

25b REV

Let's resume our study now at Revelation chapter 19. We're going to pick up the pace just a little bit here because we are hearing noises in heaven. Heaven can be a noisy place.

There is noise. There are great crowds who speak. This is right at the end of the tribulation period.

The woman is destroyed. As Matt reminded us on the break, the agent of destruction of the woman is the government, the little horns. You know, the beast reaches around and grabs the woman off his back and tears it to pieces.

So there's going to be sort of an implosion of this unholy alliance and partnership between government and false religion or false faith is probably a better way of putting it because it is going to be some sort of godless system, whether it takes the form of a shell of Catholicism or Islam or some third, maybe everybody put their faith in the internet. And you know, WWW, WOW is the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, 666, WWW. It may all be computers, the image of the beast that everybody worships will probably be coming right on your desktop on your big old 21 inch flat screen TFT monitor.

And it'll all be e-commerce. eBay will be the big religion of the 70th week. Whatever it is, it is going to seem like the answer to everybody's problems.

No more credit card fraud, no more identity theft, no more warfare. This guy is going to pull off the coup of the millennium, the previous millennium, in the sense that he is going to somehow bring a peace covenant to the Middle East. Can you imagine if somebody walked in and brought peace in the Middle East right now, how big a noise he would make on the planet? Somebody went over there and kissing your eyes the place and walked out and said, hey, I've got Hamas and I've got the Israelis and the Iranians and the old Iranian president, he's just humble as pie, I'm leading him by the neck here and everything's great.

Everybody's cooled off. Koreans are all happy. No more nukes.

I've solved world hunger. I've cured AIDS. Cancer is all in remission.

Everything's great. And people are just going to be saying, now, here's what we've been looking for all our lives. And that is going to prevail.

And people will be saying, peace and safety, just as they did in the days before the flood of Noah, because it will be a godless solution. Observation, interpretation, application. What do we observe? People are going to be fooled and deceived and think that they have peace and safety by a godless solution to their problems.

It is going to be good in the short term. It is going to be horrible in the long term. The bad thing about raising an entire generation in our culture, believing in instant gratification, is that life is not about instant gratification.

Life is about endurance, perseverance, patience, long term planning, long term goals. You cannot solve your problems in 43 minutes plus commercials. You cannot just pop a pill or go get rhinoplasty and have all your problems solved.

You can't. It doesn't work that way. And that false promise raises people up to a false high only to drop them to an even deeper low.

There are only two kinds of solutions to be found in this world. And that is a solution that is a part of God's plan and purpose. And then there is the godless solution.

Most of the time, people will choose the godless solution because it has more advertising. It has more allure. It has more dash and splash.

It smells better. Its shirt is whiter. It is just more captivating and exciting and interesting.

You know, sort of the age old problem of I will do this a little bit in the short term. I remember long, long ago, you know, Super Bowl is coming up. I've got football on the brain.

But there was a football movie a long time ago. It had Mac Davis and some other guy at the longest yard, I think, or North Dallas 40 or something like that. Anyway, these guys were all playing.

And the only way they could get through the game was to have the doctor shoot them up with Novocaine and all of their joints. And, you know, they wake up in the morning and all their joints and aches and pains. And so if a guy got injured in the middle of the game, and I guess some big game came up and this guy tore his rotator cuff or something, and they said, well, you're out of the game.

He said, no, shoot me up. You know, just numb me up when we can finish the game and win the championship. Well, that's a short term fix.

But to play on an injured joint like that destroys it for life. But this is the kind of thinking that we cultivate in our modern society. I don't really care about tomorrow.

Just make it good right now. I'll worry about tomorrow when it comes. Well, tomorrow, you can't go back and undo the damage.

The Bible teaches this from Genesis to Revelation. You sow the wind, you reap the whirlwind. You sow to the flesh, you reap corruption.

Well, the world system here in chapter 18 is done away with in the sense of its deception

and its false promise. And there is exaltation in heaven. And I think first you have the angels who have been watching this from the beginning.

