

15a REV

This is the 18th of November, 2005. We continue tonight our study in the book of Revelation, resuming in chapter 12. Let's take a moment as we begin to exercise our individual priesthood as we go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, it is a privilege to be studying this great book as we look around in the world today and realize that the time is short, that world events are moving rapidly, and the pieces of the puzzle are falling into place that match the predictions and the prophetic word that we find before us. We thank you that we are not of the night or of the darkness. We're not in wonderment or in confusion.

We know that you hold all of the factors of human history in your hands and everything will fall into place according to your timetable and under the direction of your power. We thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ and for his love for us, his sacrifice on our behalf, his ministry of intercession, and his soon return to take us to be with himself. We pray that in the time that remains to us, we can prepare ourselves and be ready and be worthy to occupy places where we can bear fruit in this life and in the age to come.

We pray that our study will contribute to that goal. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

We saw last time that chapter 11 closes with the temple of God opening in heaven, revealing the ark of his covenant in his temple. And this is the heavenly reality of which the earthly manifestations in the tabernacle and Solomon's Temple are just copies. And when this sight is revealed, and we remind ourselves that this ark symbolizes God's memory of his own covenant promises.

He is mindful of all of the things that he has said. God does not forget his promises. We can forget.

God does not forget. And that ark is the symbol, both on earth and in heaven, of the place where God and man meet. And when God meets us, he makes promises to us.

He promises us deliverance. He promises us his presence. He promises us salvation.

And the ark of the covenant was the highest and greatest symbol in Israel of God's deliverance. This is why they thought it would be great to carry the thing into battle. Because, if God be for us, who can be against us? And so on.

Of course, the symbol is no substitute for the reality. And if God is really not in your midst, because you're disobedient, like Hophni and Phinehas, carrying the symbol into battle is just going to be sort of an embarrassing and ultimately fatal loss. But the temple of God is open in heaven.

The ark of his covenant is seen in his temple. Then it says, there were lightnings, noises,

thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. I didn't say anything about any of these things last time.

But as I was reviewing and ramping up to move forward this week, I got to looking at those, and I thought, I wonder why that's there. Why couldn't God just pull back the curtains of heaven, and here's the temple, and you look through, and a veil is pulled out of the way, and there's the ark of the covenant in the holiest place. Why do we have to have all of these sound effects? I was mentioning to some of you all before the break, I'm involved in helping somebody set up a big fancy sound system, and you know how this is, the phone rings or something, and you hit the mute button, and you have a picture on the screen, and you don't have any sound, and sometimes you get the little closed captioning that kicks in automatically when you mute your TV set.

But it's completely different. It transforms commercials from something odious and repulsive into something interesting when you cut the sound off, because all of their flailing and gesticulating and all of the energy that they put into trying to get your attention and trying to impress on you the greatness of some product is cut by about two-thirds when there's no sound. All of the noise and the music and the verbiage, all you see are the people cavorting and doing this and the other on the screen, and it loses much of its impact and much of its meaning without the sound.

And I find it much more entertaining because I can make up my own words and my own dialogue underneath the pictures, and I can say it much more like it really is. But here, when this great sight is revealed, look at all of the sound effects. Look at all of the accompanying supernatural manifestations.

You have lightning, noises, and this is phonai. And any time you have phonai or one of its Greek equivalents, you never know if this is sound or voices. Phonai in Greek can be equally well translated as sound or voice.

I would submit that this needs to be voices. Otherwise, it's kind of nonspecific. We know what thunder is, but other noises, I mean, is this like cartoon noises, little squeaky, you know, thingamajig noises? You know how they make those noises in the cartoons when some little invention is rolling along? Well, I mean, that would destroy the whole effect.

I don't think this is just noises like squeaks or, you know, pops and that sort of thing. This is voices. There are voices that are heard along with this.

There's lightning and there are audible things being said. There is a proclamation. There is some sort of statement being made that John is not permitted to reveal.

