

02-10-06a Revelation

As we continue our worship this morning, let's take just a moment at the outset to clear our minds and prepare our hearts and cultivate the ministry of God's Holy Spirit in our souls. We know that we cannot do any good with the Word of God, we can't really remember it, we can't really understand it and take advantage of its power unless God's Spirit does that for us in our soul. There is a lot of talk about God's Word, there's a lot of things that are said from the Bible, but unless God's Spirit is in there using it, the Apostle Paul says it's the sword that's in his hand and you don't rush into battle without a sword, but you also don't stand back at the rear and throw your sword at the enemy.

You've got to have somebody with a sword in his hand who knows how to use it to have an effect and God's Holy Spirit is in the soul, He indwells every believer and when we look at God's Word, we want Him to take that and use it to strengthen us and to make us into what we should be before God. So we pause at the outset before we study God's Word to recognize the role and the place of God's Spirit, to acknowledge any unconfessed sin that is in our souls so that God can forgive us and so that God's power like those two balanced elements, God's Word and God's Spirit can be active in our soul and strengthen us to do what we can't do on our own. So let's take just a moment and pray.

Father we thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ who came and took our place, suffered the penalty for our sins and made a way of access to you. We were hopeless and useless. We were separated from you by our sins, by our corrupt nature, by our guilt, by all of the things that occurred going all the way back to the garden and the fall.

But the Lord Jesus Christ came and being the way and the truth and the life, He has given us a relationship with you. We thank you for that. We thank you that even though He is not here with us, we have God the Holy Spirit.

We have your Word that tells us about Christ and not only tells us what your will is and what your plan is, but also gives us the ability to fulfill it. We pray this morning as we study together that you'll be with us, that these things will be impressed on our hearts in such a way that we'll remember it and it will be active to energize us and to strengthen us in the days ahead. We ask it in Jesus name.

Amen. We've been studying the letters to the seven churches in Revelation chapter 2 and 3. Jesus was here. He did the things that are recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

He was crucified. He was buried. He rose again.

And 40 days later, He ascended into heaven. And after that, you have the start of a new age. We're not in the nation of Israel.

We're not Jews. We don't have a king on the throne of David right now. We're a whole separate type of people of God as Christians.

And you think, well, Jesus left before this age really got underway. He was here when the Jews were still here. He was here for Israel.

He was the Messiah, the anointed one, that was supposed to be the king of Israel. But when He came unto His own, He came to His own people of Israel, they said, you're not our king. And they mocked Him.

They put up a sign over the cross that said, the king of the Jews. And the Romans said, well, looky here, Jews, here's your king. And there He is dying on the cross.

And it was a mocking kind of a thing. Why? Because when the Lord Jesus came, they didn't recognize Him. What a horrible thing.

Here God comes to you, wanting to deliver you, wanting to fulfill His promises to you, and you miss it. And the people of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, walked right in front of them. He talked to them.

He taught them. He did miracles in front of them. He fed them from five loaves and two fishes, 5,000 people.

He walked on water. He healed the lame and the blind. A man that had been blind from birth, had never seen a thing, not only gained his sight, but you think about how a baby learns to see.

A baby in the cradle, it has eyes and can see, but it can't process the information. It doesn't know what the different blobs and shapes and colors mean. And we grow as young human beings, and it takes us time and experience to learn depth perception and to focus our eyes.

If you ever looked at a newborn baby, they'll be looking at you and think, oh, look at his concentration. Then one eye will just wander off to the right, and he looks all dazed and confused, because it takes us time. You can tell the healing of God, because not only did the Lord Jesus heal the blind man, but at the point that he gained his sight, he could instantly process the information.

He could walk around and not bump into things. He could tell who people were. God not only healed his eyes, but put the information in his brain so that he could see and process the information just like us.

Jesus did that right in front of people. Untold, uncounted miracles. He would take whole days and do nothing but heal everybody that came to him.

And people with missing limbs, people with withered, crippled arms and legs, sightless, deaf,

unable to speak, tongue-tied, not only did he untie their tongue, but they had all the brain vocabulary to know how to move their lips and move their tongue. They didn't have to learn how to talk. How long does it take human beings to learn how to speak, even though they've got a tongue and everything? It takes us time.

Jesus healed them and put all the information to use his healing right away. People saw that. We sometimes think, well, God is so far away.

