

24b REV

Let's pick up our study here in Revelation chapter 18. We're spending a little bit of time on this because surprisingly enough it is one of the most directly applicable parts of Revelation to daily life. One of the challenges in studying prophecy is to not only recognize the future significance or the eschatological prophecy versus fulfillment, but to say well, so what and how should I then live? What difference does this make when I get up in the morning and butter my toast and pull on my shoes and go off and do the stuff I have to do? Why does this make a difference? The study of the Revelation in particular and the other end-time prophetic sections of Scripture are really useless if it doesn't affect the way we live day to day as with any other portion of Scripture.

So, I think it's especially meaningful to see the wholesale deception and the wholesale diversion of the world and its leadership and its powers and its governments under the allure and under the dazzling spell of the woman. You don't get dazzled and you don't get allured and pulled away by amateurs. I mean, this is a professional job.

Have you seen the magician on TV called Criss Angel? That guy is a magician on drugs or something. I mean, he's very trendy and modern and there's rap music playing one thing or another, but he is... The last time I saw something about him, he was hanging from hooks in his back underneath a helicopter a mile up or something. And, you know, I've seen people get suspended from the ceiling with fish hooks in their back.

Well, he had like five fish hooks in him. He was hanging a mile up from a helicopter, but he does illusions. He wanted to see how long he could run around being on fire.

So, he doused himself in this gelled gasoline and he had a suit on underneath it that was supposed to protect him for a certain amount of time. But, you know, the stuff eventually burns away. And so, he said, you know, stand by with the fire extinguishers.

I'm going to see if I can set a record here. And so, he's running around in flames. His mom is sitting in the audience and he's, you know, everyone is just... That's kind of a dangerous thing.

If the flames go the wrong way, you can't breathe. You have to keep moving. You have to get your face moving into fresh air.

You can't breathe. And so, he was moving around, moving around, moving around. And then, his eyes kind of rolled up in his head and he fell down flat.

They immediately sprayed him with the fire extinguishers. I mean, it was just like a half a second. He ran right in front of the camera, stared into it, rolled up his eyes, and fell down on the ground.

And the clothes were all flat and he wasn't in them. I mean, they played the thing like six

times and he was there. He was staring in the camera.

He fell down flat. They hosed him off and he wasn't there. And then, it turned out he was one of the guys with a fire extinguisher and he pulled off his thing and everybody cheered.

But, dazzling. I mean, when that guy is operating, you cannot take your eyes off of him. He's a long-haired, wild-eyed, freaky, kind of a modern-looking, no-holds-barred kind of a guy.

I mean, long gone is your David Copperfield with Vegas music and, you know, Spangles and some gal in a swimsuit walking around. I mean, they don't do that anymore. Now, they do these radical things.

And he raises stuff from the dead and does all kinds of bizarre things. Well, it's dazzling. It's riveting.

It's spellbinding. You can't take your eyes off of it. And maybe you need to take your eyes off of it.

Maybe you're supposed to be doing something else. You don't want to be watching this while you're driving, for example. You know, you've got those screens in your van.

Well, don't let anybody turn that on and let the driver see it or you'll be in the ditch. You just can't take your eyes off it because you can't believe what your eyes are telling you. Well, this woman... I mean, in the ancient world, how many alluring things... I mean, in those days, getting a cold drink was alluring.

I mean, just not being pursued by hordes of spear-brandishing enemies was a pretty good deal. So, the ancient version of complete enthrallment was the woman, the harlot, in these expensive garments that people rarely saw. Common people, how often do you see pearls? You know, the man who finds the pearl at a great price, sells everything he has and buys the field where it's buried because it's that rare.

So, if this had been written in the modern day and was using modern vernacular, this would be the addictive video game, the ending of J.R. and Dallas and all that, where people can't take their eyes off it. It's just something that's so... I guess now people watch, you know, American Idol or The End of Survivor or something like that. I saw where that first survivor guy is going to jail because he didn't pay his taxes.

