

## 25a REV

This is Friday the 3rd of February, 2006. We continue tonight our study in the book of Revelation, picking up in chapter 19. Let's take a moment as we approach our study to go to the Lord in prayer.

It's a chance to clear our minds and prepare our hearts and cultivate the teaching ministry of God's Holy Spirit. Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful for another opportunity to spend time as a group, as believers of like mind who share the recognition of the importance of your word and its role in our lives. We thank you for the gifts that you've distributed amongst us and the blessing that we receive when we assemble.

We pray that as we look into this passage tonight, that God the Holy Spirit will find us teachable and will impress these truths on our hearts. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Last time, we finished chapter 18, which details the fall of Babylon the Great. In chapter 19, you can see the heading in your New King James, probably something similar in other versions as well. It says, Heaven exalts over Babylon.

There's great rejoicing in heaven. You get this whole chapter 18, even back into 17, talking about the destruction of the harlot. Now, here's my question.

Here's my question. Coming all the way through the book of Revelation, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls, what was going on in all of that? Who was in charge? Antichrist, right? Antichrist puts together this coalition government. Antichrist creates a false peace.

Antichrist makes a covenant with the many for one week. Antichrist has the beast as his PR man and his agent going around drumming up support like the John the Baptist alter ego. You've got the false prophet, the unholy trinity.

These guys put together this final revived Roman Empire type government. They get the power from the ten toes. We've seen all of that, right? But here's the big... In literature, when I was an English major, they said, well, this is the denouement.

Why an English major has to learn French words, I don't understand. But you come to the climax of the story, and here's the big resolution of the conflict, and it is not the destruction of the Antichrist. Do you not find this shocking? We don't have a chapter here talking about, and lo, the beast was fed into a meat grinder.

The beast did get crushed under the stone made without hands. The beast was wrapped up and thrown... None of that. We've got over a chapter, about a chapter and a half, about the woman riding around on the beast.

Now in chapter 19, before we ever even read a single verse, you look at the title of it,

and it says, Heaven exalts not over Antichrist, getting the stuffing knocked out of him, and the false prophet and the beast and this unholy trinity getting all raked out of the way. It's the woman. Now, why? I ask myself this question, before you ask me.

I try to anticipate these questions, so I'm not caught totally flat footed. Does this not seem odd to you? After the Antichrist, you know, the mark of the beast and all the rest of it, everybody's, all of the movies, Gregory Peck and the demon boy way back, whatever that was, the omen. Of course, that dates me, but all of the superstition and fear and everything about the beast, and yet, Heaven is rejoicing over the woman.

Why? What have we seen over our last couple of nights of studying Revelation? The woman rides the beast. When they have an equestrian statue of Caesar or Alexander or Napoleon or go to Claremore and there's an equestrian statue of Will Rogers, you know, up on the horse. When people come and look at that, are they looking at the horse or are they looking at the person astride it? It's the rider that counts, right? The rider steers the horse.

The horse is in submission to the rider. When the horse and rider are cast into the sea, it wasn't the horse's idea to be there. It was the rider's idea, right? So, what does this tell us about all of this hype over the Antichrist and the beast and the false prophet? They are going to essentially be in the service of Babylon, in the service of the harlot, the mother of prostitutes, in the service of this concept represented by that figure.

And what have we figured out that that concept is? It is the alternative to faith in God. I say that. Most people say it's world religion, false religion.

People think of it as Catholicism, as Islam. But any faith system that people use in place of genuine biblical relationship with God fits this bill. And it doesn't have to be a religion that has a name with a church.

You can be Henry David Thoreau out there on Walden Pond or something. You can be thinking deep thoughts like Confucius. You can be a Buddhist.

You can be a Scientologist. You can be a Scientist and put your faith in science. And I verify with my five senses.

But whatever your faith system is that has been put in place in a Romans chapter one sense, when they knew him as God, they did not glorify him as God, neither were they thankful, but became empty, vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened. And down through the ages, these faith systems, you can put your faith in the state. Look at socialism and communism and what a misplaced faith that was.

Oh, we'll all be equal. We'll have everything in common. And proletariat and all the rest of it.

And that collapsed under its own weight because you had all of the people living in the fancy estates and hoarding all the money. And then you had all of the people waiting in line for a week to get bread and cheese and drinking themselves into oblivion on vodka because they couldn't take their way of life. And their sports figures defecting every year.

Whole ballet troops were defecting and so on. Well, this was a faith system. And it's just as much a part of this harlot as anything else.