And we have seen this before when the seals are opened on the little scroll and the seven thunders utter their sounds. That's also phonai, but it's translated voices there. But John's not permitted to write it down.

Well, once again, we have sounds. We have voices here, phonai. Phonai here in the plural.

And brontai. Remember brontosaurus? You know why they call him that? His great big heavy thing? Because when he walks around, he makes the ground shake. It's like thunder.

He's thundersaurus. Brontosaurus. Brontai means thunderings.

And then seismos. Not too difficult to figure out what that is. There's brontai and there's seismos.

But seismos here is in the singular. There is one great concluding earthquake. God will shake the earth a final time before Christ's kingdom comes in.

And every time you see this singular earthquake, it's the same one. It's at the end of the 70th week. And then we have kaladza megale.

A great hail. A great hail. And this intrigued me because I thought I can understand the voices.

I can understand the thunder and lightning. Lightning and thunder sort of go together. The order is even correct here.

Lightning first, then thunder. And earthquake. All of that makes sense.

But hail? What is hail? Frozen big globs of water coming down. Why hail? Why not brimstone? Why not something else? But it's hail. So this made me curious.

If you were going to take a stab, take a wild guess at where hail first shows up in the Bible, where would it be? That's right. The plagues in Egypt. I took pains this week to memorize the order of the plagues.

I've never done that before. Even when we were doing Genesis, I didn't memorize them. But I memorized them this week.

Let's see if I can remember. The first plague is blood. The second plague is frogs.

And the third plague is lice. And that's the first set of three. Remember, they come in three sets of three, and then you have Passover.

So blood, frogs, and lice. The second set is flies. Then livestock are afflicted.

And then you have boils. The third set, the final set, you have hail. Then you have something else.

What? No, that's the ninth. Ninth is darkness. Locusts.

I just can't memorize as well as I used to. But the third set is hail, locusts, and then darkness. And isn't it interesting that all three of those are manifested here in these final days? We've talked about the third of the light of the sun and the moon being cut off.

And that there's darkness in the day, and there's darkness in the night. We've talked about the locusts. We had a half a chapter on these locust-like creatures that come up and are released.

And we have hail. Keep your finger here in Revelation chapter 12 and turn back to chapter 8. What was the first thing that happened when the seventh seal was opened? Chapter 8. When he opened the seventh seal, silence in heaven, half an hour. Seven angels stand before God.

To them are given seven trumpets. Another angel with a golden censer comes. He's given the incense.

He goes to the golden altar and the smoke and the incense and all that. He takes the censer, fills it with fire in verse 5, throws it to the earth. And what happens? There are phonai, voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

The seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. When the first angel sounds, what happens? Verse 7. Hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up and all green grass was burned up.

So, from the first trumpet all the way to the seventh trumpet, you have this bracket. There's hail mixed with fire and blood at the beginning. And here, once again, just as we had with the opening of the seventh seal, you've got this bracket of voices and thunder and lightning.

And this is an inclusio. It seems to frame everything that goes in between. So, this sort of makes sense.

What role does hail play in the Bible, symbolically speaking? Or what sort of baggage does it carry in terms of meaning? The first time we ever see it, it's the seventh plague in Egypt. And it's a form of judgment. Other places you find hail in the Bible, Job chapter 38 and verse 22, where the question is asked, what do you know about the workings of God? Have you entered in where the treasury of snow is kept? Have you seen the treasury of hail? God stores up all the different kinds of precipitation.

Snow gently falls and is relatively harmless. Hail comes down and destroys everything beneath it. God decides whether the frozen precipitation is going to be benign or destructive.

In the Psalms, several times you have a rehearsal of what took place in Egypt. Psalm 78,

you may remember Psalm 78 is a great recounting of deliverance from Egypt. And in that, it reminds the people of Israel that God, in Psalm 78 verse 44, He turned their rivers into blood and their streams so that they could not drink.

