating myself slightly here, we want to take a look at the idea of the second death, because that phrase only occurs here in Revelation. And there are three times in addition to this first one in Revelation 2, that's Revelation 20 verse 6, Revelation 20 verse 14, and Revelation 21 verse 8. What does it mean to suffer loss, or to be wronged, to be violated by the second death? Notice it does not say

experience the second death, or die the second death. How easy it would have been to use the verb thanatao here, to die the second death.

Will not die. But that's not it. It is because the second death has no power to take away your resurrection life, and your resurrection body.

What it can do is wrong you, and violate you from your personal perspective, by taking away what you were expecting. Do you think the Pharisees were expecting big things in heaven? Do you think there are a lot of believers today who are out there working, all elbows flying, and ministering, and evangelizing, and doing a lot of things, impacting people out of motivations other than faith, and not waiting on the Spirit, not concentrating on getting the beam out of their own eye, before they get the mote out of another. And we can all do that.

It's not restricted to other people at whom we can point our finger. We have a tendency to operate in our own strength. That's how we've lived our entire life, up to the point of our salvation, and it's the natural reflex.

It feels good. It feels right for us to work. We think, well, I'll work, and I'll sort of earn my way.

I'll earn my way into God's favor. And we can't do that. The servant does not earn his way in.

We saw that parable in Luke. The servants who've been in the field, and then they come in and dress themselves, and serve the master his supper. At the end, they say, we are unworthy servants.

We have done no more than it was our obligation to do. Can't take credit for service as a bond slave. Well, let's take a quick look once again at these passages.

It is so important. This is the tone. These letters are in this order for a reason.

And we are encountering the tree of life in the paradise of God first, and we're encountering the crown of life, and the second death here at the beginning for a reason. This colors and conditions everything we see in the rest of the five letters. So, Revelation chapter 20, verse 6. What do we know about the second death? We're in the section here that talks about those who have been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands.

They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. Now, those are tribulational saints. They indeed are Old Testament saints.

They are heirs of the Old Testament covenants, the Old Testament promises. Their reward is to live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.

This, talking about those who were raised at the end of the tribulation period, at the end of all of human history that precedes the millennium, that's the first resurrection. The first resurrection basically subsumes, it is a general term, that subsumes all believers of every age up to that point having been raised. The resurrection of church age believers at the rapture, that's the first resurrection.

Seven years later, the resurrection of Old Testament saints at the inception of the millennial kingdom, that is the first resurrection. Believers' resurrection is the first resurrection before the millennium. Now, there is an interesting question and I will not claim to have fully puzzled it all out from Scripture, but if there are those who are children and who grow to maturity and who come to faith in Christ in the millennium and then they should die, we know there will be death in the millennium.

One that dies at the age of 100 will be said to have died in his youth. There will be capital punishment and various other things in the millennial kingdom. Well, what if one of those is a believer? When does he get raised? On the assumption that God will be consistent and follow the pattern he follows elsewhere, at the end of each of the ages, at the end of the Old Testament age, i.e. the end of the tribulation, the end of the 70th week of Daniel, there is a resurrection of saints.

At the end of the Church age, there is a resurrection of saints that have died. And I would suggest and I theorize that at the end of the millennium, should there be those who are living a mortal existence, who come to faith in Christ and subsequently die, they would be raised at the end of that age. And you would have this taking place at the judgment of the sheep and the goats.

The next question is, well, is the sheep and goat judgment the same as the great white throne judgment? I will tell you, I don't know. There are similarities that suggest that those may be two different terms for the same judgment. That is the only judgment, or those are the only judgments, depending on how you look at it, at which those who are rejected are said to be sent directly into fire.

It doesn't say they have their part in the fire. It doesn't say they are near to the fire. It doesn't say they are hurt by the fire.

It says they go into the fire. Those who are rejected at the great white throne judgment are cast along to the same place where Satan and his angels are cast. They are cast into the lake of fire.

There is no getting around it. The people themselves are bodily, if you will, cast into the lake of fire. The same thing is said of the goats at the sheep and goat judgment.

They depart into the fire that is prepared for the devil and his angels. That is specifically what Jesus said. So, whether those are two separate judgments, one for millennial people, who are believers and unbelievers, and then the great white throne is the general resurrection of all of the

unbelievers, I currently lean toward thinking that that is probably the very same judgment.

But I don't know. Maybe if I study further and uncover passages that relate to that, it will become more clear. Thanks be to God, I don't have to sweat one or the other or that judgment because we will have already been judged.