They've had a ringside seat, things into which angels long to look. Women have authority on their heads. Why? Because of the angels.

Angels are looking. Why is it such a big deal for angels to look at women and see authority on their head in the church? Paul talks about this, and it's like a cryptic statement. Women don't pray with their head uncovered.

They might as well shave themselves bald. They have authority on their head because of the angels. And you say, what? It's like angels can't look unless there are hats on the women.

I don't understand. But we look at that head covering. Even today in the Middle East, your observant Jews wear the yarmulke, or you have the prayer shawl that's put over the head when you pray.

What is that a sign of? Submission. It is a sign. It is a symbol.

If you're a rebellious person, you can put all the stuff on your head you want to, and you're still rebellious. But it is a sign. It is a symbol.

And a woman who would go to church on Paul's day and throw her headscarf off and pray in public was shaming her husband because he is the one who should take the initiative. He should be the public representative of the family. And I'm going to tell this story on Patty because she just had a birthday, and she's mature enough that it won't bother her.

But we didn't get married until we were both 30, and she had been fending for herself for a long time. And I'll never forget very shortly after we were married, we had to go down and buy some new tires for one of our cars. It might have even been her truck.

And so we walked into the tire store. Patty walked right up to the front desk and said, hey, I want to get some tires and blah, blah, blah. And I was standing there looking at the fan belts.

And it was really awkward because tires are a guy thing. Car repair, that's a guy thing. And the guy brings his wife in and says, now stand there, honey, while I take care of this car thing.

And it was just completely topsy-turvy to me. And it's a silly example, but in the ancient world, this was serious business. I mean, you could lose respect.

People wouldn't do business with you if they thought you were some kind of a mama's boy or something. And you're, well, let me talk to your wife. I want to get some business

done here.

It was a big deal. So coming into the church and for a woman to pray with her head uncovered, not only did it shame the husband, but it moved the church in the direction of all of these pagan cults that were run by the quote unquote, vestal virgins that were about as virginal as Heidi Fleiss. And that, you know, this avoid even the appearance of evil women running the worship service, women standing up and leading things.

That was what the pagans did. That's why one of the reasons Paul said, I will not have a woman standing up and exerting authority in the church. That's what the pagans do.

You're different. You're supposed to reflect symbolically. It has nothing to do with superiority, inferiority.

A lot of women are smarter than a lot of men would make a better leader. But God wants this picture to be put forward. The man and the woman, the husband and the wife, Christ and the church.

The church doesn't tell Christ what to do. The church doesn't go in and buy Christ's tires for him. He's, he's in charge.

And anyway, we, we had a talk and Patty's been very gracious about that sense. And she arranged herself in and lets me, you know, act like I am in charge when I go in. But this was a big deal.

So now you get back to women have authority on their head because of the angels. What does this communicate? There is an order that God has established. Wives submit to your husbands.

Husbands love your wives. Children obey your parents. This is the divine design.

And in the church, which is supposed to reflect the glory of God, this is more than just good practice. This communicates. We are supposed to be reflecting the presence of God, the presence of Christ, the word of God.

Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works and glorify your father who is in heaven, not glorify you glorify your father. We are here to bear witness because Jesus is gone and God, the Holy spirit resides in us. And that's part of why we're here.

And to mess that up is to obfuscate. God has to find somebody else who can reflect his glory and communicate his truth because we're all messed up. Women have authority on their head because of the angels.

The angels learn by watching human history. The angels recognize that when God sets up an authority structure, it's for a reason. When God appointed Lucifer to be the

guardian cherub who covers, and he was the one with the stops and the goes.

Remember that, that King James says something about his pipes and his timbrels and it's just ridiculous. You go to the Hebrew. He is the last line of security to come into the throne room of God.

He is the one who stops and he is the one who allows the whole reason they got that pipes thing was literally the stops. He has the stops. And they said, well, now what could stops be? Well, Oh, it's an organ.