He sent swarms of flies among them which devoured them and frogs which destroyed them. He gave their crops to the caterpillar and their labor to the locust. He destroyed their vines with hail and their sycamore trees with frost.

He also gave up their cattle to the hail and their flocks to fiery lightning. He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, indignation and trouble by sending angels of destruction among them. He made a path for His anger.

He did not spare their soul from death, but gave their life over to the plague and destroyed all the firstborn in Egypt, the first of their strength, in the tents of Ham. But He made His own people go forth like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And that whole Psalm is sort of centered on that great theme.

But much of what we've seen in terms of these great destructive manifestations in the 70th week of Daniel and in the latter half of it in particular, hark back, do they not, to some of these earliest judgments of God. People almost wish, well, I wish God had not promised to never destroy the earth with a flood again because the flood is relatively less scary than all of these other blights and disasters and plagues that are falling. So, once again, the fierceness of His anger, wrath, indignation and trouble.

Hail is a part of that manifestation. You'll find the same thing in Psalm 105, 32. He gave them hail for rain and flaming fire in their land.

Psalm 147, verse 17. He casts out His hail like morsels. Who can stand before His cold? The very next Psalm, Psalm 148, 8. Fire and hail, snow and clouds, stormy wind fulfilling His word.

This is in a section that talks about praising the Lord. And you say, wait a minute. Praising the Lord, I would think of butterflies and birds and sunshine and the gentle Jesus leading a child through the meadow and that.

But in Psalm 148, verse 7 says, Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all the depths. The ancient people were afraid of sea creatures. They were afraid they were going to come up and upset their ships and their boats and devour them never to be seen again.

This is part of the baggage of the story of Jonah. Great sea creatures and all the depths, fire and hail, snow and clouds, stormy wind fulfilling His word. This is in a section of praise.

My whole point here is, we look at these terrible disasters in the end times and you go

back and find the similar manifestations in the Old Testament. And yet these disasters actually reflect the glory of God. God's glory is not just in His blessing and in what He does for His people.

It's also what He does to the enemies of His people. And it's what He does against the forces of darkness. God is glorified in destroying Egypt.

It's not much fun for the Egyptians, but look at how God identifies Himself throughout the rest of the Old Testament. I am the Lord who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, with signs and wonders. And you cannot have the positive and the blessing side of God without also seeing His righteousness and His justice and His judgment.

And so when you see this hail at the beginning and at the end of this section in Revelation, beginning in chapter 8 and coming forward here to chapter 12, it is a reminder that there is a season for everything. There is a time for everything. Ecclesiastes chapter 3. There is a time for the long-suffering and the gracious patience of God.

Peter talks about the fact that God is not willing that any should perish. He's long-suffering. People who say, why is God waiting? What's the delay? The soul's under the altar.

How long, O Lord? God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And God waits. And God is compassionate.

And God is patient. And God lets people get away with all kinds of things. And we say, where is your justice, O Lord? God says, I put my justice on hold because this is my mercy.

I am not willing that any should perish. I don't want to have to discipline. I don't want to have to destroy.

And so God's patience waited in the days of Noah. Remember that? God waited. God delayed in executing that judgment to give people the opportunity to change their minds.

So when we find injustice and when we find negative behavior on the part of people that doesn't seem to be getting a divine reaction or divine comeuppance, we remind ourselves this is the patience of God. This is the grace of God. But there is a day when the door of the ark shuts.

And there is a day when the rapture takes place. And there is a day when God will no longer listen to cries and pleas from people. He talks about this in Isaiah.

Your iniquities have separated between you and your God. And your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear. Behold, now is the appointed hour.

Now is the day of salvation. There is a window of opportunity. And once that window shuts, this is what results.

And so this hail is a reminder. When the hail starts coming, it's all over. So it's a reminder of the power of God.

It's not like you can stand there with an umbrella and stop this kind of hail. We'll see another description of this hail coming up in Revelation chapter 16. This is the same hail storm.