Before we leave chapter 18, I want to look at one particular idea. And this is what the woman represents and how it is spoken of in the Old Testament. You have the belief system that people embrace and espouse.

Now, they didn't have Scientology and they didn't have L. Ron Hubbard Dianetics and they didn't have a lot of the weird, goofy stuff that they have today. Islam had not yet been invented. Buddhism hadn't yet been invented.

I think the people down in India were already going into their karma thing way back. But in the ancient world, what did people generally believe in? Magic and idols. There are some kind of gods out there, Baal, Ashtar, whatever.

And if I can appease them in some way, if I will invest in some way in this religious faith system, then something will come back to me. And we tend to think, well, those poor primitive people think in that way. But people do it today, don't they? You can put your faith in human relationships.

There was a woman who sued the Citadel a few years back when the Citadel was still all male. And she sued because they wouldn't let her in. And when they said, well, why do you want in to a place that already hates your guts because you're suing to get in? Do you remember what her answer was? Do you remember why that gal wanted to go to the Citadel? She said, there are advantages.

I can get the same education in other places. I can go, you know, the service academies were already integrated by that time. The Citadel was not.

And they said, why do you insist on, are you just making a nuisance out of yourself? And she said, no. The reason I want to go there is that in our region, in our area, there is this good old boy network of graduates who help each other out with jobs. And it's like a fraternity that I want to join.

Well, aside from the obvious illogic of alienating everybody in the fraternity when you blow your way in there, or I guess that's not the right word, when you force your way in there, what is that fundamental idea? I want to be in a situation where I can network. My network is so important that I'm willing to sue to get into this network. I'm trusting in this fraternity.

And that's why you have fraternities and sororities. That's why you have the masons. All that 32nd degree mason stuff, there's only a handful of freaky guys who want to go in there and do the secret handshake and wear the funny clothes and do all that.

You know, I think there's people for whom that's some kind of a big deal. But you know what most of the masons are in the masons for? The fraternity. The mechanic or the barber is a mason and so am I. And we're instantly buddies.

We have an in with each other. It's a false version of what pertains when you're a believer. If you're a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and especially if you're one who has some inkling of what the plan and purpose of God is and you're active in your spiritual life, there is automatically... In fact, a lot of times you know somebody's a believer before they ever say anything.

There's just an identification friend or foe that takes place and you say, you know, that's a friend. Here's somebody. It's their integrity.

It's their attitude. It's their general aura of peace or whatever. But people want that, but they don't want it necessarily in the spiritual realm and so they want it some other way.

I will join this. I'll become a moose or an elk or whatever. I'll be in this group.

And this is a faith system. We don't think of it that way. We think, well, it's not a religion.

They're not worshipping anything. Yes, they are. They say, if I put this particular coin in the slot, I will get this thing out of the machine.

If I... This was my argument after I got a certain distance in the military, that in order to stay in the good graces of those who were my superiors, you had to show up at certain social and non-mandatory functions. And if you're being rated one of six, six lieutenants, well, the five lieutenants that show up at the colonel's cocktail party and the one lieutenant that didn't, it will reflect. That's the buzzword.

It will reflect. And so guys that are banking on a career, that's your faith system. I will do this and I will get ahead.

I will cultivate these friendships. I will talk over my back fence and my neighbor will take care of me. It can be in any area of life.

That's the woman riding the beast. Because what does human government down in history do? The same thing. So, that's what we saw in chapter 18.

This is what you find in the Old Testament scriptures. Babylon who deceived the nations, this woman riding. What is the deception of the nations? Let's get this government and things will get better.

We'll out with the old and with the new. We'll do the French Revolution. We'll do the revolution in Nicaragua.

We'll do the revolution in Colombia. We'll change out the government and things will get better. And my faith is in the governmental system.

My faith is in the rebels who are fighting the governmental system. I'm a Palestinian and my faith is in Hamas or the PLO. I'm an Israeli and my faith is in Likud or the other party.

I'm an American and I believe in the Democrats or the Republicans or the Independents or Ross Perot or somebody. The Libertarian Party. Any time a faith system replaces the proper role of God in a human being's life, it is the woman riding the beast.

Now, in the 70th week of Daniel, in the tribulation period, the church is gone. We have checked out stage up and now the Antichrist is revealed and his false prophet and his advanced man, the beast and all that are all functioning. But the real player is not the Antichrist.

