

## Revelation 20-05-21b

We're ready now to resume our study in the book of Revelation and having looked at the woman in chapters 12 and 13 representing Israel, we saw that when the dragon in verse 13 of chapter 12, this is Revelation chapter 12 verse 13, when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. And the woman is given two wings of an eagle to fly into the wilderness where she's nourished for a time, times and half a time. So the indication is that this casting out is something different than what we've traditionally understood in terms of Satan's exit from heaven.

We've basically thought that there was a single episode where when Satan committed the five I wills, he was cast out of heaven. But if you remember, when you go back to Isaiah chapter 14 and Ezekiel chapter 28 and read the details, it says, how thou art fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of darkness, right? How thou art fallen from heaven, you who rule the nations and so on, you have it is presented at least initially as being fallen here. And all of you who have fallen know that you can do this all by yourself.

You can trip yourself, you can miscalculate and fall with no action on anyone else's part. But here he is very clearly cast out. Verse nine, he was cast to the earth and his angels were cast out with him when he saw that he had been cast to the earth.

And it appears that Satan originally fell and was consigned to go to and fro in the earth and walk up and down in it, but still can return to heaven for these heavenly councils, these conclaves, if you will. And he seems to have some freedom of movement. He's still got a temporary visa or a visitor's pass to come in.

But he is going to be forcibly expelled and penalized in some way that we don't have detailed in the Old Testament. And this is going to enrage him. And if you're familiar with those who are in the grip of evil and don't have access to God's grace, sometimes even a small insult or a very minor slight can produce profound rage and indignation.

Pride wounded is like a woman scorned. Hell hath no fury. So when the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth, he's already suffered loss of privileges.

He lost his throne room, guardian cherub job, and was somehow linked to this earth before Adam and Eve and the garden and before Job. And he's been roaming the earth and seeking whom he may devour and so on. But it seems that he has had quite a bit of freedom of movement.

And it may be that when you think of the three heavens, the third heaven being the throne of God, the second heaven being the realm where angels typically dwell and operate, and the first heaven being the the earthly skies and the immediate surroundings in which angels can operate with a view toward influencing earthly things, that his original fall may have been from the third

heaven and no longer having his cherubic priority access to the very throne room of God, which, by the way, you and I have access to that has to rub in the wrong way. Jesus Christ has made a way for us that we can boldly come to the throne where Satan can't even go. But perhaps these councils and so on are held in what we might loosely term the second heaven and that he and his minions still have access to that.

But here he is cast to the earth and evidently his or perhaps. And this is a speculation on my part. He loses his second heaven privileges and is strictly confined to the earth.

And this really enrages him because he's just about to try to pull off his final coup here. And instead, in his effort to get rid of the woman, he his powers are restricted. And so he's got to use all available resources to try to finish the job.

So the woman is given the wings of a great eagle to fly into the wilderness where she's nourished for these three and a half years. The serpent spews water out like a flood to cause her to be carried away. And notice God used a flood to judge the ungodly people.

Satan wants to try to use a flood to judge the godly people. The earth helps the woman and opens its mouth and swallows up the flood, which the dragon spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her offspring.

So then we saw in the first part of chapter 13. So I guess what I'm saying is by way of clarification, I personally see a distinction between the fall, which happened pre-human history, and the casting out, which takes place midway through Daniel's 70th week. And the woman isn't given wings and a place of nourishment and protection.

For 2000 years or 3000 years or 4000 years, it's for the last half of the tribulation. Why only then? Because it is only the rage of the dragon and the purpose of Satan to destroy her at this particular time as a result of being cast out of heaven and to the earth that it's necessary. Then in chapter 13, we saw this beast rising up out of the sea and he's got the seven heads and ten horns.

It's granted with him in verse seven to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Authority is given him over every tribe, tongue and nation. All who dwell on the earth worship him.

If anyone has an ear in verses nine and 10, that's where we left off in the first session. If you continue in verse 11, I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. The first beast, who is the Antichrist, comes up out of the sea.

This beast comes up out of the earth, has two horns like a lamb. And speaks like the dragon, two horns instead of ten horns, exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. This is the third member of the unholy trinity.

You have the original dragon who gives authority to the beast, the first beast in verse four, right? The dragon who is Satan, he's the God, the father substitute. He gives authority to the first beast who comes up out of the sea. That's the Antichrist, who is the second person.

He's the instead of, you know, anti means instead of in Greek. He's the instead of Christ. And they're both mentioned in verse four of chapter 13.

Now, this third beast, verse 13 of chapter 13. Talk about two unlucky things. 13, 13 of Revelation, he performs great signs so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

He deceives those who dwell on the earth by these signs, which he's granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and live the Antichrist. He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And you get the idea that this is easily implemented in our day of technology with avatars, with I have seen recently, and this was on a comedy show, a person who had the face of our president, Mr. Trump, mapped onto his face and whatever he said, it looked like Mr. Trump was saying.

And the map was real time so that when this person spoke, his lips moved. But they were Mr. Trump's lips. And when his eyes blinked, they were Mr. Trump's eyes.