If you look at Revelation 16. It's talking about the great city divided in three parts. The cities of the nations fell.

Babylon was remembered before God to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Then every island fled away and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men.

Each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail. And the plague was exceedingly great.

Well, when you have hail of this size. This is several pounds in each hailstone. I mean, you know, we get golf ball size hail.

And we think, well, it's time to call up the insurance company. This is larger than, this is like watermelon size hail. You know, who's going to, you can see why men are complaining.

Watermelon size hail. Men blasphemed God. Those that were indoors.

Those that were outdoors didn't do any blaspheming because they've been beat into jelly. But this hail is a manifestation of the judgment of God. One final passage you can put with this is Haggai 2.17. God says, I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands.

Yet you did not turn to me, says the Lord. Consider now from this day forward, from the 24th day of the ninth month, from the day of the foundation of the Lord's temple. Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not yielded fruit.

But from this day I will bless you. Once they changed their mind, once they responded to the discipline of God and laid the foundation of His temple, God's motif, God's policy changes from judgment to blessing. On the day they lay the foundation of the temple, the hail and the blight and the mildew cease.

And the pomegranate, the vine, the fig tree and the olive tree are going to yield their fruit. On the very day, He says, you look at the calendar, mark the day. Always before that your crops were failing and getting blighted and destroyed.

From the day you lay that foundation stone, you will notice your crops prosper. And that same lesson is true for us. Where is the temple of God right now on earth? There is not a temple in Jerusalem.

We are the temple of God. Have we laid the foundation stone? Is the temple of God being built in our soul or not? Are we in line for hail or are we in line to say hail? Hail to the Lord of our lives. Hail to the head of all things to the church.

Well, back to Revelation chapter 12. Now, having covered the end of chapter 11, we looked at this last time, the great sign appearing in heaven, the woman clothed and so on. I just want to point out one thing that I didn't mention last time in this about Satan.

Because we were talking about the timing of Satan's fall and when did the angels follow him out of heaven and so on. There's an interesting thing to note here in the fourth verse. Talking about the great fiery red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, seven dyed ends on his head, his tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.

This is a little bit of a mistranslation. And if you want to correct your New King James there, the word translated drew there is present indicative, draws. His tail draws or drags is really a better translation.

His tail drags a third of the stars of heaven. It's ongoing action in present time. Wherever the dragon moves around in the heavens, he drags a third of the stars around with him.

They are already in his train before they get hurled to earth. It's not like they're up there and his tail suddenly wraps around them and slings them to the earth. Wherever he goes, his tail drags a third of the stars.

They're already following him. And when he's cast to earth, they come with him. So this is an indication that the division of the angels, division of the stars, if you will, has already been made.

In the present time, his tail is dragging this third around. But they haven't left heaven until this point. And so, the threw them to the earth is not present.

It's aorist. At a point of time, his tail drags them down to the earth. And this happened in the past.

Generally speaking, when you have a second aorist like this, you're looking at action, completed action in past time. So, you have the child being born, and the child is caught

up to God and his throne in verse 5. And there's no mention of the life of Christ, no mention of his work on the cross. The child is born and he's caught up to heaven.

If this was the only scripture we had, we would think, well, that was fast. The angels must have come down and grabbed him out of the manger and just taken him straight to heaven. But we have other passages, other prophetic passages of scripture that are much like this, don't we? You might remember the passage that Jesus read over in, I think it's Luke chapter 4, where he goes and reads a passage of scripture from Isaiah, where he quotes from Isaiah and he says, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.

This is Isaiah 49, verse 8 and following. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

But you remember that when he quotes that, he breaks off right in the middle of that verse that goes on to talk about the great and terrible day of the Lord. He stops right in the middle of the quotation and he doesn't complete it. That original verse is kind of like the verse that we have in front of us, where it skips directly over the day of vengeance, everything between proclaiming the year of the Lord and the day of vengeance.