The real player is not the beast and the real player is not the false prophet because they are all in service of Babylon. And we have to understand this to understand chapter 19. So, with that as background, I thought about going back and showing us some Old Testament passages on the role of witchcraft, fortune telling, necromancy, idolatry and all that.

But you know that already. So, just remember, those were the versions in the ancient days. They had the same kind of thing in Jesus' day.

They had the same kind of thing. Why are these continual entertainments coming out where you've got the Catholic priest fighting unsuccessfully against all the forces of darkness. Satan is trying to bring his progeny into the world or come back from the dead or whatever.

And people get all spooked out by this. Why? Because people understand that there is an unseen world and they think, well, I can talk to a saint. I can talk to an angel.

I can get over in some kind of way. Well, that's essential because now when we move into chapter 19, it says, after these things, this is John speaking, after these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven saying, Hallelujah, salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God. For true and righteous are his judgments because he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication.

And he has avenged on her the blood of his servants shed by her. Again they said, Hallelujah. Her smoke rises up forever and ever.

And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne saying, Amen, Hallelujah. Then a voice came from the throne saying, Praise our God, all you his servants and those who fear him, both small and great. Well, this sounds like your standard praise and worship service, right? Lots of hallelujahs, praise God, righteousness, justice, salvation.

What's really going on here? We have to pay attention to who is speaking. John says, After these things I heard a voice or something like, actually it says, I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven. Right? But in Greek it says, I heard something like a sound of a great crowd.

I heard something like, there's the word hos in there, H-O-S, long O. If it had said, I heard a sound, that would be one thing. But he says, I heard something like the sound of a great multitude. And that one little two-letter word in Greek, O-S, with a rough breathing on it for hos, makes a difference.

And it's a clue because we have several different speakers and several different groups operating here. And interpreters are all over the map. Is it the 144,000? Is it the church? Is it angels? Is it, you know, what? After these things, I heard something like a great sound of a large multitude.

Well, you can guess the word for sound. We've covered this the last couple of weeks. What do you think the word for sound is? Phonē.

Phonē. Equally can be translated voice or sound. And context always tells you which it is.

Since this is voice in the singular, or phonē in the singular, how should we translate it? A crowd doesn't have a single voice, does it? It has a sound. There's the sound of, a great sound of a big multitude. So this should really be translated sound.

And this seems like, you know, picky little details, but trust me, it's important that we figure out who's saying what here. After these things, all the stuff in 18, I heard something like a great noise of a many crowd, a multitudinous crowd in heaven saying, Hallelujah. So this is confirmation that, yes, they do speak Hebrew in heaven.

Hallel, to praise. Hallelu, you praise. It's the cohortative, or the sort of command voice.

And then Yah is the object, the Lord, the Lord God. Hallelu Yah, Yahweh. You all praise the Lord.

But notice it's the Hebrew term here. It doesn't say something in Greek. This is transliterated into Greek from Hebrew.

Now, it says Hallelujah. Then it says the salvation. This is Soteria, the deliverance.

Most of the time in the scripture, it's deliverance. The deliverance and the glory, Doksa,

splendor, shining greatness of something. And the power.

This is Dunamis, the root that we get dynamite from. This is effective power. This is the power that moves mountains.

Dunamis. Then it says, all we have is the genitive of Theos, and the first person plural possessive. Notice how in your Bible, it says something like, salvation, glory, and honor, and power to the Lord our God, or belong to the Lord.

It's not even in there. It says, Hallelujah, the deliverance, and the splendor, and the power of our God. That's it.

Why do you say Hallelujah? Why should you praise God? It's because of His deliverance. It's because of His splendor. It's because of His power.

And the other way, it sounds kind of remote. It sounds like some sort of a little trite saying. Such and such be unto God.

This is much more forceful. This crowd is saying Hallelujah. It's elliptical.

There's no verb. It just says, deliverance, glory, power of our God. They're simply saying, look at it.

And it's as a direct reaction, and result of this woman being destroyed. Because it's bigger than destroying a government. It's bigger than destroying the Antichrist, and the beast, and the false prophet.

This is 6,000 years of the deception of the human race that began in the Garden of Eden. Hath God not said, don't you know that if you partake of the fruit, you'll be wise, you'll be like God? And that deception carried on for 6,000 years. That is the woman.

What deceives people into thinking they're going to get over and have a great life? What deceives people into believing that success is on the way, and happiness, and prosperity? If I can just get with this person. If I can just make this career move. If I can just get this thing accomplished.