I don't see him. He's not active. If he would just do a miracle, then it would be so much easier for me to believe and to follow him.

No, it wouldn't. He's revealed himself in the Word of God, and people that saw him, people that saw the Red Sea part, people that saw the smoke and fire on Mount Sinai still got busy doing other things and neglected God. Don't think that God has to come down and do a miracle before he's going to be real enough to believe in.

God's Spirit confronts each one of us in our soul and says, here I am. You need to get right with me or there's big trouble ahead. Everybody knows that.

Everybody has that conversation with God's Spirit in their soul. Jesus came and confronted his generation, and even with the miracles, the people said, you know what? We're looking for something different. We wanted a king that drives a limousine.

We wanted a king with fancy clothes. We wanted a king who would come in with great power and chariots and armies and wipe out the Romans. We wanted a king to come in and solve our problem.

Our problem is this oppression by Rome. We want a king to come in with an army and get these Romans out of the way. I can see it in my Bible.

It says he's going to be the conquering king, and he's going to come in and slay them with the sword that issues forth from his lips and so on. And you're not that guy. You're just a rabbi wandering around with these dusty twelve men following you.

You're not what we're looking for. Well, and even today, people say, God is just not what I'm looking for. Jesus is just not what I'm looking for.

I need something to fix my immediate problems right here. But God says, look, there's a cart and there's a horse, and the horse has to come first. You don't see a wagon pulling a horse down the road, and you don't see the Lord Jesus and God as a big band-aid to put over an owie.

You don't see God as the big excedrin pill to come in and solve. Well, I want God to be the genie of the lamp. I want to rub the lamp and get my three wishes.

And if God won't do that for me, then I'm not interested in him. God says, look, I am the Lord God. I'm the creator.

I have sent my son to rescue you, and you've got to put me first. What's the very first commandment out of the ten? Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Well, our lesson this morning out of the letter to the church at Philadelphia addresses that.

Look with me at Revelation chapter 3 and verse 7. This will give us the context for our scripture reading, which is in Isaiah 36. But this is a letter. Jesus, and what I was starting to say is, after he left, we think, well, Jesus didn't speak any more words to the church because he ascended.

He went up in the clouds, and we just have the testimony of the disciples. But Jesus came back, in a sense, and spoke to the church. He sent you and me a letter.

Wouldn't it be great if you had a letter from the Lord Jesus Christ himself telling you what his expectations were, telling you what it is you're supposed to be doing with your life? Well, Jesus did that, and in one sense, it's a single letter with seven parts or seven chapters. It's Jesus addressed a letter. This is the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

If you've got a red letter edition, these words are in red, and they're after he left, and that's kind of an unusual thing. We just have a few words that he spoke to the apostle Paul, but here's a complete connected message to you and to me. Well, this is the letter to the church at Philadelphia.

This is the sixth of the seven letters. Philadelphia, we have a city named Philadelphia. What's the nickname of that city? It's the city of brotherly love.

Philos is one of the Greek words for love. It's the kind of love between friends, between close associates, and adelphos is the Greek word for brother. So, philos adelphos winds up getting mashed together and becoming brotherly love.

So, to the angel, this is the leader or the pastor. Angel, angelos in Greek means messenger. The messenger of the church in Philadelphia write, he who is holy, he who is true.

This is the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one will open, says. In each of these letters, Jesus describes himself with certain features of the vision that was back in Revelation chapter 1. What does he focus on here? These are things that weren't even in that vision. This is sort of new information.

He says, I am the holy one. I am the true one. A lot of people are looking for truth.

A lot of people try out different religions, try out different philosophies, watch Dr. Phil, watch, you know, read L. Ron Hubbard and Dianetics. A lot of people look all over the place trying to find truth. They study Confucius.

They study the great literature of writers of the past. They read Emerson and Thoreau or Socrates and Plato. Looking for the truth.

What is the meaning of life? How do I succeed and have a happy and productive and meaningful life? Well, Jesus says, I am perfect. I am true. I am the truth.

He says in John 14, 6, I am the way, the truth, and the life. He who is holy, he who is true. Then he says this, he who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one will open.

What on earth does this mean? Why does Jesus describe himself this way? The doorbell rings. You're the only one home. You get up and go to the door.