Isaiah 61.1 is the second part of Jesus' quotation. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me. This is Isaiah 61.

To preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And that's where Jesus stopped.

But in Isaiah 61, it goes on to say, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. It goes straight across from the proclamation of the day of the Lord, which Jesus did at the first advent, to the fulfillment of the day of vengeance and the comforting of those who mourn, which is the second advent. And in that one verse, verse 2 of Isaiah 61, you go from the first advent to the second advent seamlessly.

You skip 2,000 years of church age history, you skip the cross, you skip everything else, just as our child being caught up to heaven verse does. And there are several other examples like this, where prophetic passages, when they have a single object in view, can skip a lot. And as I mentioned, I think Luke chapter 16, when you have the rich man and Lazarus, skips a lot, because it has a single point in view.

So this is another example of that sort of thing. Then it says in verse 7, War broke out in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels

fought. But they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

Now this warfare has been going on for a long time. This angelic warfare has been going on ever since Satan fell. It's reflected in the book of Daniel.

It's reflected in what God says in the garden, that there will be enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between his seed and the woman's seed. It is reflected, I think, in the mythologies that you have around the world, these half-remembered truths of warfare amongst the gods, that you have in Greek mythology, Roman mythology, Persian, Babylonian, all of the ancient mythologies talk about these gods and demigods, and their conflicts, and their wars. And this has a grain of truth going back to the days when the angels and their conflicts were better known to human beings than they are today.

So, this is a specific manifestation. Another recollection of this warfare is in the book of Jude. Remember when Jude talks in verse 9 of his single chapter book, he says, Yet Michael the archangel in contending with the devil.

We have the same two players in Jude verse 9 that we have in Revelation 12 verse 7. It's the devil versus Michael. Lucifer versus Michael. You have the same thing in Jude.

Back when Moses died, which is 3400 years ago, these same two angels squared off. Now, what were they fighting over? Jude 9 says, Michael the archangel in contending with the devil when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, and so on. Have you ever asked yourself this question? What's the big deal about the body of Moses? Why did the devil want the body of Moses, and why did Michael keep him from getting it? We should just stop, take about a minute, and just ponder on that.

Why would Satan want the body of Moses? Why would he be willing to duke it out with Michael, the archangel? Why would he want that body? Does he fight over everybody's body, or just that particular one? What would have happened if Michael had lost, and Satan had gotten the body of Moses? Then what? This is really kind of a cryptic passage, isn't it? What is Satan's objective? What's he trying to do? Of course, that's kind of a loaded question. He has several objectives. But in relation to the people of God, to narrow that down a little bit, what is God trying to do with his people, and what is Satan trying to stop him from doing with his people? God wants a people who will reflect his glory, who will be obedient, and operate in faith, right? That's what God has asked for.

What does God require of you, O man, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? What is the first and greatest commandment? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. The second, love your neighbor as yourself. Operate in faith, and hope, and love.

How could Satan counter those objectives if he can get control of the body of Moses? This is directly related to our study, because the nation of Israel has just been formed at the Exodus. We went through that book. And Israel has just now formed.

That's the beginning of the age of Israel proper, in terms of the nation. And here you have the end of the age of Israel. At the beginning, you have Satan and Michael fighting over the body of Moses.

What are they fighting about at the end? It's going to be the same basic objective in the conflict. Why is there a war in heaven? And why are Satan and his angels fighting Michael and his angels? What are they fighting about? Are they arguing over planets or galaxies? What are they fighting over? Well, we get a clue from Jude, verse 9. Because it's essentially the same thing. You start out fighting over the body of Moses.

What does Moses universally represent in Scripture? The Law of God. The Word of God. The authority and the witness of the Pentateuch is Moses.

The only written record of the Word of God has come to the people of God through Moses. He is the guy who came down from the mountain with his face glowing. He is the guy who came down and said, this is what God has said.

He wrote Genesis. He wrote Exodus. He wrote Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy.