We have already received our rewards. That's why, however, regardless of how you see that, that is why verse 6 here in Revelation 20 says after this first resurrection, where believers, whether it's the judgment seat of Christ for church age believers or the equivalent judgment for believers of the Old Testament age, they have something parallel to, analogous to, the judgment seat of Christ where their lives are evaluated and their place in the kingdom is assigned, their level of blessing and reward or their blessing of discipline or their assignment of retribution and loss of blessing is made, that is the first resurrection. The rest of the dead, verse 5, did not live again until the thousand years were finished.

This, talking about verse 4, who are raised and live and reign, that is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has a meros, who has an inheritance, in the first resurrection. It doesn't mean blessed is he who got raised in the first resurrection, although you pretty much have to be raised in order to have your assignment.

But the reference here is to the meros, blessed, because there are going to be people raised in the first resurrection who do not have a meros, who do not have a blessing and reward package as a part of that resurrection. They are the weepers. They are the wailers.

They are the, wasn't there a group called the wailers? They are the gnashers of teeth. And this is, I don't think that you are going to literally walk along in the millennial kingdom and find people down on the ground pounding their fists, weeping and wailing. What does this represent? Exceedingly great disappointment.

An exceedingly great sense of sorrow and loss and chagrin at what was missed. They are hurt by their loss. They feel wronged in many cases.

Some of them will no doubt have difficulty comprehending why they are not among the foremost in the kingdom. Because they spent their entire life here on earth expecting that they would be. And they are not going to come to a magic realization at the inception of the millennium.

Oh, I see why I'm chopping cotton here in Timbuktu instead of ruling with Christ in Jerusalem. Oh, I see. It's all clear to me now.

Because if it was clear to them, they wouldn't be weeping and they wouldn't be wailing and they wouldn't be gnashing their teeth. To say that everyone is going to come to perfect knowledge as soon as they're resurrected is to say that we'll never learn anything again in the eternal future. And if we don't learn, then what on earth or what in heaven's name will we be doing for all of

eternity? Of course we're going to learn.

Why do you think that there are healing leaves coming out from the tree of life? People are going to learn. They're going to come to an understanding. Oh, 849 years into the millennium, now I'm beginning to see why I'm not in Jerusalem and why I'm out here in the far svelte of Africa.

Now I see why I'm living down here in Thailand instead of in Palestine. We will continue to learn. Have the angels stopped learning? They have not.

Are they perfected and in glory and living in dimensions that we have no access to? Of course they are. And they learn. They long to look into things that happen down here.

They learn from the picture of authority that women have on their heads in the church and so on. Well, we can't expect no less for ourselves. Do not think you're going to have a blinding infusion of all knowledge when you get resurrected.

You know how much you're going to know when you get resurrected? Just as much as you leave this life with. That's what you're going to start the next with. We will begin to learn the moment we open our resurrected eyes and we see Christ face to face.

That'll be something new. We'll know what He looks like. We will see Him as He is.

And we'll see the reality of these promises. Now, Revelation 20, verse 6. Blessed and holy, blessed and sanctified, makarios and hagios, is He who has His inheritance, His meros, the division of the spoils, at the first resurrection. Over such... Over whom? Over the blessed one.

Over the holy one. Over the one that has an inheritance that's already been assigned. The second death has no power over that person.

Instead, they shall be priests of God and of Christ. They shall be priests. What proportion of the people in Israel were priests? Was it one twelfth? Trick question.

It was actually less than that. You have the tribe of Levi, that's one twelfth. But then within the tribe of Levi, you have the priests and the Levites.

It was one clan within Levi, was it not? The sons of Aaron were the priests. So, maybe a twelfth of a twelfth? A 144th perhaps? Over such the second death has no power. What does Jesus promise the church at Smyrna? Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.

To the one that overcomes, I make you this promise, you will not be wronged by the second death. Why? Because if you overcome, you have a meros, you have a part in the first resurrection. And that is your seal, that is your token.

It's like the Erebon, the seal that Paul talks about, of the Holy Spirit that we carry. We are sealed unto the day of redemption. How do you know that you're saved? How do you know that you're

not going to end up in the lake of fire? That there wasn't a bookkeeping error? Because you have the seal of the Holy Spirit.

It's like a wax lump that's been melted onto your scroll. And you say, look, how do you prove you're legal to drive in Texas? You've got a driver's license in your possession. How do you keep from getting arrested and charged with a ticket or something when you get stopped by a policeman or a patrolman? If you've done everything right, and you're not guilty of anything, you show your driver's license.

It says, I am authorized. That's my seal. That's my guarantee.