If I can just get to this place. Our happiness is always just over the horizon. And we never seem to get there.

People get all disillusioned when they get in their 50s and 60s. They say, you know, I've been running trying to get over the horizon all this time, and I'm here, and I feel just like I did in terms of non-fulfillment way back. It's deceptive.

God fixes that. When He brings down the woman and destroys it, and takes it out of the way, that deception is not going to exist in the Millennial Kingdom. There will be some problems in the Millennial Kingdom, and you're going to have Gog Magog at the end, but

you know what? It's not going to be through deception.

It's not going to be through deception. If you think about it, the 6,000 years is kind of like Eve. Eve was deceived and not Adam.

The first 6,000 years, people get deceived. But in the 7,000, people who rebel against God at Gog Magog at the end of that Millennial Kingdom, there's no deception. There's no deception at all.

And that's why there's no judgment based on faith. At the end, it's a judgment based on works, because faith is not an issue. You can see God, Emmanuel, God with us.

It's all right there, and it's much like the angels who saw God, and there was no faith issue there. It was a simple matter of obedience versus disobedience, acceptance versus rejection. And Jesus saying, you have seen and believed, Thomas.

Blessed are those who not having seen, believe. That's the whole issue in this phase of human history, is believing without being able to see. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

The not seen element is going to go away. And this is the conclusion. When the woman is dropped off the beast, and destroyed, there is great exaltation in heaven, because the period of deception is over.

Never to return. We'll talk about never to return here in just a minute. But this is bigger than the destruction of everything the Antichrist does in his little seven year run.

And that's why he's not even mentioned here. It's all about the woman. Now, it says, Hallelujah.

Praise the Lord. Deliverance, glory, and power of our God. Because, this is the Greek conjunction, *Hati*, because that, this is why, true and right, *Alethena*, the lady's name *Althea*, *Alethea* means truth, and *Dikaio*s, righteousness.

True and righteous, the judgments of him. True and righteous are his judgments. But again, the verb is left out, because it's elliptical, it's emphatic, it's poetic.

His judgments, true and righteous, is how we'd say it in English. And they're leaving the verbs out, because they're just so impressed with this. Now notice, it doesn't say our deliverance, does it? It doesn't say our righteousness, or our justice.

There's a second because in verse two. Because true and right are his judgments. Because he judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth in her *pornia*, in her faithlessness, in her spiritual fornication.

What is the nature of *pornia*? We've talked about this before, it's usually translated

fornication in the scripture. Moikia is the word for adultery. But pornia, we get pornos, pornography, from this, but it misses the point a little bit.

Because pornia, the fundamental nature of pornia, is the betrayal of trust, betrayal of covenant, betrayal of relationship. And inevitably there is deception involved in that. Why is she the great harlot? Why is she characterized by pornia? It goes back to this spiritual deception.

It seems to be one thing and it's something else. Oh, I'm here only for you for the next half hour. I mean, that's the prostitute's line.

And that's how God chooses to picture this great deception. And whether it is Baal worship, Ashtar worship, whether it is worship of the Roman gods, whether it is worship of the saints of the Catholic Church, whether it is the worship of power, of influence, of financial security, of career accomplishment, of fame, of relationships, whatever it may be, it is a deception because it doesn't partake of the eternal. It all turns to ashes.

It all fades away. It is temporal. It is an artifice.

It's just like the prostitute who's here one moment and gone the next and doesn't care any more about that client than she will the next one. So, these individuals in this great multitude with this very loud voice, this very loud sound made up of their individual voices are saying this, praise God, because He judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her pornia and He has avenged the blood of His servants on her hands, actually from her hands. The word avenge is interesting because it is to bring right out of something.

It's from dikaios, for righteousness, but then it's got the preposition ek in front of it. Ek dikaios, if you make that a verb, it's He has gone into this pornia situation and He has brought right out of it. It's a turn on Romans 8.28, all things work together for good to those who love God.

Well, here's this prostitute slaying the servants of God and in bringing this woman down and doing away with her, God is bringing right, bringing righteousness out of that situation. You think, how can there possibly be any righteousness in this? But sometimes the whole point of the thing is its end. And this is something that God has allowed, the eternal question people have answered, how can God allow evil, why does God allow suffering, how can God allow child abuse, starvation, all the horrible things that happen in human life.

The end justifies its existence. What God does at the end of this, in ending it, and in showing it for what it is, it brings righteousness out of it. That's literally what He does.