Richard, what's his name, ran around naked, didn't pay the IRS, and he's looking at 10 to 13 years in prison, I think. Well, this is the ancient equivalent of that which you can't take your eyes off. You can't escape its spell seemingly.

You willingly go enthralled in this thing. And we have to look in our lives and make sure

that we have not allowed something to co-opt our energy and our attention and our responsibility to God to live in a way that redeems the time even though the days are evil. When you look at the verses in the middle of this chapter, it says, in one day, verse 8, her plagues will come, death and grief and famine.

It is always amazing to see someone who seems to have everything going for them. Sean Penn's little brother was just found dead this past week. The guy is young.

He's got a great future. He's famous. He's rich.

And, I don't know, they had to autopsy him to figure out what's the matter with him. I would assume it's going to be another one of these drug overdose type of things. He's Chris Penn.

He's Sean Penn's younger brother. He's got everything in the world going for him, and his life is cut short. Why? And, of course, you can think of a dozen other examples of the same kind of thing.

Why? No anchor, no stability, no set of values, no clear priorities, no ability to engage in a life of meaning and purpose and definition. It's just the woman riding the beast, and one of these days, the beast is going to reach around and consume her. In one day, her plagues will come, death, grief, and famine, and she will be burned with fire because the mighty Lord God is judging her.

This downfall, pride goeth before a fall, haughty spirit before destruction. This calamity in one hour, as we've already talked about, isn't necessarily a 60-minute clock type of hour. It means a brief period of time, devastatingly swift, it has been called.

This is drawn from Old Testament imagery. Isaiah 47, verse 9. These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness because of the multitude of your sorceries, for the great abundance of your enchantments.

This dire, swift judgment comes because of sorceries and enchantments, and what do those represent? I am appealing to some power that I believe is supernatural that is not God. Magic, sorcery, enchantment, I want to reach into what is essentially the demonic realm to get my way through, to get what I want, anything but God. People say, oh, I'm all about science, I only believe in facts, it's what I can sense, and so on.

Anything that you stand up in the place of God and say, I'm going to rely on my own logic, I'm going to rely on my own reasoning power, I'm going to rely on science and scientists and their quote-unquote integrity. I told you that story about that guy that falsified all of his data and it's wrecked like 40 years of science. You know, scientists are people like everybody else, and if they're unbelievers, they have even less reason to be honest.

If your funding depends on your results, if you go get some big grant, they say, all right, go out in the Kilimanjaro there and find something and bring it back and find us some fungus that will cure cancer or whatever. Well, what if you come back and say, well, guess what, it wasn't there. I mean, people don't want negative results, and there's a lot of pressure to publish or perish, to justify funding, to justify your tenure, to justify your position, to justify your expedition, to be seen in the eyes of your peers and so on.

Well, Jeremiah 50, verse 31, Behold, I am against you, O most haughty one, says the Lord God of hosts, for your day has come, the time that I will punish you. There is a set day and a set time. Souls under the altar, how long, O Lord? There is a set time.

There is an hour. Do not fret yourself because of evil men, the Scripture says. And we often shake our fist.

I was driving down here tonight, and traffic is one of my weak areas, and the infernal, confounded Ford van, I love that vehicle in every aspect but one. The horn on the steering wheel, Patty knows about this, a guy nearly caused me to wreck at high speed, jockeying around, cutting off, and he was pulling in behind me as I was changing lanes and trying to squeak past me, and I wanted to hit the horn. And I hit the cruise control and the windshield wipers, and it's a little tiny button on each side of the steering wheel.

If you hit the, you know, the airbag is in the middle, there's nothing there. You hit that and you have a good chance of the thing blowing up in your face. And there's all these cruise control and all this.

Well, in the dark at night, and you want to honk the horn, and there's no horn to honk. Wipers and the lights are blinking, and stuff is clicking, and the cruise control is trying to kick in, and no horn. And the guy just got away scot-free.

I didn't even get to make a noise at him. Where is the justice? Very seldom do you find one of these yo-yos getting pulled over. I saw it happen a couple of weeks ago.

