

16b REV

Let's continue our study now in Revelation chapter 13 picking up at verse 11. John says, Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. Now we know, and I said this without really any proof, that the beast is a single individual, it's the Antichrist.

We know this from other passages like 2 Corinthians chapter 2 where Paul is affirming to the Thessalonians that it is our presence on the earth that is the counterbalance and the counteracting force to the spirit of Antichrist which has been at, what is the spirit of Antichrist? What's the spirit of Antichrist? It's Satan. And Satan has been at work in human history ever since the garden and he's been at work ever since Jesus left. And so when Paul told the Thessalonians the spirit of Antichrist is already at work he's just saying Satan is alive and well.

I think that was Hal Lindsey's second book after Late Great Planet Earth was Satan is Alive and Well on planet earth or something. It's true. And that's what he's saying in 2 Corinthians 2. And I'll just read you a little bit of that.

Brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. There was some confusion. Paul had already been to Thessalonica, had already taught on this subject, that after Paul left, people started coming in and saying other things and people were starting to get confused.

And they were saying, well, I got a letter from Paul here that says that your understanding is not correct about this. And Paul said, don't let anybody tell you any different than what I told you when I was there. Whether a spirit, a word, or a letter, don't say, well, when I heard him over in Colossae, he said something else.

You just remember what you heard. And so he's going to review it briefly. He says, let no one deceive you by any means, for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first.

The word translated falling away, we've been over this dozens of times, it's apostasia, apostasis. Stasis means to stand, apo means away. It's the standing away.

Apostasy means you stand away from orthodox doctrine. It doesn't mean to fall. That would be apopipto, to fall away.

Pipto means to fall. This is not fall, this is stand. It's the standing away.

And I can't help the fact that, I don't care what the church fathers or anybody else said, I don't care what they teach in seminary, I don't care what the lexicon says, I am telling you that apostasia means to stand away and it is a direct scriptural reference to the

rapture. And I and Dr. Walvert and lots of other people that have their heads screwed on straight understand that and everybody else is just in the weeds. You just have to trust me on this.

Apostasia means to stand away. That day, the day of the antichrist, when he is revealed, will not come until there comes first the standing away. That's the subject of this chapter.

He says, look, let's talk about the day of the Lord. That day will not come unless the apostasia comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, the son of Apolia, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God. This is the tribulational temple.

We just covered this in our Ezekiel study on Tuesday night. There are two future temples yet to be built. One is the tribulational temple.

They've already got the plans. I gave you the website. You can look at that.

I went all through that website the other night after class. And, oh, beautiful, beautiful. If you haven't had a chance to look at that yet, you need to go look.

I forget what it was, templeinstitute.org. Go there and look at the photographs. They're really interesting, by the way. Not only do they have the cups and the shovels and the vessels for catching blood and beautiful.

You would not imagine what these little things look like until you see pictures of them. I had no idea how they looked. But these things are faithful reproductions based on Jewish tradition and memory and iconography and so forth.

And they're beautiful. They're just beautiful, beautiful implements. The shovels and the little cups and all the other accoutrements.

The menorah, what a thing of beauty that is. They have got the table for the showbread. And wait until you see that thing.

If you haven't seen a showbread table until you've seen the photograph. These are built. They're sitting over there in vaults.

They're done. They're ready. All they've got to do is put them on a hand truck and roll them in and they're ready to go.

Assuming that they won't use a hand truck. They'll probably have Levites carry them reverently in. But it's fascinating.

They even have a mock-up of the Ark of the Covenant. But they're careful to tell you. Now, this is just a mock-up because the real thing is hidden in the Temple Mount.

And when the time comes, we'll roust that thing out of there and put it in the Holy of Holies. So this is just a mock-up for training purposes. But they have a picture of their mock-up.

But they haven't milled another Ark of the Covenant because they fully expect to use the original. They've got pictures of the breastplate of the high priest with all of the stones. They've got the breastplate itself.

And you remember we studied the different colors of thread. The red thread and the blue thread. And I'm getting off my subject.

But I will tell you, it's really fascinating because I picture it, and I think they may be goofed up on this. I picture it as basically white with ornamentation in these other colors. But the one that they have made, it's like you took all three colors of yarn and knitted the thing all the way through.