And it was almost perfect. You could tell. And maybe they intentionally left it a little bit fakie so that you would know that it wasn't actually Mr. Trump.

But it was scary in how they could make the image of someone look, act and speak exactly as though you were looking at film or tape or a live camera image of that person. That technology exists and it exists flawlessly. You've seen it with, you know, young Arnold Schwarzenegger and others in movies, but now they can do it in real time.

They don't have to wait for rendering and, you know, take weeks on a on a big computer. They can do it in real time. And that's evidently something like that is what is being spoken of here.

But notice you have the dragon as the God, the father figure. You have the antichrist as the as the sun figure. And you have this beast from the earth.

Acting on behalf of encouraging worship of and giving powerful signs in support of the first beast. And he's the pseudo Holy Spirit figure. He causes all verse 16, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads.

Notice it is the beast from the earth with the two horns like a lamb, but speaking like a dragon. Horns always represent power. This could be a cooperation between two tech companies, Apple

and Google.

As just a for instance, I'm not saying that I'm using it by way of suggestion to entities who might have that kind of clout, that kind of tech power could pull this off using technology. No one may buy and sell except the one who has the mark. This is how the mark is implemented, not by the dragon and not even by the antichrist.

It's by the the second beast. The second beast perpetrates the mark. This, I think, is a form of technology.

It's it's implemented via technology unless you have the mark or the name of the beast or the number. Notice there are three different ways. You can do this.

Just kind of like there's three different ways you can sign into your phone, you can use your fingerprint or you can use a code or you can use a swiping pattern, for example, on your phone to unlock it. Well, you will have the power to unlock the ability to engage in commerce by a number of different ways. And typically the judgment is just said to come on those who have the mark.

But if you don't have the mark, you have the name. And if you don't have the name, you have the number. And these are alternative ways of accomplishing the same thing, the mark or the name or the number.

So and then the number is given, we can talk about that at length, but this is the unholy trinity. So that that is a fast overview of chapters 12 and 13. And I'm primarily looking at it for the the structure and the way it communicates.

It spans across the entire age of Israel, but it focuses on the time of the end and the judgments that come on those who attack this woman. The woman is not judged, the woman is protected. And that's in this end time, right now, when you go to chapter 17 and 18, the Scarlet Woman.

And the Scarlet Beast, we read this, the angel who had the seven bowls, he hasn't handed them out yet. He says, Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters with whom the kings of the earth commit fornication and the inhabitants of the earth are made drunk with the wine of her fornication. She she he says, I'm going to show you the judgment on this woman.

In 12 and 13, we saw the salvation of the woman with the garland of 12 stars, sun and moon. Come, I will show you the judgment. We know already this woman is in for it, as we used to say when I was a kid, carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness.

And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast full of names of blasphemy. And she is sitting on this beast with seven heads and ten horns. Now, we know that in the previous two chapters we looked at, this started out being Satan and ended up being his his emissary, his his.

His factotum on the earth, the Antichrist. And I had always thought, well, this woman appears, rises to power in the 70th week. And we didn't really see her before that because she's sitting on the Antichrist beast.

And I think I failed to appreciate the comparison of these two women. And if the woman of chapter 12 and 13 is presented across the entirety of her age, including the birth of Christ, which is now 2000 years and counting before the tribulation period, the 70th week, then this woman could also span the age. And I finally have an answer to the question.

And if you went through Revelation with me 15 years ago or whenever it was, I really wrestled and I told you at the time I don't understand the cup she drinks that is full of the blood of saints and martyrs. How could there be so many saints and martyrs when really the hundred and forty four thousand are the only saints that are specifically spoken of? There's some martyrs under the altar. But how can she have this cup that just seems full of overflowing and this fornication? How can all of that happen in such a short space of time? It would all have to be compressed into two or three years in the last half of the tribulation.

Or even if you expand it to seven years, how can you have that many martyrs? And I just couldn't figure it out. It makes sense to me now in the light of chapter 12 and 13 that this woman, and I think I mentioned it before, this woman has existed long before this period. But who is the woman? Well, she is riding, i.e. in some sense controlling and suppressing and directing the energy of this beast.

When you ride a beast, you control it. It's not a it's not a rodeo. This is not a bucking bronco contest here.

She has successfully subdued this beast for some length of time. And so she's identified as sitting on many waters. And this, of course, the church draws from people of every nation, tribe, kindred, tongue.

But it says in verse six, I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. You can only have martyrs of Jesus after the church age begins, but drunk with their blood, there have to have been thousands, millions, perhaps. And I marveled with great amazement and I marveled with great amazement because if this mystery, Babylon, the great mother of harlots and mother of the abominations of the earth somehow represents the church, how can that be? Well, let's read on.

I marvel myself just the way John says he marveled at the end of verse six, marveled with great amazement. Now, I ask myself two questions, a who specifically is this woman? She can't both be the martyrs and saints of Jesus and be drunk on their blood. And if she's drunk on their blood, how and why did God allow his saints and martyrs to be overcome and have their blood in a cup to be drunk by this woman? In the Old Testament, it seemed that, you know, the righteous were

protected and their seed doesn't beg bread.