It's his pipes, his pipe organ. And the timbrels were like a flute kind of a thing that, you know, something through which air passes. Well, if you go back and look at it in Hebrew, which we have done in Ezekiel, it's he gives the passes and he gives out the denials.

You can come in and bring your case before God. You have no business coming in here, go away. And that was his job.

He is, there's an angelic civilization. We think they are just like a bar relief up there with their little wings and hanging in space. They had a culture, they had a civilization, they had merchandise, they had a ton of things that we know nothing about.

And they had the necessity to approach God. And Satan was the guardian, guardian cherub who covers, who provides that. He's the XO.

He keeps everybody from bugging the CO unless their business is important enough. What happened? He decided, you know, I know so much about what God decides and how he works and what justice is and so on. Why send them into God? I will be like the most high.

I'll just do all the business out here and we don't have to send anybody into God. I'm the guy who's really making things happen here. I will ascend my throne above the stars of God, the angels of God.

I will be like the most, you know, the five I wills. And what is this? Breach of authority, screwing up the divine design. What are the angels learning when they watch human history? What are the angels learning when they watch a woman who obediently comes to church and respects the authority of her husband by covering her head when she prays? Authority on her head because of the angels.

It all starts to make sense. This harlot has usurped authority that belongs to God. There is relationship with God.

That's the husband-wife. Israel, pictured as the wife of God. You have Hosea and these others who talk about that.

God says, I have the right to divorce you. I shouldn't have to take you back, but I'm

going to anyway because I love you. You've been unfaithful, but I'm going to take you back anyway.

And the prophet mirrors this in his own marriage. God says, go marry the prostitute. She's gone off and been profligate and unfaithful.

Take her back because I'm showing Israel what I will do. She is my espoused. She is my betrothed.

She is the wife of God, so to speak. The church is the bride of Christ in symbolic terms. And both groups of the people of God have this picture of faithfulness and submission to authority.

All day long I have held up my hands, God says, to a disobedient and stiff-necked people who do not heed the authority of God. God says, do this. God says, don't do that.

They don't pay any attention. Same thing in the church. It's all nice to be church bride of Christ without spot and blemish and all of that, that he might present to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Remember that? Bride of Christ. And we think, well, isn't that wonderful? But it's kind of out there. I'm here living my life, driving my car, doing my laundry, getting stuff done.

Somebody does my laundry. And that doesn't really, how do I apply bride of Christ in my daily life? Well, here's how. There is authority on us.

And like that woman who respects her husband when she covers her head and doesn't speak out at church, but asks her husband at home, gives him the reason. She may be miles ahead of him spiritually, and it may be pointless to ask him the question, but it's not as important to get the answer to the question as it is to ask it at home in accordance with God's design. That's the principle.

That's what the angels are looking at. God says, look how important this divine organization is. Lots of enlisted people in the military are smarter than the officers who command them, but they don't frag the officer and take over, or at least they shouldn't.

Why? There is more respect for the organization and the principles that guide it than there is for any particular situation where some dingbat officer is goofing it up. It's not worth disrupting the authority structure and the whole fabric of the organization for the sake of this one issue that's going to get messed up because there's a dingbat making the decisions. And you got a chief warrant officer, you got a gunnery sergeant, you got a first sergeant or somebody saying, sir, you know, this is going to all come unglued.

And you got some inexperienced or daft person who doesn't listen and does the wrong

thing. Well, we don't have people in the ranks rising up and committing mutiny. Why? Because the fabric is more important than that single decision.

And the same is true in the spiritual life. Nothing is more important than our orientation to the plan and purpose of God. And it isn't worth trying to get one little thing to go exactly right and mess that up.

Wives often have to swallow their objections and support their husbands in what they believe to be foolish nonsense. But having spoken their peace and the husband saying, I don't know what I'm doing. Be quiet.