It was very gratifying, but that's rare. So where is the justice? Where is the comeuppance for people who blatantly, and of course that's a minor example, but I'm going to still be satisfied when the individuals that stole my bicycles, and broke into my car, and every other injustice I've ever suffered at the hands of evil men, I could name many far worse. Patty and I were talking early this past week about the guy that nearly took my head off with a shovel.

My career would have come to a quick and untimely end if the guy had not been tackled from behind. I never saw it. I gave the guy an order, I turned around to walk off, and the guy had the shovel by the handle end, and was rearing back looking like a cross between Babe Ruth and Tiger Woods, and was going to take my head off with the shovel.

He was a loony, obviously. Got locked up, and kicked out of the Marine Corps. But, if God

hadn't had somebody who happened to see the guy in full swing, and tackled him from behind, I have no doubt that I would not have survived the incident.

So, we all see injustices, small and great. And I've been a little flippant here, but there are serious injustices. There are serious wrongs and crimes that are committed.

Egregious, heinous, horrible crimes. And there doesn't seem to be justice. God has set a time.

His time is better than our time. It's going to fulfill His purpose. It's going to reflect His glory.

But it is a time that comes. Your day has come. The time that I will punish you.

Jeremiah 50.31 The people will not be able to save themselves at that time. Now is the appointed hour. Now is the day of deliverance.

If you want to avoid the judgment of God, now is the time for us to claim His mercy and claim His grace. Receive His cleansing, His forgiveness, and His new lease on life. Isaiah 47.14 Behold, they shall be as stubble.

The fire shall burn them. They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame. It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before.

Now this is the Bible understating. The flame that is going to be produced by this judgment will not be a coal that you can come up and warm your hands by. It's not going to be a fire that you're going to sit there and roast marshmallows over.

This is going to be a destructive fire. Many times people escape justice. They slip its bonds.

You can think of famous cases in the last 10 or 15 years where people were clearly guilty and got off scot-free. They shall not deliver themselves. They shall not escape.

So Babylon is going to symbolize all of the delayed, overdue judgment and the cup that she has meted out to others. And you think of all the injustices that have been done in the name of greed, in the name of commerce, in the name of religion. They will all be recompensed.

God is called mighty here. The mighty Lord God is judging her. This term has been applied to angels and military political leaders here.

It is applied to God. Babylon itself is called mighty. In verse 10, that great city Babylon, that mighty city.

Well, there's the mighty city and there's the mighty God. This is not the irresistible force

and the immovable object. This is mighty city versus mighty God.

Which one's going to win? It's the mighty God. Verses 10 and 18. Who is like this great city? Well, God's might is going to subdue it.

Within the hour of judgment, as the author of Hebrews says, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. So, as a result, when this woman, Babylon, is destroyed, this final form of human pseudo religion, man's man-made solution to life's problems, the kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her, in verse 9, will weep and lament for her when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance. Three times in this account it tells us that people stand afar off, stand at a distance.

You know how it is when things are good and you get your friends there and then things go bad and suddenly everybody is at a distance? Well, the loneliness of this judgment is going to become apparent. The kings are going to distance themselves. This is sort of the fair weather friend syndrome.

Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, the mighty city, in one hour your judgment has come. So, the kings of the earth, political leaders, distance themselves. Sea captains and sailors, these are the union workers, the people who keep the economy going.

In verses 17 through 19, every ship master, all who travel by ship, sailors and as many as trade in the sea, stand at a distance. And I think, metaphorically speaking, these are your black marketeers, those who are on the edge of legitimacy, the chaotic sea, the troubled sea whose waters cast up mire and dirt. We know what that stands for.

Sailors are at home in that environment, symbolically speaking. Nothing wrong with sailors. Some of us were or are in the Navy.

The Navy is good. The sea is good in the real sense. But in the symbolic sense, the sea represents evil.

And those who are sailors and ship masters, those who travel by ship, those who trade in the sea, those who are at home in the sea, are kindred spirits. They are going to be moan and wail at the ruin of the great city. They are going to throw dust on their heads and cry out, weeping and wailing, saying, alas, alas, all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth.