I am allowed to drive in this state because here's my valid current driver's license. Well, there is a seal. There is a guarantee.

And if you are faithful, the promise of God is the guarantee. They shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Now, we go on down, and when the thousand years have expired, Satan is released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth.

Notice, there are nations in the four corners of the earth susceptible to deception in the kingdom of Christ. How can this be? I thought it was perfect environment. I thought everybody was resurrected.

I thought it was basically all the believers living for a thousand years and the rest of the dead live not. Who is it that takes part in this Gog and Magog rebellion? Who is it that Satan gathers together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea? Where did all of these numberless hordes of rebels who follow Satan in rebellion come from? I would submit to you that you cannot maintain the view that the millennial kingdom is composed only of resurrected church age saints and resurrected Old Testament saints. Unless you are willing to say that we fall a second time, we believe in Christ or believe in God in the Old Testament, get raised as saints, get a resurrection body, and then toward the end of the millennial kingdom, a bunch of us just up and decide we don't want any part of God anymore and numberless scores and hordes of believers and resurrection bodies see Satan and say, now that looks like a better deal over there, I believe I'll follow him.

Rejected him the first time, got away from him, got out of his clutches, but the more I look at him the more I like him. I think I'll just go join up and put a big GM on my forehead, Gog Magog, that's me, I'm the Gog Magog army. Obviously it is to laugh, that's not going to happen.

And so who are these sands of the sea hordes that follow Satan? There is a pyramid, there is a multiplying exponentially growing population of people in mortal bodies getting their first go around in the millennial kingdom. My suggestion, and it's only a suggestion, is that these are the souls that didn't get their first go around in this life. What happens to children who die before

accountability? What happened to all of those Philistine and Canaanite babies that were slain when God told the Israelites to go in and hew and hack them to pieces? People say, I don't like that God of the Old Testament, he's telling the Israelites to kill the children.

What kind of heartless, abusive, maniac God is that that tells people to go in and slaughter children with the sword, the innocent children that Jesus sat on his knee? How can the God of the Old Testament be the wonderful Jesus walking through the daisies with me hand in hand? Listen, God did those, in my view, God did those babies a favor. Instead of growing up in a pagan, godless, Baal-worshipping, child-sacrificing culture, they're going to get their go around in a world ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ. If you had a child, would you want to raise them in Philistia in the days of Goliath? Or would you want them raised in the millennial kingdom with Christ on his throne? Is God so heartless when he rescued that entire generation of children from their godless, pagan, savage parents? Maybe not.

However, in any population of people, you're going to have a proportion of those who respond and accept God, and you're going to have a numerically larger portion of those who reject God. It has ever been thus. It's the same in the population of believers.

Narrow is the way, and straight is the gate that leads to life, and few there be that find it. That's why the faithful can be at the top, ruling and reigning with Christ, because there just aren't that many. Not that this would be an argument to do it this way, but just for a hypothetical.

Let's say that most people become believers, and most believers become faithful like the apostles. Faithful like you just can't believe. If the promise, then, is ruling and reigning, you've got a whole lot more chiefs than you've got Indians, right? It would be a strange reward.

It's not that God wouldn't love for that to be the case, and that God wouldn't have plenty of rewards, but rulership would not be the reward of the faithful if most people were going to attain it, because you'd have all chiefs and no Indians. You haven't lived until you've been in an organization that's all leaders and no doers. I have been.

I'll give you an innocuous example. The MTU in Broken Arrow. This is the place where Marines who are in the reserve and want to keep drilling and getting to retirement go, but they don't get paid.

They just drill for points and not for profit, as if there were a profit. But anyway, you drill. You go down and drill and spend your time.

You dress up in your uniform and go down and do stuff, but you don't get paid for it, but you do accrue good time toward your reserve retirement. Well, in the MTU at Broken Arrow, the guys who were in that category were guys who couldn't find a command billet, who had already served in every command billet known to man, and somebody else needed that chance, and there was no place for them. So they were all majors and colonels and lieutenant colonels and captains,

and it was all officers in the MTU.

I think there were only maybe two or three enlisted guys, and all the rest of them were senior officers, field grade officers in many cases. So when it came time for the MTU to do something, you wound up having the captains and the majors, such as myself, doing the corporal and sergeant work, because there weren't any corporals and sergeants to give it to. All chiefs and no Indians.

There's nothing worse than being in a unit where you've got a colonel who ought to be commanding a battalion somewhere, and he's commanding a group of five officers who are nearly his same rank. It's just confusion and frustration. Well, obviously, when God promises... Think about it.