Here we go. That's their role. And you have to do it as unto the Lord.

You know that certain disasters is going to follow or is likely to follow or you think it's going to follow. But God is not looking for you to get this situation figured out exactly right. God is looking for submission.

God is looking for that obedience. And even though your husband may wreck the train, you have laid up for yourself treasure in heaven. You have seized and laid hold of righteousness because you are saying, well, dear, you know, I was behind you a hundred percent.

I'm sorry that didn't work out. You won't hear me say, I told you so. It's a mythical world.

But you see my point. God is looking for those who will be faithful. Many times we have to respect crazy authority at work or in the home, in business, in life.

God can always work out the details. He's not so interested in how a particular situation works out. He is looking for people of faith who will be obedient, who will reflect an understanding of that divine design and who respect it to the point of living their life in the light of it and not compromising it.

Women pray with their heads covered. They have authority on their heads because of the angels. This is the biggest thing God has going.

He's got the angels in a Super Bowl stadium up there watching this game, looking to see what happens in human life. And this is the resolution. When the woman of Babylon, all of the participants in the deception of Satan, substitute faith, substitute solutions, substitute life for the life of God, it's all brought down and God implodes.

The beast reaches around and rips the woman off his back and chews her up. And those ten horns burn her with fire. They burn Babylon down.

And of course, their time is over with as well. There are 66 pound hailstones falling. A third of this and a third of that is all turning to blood and burning and getting scorched and people are crying out.

They're doing everything but what? Repenting. They do everything but repent. And it's all kind of out in the open.

It's not even a matter of faith anymore. God's practically ripped the fabric of space and time and poked his face through and said, are you going to listen to me yet? And everybody's saying, no. They're blaspheming God for the judgment that he's bringing on the earth.

They don't acknowledge him. When they know him as God, they don't glorify him as God. They are not thankful.

They become empty in their imagination and their foolish heart is darkened. Well, when God destroys that woman, there is rejoicing in heaven. And the first ones to rejoice, I think, are the angels.

And there's many other commentators who, for various reasons and from various points of view, believe that this is an angelic host. Loud sound of a great multitude in heaven saying, Alleluia, salvation and glory and power of our God. You'll notice what I've given you is slightly shorter than what you have in your New King James.

This is another one of those cases where there's textual variation. The shorter text leaves out one of the words there. You have four things that are being celebrated and in the Greek, there's only three.

The tendency of texts as they were copied over and over and over and over. Somebody would have a copy for years and years, a little monk somewhere reading through it, making little notes in the margin to himself, having his devotions. He dies.

They bury him. Ten years later, some other monk comes along and says, Boy, this thing's really getting ragged. I'll make a copy of it.

And so he gets a fresh parchment and he starts copying along. And when he gets to the marginal note, he thinks, Well, this is faded along just like the rest of I guess the original copyist left something out and then added it back in. So he would incorporate the marginal note as thinking it was a text correction and just put it right into the text.

Then his copy gets copied by endless other little monks. And first thing you know, you have all of these manuscripts with this variant reading and you say, Well, how do you know which one is original? Well, there's also the case where a guy is tired and he's been copying three or three and a half, four pages, and he's been there for six hours and his eyes are all blurry. And maybe there's a word in line three and that same word occurs in line five.

He's copying along and he glances over and he copies. And when he glances back over, he catches that same word and skips a whole line or skips a phrase. And it's what they

call homeoteluton, which means it got shortened by that much.

And then first thing you know, you go back and read that and you say, Well, that's kind of a non sequitur. And so there's a science and an art to textual criticism of determining what is the correct reading. Generally speaking, in a situation like this, the shorter reading is to be preferred.

It was much more unlikely for somebody to just throw in an extra word. They say, Well, deliverance and glory and power to our God. And then somebody says, Well, in another passage, it was glory and honor and power.

And maybe that is running through his mind and he kind of sticks it in from memory to match another verse or because he knows another verse. And I used to do this with some of the things in John. He that hath the Son hath life.