In one hour she is made desolate. So, those who profited, those who use this as a cover, as a cloak in which to wrap themselves, are going to be greatly debilitated by this. However, in verse 20, those in heaven, the holy apostles and prophets, God has avenged you on her.

Rejoice over her, O heaven. This is the angels seeing the vindication of God's

righteousness and judgment. And the holy apostles and prophets.

Now, there is a little bit of a textual issue there in verse 20 that we will address because depending on the reading you take here, it is either holy ones, apostles and prophets. So, you have some text saying, rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets. And so, you have the heavens and then three categories of human beings, saints, apostles and prophets.

You will see in your New King James, it says you holy apostles and prophets. Some of the manuscripts have a tautography here of a couple of words. I don't think it is especially significant.

What is significant is that both apostles and prophets died at the hands of this woman. How many apostles do you have in the tribulation period? Of course, that's kind of a loaded question, isn't it? Depending on who you think the two witnesses are, you might have a couple. But prophets? I mean, they are either apostles or prophets.

I don't think you can say, well, James is a prophet and John is an apostle or vice versa. This obviously stretches the perspective as we have seen across the ages from Babel to the woman on the beast, Babylon on the beast. This is the historic perspective and this vengeance is symbolic and represents the judgment of God on all those who have participated in this kind of evil.

Then in verse 21, we have the millstone scenario. An angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea. The listing of items that were produced, I kind of skipped over that in verses 11 through 19.

Let me just point out that if that sounded familiar at all, we saw something very similar in Ezekiel looking at Tyre. Remember when Tyre was a great merchant sitting there and all of the Togarmah and Tarshish and all these other people are running stuff through there and they are getting their cut. They are making their money as brokers and as dealers.

Kind of like the people who made their fortune selling picks and pans to the 49ers and the Alaskan Gold Rush and so on. The settlers. Well, the list of items given back there in Ezekiel is virtually identical.

It's in a slightly different order. But in Ezekiel 27, 12 through 22, Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods. Silver, iron, tin, lead, bartered human lives and vessels of bronze as your merchandise.

In Togarmah, they had horses, steeds and mules. The men of Dedan were your traders. Many islands were markets for your hand.

They brought ivory tusks and ebony as payment. Syria was a merchant. You had

emeralds, purple, embroidery, fine linen, corals and rubies.

Judah and the land of Israel traded in wheat, millet, honey, oil, balm, Damascus, luxury items, wine, white wool, danon, etc. If you go back and look at Ezekiel 27 and then look at this list in these 8 or 9 verses, you find virtually an identical list. And Tyre in Ezekiel represents in the next chapter Ezekiel 28, King of Tyre.

You have Satan himself and Satan with his false system, his counterfeit system of worship and so on. But notice the great weight of items because covetousness is idolatry. The Apostle Paul tells us this.

Covetousness is idolatry. Idolatry is false worship. The woman represents false worship and it is what we covet instead of loving God with all our hearts that constitutes this woman.

Having said that, we move on now into the 20s of chapter 18. Mighty angel takes up the stone like a great millstone and you have the big splash with violence the great city of Babylon is thrown down and it is not found anymore. The sound, now you have the entertainers, you have the bands and the people playing as the Titanic sinks are all disappeared, will not be heard in you anymore.

No craftsmen. So much of this has been drawn from the passages I have suggested to you. Jeremiah, Ezekiel and so on.

So once more, this imagery of the symbolic stone can be found over in Jeremiah 51. Jeremiah 51, 63 and 64. Now it shall be when you have finished reading this book that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates.

Ezekiel 51, 63. It shall be when you have finished reading this book, tie a stone to it, throw it out into the Euphrates. Then you shall say, Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her and they shall be weary.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah. So, John fleshes this out a bit. The mighty angel speaks here and portrays how Babylon is cast away.

Instead of a small stone with a scroll attached to it, this is a millstone that goes splashing in and that's not going to be hoisted back up. They're not going to do a salvage operation on that. These millstones were extremely heavy.