I've got a sweater that looks like this when you get up close. And I've also got a tie like this. My tie, when you stand far away across the room, looks brown.

But when you get up close, you can see that it's actually got these circles of red and blue and yellow. And the proportions and the values of those colors, when you stand far away and they blend together, it looks brown. But you actually have to wear it with blue trousers because it's blue and red and yellow.

Well, that's how the thread is. That's how the yarn is on this jacket, the accoutrements for the high priest. It's all intertwined.

And when you get up close, you can see the scarlet and blue and all of that. But when you stand away, it just looks muckily. It looks kind of a vague grayish purple color.

It's really worth seeing. So look that up when you get a chance. But the reason I talk about that is, look at what Paul says.

This Antichrist is going to sit as God in the Temple of God. That's the Tribulational Temple. That's the Temple where sacrifice and offering were made to God for the first three and a half years under agreement with the Antichrist.

And then, midway through the week, he cuts it off, Daniel 9. And they can't sacrifice anymore. And ultimately, that Temple is going to get knocked down and destroyed in the disasters and catastrophes that take place in the last half of the week, culminating with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Mount of Olives, the splitting of the Mount, the rearrangement of Jerusalem, so that Jerusalem will be rebuilt. All of that old natty, ratty, tatty-looking Byzantine church on every corner.

And here's where Jesus stopped and wiped His brow. And here's the church that wiped

His brow. All the rest of the stuff that they've got there is all going to be knocked down.

God is just going to wipe that stuff right off and clear the rubble away. And the Lord Jesus Christ is going to build Jerusalem back the way it ought to be. And He's going to build the Temple back according to the specifications that we've seen in Ezekiel.

But this is the third Temple. This is the Tribulational Temple. And He's going to set Himself up, showing Himself that He is God.

He's basically going to say, Hi there, I'm God, worship me. He's inspired by the dragon, as we've seen. Paul says in verse 5, 2 Thessalonians 2, Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? Now, this is a rebuke.

Paul says, why am I having to write this down? Of course, I'm glad, because we wouldn't know it otherwise. We weren't there. And apparently nobody took any notes that survived when Paul was there speaking.

But Paul is basically complaining. He says, look, I already told you this. What's the matter with you that you're being shaken from your faith? Now, you and I have heard the teaching of the Word of God, and we don't want the Lord Jesus Christ looking over His desk at the judgment seat and saying, look at the outcome of your life.

Don't you remember the things that I said? Do you not remember what I put in the inspired Bible that sat there on your shelf and in your lap? Why did you do this? Do you not remember that when I was on the earth, I said these things? I gave you my disciples. I gave you the apostles. I gave you a record.

I gave you 166 books. Do you not remember? I hope that whatever other rebukes I get, I at least don't get the rebuke, did you not remember what I said? Jesus said, the one that has my word and keeps it, He's the one that loves me. Do you not remember? When I was still with you, I told you these things.

And now you know what is restraining. Paul says, you shouldn't be soon shaken in mind. I shouldn't be having to write this, because you already know what is restraining, what is preventing any fulfillment of the tribulational prophecies, any fulfillment of Antichrist.

A lot of people try to say that the 70th week has already come and gone. Right after Jesus left, time just kept running, and it's fulfilled. It's over with.

These are your Amillennialists and Kingdom Now crowd. You just can't believe. I won't even waste your time telling you all the goofy aberrations.

But a lot of people say, well, it already happened. You know why they say that? They make the same cotton-picking mistake that these people made, and Second Thessalonians 2, saying, look at Caesar. He's the reborn Antiochus Epiphanes.

Look at what he did to the saints. Look at how the temple was knocked down. Look at how Rome set themselves up for deification and worship.

All of the 70th week prophecies have already been fulfilled. Nonsense. Poppycock.

Hogwash. It's not true. Paul says, look, I've told you about this, and I'm telling you again.

That day can't come unless the church leaves. If the church is here, you're not in tribulation. Do you not remember that when I was with you, I told you these things? If we're here, the Antichrist is not.