He extracts right out of it. And what is the worst crime of all? It is the blood, it is the sacrifice of God's servants who have been dealt a cruel injustice at this harlot's hands.

Well, all of this goes back to who is saying this? Who are the individuals in the great crowd? Well, from Revelation chapter 5 and verse 11, if you keep your finger here and flip back a few pages, then I looked and I heard the sound, voice, phonay, of many angels around the throne, the living creatures and the elders, and the number of them was 10,000 times 10,000, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

And I would submit to you that this is that same crowd. This is the angelic crowd. Now, why do I say that? You might ask.

Well, let's continue a little bit. In verse 5 of Revelation 19, it says, A voice came from the throne, saying, phonay, once again, sound, voice, since it's saying, we know it's a voice, Give praise to our God, all you His servants, all you His douloi. What do they call plebes at Air Force? Doulis? Yeah, they call them doulis.

Then it comes from doulos, douloi, slaves, bond slaves. Give praise to our God, all you His servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great. Now, who would this be? Because in response, in verse 6, it says, Then I heard something like the voice or sound of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thundering, saying, hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigns.

Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready. Now, these are two different crowds. It's fairly obvious, because he describes this new crowd and its sound.

He doesn't say, once again, I heard that same sound I heard in verse 1. So this is a separate crowd. So we've got two crowds. First crowd says something, then a voice comes out of the throne and says, you servants need to praise Him.

And then this crowd, so we can safely deduce that this crowd are servants of God. It doesn't say that the first crowd are servants, but this crowd are servants. And it says, Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the Lord God omnipotent reigns, the marriage has come, the wife has made herself ready, and to her it's granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous act of the sanctified ones.

So, bear with me now. If I suggest to you that the first crowd are the angels, we have basically three crowds. Let's just back up and define our crowds.

We have the crowd of Revelation 5.11, 10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands. These are the unfallen angels in heaven, around the throne. Okay? That's a big crowd.

We have the white-robed throng that we saw several chapters back. That would be us.

That's the church, right? And so, what other crowd is left? Israel.

You're represented by your 144,000 witnesses. Or, not witnesses. I was trying not to say witnesses.

Servants. Doesn't even call them witnesses. I don't know how we got that vocabulary.

The 144,000 servants of God, which represent a much larger multitude who have died and are in the grave, right? Well, if the first crowd are the angels, and if this crowd is talking about the bride in the third person and saying she is arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, and the wife has made herself ready, then this crowd wouldn't be talking about itself. Right? It doesn't say, we have made ourselves ready. Look at me, I'm in my fine white linen.

Where's the feast? It doesn't say that. It says, Praise God. He reigns.

Let's be glad and rejoice, give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come. Now, the marriage of the Lamb, the bride of the Lamb is the church. The church has made herself ready, but is talking about it in the third person.

So, this only leaves the multitudes of Israel to be speaking this. The difficulty being that they're all dead. Right? However, we are at the end of the tribulation period.

The seven years have run their course. The woman has been destroyed. And of course, if the woman has been destroyed, there's nothing, you know, a fortiori, if you've destroyed the rider, the horse and its rider have gone into the sea, so to speak.

So, the beast, the antichrist, the false prophet, the whole one world government thing has collapsed. So, and if it's time for the wedding feast, and the wedding supper, we're ready to start the millennial kingdom. We're ready to get on with it.

So, 70th week of Daniel is over. And we know that at the end of the tribulation, there is the resurrection of Old Testament saints. I would submit to you that it has happened.

And the first thing that they are given by way of an instruction is the voice from the throne. The voice from the throne speaks and says, Praise our God, all you his servants and those who fear him. How many times is Israel in the Old Testament called the servants of God? Jacob, my servant.

My servant, Jacob. My servant, Israel. Over and over and over.

So, I would submit to you that this is, in fact, the resurrection of the Old Testament saints. And they speak their peace. It would make sense then, in verse 9, this crowd having just spoken, he, the angelic guide for John says, Right, blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Blessed are those who are called. Remember the parables of Jesus? Who are those who are invited? Who have the white robe and are qualified? Who are the ones that did not respond and are outside in the darkness? Cut into a portion their lot with the hypocrites. They're there.

Many will come east and west. Sit down. You yourselves cast out.

You will see this. Jesus told the Pharisees. They have to be there to see it.

They're not unbelievers. They're believers. But they're in the darkness, which is outside.