You open the door and look out. Here's a man standing there. He says, I am holy.

I am true. I have the key of David. When I open things, nobody shuts them.

And when I shut things, nobody opens them. You get the idea that this is the Lord Jesus Christ, but why is he telling me this? Why is he telling me he's got the key of David in this business about doors and opening and shutting? Well, this is what we want to discover this morning. To discover that, we have to go to the Old Testament because this description of having the key of David is taken from an Old Testament book.

People knew these things. They would learn their memory verses as a child. So we want to go back and find out the story.

This story is about two men who work for the king. This is over in Isaiah chapter 36 and 37. And our passage this morning is, our scripture reading at least, is Isaiah chapter 36.

It says in verse 1, in the 14th year of King Hezekiah, they didn't have a four year term and have to have another election. The king lasted until he died or got killed or something bad happened. So Hezekiah has been king for 13 years and now it's in his 14th year.

King Hezekiah has got a couple of men on his staff and they are the people we're going to be watching here. But this is an interesting thing because all was not well. Imagine we're in the United States and all of a sudden Mexico raises up a big army and they decide that they want Texas back and they want California back and they want some other things that they think belong to them.

And so they swarm over the border and they start taking the border towns and they take the Rio Grande Valley towns. They take Harlingen and they take Mission and they take other towns around there. And so the people down in Austin are starting to sweat because the border towns have already been taken by the swarming Mexican army and the army is marching up.

And who is the guy from the Alamo? Who was the general for the Mexicans? Yeah, Santa Ana. Let's say we've got another Santa Ana that's the general of the Mexican armies. And so he sends a messenger ahead to Austin to the capital of Texas and he says, hey, I just want you to know I've already swarmed over your border towns here and resistance is futile.

I've already conquered, I went down in the other direction, I went down to the Central America and I've already conquered Panama and I've conquered Nicaragua and I've conquered these other towns in your vicinity and I'm coming up and I'm going to take Austin. Well, this is the situation for Israel. The Assyrians were up in the north and east of Israel and their capital is Nineveh, the same town that Jonah went and preached to.

Well, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, sends his general and his general's name is Rabshaka. Instead of Santa Ana, it's Rabshaka. He's the general of the armies of the Assyrians and he's come blowing over and he's overrun a bunch of other countries and he's come over the border of Israel and he's smoked a bunch of those towns and so now he's sending messengers down to the king.

In the 14th year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them. These were their border towns, that was their ring of defense and the king of Assyria sent Rabshaka from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. This is Santa Ana coming up against Austin and he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field.

Now, when it says the aqueduct or the conduit here, this is their water supply. This is their life's blood. If you know Jerusalem, it sits on a mountain and they don't have any water in the city walls.

The water for Jerusalem comes from a spring, the spring Gihon. In those days, it was outside the wall and they had an aqueduct that carried the water into the town and so he's standing right there by the artery in their neck. It's as though, he says, you know, if I felt like camping out here and seizing your water, I could make you all die of thirst.

So he stood by the aqueduct from the upper pool on the highway to the fuller's field. People that lived there knew what that was, we don't, but we know he's right next to their life's blood, their water. And Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to him.

You know how this is, the king of Assyria is sitting on his throne, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Judah, at least, is sitting on his throne and you send out your minions, you send out your representatives. You know, President Bush doesn't always go somewhere, he'll send Mr. Colin Powell, the Secretary of Defense or somebody, he'll send out the Secretary of State to meet. So these are the representatives that are meeting and the kings are back behind, so they're going to

talk to each other.

Now you've got to remember these people because these first two men that are mentioned, the third guy, Joah, he's like the record keeper, he's writing everything down that is said so that they can tell each other about it later. But you've got Eliakim and you've got Shebna. These are the two main guys we're going to look at today.

These are the men who are in view, believe it or not, over there in Revelation when Jesus sends a letter to the church at Philadelphia. Now Philadelphia is a Greek town and it's totally different, so how are these two things connected? That's what we're going to see. Eliakim, it says he's over the household.

Now this sounds like he's the butler, but he's not. Being over the household was the highest office in the land under the king. He's over the household of Israel, he's the Secretary of State, that's his job.