He that hath not the Son of God hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. That's actually a conflation of two different John passages. And I've quoted it that way for years because they just, and if I was a copyist, I'd goof up a text based on it.

So honor isn't there. And they'll go from God to the Lord our God. And so this is the kind of thing that tends to happen.

But regardless, you have this angelic host singing this out. They see what God wanted them to see in human history. This is what God has done.

God is a God of deliverance. God is a God of glory. God is a God of power.

His judgment and his righteousness are vindicated here. And he has taken away this deception. And in all of down the corridors of the eternal future, with everybody still having free will.

I used to think when I was in Sunday school, you know, I can't wait till I get to heaven and I'll never sin again because, well, I'll be perfect and I just won't have the ability to sin. I was taught that from well into my adult life. Boy, you know, get that glorified body, won't be tempted by sin.

Bible doesn't say that. Why is it we won't sin in the future? Is God going to take our little on off switch, our positive negative switch and just strap it down on positive and we won't be able to reject him? Why will we not sin? And I mean, you got the angels that God created and a third of them rebelled against God. For what reason? They didn't have their volition strapped down on the positive pole and we won't either.

But one advantage we have that they did not have is history. We have been there and done that. And it's sort of like people who take up smoking.

If you've been a smoker and you've quit and you stay quit, you tend to not want to ever

go back. Somebody who's genuinely recovered alcoholic or genuinely recovered drug addict remembers what it's like. There are people who are sort of mystified and I wonder what that's like.

It's a mystery and I feel like I want to try it. People have already tried it and know how horrible it is. Say, no way.

I am never going to do that again. You have no idea. And I'm telling you now, don't do it.

But there's people with experience and people without. We have the experience of what it's like to be conceived in iniquity and born in sin and struggle through all of the havoc and the catastrophe and the pain and the sorrow that sin and evil and separation from God brings. And when we are restored to that place that the unfallen angels have always enjoyed, a fellowship and communion and basking in the glory of God, and we compare that to the slogging through the muck that we have to do down here, nobody in our ranks is ever going to go back and say, well, I think I'll try that sin thing again.

Leeks and garlicks of Egypt, that's not going to be a temptation for us. But it won't be because God has changed our free will. It's going to be because we will have the basis to always make that good decision.

And the more experience of God, just think about it. If we can trust God and choose God and pursue relationship with God in these hard circumstances now, it's duck soup when we're glorified and sanctified and in his presence. And we are going to enjoy him more and be more useful and do the kinds of things that the angels in heaven do that we already have.

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, hasn't entered into the heart of man. So back to chapter 19, the angels glorify him first and they say, look at God and glorify him. His deliverance, his glory, his power, his judgments are true and righteous.

He has judged this great harlot, this deception that corrupted the earth with fornication and he has brought right out of the martyring of the sanctified ones. That seemed like a horrible tragedy when people were martyred for the faith. You think about Wycliffe and these other guys that were burned, trying to give people their own copy of the word of God.

God is going to vindicate that. Why? Does anybody want to see the harlot come back after seeing what she does? You know, I think the argument in heaven might have been, you know, all of us angels who are kind of tired of God, why can't we just go over here and do our own thing? We won't bother anybody. It's a lie.

What happens when you get away from God? The first thing you want to do is go back and wipe out everybody that's still interested in God. You can't leave them alone. You want to go back and spill their blood.

And they say, look, God has showed us through this 6,000 years of human history why he has to get rid of people who reject him, or individuals, angels who reject him. They have to be removed. They can't just be segregated.

Is God going to sustain them and keep them alive and provide for them? I mean, to the extent that they're dependent on him, they're just going to hate him and they're going to chafe under their dependency on him. If he turns them completely loose, they will devour one another because that's the nature of separation from God. And it's been demonstrated in human history.

So it's vindicated. They sing about it. And then once they do this, now you have the 24 elders and the four living creatures.