And the master of the house rises up and shuts the door. Peeks through the little thing. Lord, Lord, in your name have we done all this.

I never knew you. Depart from me, you iniquity workers. And they are there, but they are unrewarded.

They are the five foolish virgins. So, this all sort of makes sense now, doesn't it? But what intrigues me is back in verse 1 and 2, because the first crowd says this loud sound of the great multitude in heaven saying, Hallelujah, salvation, glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God. How many times have we looked at what we fondly recall or call the angelic conflict? The fall of Satan.

Why is human history going on? It's an object lesson. We'll make some inferior creatures. We'll run a lab experiment on them.

Perfect creature, perfect environment. Fallen creature, fallen environment. Fallen creatures in a good environment.

We run it every different which way and we solve for volition. Man can't and no creature, no sentient creature can blame his volition on his origin, on his environment because look, in every different set, every different combination, it's just like a very well laid out scientific demonstration. The unfallen angels made a choice to stick with God in eternity past.

The fallen angels in perfect environment with no inherited sin, no corruption anywhere said, we're going to fall. We're going to depart from God. Perfect creatures, perfect environment.

Volition can go either way. Volition is truly free. We'll put a man and a woman in the garden.

Perfect environment, perfect creatures. Look at there. They did the same thing the angels did.

But when God comes and offers salvation, they accept it. They walk out of the garden

wearing the skins, offering the sacrifices. There is the seed of the woman that's going to crush the head of the serpent.

You have this line of those who, fallen creatures in a fallen environment can still choose for or against God. And so, any creature that says, well, you know, God, you gave us free will and it's just inevitable that we would fall. It's not our fault.

God says, look, I have shown you with all of these different situations that your volition is truly free and you have nobody to blame but yourself for your choice. And you're accountable for your choice and you cannot dwell apart from me and have anything but corruption and destruction and depravity result because to cut yourself off from God is to cut yourself off from life. So, these angels, having seen the 6,000 years of human history, what do they say? Praise the Lord.

Deliverance and glory and power belong or are of the Lord our God. We have seen the demonstration and this is what we recognize. His judgments are true and righteous.

Going all the way back to the judgment that was passed on the fallen angels before human history ever began. This is why the New Testament says, this is why Jesus says, the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels. The only reason there is a lake of fire is because judgment was rendered, sentence was passed and there has just been a delay in the execution of the sentence.

So, these angelic hosts say, true and righteous are his judgments. We have seen the demonstration of it in this human history scenario. He has judged the great harlot, the perpetrator of deceptions who corrupted the earth with her fornication and he has avenged the blood of his servants that have been shed by her.

Now, this is real interesting when you speculate on the possibility of angelic salvation. To me, that's just way too wild to think about but I have had seminary classmates who wrote whole papers on it. The Bible says nothing about that.

The angels are presented in more or less their final state and I am not prepared except by analogy to say that it seems as though God always offers grace before judgment and I have no idea what the nature of that might have been in the angelic realm. We'll find out later. It is enough to know that in our realm, there is grace before judgment.

There is salvation available to all who will accept it and that deliverance is not just, you know, the big one, the deliverance from the lake of fire but in time, in our lives, in the progress that we experience as we go from birth through youth to middle age to old age if we live that long in death, there is deliverance. There is deliverance in time and it is there to be received. It is all of grace.

It is all of the Lord Jesus Christ and when we receive it and when we benefit from it, we can say with these heavenly hosts, praise the Lord, deliverance, glory and power of our

God. His judgments are true and righteous. He judges this whole alternative deception, this evil that permeates the world and He vindicates, He justifies, He avenges the wrong that has been done, the blood of the saints.

We suffer as a result of the presence of the harlot. All believers do. In this world ye shall have flipsis, tribulation.

Jesus said, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. That overcoming is future, this is the fulfillment of it. Overcoming the world is the world system.

It is the harlot and the deception. So, when they say this and again they say, hallelujah, her smoke rises up forever and ever. Now, there is nothing about the harlot being in conscious torment, is there? The smoke ascends forever and ever, which means this is a permanent judgment.

The harlot is never coming back. It is kind of like idolatry in Israel. When they get out of the Babylonian captivity, no more idolatry in Israel.

And there will never again be this deception. That's the smoke forever and ever. But I think you can make some interesting comparisons between that smoke rising forever and ever and the smoke of the lake of fire that rises forever and ever.

Permanence of the elimination of a thing. Well, we must pause and take our break. We'll come back and pick up in verse 6.