Shebna, it says Shebna the scribe, but this was another honorary office and he's like the third or fourth man down. So Hilkiah is the second to the king man, he's like the vizier. Remember when Joseph was in Egypt and you had the Pharaoh and Joseph was in charge of everything? Well that's what Eliakim is here.

So he's come out to meet Rabshaka who is the military representative of the king. So the Rabshaka, the big Assyrian general, he says, say now to your king Hezekiah, thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, what confidence is this in which you trust? I say you speak of having plans and power for war, but they are mere words. See the people in Jerusalem were saying, oh boy they've taken all of our border towns, what are we going to do? And so they started trying to fortify themselves and the people who were out in the plains all came rushing into the city, they're hiding behind the walls of the city and they're saying we want protection from the swarming armies of the Assyrians.

In fact Hezekiah dug a tunnel to the water hole, dug it through the solid rock and on the break I can show you an inscription from that tunnel. When they finished it they wrote some stuff on the wall that's still there and I've got a plaster cast of it, this is one of the most ancient Hebrew inscriptions we have. This is from like about 600 BC, 600 years before Christ and it's some of the oldest Hebrew writing we have.

But anyway they were fortifying, they said well we think we can get up enough of an army to resist, we can protect ourselves in our fortified city of Jerusalem, that was the plan. The Rabshaka comes out and says I hear you all are gearing up for war and you think you're going to resist, you think you're going to be different than these other people that we've conquered. He says in whom do you trust that you're rebelling against me, you should be sending me tribute, you should just cave in and surrender and just pay a bunch of money to me so that I don't wipe you out.

Look you are trusting in the staff of a broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans it will go into his hand and pierce it. People were telling Hezekiah you know what we ought to do, here's this Assyrian guy coming down, let's go south to the Egyptians and make an alliance with them and we'll team up. This would be like the people in Austin saying let's go up to Oklahoma and get them to come down and help us.

Let's get the Oklahoma National Guard to come down and defend us from these swarming armies from Mexico. Well the Rabshaka says you're going to lean on that and it's going to be like a stick that snaps and the sharp end jabs through your hand. And God had told Israel don't go down to Egypt, Egypt is where you came out from slavery and bondage, that's not going to be your answer.

But people were saying hey they've got a big army, there's a new Pharaoh down there in Egypt, he's got a lot of great chariots and horsemen, they'll help us out. So what did they do? They had a big problem, they were under pressure, God said turn to me and I'll deliver you. They said you know what, God you're up in the sky, we haven't seen any miracles in a long time, down here in Egypt they've got armies and chariots, that's what I really need.

I need something that will fix my military problem now. And they wanted to go down to Egypt. Well even the attacking army said do you think your alliance with Egypt is going to help? It's not, it's going to snap off and stab your hand.

That's what Pharaoh, king of Egypt is to all who trust in him. But if you say to me we trust in the Lord our God, isn't it he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away and said to Judah and Jerusalem you'll worship before this altar. Hezekiah had tried to get the people who were off worshipping on mountains and doing idolatry and things, he had taken all that away and tried to get them to worship God, but they weren't really interested in that.

And the Rabshakeh sort of misunderstood, he thought when they took away all the altars on the mountaintops that they weren't worshipping God anymore. In fact, Isaiah and Hezekiah were telling the people you need to get right with God and these other problems will go away. You've got to have your horse in front of the cart.

If you get right with God in the vertical, your horizontal problems will be taken care of afterward. But don't look at God as the means to an end. Don't say well I'm going to say some words to God because I really want him to solve these problems.

You have to focus on God and then God will take care of these other things as a result. Therefore I urge you give a pledge to my master the king of Assyria, send us a bunch of money so we don't wipe you out. That's the essence of his message.

So look down at verse 11. Eliakim and Shebna and Joah, they're out there and they say look

please speak to your servants in Aramaic. Now why would he say this? They're talking in Hebrew and everybody up on the walls of the city, they've come out in front of Jerusalem, you know it's like a castle wall, everybody's up there, they're listening to this conversation and they can understand it and he's telling them there's nothing you can trust in, there's nothing that can save you, you need to send us a bunch of money or you're going to be wiped out.

And he says look let's speak a language the people don't understand. We can carry on this negotiation in private so people can't hear it. But the Rabbi Shaka in verse 12 says no my master has not sent me just to your master to speak these words, he's also sent me to the men who sit on the wall who eat and drink their own waste with you.