I mentioned last time that Jesus in Mark 9, verse 42 talks about the one who causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble. It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. It's a picture of permanent bad news, judgment.

This is a mighty angel because he picks this millstone up and hurls it. We saw a similar

idea in Ezekiel 26, 21. I will make you a terror and you shall be no more.

Though you are sought for, you will never be found again, says the Lord God. The harps and trumpets and so on, this is a reminder of everyday life. I watched Michael Palin go around the Pacific Rim and as he would visit these different countries, as he made this 10,000 mile journey, he would often find some expression of the culture of the country.

In China, here are people making music and in Vietnam, here are people making music. Down around Australia and New Zealand, here are people making music. You get to South America and Brazil and up in Peru and the Andes, here are people making music.

He would arrive either accidentally or on purpose at a time when they were having some sort of festival and expressing their culture and here are these people making all these weird noises. You think, do they make CDs of this? Do people sell this? Do they buy it? Do they play it in their car? It just sounds like so much wheezing and bellowing and random sorts of noise. We have our ideas of what constitutes music.

But look at verse 22. The sound of harps, musicians, flutists and trumpeters will never be heard in you again. The sound of the mill and craftsmen of every trade will never be found in you.

The light of the lamp will never shine on you again. The sound of the bridegroom and bride will never be heard. These are signs of normal, ongoing, productive life.

Whether it's artistic and cultural, whether it is economic, or whether it is social. Every aspect. Now think about this.

Has the religion of self-gratification entered into the entertainment and arts and cultural realm? Well, duh. How about the economic realm? How much of the gross national product is earned by the better tasting beer or the whiter shirt or the more expensive car or the electronic gadget? Wrap my own knuckles there. I have a weakness for something that plugs in and blinks.

How about the social realm? There was a little bit of an outcry because there was a commercial that came out for Theraflu. Theraflu is a wonderful thing when you've got the flu. Instead of putting the powder in a cup and drinking that horrible tasting brew, they have a thing like these Listerine strips you put in your mouth.

If you've got the new things that melt in your mouth and not in your hand, it looks like that funny candy they make for kids. It's kind of a plastic sheet looking thing. Well, Theraflu comes in this now.

So Theraflu said, well, everybody has seen all of these medicine commercials and everybody's sick of them and nobody pays any attention anymore. So they got a whole new ad company from over in Sweden. I guess they're headquartered in Sweden,

Theraflu people.

So they got a new ad company and they said, make us something different. So their commercial, now there's a guy that looks like the elephant man. He's got this green, misshapen, dead-looking face and he's drooling and he comes up to a bus, like a city bus, and he goes limping on there and he Quasimodo's his way down the aisle and sits down in the back of the bus and everybody is all repelled and repulsed and is fleeing away from him and he sits down and there's a grandma and her little granddaughter sitting in the back.

And he's there and he's wiping his nose on his sleeve and he's all horrible. And grandma reaches across and gives him one of these Theraflu things. And he sticks it in his mouth and then the next thing you see him getting off the bus and he's a human being.

He's all normal again because the flu made him a monster. He had a monstrous flu. Well, everybody said, you know, it's a real depressing commercial.

The music is all moody. It doesn't even seem very humorous. It's just kind of dark and like, you know, what message are you giving us here that you should take this medicine not because it will make you feel better but it will make everybody else feel better.

I mean, what are you trying to get across? Well, even in the social realm, products are pushed to us because we will be socially acceptable. Our teeth will glow brighter. Our hair will shine.

We'll have less dandruff. Our breath will be better. You know, people will be more impressed when we drive up or when they look over the fence and we're at a barbecue or whatever it may be.

Whether it's social, economic, or artistic and cultural, money changes hands. It's big business. It is the philosophy of give it to me now, gratify my desires, satisfy me.

The religion of self-satisfaction pictured by the harlot. In John's day, in the ancient Near East, what did you have? You had people working in wood, leather, metal, brick, stone. You had them producing goods out of these and all of that's going to come to an end.