It's just that simple. That's why we believe and understand and affirm the truth of Scripture that says the rapture is pre-tribulational. Pre-tribulational.

Not just pre-wrath. Pre-tribulational. That day cannot come.

The man of sin cannot be revealed. Look at what it says here. Now you know what is restraining that he may be revealed in his own time.

What is it that's restraining? What has Paul mentioned? He hasn't mentioned anything. He hasn't said word one about the Holy Spirit or anything, has he? So how can we know at this point in chapter 2 what it is that's restraining? That day cannot come unless there comes first the standing away. Now you know what it is that's restraining him.

You haven't stood away. You're still on duty. You're still shining the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God to the world.

You are still maintaining the presence of the Holy Spirit. That's why the man of sin cannot be revealed. God is suppressing the spirit of Antichrist.

Generation after generation, year after year, day after day, hour after hour. Nobody needs to call up to heaven and say, Oh Lord, bind Satan. I bind you, Satan.

I bind you in the name of Jesus Christ. Nonsense. He's already suppressed.

He is restrained. His spirit can only work where people cultivate it and allow it because God has got him damped. He's got a big wet blanket thrown over Satan and it's us.

When we are faithful and we're obedient, he is restrained. When we are removed and that big wet blanket on Satan is taken out of the way, the man of sin is going to be revealed and literally all hell is going to break loose on earth. So Paul says at this point, Now you know what is restraining that he may be revealed in his own time.

Not our time. His time. His time is not our time.

We are not of the night or of the darkness. We are of the day. The mystery of lawlessness is already at work.

Only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan with all power, signs and lying wonders and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish.

Among those who perish. Why is it that Satan can't do all of these lying signs and wonders and mighty works? God the Holy Spirit is here in our midst restraining. Satan can do nothing until God allows it.

He can't overcome any saints unless God allows it. He couldn't harm Job unless God allowed it. And he can't have his day until we are taken out of the way.

And Satan is agitating and he is wanting to get on with it and prove his point and get his man in control of the world. And every time he looks over at God, God just shakes his head. No, not yet.

Not yet. I've got my people down there. I'm not finished with them.

When I get finished, then you can try your stuff out. But not yet. Not yet.

Not yet. And Satan just has to wring his hands and wait. He has to wait for God's time so that he can empower the beast.

Then the coming of the lawless one, according to the working of Satan, all power, signs, lying wonders, unrighteous deception among those who perish. Because why? Why will these people be deceived, tortured, and made so miserable that they call for death and death will not come? Why? Why are they in that position? They did not receive the love of the truth that they might be delivered. It's the same in every age.

It's no different in the tribulation than it is right now or than it was a thousand years ago, two thousand years ago, five thousand years ago. We either receive the love of the truth when it is offered to us or we don't. We either decide we're going to value the word of God more than our necessary food or we don't.

And if we don't, our life can be just as miserable as these poor sods who are going to suffer all of these horrible catastrophes in the tribulation. You can be just as miserable. You can be just as desperate.

You can be just as frantic looking for some relief and some happiness. Why? They did not receive the love of the truth. Notice, it's available.

It is offered. It's being held out in the hand and it's not received. They didn't receive it.

They didn't take it alongside that they might be delivered. For this reason, God will send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie. You can find a lot of people, you

can talk to a lot of people who have opted for strong delusion.

And the one impressive feature of someone who is strongly deluded is they are cocksure. They are absolutely convinced that they are right and that you are some poor benighted fool believing ancient Hebrew myths and legends and you poor slob, what's the matter with you? Come into the age of reason. Come into the 21st century.

Get out from under your superstitions and your primitive spookiness and wake up and listen to science. That's what they are going to say. Strong delusion.

Did not receive a love for the truth. Even the human mind ought to be able to comprehend this. If you are only going to go by things that you can verify by the senses, you might as well be a dog.

You might as well be a chimp. You might as well be an orangutan or a penguin. Just become an animal.

Just be an animal and only go by what you can sense. We have higher perceptions. We have consciousness.

We have intuition. We have logic. We have the ability to deduce and to infer and to work in the abstract.

There would be no art. There would be no poetry. There would be no music.