What do they represent? Who are the 24 elders? These are the overcomers. They represent the overcomers of the church age. They have crowns, as Jesus promised in the letters to the seven churches, Revelation chapter 2 and 3. 24 elders.

Why? Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. 24 courses, just like there were in the Old Testament. 24 courses of priests.

These are the priests who have fulfilled their priestly function. They haven't soiled themselves. They haven't discredited themselves.

They haven't disqualified themselves. And they are the ones who are qualified to sit in proximity to God, casting their crowns at his feet. Where did they get those crowns? They are the overcomers.

And so they, as the representatives, in the same way that 144K are representative of faithful Israel, 24 elders representative of faithful church. So they speak up and they say, Amen. Separate and distinct from this group that has spoken, right? You get the idea that the 24 elders would be in a leadership role in whatever group you see them as being from.

I say their church. Well, they would speak before the group. They're not going to be doing a refrain to the white-robed throng.

So angels first, then the 24 elders and the four living creatures. Now, what about the four living creatures? We know about them. Each of them has four faces, the cherubim.

They've got the coals. They've got the wings. We saw all of that in Ezekiel.

Four living creatures. Why? Four is the number of universality where? On the earth. They accompany God's chariot, God's throne, God's mobile presence when it comes to earth, when it is in view of people on the earth.

And this is the earthly manifestation of God's glory, which no man has seen at any time.

This is representative. And the four living creatures are representative and their nature is representative.

Four is the number of the cardinal directions. It's the number of the spatial dimensions, all of that. So four living creatures, once again, they speak on behalf of those on the earth.

So they say, Amen. And then you have this voice from the throne, no doubt one of the living creatures, because who do you have at the throne? You have God on the throne and you have the four living creatures surrounding it. We know those living creatures speak.

One of them talked to Ezekiel. So a voice comes from there saying, praise our God, all you his servants and those who fear him, both small and great. And this is Israel because they, I think, are freshly resurrected here.

And this is the first act of those resurrected servants of God. My servant, Israel, Jacob, my servant, and so on. Then you hear this sound of a great multitude as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings sort of puts you in mind of the thunderings on Mount Sinai.

But instead of God speaking here, these are the people of God speaking, saying, Alleluia, the Lord God omnipotent reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and give him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come. And you get the idea that these are those who are looking forward to attending that marriage feast, friend of the groom.

The ones with the white robe, they're going to be qualified and be invited into the feast that the king gives for his son and so on. So it makes sense in verse nine, write blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Not all of Israel is going to be called.

Blessed are those. They are blessed. Some people are going to be experiencing the resurrection of blessing and reward.

Others, it's a resurrection of shame. Daniel talks about it. Paul talks about it in the church age comparison in Romans chapter two, those who by patient continuance and well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality.

God will grant life eternal life with that quality of eternity. It's not deliverance from the lake of fire. This is I've come.

They might have life and have it abundantly. So blessed are those who are called. And he said to me, these are the true sayings of God.

Now this is kind of an odd thing. We always just kind of hurry on when we run across

something like this. The what are not the true sayings of God? Tell me which ones.

Why would he say this? This is emphasis, isn't it? This is a true saying of God. What is he saying? These songs that these different crowds have sung, the angels sing one, the 24 elders and the four living creatures sing one, and the throng of servants of God who sing about his omnipotence. What was Israel's big problem in the days of Samuel? Give us a king.

We want to be like the nations. That's what's going to give us power on the earth and make us like the other nations. We'll be rubbing elbows with the big boys.

God is omnipotent. Resurrected Israel understands that God is their king, that God is their power. And that's I think what they're singing about here.

These are the true sayings of God. A true saying of God is a timeless principle. You can divide things in the Bible into doctrines, principles, and promises.

Doctrines are timeless truths. Principles are what you apply in life. Promises are just what they sound like.

These are doctrines. These are doctrines of God, true sayings. They apply in every age.