The sound of those activities is going to cease. No oil for lamps. No more light.

In the modern day, this would be the power plants quit and there's a blackout. If there is no light, then all of your riches and your jewelry and the rest of it are useless. The rich have to live in darkness just like the poor because the fundamental basis of the economy has been taken away.

And nobody is going to get married. The times are too hard. Who would want to get married with a view toward bringing children into the world in this horrible environment?

And this means no future.

There's not going to be another generation. Paul suggested to the Christians that if you really realize how short the time is and how critical it is, he said, my suggestion to you is don't split your attention between a spouse and the Lord because we are living in hard times. This was the time of the Roman persecution and your family could be held hostage and Paul said, this is for me, not the Lord, but I would suggest you operate like me and don't give them the leverage of a family and don't try to split your time between the Lord and the family because we're living in dark days.

Well, verse 23 goes on to say, because your merchants were the great ones of the earth because with your sorcery you deceived the nations. These are false solutions. They are false remedies.

They don't last. Everybody that's ever been a child knows what it's like to want something for Christmas, to pine for it, to look at it in the catalog, to dream about it, to watch the commercials on TV. You get it for Christmas and you're as happy and excited as you can be.

You play with it two or three days and it either breaks or you get tired of it and that thing that you pined and thought you couldn't live without, now you've got it and it doesn't have the same old thrill. You look at it on day four and it doesn't excite you the way it did on day one. Unfortunately, some people's relationships are like that.

It was only great because it was novel and new and when the new wears off, they have no commitment to it. Well, because your merchants were the great ones of the earth, because with your sorcery, your deceptive ploys, you lied to the nations. You made people think you had an answer when you didn't.

You made them think they were going to be happy when they weren't. You made them think they were going to be satisfied, think they were going to be fulfilled, think they were going to have real answers to real problems and have genuine peace and contentment and it was all a big lie. This is the reason for the utter desolation of Babylon, the false promise, and this goes all the way back to the serpent in the garden.

If you eat the fruit, you will be like God. Well, who wouldn't want to be like God? And it's a false promise and you wind up worse off than when you started. Isaiah 23 verse 8 Who has taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traders are the honorable of the earth? Big fat lie.

By your skill in trading, you have increased your wealth. Will you then say, I am a God? Ezekiel 28 verse 5 Ezekiel 28 verse 9 This goes back to the very source, the original liar, the father of lies, and it's his, to use crude but memorable language, he is the pimp for this harlot. He is the one running this racket.

He is the one behind the woman riding the beast. Babylon worships wealth, worships self-satisfaction instead of the God who can give the kinds of wealth and the kinds of gifts that are permanent and eternal. Eternal life is eternal in the sense of quality, in the sense of permanent possession.

So this is a tacky and temporary substitute. Babylon deceives the nations with sorcery. Sorcery relates to the practice of magic.

You can go back to chapter 9 verse 21. They did not repent after all of these catastrophes, 66 pound hailstones and so on. They did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

How glorified is homosexuality going to get before God takes us off this planet? Ellen DeGeneres has her television show back on. You have every different kind of program, every different kind of book, every different kind of push in our culture for the acceptance of that which is an abomination punishable by death in the Old Testament. Unnatural, it says in Romans chapter 1. It is glorified.

And do you think that people are going to reverse their flag-waving, armband-wearing agendas for gay marriage and gay rights and gay everything else? Flaunting and openly parading this perversion. It's a lot easier for those of us who lived before this happened to see what a great sea change there has been from those who are growing up in the midst of it and say, well, we've always had these people. And what's the big deal? What they do behind closed doors is their business.

Wrong, wrong, wrong. It is a kind of thinking. And it is not restricted to a set of actions.

It is an expression of an attitude. And it is an expression of a degeneracy that God says is like a cancer that has to be removed from a society or it will spread, infect, and destroy. The application there is obvious.

They did not repent of their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts along with their murders. Revelation 9.21 It allows a person to control the gods. It is at the same time a gift and revelation of the gods to men.