This is kind of an ugly picture but they're surrounded in the city and they can't get food from the outside anymore. He says pretty soon you're going to have to recycle to stay alive. That's a nice way of saying it.

So the Rabbi Shaka in verse 13 stood and called out with a loud voice in the Hebrew and said hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria, don't let Hezekiah deceive you, he will not be able to deliver you. So this is the scenario, this is the background of what we're going to talk about today. Jesus comes to the church at Philadelphia and he says I have the key of David, I can open and no one shuts, I shut and no one opens.

We think sometimes that our problems are so severe that they have hemmed us in kind of like the Assyrian army has trapped us in Jerusalem and we think if something doesn't happen here I'm going to end up eating and drinking my own waste. That's about as bad as it can get. In other places they talked about people being so hungry that they would eat their babies and they would eat after birth and eat all kinds of horrible things.

Why does God put that kind of language in the Bible? To shock us. We're supposed to be shocked, we're supposed to be a little taken aback by that language. Because God says look, you think your problems are severe, you think that they are hemming you in and that it has shut your gates so that they can't be opened and you can't get out and get what you need.

He says I've got the key, I am the one who opens and if I open a door no one shuts it and if I shut a door nobody's going to open it. Remember he shut the door of Noah's ark. A lot of times you see this in the movie and you see Noah hauling in on a rope and pulling the gang way up and the ark shuts.

That's not what the Bible says, you go back and read Genesis chapter 9 and along in there, actually I think it's 7, 8, 9 all through Noah's flood and it says after Noah and the animals went in God shut the door. What rain wasn't pattering when he shut the door, he shut the door several days before the rain came and it was too late to get in the ark and be saved. God shut that door.

God can open a door and God can shut it. Well, I talked about Hilkiah and Shebna. When Jesus

says in Revelation chapter 3 verse 8, he says I have the key of David, I open and no one shuts, I shut and no one opens.

If you're in Isaiah, turn over back a few pages to Isaiah chapter 22 because here's the thing, you have these two big leaders in Israel and it used to be, remember Hilkiah was the second in command, he's the head over the household. Well, it used to be that Shebna was the head of the household. Shebna was the high guy right under the king.

He had that office. Look at Isaiah chapter 22 verse 15, thus says the Lord God of hosts, go proceed to this steward, this high official to Shebna who is over the house, he's over the household. Now this is earlier.

What happened, Shebna used to be the second guy and now Hilkiah is the second guy and Shebna is demoted. What happened to change that? Well, when the Israelites saw the Assyrians coming, Shebna was telling the king, look we need to go down to Egypt, we need to get some chariots, we need to bolster our army, we need to do some things. Hilkiah gave different counsel.

Hilkiah said, you know that Isaiah has been telling us we need to return to the Lord, we need to get these high places down, we need to quit messing around and return to the worship of God. So he was getting two different kinds of advice. That's what your advisors are for.

But the advice of Shebna was a bad idea. God through Isaiah had already told him, don't go to Egypt. But Shebna said, you know this Egypt thing is a good plan.

Use some human strength, use a human solution. Hilkiah was saying something different. And so God came to this counselor who was counseling evil, to Shebna, and this is what he said, starting in verse 15 of Isaiah 22.

Thus says the Lord God of hosts, go to this steward, go to this counselor, this official of Hezekiah, to Shebna who is currently over the house and say to him, what have you here and whom have you here that you have hewn out a sepulcher as he who hews himself a sepulcher on high, who carves a tomb for himself in a rock. This is what rich men did, this is what powerful men did. Shebna was a power broker, he was a politician, he was a guy who would get over, he was a guy who would aggrandize things to himself.

He had the nice clothes, he had the chariots that would carry him around through the city and he was a guy who used influence and made himself rich and made himself powerful and he had worked himself all the way up to the second highest in the land doing this kind of maneuvering. He says, you are like these rich men who not only have power now but they want to be remembered, they want to have a monument, they want their grave to be up on high where everyone will see it. He says, look, God, the Lord will throw you away violently, oh mighty man, and will surely seize you.

He will surely turn violently and toss you like a ball into a large country. Now I don't know about you, but if I was operating along and I had gotten myself up to the top of my profession or up to the top of my political ambitions or in whatever circle I move in, I had become the kingpin and then God came up and he said, I'm going to wad you up and play, what do we call that, trash can basketball, executive basketball where you wad paper up and throw it across the room and see if you can hit your trash can. This is essentially what he's saying.