By the way, none of these things could have evolved according to evolution because they serve no survival purpose. Ancient cavemen in an evolutionary perspective didn't write a poem and survive the saber-toothed tiger or something. Why would that evolve? What is the evolutionary value of poetry? There is none.

None of the higher cultivations and achievements of civilization have any meaning when it comes to evolution. Their own system is just blindingly illogical. How could poetry ever evolve? What good is a poem? What are you going to do? Here comes the hordes over the hill, going to wipe you out and carry off all your women and destroy your village.

What are you going to do? Go out there and say, quote, the raven nevermore? To be or not to be? That is the question. It's useless. It has no survival benefit whatsoever.

Why would it evolve? It wouldn't. It couldn't. And it didn't.

Our higher faculties are God-given. And they are given to us to perceive and elucidate the truth of God. And people pervert them and believe the lie.

They go for the strong delusion. There is no explanation for the higher levels of consciousness that man enjoys, except that God gave them. It's just that simple.

But of course they can't see it because they are deluded. They do not receive the love of the truth. God sends them strong delusion so they believe the lie, so that they may be condemned.

Why? Who did not believe the truth, but instead had pleasure in unrighteousness. There are only two choices. You either believe the truth of God or you delve into unrighteousness.

There is no other option. It's black and white. There are no shades of grey.

It's either the truth of God or it's unrighteousness. It's either light or darkness. God is light.

In Him is no darkness at all. So, Paul comforts and encourages these people. He says in verse 15, Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle.

We get it by the epistle and we stand fast. We are not moved. We are not shaken.

We are not disturbed. And we don't start going off on wild tangents. But this is the Antichrist.

This is the individual. He is the man of sin. He is not men of sin.

He is not a country of sin. He is not a corporation of sin or a committee of sin. He is a man.

And this illuminates our understanding when we get over to Revelation chapter 13. Because as we continue in verse 11, it says, I saw another beast. If the first beast is a man, and this is another of the same kind, then what is the second beast? He is also a man.

This is a second individual. This is like the vice president of Antichristdom. He is the alternate.

He is the standby. He is the stunt double. In reality, he is what we fondly refer to as the false prophet.

You have the beast and the false prophet. This second beast is the equivalent of John the Baptist. What John the Baptist was to the Lord Jesus, this guy is for the Antichrist.

He is his mouthpiece, his spokesperson, his advocate, his goodwill ambassador, his press secretary, his biggest fan, and so on. I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. Two horns.

What do horns represent? Power. But these are the horns of a lamb. So this is happy

power.

This is good power. This is not warlike power. The false prophet, when he comes along, isn't brandishing a machete and saying, listen to me or else.

He's got two spheres of influence, and it's innocuous. Everybody says, well, isn't he wonderful? Isn't he a great guy? You've got to like this guy. Look at him.

And he's got a double type of influence. What are these two horns? I don't know. Maybe it's television and the internet.

That would be my guess. Or something along those lines. Two areas of influence.

Two spheres of power. And I'm telling you looking at technology today, if you dominate TV, and you dominate the internet, you have got the world by the collar. And you can make it listen.

And sometimes the two cooperate. I saw a program the other night. I was busy doing something else.

I glanced up and here's this program. And it was something about the wildest videos of the internet. And all the things that I spent my time filtering out of the email system at Buckner were all on TV.

And this guy lip syncing some Romanian song and all these other weird videos that have been popular on the internet. Well, they put them on TV. So you can get your TV on the internet.

You can get your internet on TV. And whoever has broadband has access to all these kinds of things. And so what will be the means of communication, would you guess, if the Antichrist came a couple of years from now and his press secretary wanted to reach the world, what means do you think he would use? TV, satellite TV, cable TV, broadcast TV, and the internet.

If you saturate that media, everybody is going to see and hear you, probably simultaneously. So if I had to guess what the two horns of the lamb are, because who thinks TV is a bad thing? Who thinks the internet is a bad thing? There are bad things on TV and on the internet, but we look at those like we look at cars. Lots of drunk driving and vehicle wrecks, and one of the biggest killers of people in the United States is automobiles.