They apply outside of the ages. They apply among the angels. God is the source of righteousness and justice.

His judgments are true and right. He is the God of deliverance. He is the of glory.

He is the God of power. This is universally true. These are true sayings about God.

What we have just seen here in these first several verses. John falls at his feet to worship him. Oops.

Don't confuse the message and the messenger. How many times have we talked about this? Nothing special about the messenger. Anybody who glorifies a pastor is kind of like John falling at the feet of the angel.

What does the angel say? He said to me, see that you do not do that. I am your fellow servant and of your brethren. Oops.

Can't be an angel if he's of the brethren, can he? So now we say, well, now wait a minute. I thought this was the angelic guide. So we have to start going back.

If he's of the brethren, we go back and he said right. Blessed are those who are called. Well, this is where you get into one of those time travel conundrums.

These are events of the future being viewed by a man of the past. John is an apostle. We have seen good evidence that John is going to be one of the two witnesses of revelation.

James and John, the sons of thunder who will drink the cup that Christ drank and so on. Well, he's going to know a whole lot more when he gets there and performs his function as a witness and he actually eats the seven sealed scroll, which he as yet has not eaten and the content of which nobody knows. But this is the past John looking at the future events that the future John is going to totally comprehend because he's an apostle.

He's up there in the ranks of the 24 elders and he'll be a whole different guy then than he is in his patmos state. And so he's ready to drop and say, you know, you know a whole lot more than I do. Praise to you.

And the guy says, look, no, no. For all I know, this is the future John telling the past John, look, cool it. I'm one of your brethren.

Maybe it's James. It's hard to know, but this is in fact a church age believer. I am one of your brethren.

There's only one thing a brother to a church age believer can be and that's another church age believer. Angels are not our brothers. They're not up there saying he ain't heavy.

He's my brother. They're not floating around helping us in that sense. He says, I am your fellow servant.

I am your brother. So we're going to know a whole lot more in the future than we know now. But remember this is John and there's certain things that he can't comprehend because he's living in 90 something AD seeing this vision.

So one application we get from this is be careful. Do not confuse the message with the messenger. It is the word of God.

It is the power of God, the true sayings of God that are worthy of our faith, our devotion, our concentration, our meditation and so on. See that you don't do that. I'm your fellow servant.

I'm of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. It's the testimony that is the issue. Get the testimony.

Messengers come, messengers go. They drop like flies. Others come up.

You can get the testimony from a book that a guy wrote. I love to read C.H. Macintosh. The guy's been dead a hundred and some odd years.

But the testimony of Christ is in those books and it's great. C.I. Schofield, Lewis Perry Chaffer, Darby, Matthew Henry, Adam Clark, great scholars, students have the testimony of Christ and it's the testimony that counts. Worship God for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Anybody that gets off on seeking the Holy Spirit, oh you know, don't get me started on that. But the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus Christ. It is the truth about Christ.

He wins this victory. He is the one that brings about the end of the harlot. The seed of the woman of faith crushes the serpent's head and that's the basis and the foundation upon which the millennial kingdom is built.

John says, now I saw heaven open and behold a white horse. Well, we don't have time to see the white horse until next week. But there's one thing we take away from this first section of chapter 19.

It is don't be led astray by the deception. It is the spirit of antichrist is at work even now and it leads many of us as Christians astray. It is the testimony of Christ that gives us clear vision and helps us to see and be prepared for that day.

We want to be one of those who is qualified to be in that close proximity and sing these great songs of praise reflecting the glory of God in the future. But it requires some diligence and some paying attention now because we can't come back and get a do-over on this life. We get one go around and this is it.

A lot of great things are available to us in the future. Well, let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the graphic way you presented these truths to us in Revelation and throughout your word.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will give us insight and understanding not only of future events but also of the interpretation and application in our lives day by day in the allocation of life that remains to us here on earth. We pray that in all things our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be glorified. We ask it in his name.

Amen.