This is a false system of worship. It's an abomination of God. Deuteronomy 18 There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire, one who practices witchcraft or a soothsayer or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer, one who conjures spells or a medium or a spiritist or one who calls up the dead.

We've got TV shows of people who call up the dead. It's like the World Federation of Wrestling or whatever the thing is. I think most people know it's kind of a put-up job.

But a lot of people believe it. All who do these things are an abomination to the Lord and because of these abominations, the Lord your God drives them out from before you. The

Israelites who practiced sorcery and witchcraft were to be put to death.

Exodus 22.18, Leviticus 26 Paul calls idolatry and witchcraft works of the flesh. In Galatians 5, verse 20 John says those who practice these activities will be consigned, actually their inheritance will be consigned to the lake of fire. The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable murderers sexually immoral sorcerers, idolaters and all liars shall have their meros, their portion, their inheritance.

You can have forgiveness and you can have cleansing and you can be rescued from a lot of judgment by the grace of God. But opportunity and potential, possession, privilege, reward the glory and the honor of God in the millennial kingdom and beyond will be out of reach for those who spend their lives in these activities. You know, Mrs. Reagan I think is very admirable in her devotion to her husband especially during his serious decline and so on.

But she got all wrapped up in astrology and tried to time his trips when he was president by the stars and what not. Now God has defined what the symbolic value of the stars is and it's not astrology and it's not what is your sign and it's not the computer generated horoscopes that are published in the paper and so on. I remember when I was a teenager and they would print those horoscopes in the newspaper I don't know if they still do or not.

But I noticed that the ones for one sign in one week like three or four weeks later that very identical thing would be some other sign and they were just rotating them through. They had like a set number and it was just like shuffle the cards and deal them out and that's the horoscope these people get. Apropos of nothing I ask you to apply common sense.

How many light years away? How long ago did the light leave the stars? Is it gravity pulling on your brains? What possible relation could a galaxy far far away a star far far away a happy arrangement of stars from our point of view have anything to do with whether or not your boss gives you a raise or your loved ones have one or another reaction. I mean it's just how... I mean go watch wrestling. But there are people who choose consciously to be cowardly to be unbelieving to be abominable to be murderers in their hearts to be sexually immoral to be sorcerers to be idolaters and to be liars.

Well there's no reason to lie they will lie just because it's fun. It's kind of like when you can play an instrument you want to just sit down and play it once in a while just to amuse yourself. No good reason for it.

You just got the music in you and it's got to come out you know. I got rhythm. I got music.

And you just sit down and play it. Well there are people who lie that way. It's just

recreational lying.

It has no purpose. It has no benefit. It's just you know to keep in inform.

Seriously. Those people shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire. 2215 of Revelation Outside the gates of the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven outside this is in the new heavens and the new earth dogs, sorcerers, sexually immoral, murderers, idolaters, whoever loves and practices a lie.

There are serious consequences for what we choose to set our sights on to set our affections on. Are we going to be the bride that is without spot and without blemish or are we going to be one of the constituent parts of the harlot? It's a clear choice and we make that choice day by day hour by hour. Do we gratify self or do we live to please God? It's a simple choice but if we don't give it its due if we don't recognize its weight there's a lot riding on these little choices.

In the same way that your daily decisions and your weekly decisions to work out determine whether or not you're in shape whether or not your arteries silt up with plaque whether or not you have any bone mass when you get to be elderly you can't just make a few big time decisions you have to make daily decisions to keep yourself in shape to watch your diet to do the things that are smart and wise to be a good steward of your body. The accumulation of those good decisions benefits you later on. An accumulation of bad decisions where you eat junk food and never work out and abuse yourself and silt up you can't just undo that with a few big tearful decisions.

It's the pattern of decisions that determines what we become. It's very true in the spiritual life as well. That's the message of this woman on the beast.

Well, we'll pick up here and try to start chapter 19 next time. Father, thank you for revealing to us so clearly the imperatives and the opportunities that pertain to us as believers in this age. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress them on our hearts.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.