God has promised rulership. They will reign with Christ for a thousand years. Is this going to be a minority group or a majority group? Think about it.

It's a minority. So when you have this huge population of mortals getting their first go-round in a near-ideal environment on the earth for that thousand years, when you're a hundred years old, if you have an accident and die, they say, well, he was just a pup. He was so young.

What a tragedy that he died so young when you die at the age of a hundred, because everything is going to be better. They're going to have long, prosperous, happy lives, and the terrors are going to go right along with the wheat and look just the same and have the same opportunities and the same prosperities that so many other people seem to have. But what's going to happen? Nobody goes through this life without Perazzo.

Nobody goes through this life. And you look around and you say, well, you know, that person over there, I have had this accusation, and it just makes me want to punch somebody in the eye. Well, look at him.

He was just born under a great star, had a spiritual silver spoon in his mouth. Look at his parents. Look at his home.

They grew up in the church. Oh, Dallas Seminary and Naval Academy. What a rose petal strewn path he has had.

He's never had any tests. He's never had any adversity. He's never really faced any problems.

It's just been sort of a golden bowl and silver spoon all the way through. That is total and utter nonsense. Nobody goes through this life without being tested.

Just because you can't see somebody's tests, do not think they have not been tested. Just because you can't see someone's tests, do not think that they are not currently being tested. Do not think just because things are going well that you will never be tested.

Jesus made a promise. What did he say? In this world, you might have tribulation. In this world, a couple of you are going to have tribulation.

In this world, once in a while, there's going to be tribulation. He made no such statements. He said, in this world, you shall have tribulation.

It is a fact. And he didn't say you're going to have varying degrees of tribulation. Some of you will have little tribulation and some of you will have a lot.

When you average out the tribulation in any given human life, I predict that you will find that it evens out to just about the same. It may be in wildly different areas. Some people totally don't care what people think.

Other people live and die for the opinions of others. And their testing may all come in the opinions of people. And you, who are not subject to the opinions of people, say, what's your problem? You call that testing? That's not testing.

Some people have all of their security in their circumstances and in what they have. Do I have enough money to cover me? Have I got an investment? Do I have a retirement plan? What can I lay my hands on if things go wrong? That's a big area of testing for them. Others of us, it's just not.

There's always a way. If you're a marine, you can dig a hole and sleep in it. You can pick something off a tree and eat it.

There's always a way. And material security is just not that big a deal. But I can't look at someone else and judge them and say, now, that's no kind of test.

You call that testing? Let me tell you what testing is like and then go into what tests me. And they may say, you call that testing? Why, I can do that with my eyes closed. That's not testing.

You think about it. The human soul faces the test of Christ. And it's the same test for everyone.

Believers have the same spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, one Word of God, the same opportunities for everyone. Do you think we're going to get the same level of testing through our life? If you average it out, I would submit that we do. If you think I'm wrong, let's just wait and ask the Lord when we get there.

Here's the point. These people who are resurrected and have a mortal existence in the Millennial Kingdom, they're subject to death, there's going to be some crime, there's going to be some imprisonment, there's going to be some sickness and so on. All of this is mentioned when Jesus talks about the sheep and goats judgment.

He says, when the Son of Man comes and sits on the throne of His glory, then He will have this

judgment. It doesn't say He's going to have the judgment and then sit on His throne. This is at the close of the Millennial Kingdom.

And the people who pass that judgment and are approved, what is their reward? Does He say, come and take possession of your Millennial mansion, come sit with Me on My Millennial throne, come take this white stone or this new name? What does He say? Enter into the kingdom prepared for you by My Father. It's the kingdom of the Father that is the reward for the sheep. And it is the lake of fire that is the consequence for the goats.

It is a salvation judgment and you either enter the kingdom of the Father or you enter the lake of fire. That's the sheep and goats judgment. And that doesn't happen at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

Because nobody's in the lake of fire except the beast and the false prophet You can sort that all out. Some of them get thrown in during the cleaning up phase after the Tribulation and before the Millennium. Satan doesn't get thrown in.

He's kept in chains. But then he's released. Why? Nobody goes through this life without Paironzo.

No one goes through this life without being tested, even in the Millennium. A thousand years of seeing the positive side, Jesus on His throne, then what? Why would God do this? It's incomprehensible. He's had Satan in chains.

Why on earth would He turn him loose? Same reason God turned Satan loose on Job. The same reason Jesus let Satan have His way with Peter. The same reason God let Satan have His way with you and with me.