All of that has come from the pen of one man. Everything the people of God know has come to them. All of the Word of God that they have in their possession has come through Moses.

What's going to happen if Moses comes walking back and says, hey, I'm back from the dead and let me tell you, I just had a fresh talk with God and I've got some fresh information for you here. And he is animated and controlled and speaking at the behest of Satan. The entire program of God for his people can be derailed, can be perverted, can be Satan masquerades as an angel of light.

He is the father of lies. He's been a liar from the beginning. And he's going to take everything that has come to Israel, come to the people of God through Moses, and pervert it and twist it and render them completely ineffective.

Nobody will know what to believe. Well, Moses said this. Yeah, but yesterday Moses said that.

Now what do we believe? If you think about it, it's a brilliant strategic plan. Get a hold of the corpse of Moses, animate the thing and go down there and tell people a bunch of goofy stuff. And they won't know what to believe.

Well, now do we believe Moses A or Moses B, old Moses or new Moses? It's all confusion.

Maybe the first Moses was the bogus one and this is the real one. Because only God can bring back from the dead.

And look, here he is. So this was a big deal, to deceive the people of God. I don't think there's any question, whatever else you want to say, that if Satan had gotten control of the body of Moses, he would have used it to deceive the people of God.

That's his goal. That's his objective. He's a liar from the beginning.

What do you think his goal is at the end of the age of Israel? To deceive the people of God. And this angelic war, remember he is angry at being cast out of heaven in the latter part of the tribulation period. And the angel says, woe to you people on the earth, because he knows that his time is short.

And he's going to take out his frustration on you. And what's he going to do? He's going to try to get control. He's already got the Gentiles, and the Antichrist, and all the rest of that.

What he needs is that remnant. Those people up in the hills. Remember the warnings that Jesus gave over in Matthew 24? If somebody says this, don't believe it.

If somebody says that, don't believe it. If it were possible, even the very elect would be deceived. Remember all of those warnings? Why? That's what Satan is going to try to do.

And without this warfare, without these demons, and Satan being controlled, and battled back, he would probably succeed. If it were possible, he would deceive the very elect. But it's not possible, because Michael and his angels are going to fight with the dragon and his angels, just as Michael did at the beginning.

From beginning to end. It's just like the hail. You have hail at the beginning, hail at the end.

You've got this conflict of Michael and Satan at the beginning. You've got the conflict of Michael and Satan at the end. And it's all about deceiving the people of God.

The spirit of Antichrist is already at work. What is that spirit? In a word. Big D, little F. It's deception.

Starts with a capital D, ends with deception. Deception. That's the spirit of Antichrist.

To deceive, to pervert, to distort, to derail, to divert, to get our eyes off of God, off of the Word of God, onto anything else. Let's walk Moses down into the camp. That'll distract them.

Let's perform lying signs and wonders during the 70th week. Let's get those people to come down out of the hills. They're up there in a place of safety.

God's providing for them. He's feeding them. He's nourishing them for a time, times and half a time.

If we can't go to them, we've got to get them to come to us. Let's pretend to be the Messiah. Let's do some Messiah type miracles and the people will come to us and we can whack them.

We can eradicate them. We will defeat God's plan and purpose because if those people are wiped out, God's plan and purpose is thwarted because God has promised to preserve them. God has promised that that is his remnant.

And so it's all going to fail if he can succeed. So that's what this warfare is all about. Same participants you had back at the beginning of Israel, you have it at the end of Israel.

So, how did Michael confront Satan in Jude 9? Dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke you, even in the midst of this conflict. And remember, Satan was an archangel. He was a cherub and so was Michael.

They are more or less equals. And so, when he confronts Lucifer, when he confronts Satan, he doesn't say, I know you. I was there when you goofed up the first time and start giving him a big bunch of grief, verbal abuse.

Even standing toe to toe with an equal like this, he says, The Lord rebuke you. May the Lord put you in your place. It's not by might nor by power.