But nobody raises a human cry and says, Boo on automobiles, let's outlaw them. Let's have car control. Nobody is arguing for that.

Why? We think cars are good, and they are just misused and abused when bad things happen. Well, that's how people look at TV and the internet. So that's what I think the

two horns of the lamb are, or something analogous.

He will exercise all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and he causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. This is the media guy. He is the webmaster.

He is the guru. He is the MC. He is the advocate for the Antichrist.

He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. Now, who does that remind you of? Who in the Bible do you immediately think of when you say fire from heaven? Elijah. And who was Elijah for Jesus? John the Baptist.

This guy is Elijah and John the Baptist rolled into one for the Antichrist. And he is going to call that fire from heaven. Now, how will he do that? Some people think, well, UFOs, that's satanic, and a flying saucer is going to send a bolt of energy down.

I don't know. But lying signs and wonders are going to take place. And Satan does have power, and he does know the laws of physics, and he is going to be able to make weird things happen on the earth when the Holy Spirit is gone and we are gone.

Weird signs and wonders are going to happen on this earth. Miracles will be performed by the power and wisdom of Satan. And one of them is going to be on behalf of the second beast, this false prophet guy, is going to call down fire from heaven.

Is it going to incinerate somebody that is opposing him? It doesn't say. Is he just going to say, watch this, see that tree, and there goes the lightning? It could be something like that. But he is going to call down fire, and it is going to work.

And everybody is going to be wowed. They will see it on TV, they will see it on the internet, and they are going to say, this guy is the real deal. He deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he is granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

Now, what kind of an image do you think would be in use in the modern day? This isn't going to be a giant golden statue on the plain of Dura, is it? This is going to be media. This is going to be on a TV screen, on a CRT, on your flat screen TFT 21 inch Christmas present monitor or something. He was granted power.

Notice it is in the sight of the beast. It is his connection to the first beast. It is his connection to the Antichrist.

Satan is at the controls of the man who is the Antichrist. And Satan is going to broker power and delegate power and give the secret for doing these wonders to the second

guy. And they are going to have access to supernatural bad magic.

And Satan is going to give it to them. He causes... He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast that the image of the beast should speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. Now, this is going to be some high powered technology of some sort.

Do you remember the mark of the beast? We think it might be an implant or some other kind of technology. All of this is going to take place via technology. And people who are not in sync and in harmony, this technology is going to track them down and they are going to die.

You are either for him or you are dead. That is the plan. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand and on their foreheads.

He is the technology man. He is the guru that makes the media and the technology happen. No one may buy or sell except he who has the mark or the name of the beast or the number of his name.

So you don't have to worry about getting a credit card or getting any other kind of a thing while we are around because none of this is going to be revealed until we are gone. There is no first beast, there is no second beast, there is no mark of the beast until we are gone. So you and I do not have to sweat.

People used to say when credit cards first came out, oh no, that could be the mark of the beast. Maybe I shouldn't have digital money on the web or shouldn't use PayPal or one thing or another. Mark of the beast.

Social security number back in World War II, they thought it was going to be the mark of the beast. Don't worry about it, it doesn't apply to us. We are not going to be here when this takes place.

You have to have the beast and the false prophet and Satan walking the earth more or less incarnate for this to happen. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast for it is the number of a man.

His number is 666. This is something we will save for next time. I've got a whole separate set of things to say about 666 and the mark of the beast.

But look at chapter 14. Then I looked, and behold, a lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000, and having his father's name written on their foreheads, and I heard a voice from heaven like the voice of many waters and like the voice of loud thunder. Now, there is a lamb standing on Mount Zion in chapter 14.

Who is the lamb? Lord Jesus Christ. If he is standing on Zion, what has happened? Second coming has taken place. Resurrection of the Old Testament saints has taken place.

144,000, as we have already noted, are representative of all of the Old Testament saints. 12,000 from each tribe. And the 144,000, whether they were martyred, whether they were sold unto the altar, they are all standing with him on the mountain, aren't they? Resurrection of the Old Testament saints has taken place.