No one is going to get their gold refined without the fire being turned up. Nobody is going to exhibit their true qualities. Do you have gold and silver and precious stones in your soul? Or do you have wood and hay and stubble? The test is fire.

Fire will reveal what's there. It will either reflect the glory of God because it is precious materials, or it will be consumed because it's human strength, human energy, human ideas, human goals and aspirations. That's what will determine it.

So, Gog and Magog, in verse 8 of chapter 20 of Revelation, gathered together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. This is going to be a huge portion of the millennial population. You think about it, how discouraging.

The Lord Jesus Christ on His throne. It puts you in mind of Israel heading for the Promised Land. Almost everybody drops in the wilderness.

It reminds you of Israel in the days of Jesus Christ. Jesus comes preaching the kingdom. Almost everybody misses it.

Here you are in the millennial kingdom and setting aside the resurrected and glorified people. You look at the human population, the mortal population, and the majority of them, as soon as Satan appears, are going to be dredged out, going to be drawn to him like a magnet, and join him in this rebellion. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints.

Now, if you are surrounding somebody, who is numerically superior? The surrounder or the surroundee? If I've got 10,000 troops and you've got 5,000, are you going to surround me or am I going to surround you? If the camp of the saints is surrounded, guess who is numerically superior? The Gog Magogites. That's who. The followers of Satan.

That's who. They cover the breadth of the earth. They surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city.

And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil who deceived them at this point is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet already are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

There is no annihilation. There is no wipe out. There is conscious separation from God and great torment for all eternity.

Then you have the great white throne. Him who sat on it. So the millennial unbelievers get wiped out first.

Then you have the great white throne resurrection. Standing before God, the books are opened. Another book is opened, which is the book of life.

The dead are judged according to their works by the things which were written in the books. The sea gives up the dead. This is a great passage.

I don't have time to go into it. But, verse 14, after they are judged according to their works, then death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Anyone not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. Cast into the lake of fire bodily. Just like the goats at the goat judgment.

Sheep and goats. What is the second death? The second death is the consumption of all that does not please God. If the fruit of your life does not please God, it will be consumed.

And that is the second death. How can you not be injured? How can you not be wronged, violated by the second death? Make sure you have a meros. Make sure you have a part in the first resurrection.

How do you do that? You have to be he who overcomes. What does it mean to be an overcomer? As I mentioned to you before, the word that is used there is ha-nikon, which is

revealed in our modern day brand names of Nike and Nikon cameras and that sort of thing. Well, to the one who overcomes, he will not be hurt by the second death.

Let me tell you a little bit about Nikon and Nikion as it is used in the word of God. And I can only tell you a very little bit because we are almost out of time. But Niko, N-I-K-A-O, is the verb form of this noun and it denotes victory, supremacy, or success.

To the one who succeeds would be another way of translating this. We saw in Luke 11.22 when Jesus was telling the parable about the man who comes in and binds the strong man, someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him. He takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

There is a whole theme in the Bible about how Christ has plundered the God of this world. He has bound the strong man in that sense. We have a parallel to that in Matthew 12.29, another version of the same thing.

The victory of Jesus in this regard is spoken of in John 16.33. Jesus said, These things I have spoken to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world. In Revelation 6.2, I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow, and a crown was given him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

That is our same word, nekao. What is it that we conquer? What is it that we overcome? What are the areas of temptation? Where are our areas of peraza? The world, the flesh, and the devil. Our own flesh will betray us.

Jeremiah 17.9 The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death. What can give us an objective view? What can keep us from deceiving ourselves, from thinking something is right when it is not? It is the word of God.

There is a passage in 1 John 5. Whatever is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that has overcome the world, our faith. People like to think that is our saving faith at the point of accepting Christ, but the victory that overcomes the world is living faith, daily faith, faith that results in our being declared righteous. It is so exceedingly important for us to recognize what is on the line, the incentive that we have both in the negative, what can be lost, the fearful thing falling into the hands of the living God, and the positive side, the things that eye has not seen, the things that ear has not heard, the things that have never even entered into our imaginations, what God has prepared for those who love Him.

The one that has my words and keeps them, He it is that loves me, and I and my Father will come to Him, and we will make our home with Him. That is the present reality that will result in this great future of opportunity and reflection of the glory of God. It is worth considering.

Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, we thank You. We are so small when viewed against the fabric of the universe, and yet You have put us in the very center of Your plan.

You have elevated us along with Christ and made us the focus and the emphasis of everything that You are doing in this time. We ask that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts. We pray that we will be ever mindful that we have the great opportunity to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We ask it in His name. Amen.