God's going to wad you up like scrap paper and see if he can make a basket with you in a wide land. He's going to wad you up like a ball and throw you into a large country. There you shall die and all of your glorious chariots, your limousine and your fancy ride will be the shame of your master's house.

He says in verse 19, I will drive you out of your office and from your position he will pull you down. And it will be in that day, look at verse 20, I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, I will put his robe, I will put your robe on him. There's another story in the Bible you might remember in the book of Esther that's very similar.

Haman was second to the king and he had Mordecai and the king can't sleep one night, he says, he finds out that Mordecai did him a favor so he calls in Haman and he says, hey Haman, what should be done for the man that the king wants to honor? Well, Haman thought it was him. He said, oh, you should dress him in your robe and march him through the streets in your chariot and have someone go before him, one of the king's officers saying, thus shall it be done for the man whom the king delights to honor. And the king says, great idea Haman, go get Mordecai, the enemy that you dislike, put my robe on him and you run before him and say thus shall it be done.

And of course it just ate Haman up and he started plotting how he could kill Mordecai. He built a gallows that he was going to hang Mordecai on and he got this big plot going and it ended up that Haman was hung on his own gallows. That's the difference between plotting and scheming and maneuvering in your own strength and being like Mordecai, trusting in the Lord, biding your time, letting God do his work and his plan.

It's the same thing here with Shebna. Shebna is like Haman and Hilkiyah is like Mordecai. So he says, it will be in that day I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, I will clothe him with your robe and I will strengthen him with your belt.

I will commit your responsibility into his hand. He will be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Now look at verse 22.

The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder. This was kind of like a ceremonial key. It was on a ribbon and when they hang over it's kind of like when they give someone the key to a city.

I will give the key of the house of David to Hilkiyah. He will open and no one will shut. He will shut

and no one will open.

I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place and he will become a glorious throne to his father's house. They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the posterity, all the vessels of small quantity from the cups to all the pitchers. Now this would be like taking everything in your kitchen, all of your pans and pots, all of the vessels in your house and driving a peg up here seven feet up in the wall and hanging everything on that peg.

Everything in the house is going to hang and depend on that one peg. And he says in that day, verse 25, the peg that is fastened in the secure place, that's Shebna. He thinks he's secure.

He thinks he's got himself up to the second place in the land. He thinks by his own machinations and by his own efforts he's gotten himself into a secure place. God says, you know what? I am going to snap that peg off and everything that hangs on it is going to fall.

The burden that was on it will be cut off for the Lord has spoken. So you've got two kinds of a peg. You've got a peg that a man drove for himself in the wall and you've got a peg that God drove in the wall.

Right now Shebna has got all of his stuff hanging on his own peg and God says, I'm going to snap you off and everything that depends on you will fall. Everybody that's been toadying up and smacking up to Shebna and wanting to stay in his good graces, they're all going to fall with him. Jesus says, I have the key of David.

I open and no one shuts. Jesus basically says, I am Hilkiah. I am God's permanent peg and everything that hangs on me, everything that depends on me is permanently fastened and will never fall.

It says here that when God drives Hilkiah into the wall like a peg, it says his household, his father's house, his offspring and his posterity. The Bible tells us that when we become believers in Jesus Christ, we are his brethren. He is the firstborn among many brethren.

Everything we are and everything we have and everything that we will ever be and everything we will ever have in the eternal future all depends on that peg. We hang on that peg that's been driven into the wall by God. Now a lot of us in this life try to drive a peg into the wall and we hang a lot on that peg.

Sometimes it's our job. Sometimes it's our position. Sometimes it's our standing in the community.

Politicians will get elected to an office and everything depends on staying in that office and pretty soon you have to compromise to keep that position. You have to start maneuvering and calling in favors and making deals and a lot depends on staying in that position. Sometimes it's our possessions.

We say I've got my stock portfolio or I've got my stuff in the bank or I've got my gold hoarded away. Whatever it might be, that's the peg we drive in the wall and a lot depends on it. It's been real popular.