We have made a jump forward in time here, haven't we? This is a new vision, so to speak. And it picks up after the second coming, after the Mount of Olives is split, after the battle of Armageddon, after the events of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And now the lamb is standing on Mount Zion and he is surrounded by the 144,000.

By the way, the 144,000 do not represent all of the Old Testament saints who will be resurrected. Who do they represent specifically? The faithful, the straight arrow, the qualified, those who will pass under the rod and be able to go up to Mount Zion. If you were gathered in the plain and didn't pass under the rod, you were rejected, you're gathered out of the nations, but you don't go in.

Remember that? So, these are the faithful, those who waited for a city whose founder and builder is God, those who are Hebrews 11 type of Old Testament saints. They have the Father's name written on their foreheads. This is a special reward for the faithful.

What did Jesus promise to the overcomers in Revelation chapter 2 and 3? What's one of those rewards? I will write on him my new name. Some of us in the church age will receive the name of Christ written on us, his new name. And he'll give us a name that only he and we know if we qualify.

Similar thing for the Old Testament saints. Special mark for the faithful. They are distinguished.

Star differs from star in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection. All of this politically correct, everybody's equal, level playing field, we are all one in Christ and brotherhood, nonsense. There will be last, there will be first, there will be graduations, there will be rewards, and there will be disciplines.

Some people are going to be rewarded and have the Father's name stamped on them. Others are going to be outside the land weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth. God is not an equal opportunity rewarder.

He gives everybody an equal opportunity, based on who picks up that opportunity. What a tragedy for us to see this so clearly and understand it so well and fail ourselves to go for it, to be those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. What does the blood of Christ mean to us? Does it matter? Is it important? What are we going to do with the

great gift of redemption, the great gift of propitiation, the great gift of reconciliation? What are we going to do with it? How are we going to spend the hours and minutes that remain to us in this life? Wouldn't it be great to be like these people, to be rewarded, have the new name of Christ on us, and to be useful in His service and reflect His glory? These people have the Father's name written on their foreheads.

There is a voice from heaven like the voice of many waters and like the voice of loud thunder, and I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang, as it were, a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders, and no one could learn that song except the 144,000 who were redeemed from the earth. Who is it that's going to play a harp in the resurrection? The same people that played the harp in history.

Israelites. David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, was a guitar picker. He was a harp player.

These people are going to play harps. This is not the church. It doesn't say anything about the church having a harp here.

The 144,000 sing a song that only they know, and harpists are going to accompany them just as the original worship music in Israel was accompanied by the harp. The psalms were written to harp music by David, and these people are going to come right back, and I'll give you one guess who's likely to be leading this music. What did we see about the identity of the prince who's going to sit on the throne and rule as regent under the Lord Jesus Christ in Israel? David himself.

It says it over and over and over in the Old Testament. I gave you those passages in our Ezekiel study, and I would bet a shekel or two that it's going to be David himself who will be leading the orchestra and probably playing some solo harp riffs during this song. Harpists playing their harps.

They sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures and the elders, and no one could learn that song except the 144,000. Now notice, they are standing on Mount Zion, and yet they are singing this song before the throne and before the four living creatures. You could say, well, maybe the throne is David's throne, not if it's got the four living creatures.

So, you get the idea that they are almost two places at once here. These 144,000 are standing on Mount Zion with the Lamb, and yet they are singing this song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. Who do the elders represent? The 24 elders.

Church, 24 courses of the Melchizedekian priesthood. No one could learn that song except the 144,000. You know, people tend to think, well, the poor Old Testament saints, they just kind of get a second best salvation and the church really has it.

Not at all. It's different, but the quality of it is no less. They are going to sing a song that we can't sing.

They are going to have privileges that we don't have. There is nothing wrong with Old Testament salvation. Different program, different purpose, different aspect of God's glory reflected, but it is a wonderful and glorious set of promises that God has made for them.

So they are going to sing about that. No one can learn that song except the 144,000 redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins.

This doesn't mean they never got married, never had kids. This means they did not defile themselves. Now this defilement symbolizes a lot of things.

Remember, this is a symbolic picture. Most of the ancient religions involved sex. That's just about as simply as I can put it.