It's God's Spirit. It's God's Word. And these people who are up in the mountains, how are they going to keep from being sucked in by this deception that's going to be perpetrated by the very same Satan? What is the Word of God? Where is the testimony, the faithful witness? What are the words of Jesus Christ? If they say, He's out here in the wilderness, He's out there, don't believe them, Jesus said.

And these people are going to have to take that Scripture to the bank, because they're going to be tempted. It's going to be tiresome. It's going to be like the children of Israel in the wilderness.

How long do we have to eat this manna? Oh, the leeks and the garlicks. We're up here. It's awful.

We've got no TV. We've got no Nintendo up here. Our kids are griping and complaining.

And it's tedious. And we've been up here a year. Now we've been up here two years.

We've been up here two and a quarter years. How long do we have to wait? Didn't the Lord say He would come back? People are going to start getting impatient and antsy, like those souls under the altar. How long, oh Lord? And when a voice cries in the wilderness

and says, He is here.

He has come. Deliverance is at hand. Come and get the refreshments and all of that.

It's going to be a temptation. What is going to keep them from falling for it? It is the Word of God. The Lord rebuke you.

It is the power and presence of God that we have to cling to. And it's the same for us. We look at the future and apply these principles just like we look at the past.

There are things that try to lure and tempt us away from the power of God, away from the Word of God, away from the Spirit of God, away from God's plan and purpose for our lives. We are the remnant in this generation and we are under attack from the Spirit of Antichrist. There is widespread deception.

Much of the church today has fallen for the lie. Look around. How many times have we enumerated all of the weird stuff that's going on? People are messed up on missions.

They're messed up on evangelism. They're messed up on the purpose-driven life. They're messed up on experiencing God.

They're messed up on holy laughter. They're messed up on everything in the world. Satan is throwing everything but the kitchen sink at the church today.

And a lot of the church is buying it. It's social life. It's feel-good-ism.

It's let's not preach sin. Let's preach wholeness and wellness. Let's all get together and hail fellow well-met.

And rah rah rah and so on. And it's a deception. It's a deception.

And the people of God are being led out of the mountains, out of the place where God has put our souls to operate in faith, to seasonally hold of righteousness and inheritance and be ready for the kingdom. People are being lured out and decimated, lured out and destroyed, lured out and made ineffective and fruitless by the same spirit of antichrist. God has gone to a lot of trouble to give us his word and his spirit.

And we have got to hold fast to what we have. It is no less important for us to be faithful than it is for these people in the mountains. No less than it was for the people of Israel.

That second generation who grew up in the wilderness, learning to trust God and his provision. Those are the ones that crossed in and laid hold of the land and the inheritance under Joshua. Well, that's what's going on in chapter 12.

It's a big deal that Satan is down on earth. It's a big deal that Michael and his angels are having to fight him because this is the power of God at work on behalf of the people of

God. God is literally moving heaven and earth to preserve the way of his saints.

And he's got legions of angels fighting on their behalf, just as he has done in times past. You remember when the prophet has his servant and they're all in a panic and the prophet prays and says, Open my servant's eyes. And he looks and he sees the chariots of God ranging on the hillside.

That's the angelic hosts fighting on behalf of God's people. They do the same thing today. And they're going to do the same thing when the events of Revelation chapter 12 take place.

Deliverance and strength in the kingdom of our God, verse 10, and the power of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. If there's any doubt about the timing of this casting down, this is the accuser that's been accusing the brethren day and night. That's us.

We're the brethren. We've been getting accused. That's why Jesus is up there interceding.

Satan accuses. The Lord Jesus deflects all of that. But he's cast down.

And it says here that the brethren overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. What is it about the blood of the Lamb that makes this victory possible? How does this work itself out in practical terms? This is not like a little bottle of holy liquid that you splatter and everything's great. What does it mean to overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony? Well, that's what we'll look at when we come back from our break.