I remember when the retirement plans first came out, IRAs came out, when I was a lieutenant in the Marine Corps and I knew an army lieutenant who was telling me how he fixed up his retirement and got his 401k and all of these other things all lined out in his IRA where he was putting his money away and he had it all calculated out how this was going to help him. Well you've seen the stock market spiking and fluctuating and what you have today can be diminished tomorrow. The pegs that we drive will all eventually snap off.

The only peg that is going to endure is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is like Hilkiah and what hangs on him is what is going to last. Now, this is the interesting part to me.

What about Shebna? What does he represent? Well we know that human history is not the only history there is. Human beings are not the only beings that God created. Before we were created there was another civilization.

Before Adam ever breathed his first breath there were untold scores of angels that God created and there was a senior angel. There was an angel who was the highest of all of the created beings. He was the steward of the household.

He was like Hilkiah. He was like Shebna. He was just below God in authority.

We know about him from Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. We've read those passages recently and I don't have time to go to them this morning. But it says, you walked among the stones of fire.

You were in the garden of God. You were the guardian cherub of the throne room of God. He was the senior angel.

All of the other angels came to him. We tend to think that angels are like a painting where they just kind of hang suspended in space and don't really do much. Angels had a society and a civilization just like we have.

They did things. They had offices and functions. They learned.

They carried out tasks. We have no idea what they are. We can't even imagine what a heavenly civilization would be like.

But they didn't just get painted and freeze like a statue or just plink harps all day and sing. There was a civilization. And what the Bible says about Satan is he was Lucifer.

He was the shining one. He reflected the glory of God. But he started getting the idea that he didn't really need God anymore.

He said, you know, I'm the second in command and God is kind of the figurehead here. I'm doing all the work. I'm making these decisions.

Angels come to me and I broker influence. I decide whether they get what they want or not. I'm a pretty powerful guy.

He says, you know, I could really be like God. I could raise my throne up above the stars, which is the other angels, and I could skip the highest, the most high, and just have me and have the angels come to me. I'm doing a pretty good job of this as is.

I don't really think I need God anymore. I think I can branch out and start my own business here. And it says, by the multitude of your commerce, iniquity was found in you.

Lucifer, Satan, the shining one, started brokering influence. He got kind of full of himself and started thinking, I'm powerful enough to do this on my own. And God had to demote him and kick him out of his position.

Now, he was an angel, and the angels went through Lucifer to get into the throne room of God. And when his sin was tried, he got full of himself. Well, I want to tell you something interesting about these names.

Shebna is a picture of Satan, back before our history. Shebna was the steward of the household. But Shebna got full of himself.

Shebna built his own sepulcher. Shebna had his own chariot. Shebna was riding around like Haman, saying, I'm hot stuff.

Hezekiah, he's the king now, but hey, I can run this whole country myself. And he started getting the idea that he could do things through human strength. I'll go down and make an alliance with Egypt.

That's how we can solve this problem. He cut out Hezekiah and Isaiah and all the ones who knew the will of God and wanted to do things on his own. And God said, I'm going to chop off your peg and everything that depends on you will fall.

Well, guess what? Up in heaven, when Satan decided he would go out on his own, start his own independent branch of the business, a third of the angels went with him. They were hanging on that peg. And the fallen angels, what we call demons in some cases, are these angels who threw in with Satan.

They said, yeah, we like your plan. We're kind of tired of this whole God thing and reflecting his glory all the time. Why do we have to serve him? Why can't we just go out and be on our own? Let God do his thing over there.

Let us do our thing over here. That was the big plan. Well, Shebna is a reflection of that, just like the king of Tyre and some others are.

But the names are significant. Shaban is the Hebrew root that means to grow, to expand, to sprout, to get full. And Shebna is a shortened form of a longer name.

It was originally, the name was Shebanyahu or Shebaniah. And you'll find this name. You can find it in Nehemiah and some other passages in the Bible.

But Shebaniah means God causes growth. God causes fullness. God causes this expansion.

Well, what happened? Shebna is the only one with this name in the Bible where the Yahu or the Yah, which is Yahweh, Yahu or Yahweh is the Lord. And it's cut off of his name. He's just Shebna.

And what is it without God? When you cut God out of the picture the way Satan did, the way Shebna did, now you're just Shebna. You're, I will expand. I will grow.

I will become full. And that's a picture of pride. We become full of ourselves.