If you look up all of the ancient heathen religions, priestesses and one thing and another, all of them involved defilement with women. It just went hand in hand. That's one of the reasons that Paul emphasized the fact that women would not stand up and preside in church services in the New Testament church, because there was to be no similarity with the competing religions.

Women standing up, that's what happened down at the temple of Venus. That's what happened with the religion that worshipped Ashtar and the high places in Israel. All the way through history, this temple prostitution was rampant.

And so Paul said, we're not even going to have the appearance of evil. Women don't even stand up and say anything in church in this culture. We're a bit more relaxed in our day because that comparison isn't there to be made.

But the principle is still there that God has vested authority in men in the church and that's where it resides. That's just how it works. Same thing in marriage.

Same thing in a family. Same thing in a nation. But these are the ones who were not defiled with women.

This speaks volumes. This doesn't really have anything to do with physical relations. This has everything to do with spiritual faithfulness.

This virginity means purity with regard to faith in God. That's why these are the 144,000. That's why they have the name of God on their foreheads.

They have not compromised. They have not polluted. They have not conflated.

They have not syncretized. They haven't in any way watered down the word of God and faith in God. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

These were redeemed from among men being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb and in their mouth was found no deceit for they are without fault before the throne of God. These are those who claimed the Old Testament provision for cleansing just as we are enjoined to claim the New Testament provision for cleansing and being purified. They did it in prospect.

We do it in retrospect. They looked forward to the reality of Christ. We look back at the completed work of Christ.

But were these people sinless? Not at all. But like David, they prayed the prayer. Psalm 51, Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean.

Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Then in verse 6, we have another angel flying in the midst of heaven and we'll pick up at this point next time. I have given you a handout which I want to mention because it'll be up anybody that's followed along in other ways can get it off the FTP site.

It'll be under our Revelation handouts folder on the gtbcweb.org. But this chart gives you my view of the seals, trumpets and bowls or vials in Revelation. We've already covered the seals and trumpets. We're about to cover the bowls beginning in chapter 15 and following.

And as you can see from looking at this handout, beginning along the time of the 3rd and 4th seals, you begin to see the events of the trumpets and bowls overlap. And if you look up and down that chart, you will see, for example, when in the 4th seal, you have the sword, hunger, death and beasts, you know, tearing people up. You have the 1st, 2nd and 3rd trumpets taking place where you have a lot of violence and death beginning to take place in the earth.

Trees are burning and green grass is being destroyed. Sea creatures die. Ships are destroyed.

A great star falls from heaven. And a third of the rivers, a third of the fountains and the wormwood thing and men die. You start having death with the 3rd seal with the black horse and with the 4th, the green horse of death.

And same thing with the first three bowl judgments. You have grievous sores upon men and those who worship that have the mark of the beast. The sea turns to blood like a dead man and everything in the sea dies.

Rivers, fountains become blood in the third bowl. People are judged with this blood because they shed blood. And we just saw that earlier in our study this evening where

the faith and patience of the saints In 1310, he who leads into captivity shall go into captivity.

He who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. And you're going to see this in these vial judgments and then we'll go on and study the rest of them. But look up and down that and you'll see the parallels and how these overlap.

Why do they overlap? Because you have three different perspectives which I have labeled in large letters on your chart. The seals give man's perspective, an earthly perspective of the judgments of God in the last half of the week, 70th week. The trumpets give the angelic perspective and their participation and their influence in those judgments.

And then the bowls that we're going to look at are from God's perspective. And just look at that and you'll see that with the fourth bowl and the fifth bowl and so on God does these things and men do not repent. That's what God is looking for.

God is looking for change of mind and it doesn't happen no matter how grievous conditions get people don't turn to God and God takes that into account. Well, this is all anticipatory and we'll delve into this. We'll pick up here in chapter 14 next time.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you that we are body and bride of Christ. We live in the light and in the day and we can look forward with great expectation to the return of the Lord Jesus for us.

We don't have to worry about living through this time. We have a bright and glorious future ahead of us and we have time remaining to us to prepare for that day and for the kingdom that follows it. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts.

Help us to claim the power of the work of your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in our lives day by day. We ask it in his name. Amen.