We think we've got the answers. We'll get it figured out and we'll cut God out. And he cut the end off his name.

And instead of being Shebaniah or Shebanyahu, God grows, God expands. I will grow. I will expand.

It's the very thing that Satan said in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. I will be like the Most High. I will raise my throne.

To grow means to get taller, to raise up. Well, Hilkiah, I'm sorry, Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, I think I've called him Hilkiah a few times, but it's Eliakim who's the other one. Eliakim, L-E-L is the name for God, like Elohim.

Eli is my God. And the Yakin part on the end is another Hebrew verb that means to raise up. These guys' names mean the same thing.

But where Shebaniah had the Lord on the end of his name and he cut it off, Eliakim has the name of God at the beginning. And he doesn't cut it off. He doesn't say, well, just call me Yakin for short.

He's Eliakim. God will raise up. And that's the word play that's going on in this picture of the pegs.

He says, this peg that you've raised up, Shebaniah, and you've pounded yourself into the wall and a bunch of people are depending on you, I'm going to shave off that peg and you and everything that depends on you will fall. God is going to do this. And I will raise up Eliakim.

Eliakim means God raises up. I will raise up Eliakim and I will pound him into the wall like a secure peg and what depends on him will never fall. What happened in the heavenly realms? Satan was dismissed and kicked out of heaven and he and the fallen angels fell to earth.

And it says Satan roams up and down the earth seeking whom he may devour. He's a little angry. He doesn't like being kicked out of his job.

Who is going to take his place? The Lord Jesus Christ says, I am Hilkiah. I am Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah. The reason I keep talking about Hilkiah, it says Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah.

Hilkiah, you see that Yah on the end, that's Yahweh again, but the Hilku portion of it means inheritance. This is your possessions, your future. All of these things that were hanging on the peg, my inheritance is the Lord.

Eliakim is the son of, the Lord raises up is the son of, the Lord will give me my inheritance. My riches, my treasure is in heaven. God will give me my inheritance.

And that's why his father's name is mentioned because these names are significant. Jesus is talking to the church at Philadelphia. Who's Jesus' father? It's God the father.

Who is going to inherit? Who is going to have eternal possessions? Those who place their faith and their confidence in Christ. Those who depend on him for, like the peg that's pounded in the wall. That's why Jesus says, I am the one who has the key of David.

I open and no one shuts. I shut and no one opens. If you want to walk into the door of the future and have anything, it's going to be through Christ.

He says, I'm the way, I'm the truth, I'm the life. No man comes to the father but by me. And the ironic thing is the angels are much more powerful than us, aren't they? They're in dimensions we can't even see or access.

They can see inside our minds. We can't see inside each other's minds. They've got amazing powers.

We are made lower than the angels. But do you know who took, in human history, Eliakim took Shebna's place. You know who's going to take Lucifer's place? It's a human being.

It's the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man. A human being now sits at the right hand of God the father. The Bible tells us Jesus sits at his right hand and argues in our favor, intercedes for us.

So what do you think the angels think? Here's the humans, the subspecies and now God has become one of those subspecies and the Lord Jesus Christ sits at the right hand. He is now the steward over the household. Jesus says, all authority has been given me in heaven and in earth.

He has taken that place of honor that was once occupied by Satan and that's in his humanity. Of course he's always been God. He's always been there in the throne room of God as the Father, Son and Spirit.

But the humanity of Jesus Christ, a human being, one of us, and we hang on that peg and he's going to be there eternally. His mercies are forever sure. So it's a fascinating thing to think about.

It gives us a glimpse into the angelic history of the past and it's a reminder to us that anything we ever have, anything we ever are, anything we ever do has to depend, it has to hang on that secure peg. If we do it in our own strength, if we try to secure ourselves, God says all of those human pegs are going to break. They're going to snap off and everything that depends on them will fall to the ground.

The only thing that will last and the only thing that will endure, especially when you think about beyond this life, is what depends on Jesus Christ. We have to go to God and say, that's what I want. I want to place my faith in Christ.

I want my life to depend on him. Well Jesus introduces himself as that secure peg and as that one who opens and shuts. We're going to take our break and when we come back we're going to see what that door is and what that door means because he tells the people in Philadelphia, I have placed before you an open door.

What are you going to do with the door? That's what we'll see when we come back.