And but in this age, it seems that there is a significant factor of suffering and even martyrdom. So the angel says in verse seven, why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns. And once again, in the same verse, you have the woman and the word mystery.

This woman exists in the mystery age, it was a mystery to the Old Testament prophets, it was revealed by Paul, it is the age of the church. So in some way, shape or form, this woman came into being sitting on many waters. God is not just dealing with the single nation of Israel and its immediate surrounding neighbors.

Now it is many waters. It is the nations of the world. And from the Roman Empire forward, you basically have globalism.

You've got the the borders of the world greatly expanded beyond Israel and its neighbors, as pictured in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, Roman highways, you have Europe, you have Africa, you have the Far East. And eventually in the in this age, you have the discovery of these continents here.

So I'll explain it. The angel says in verse eight, the beast that you saw was and is not and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. Who's that? John is going to get further explanation of who goes into the bottomless pit and who ascends out of it and goes to perdition.

This is the episode spoken of here, going into the pit, coming back out and then being consigned to perdition. That is Gog Magog. That's Revelation chapter 20.

We're only in Revelation 18 here. But if you flip over two pages in my Bible to Revelation chapter 20 and verse seven, when the thousand years of the millennial kingdom and the fulfillment of God's earthly promises to Israel are complete, Satan will be released from his prison. What prison is this? Verse three of chapter 20, the devil and Satan was bound for a thousand years and cast into the bottomless pit.

Revelation chapter 20, verse three. This dragon that the woman is riding is not the Antichrist. She is riding Satan himself.

This is the seven headed, ten horned beast that goes into the pit. The Antichrist doesn't go into the pit to be released and come out to deceive Satan. The serpent of old, the devil and Satan is bound for a thousand years.

Chapter 20, verse two, he's cast into the bottomless pit, verse three, and shut up and set a seal over him. So he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. After these things, he must be released for a little while.

Verse seven, when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from the bottomless pit. Satan, not the Antichrist, not the first or second beast. This is Satan himself.

He goes out to deceive the nations like he always does in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog to gather them together to battle whose numbers is the sand of the sea. They go up on the breadth of the earth and surround the camp of the saints. Now, how can they do this at the end of the millennial kingdom? Who is he gathering to surround the camp of the saints? Well, during the millennial kingdom, you don't have 100% believers.

You start out with the resurrected Old Testament saints and millions of children, in my view, who are resuscitated and given a much better shot than when they perished in the Old Testament age. They come back and they are raised in to come to maturity and make their decision for or against Christ in the millennial kingdom. They make the same decision in that largely perfected environment and greatly controlled and minimized evil environment that they would have made had they lived.

And I personally believe that infants who die before the age of accountability anytime previous to the inception of the millennial kingdom are brought back as infants, as young toddlers or whatever they were before what we call accountability. I think they are brought back and they are raised. If they were church age, I think they can be raised by their own parents.

If they are Old Testament, they can be raised by the parents who lost them, who have been resuscitated in the millennial kingdom. And then I think there's going to be a lot of children who might have been children of unbelievers and there is no original family to bring them up. And they can be adopted, the people who were childless.

And, you know, there's scripture that talks about more are the children of the childless woman than the one who conceived and bore. And I think that many who wanted to have children but couldn't are going to have that opportunity in the millennial kingdom. And as time goes on, there's going to be plenty.

I don't know if God's going to space out the introduction of these children. They don't all have to come back at the beginning, but in some way, shape or form, everyone has to come to accountability and make their decision. There's no free pass into heaven, nor is there any extinguishing of human souls or consignment to their fate, heavenly or or perdition wise without that decision.

So they have to live long enough to make that decision. If they didn't do it the first time, they'll come back. Lazarus did it.

The young girl in the upper room did it. The centurion servant did it. They can do it.

It's just my view. I think this is why it pictures the Lord Jesus coming back with lambs in his arms

in Isaiah. So a thousand years have expired.

And at the end of the thousand years, all of those children who came to maturity and rejected Christ in the same way they would have had they lived. Those who didn't come to faith, and many will come to faith, but there are many who won't. And Satan is going to be hugely attractive.

They will chafe and they will be burdened and feel oppressed for the length of the span of their lives in the millennial kingdom because they hate it. Just as unbelievers have always hated God and the things of God. And when Satan is let loose, he will draw them like iron filings to a magnet.

And there will be so many of them that they will be able to surround the saints. There will be more of them than there are of God's saints at the end of the millennial kingdom. And once again, that tells me that most of the infants that are resuscitated, again, it's pure speculation on my part.

It's just consonant with scripture. It's harmonious with scripture. I wouldn't die for it and you shouldn't either.

But this is just my view. I think it's a reasonable explanation into which all of scripture fits and supports. So they go up on the breadth of the earth.

Verse nine of chapter 20. Surround the camp of the saints in the beloved city. Fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them.

The devil who deceived them. Notice the deception is not an excuse. They were deceived because they were willing to be deceived.

Those who seek the truth will find it. You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart, God says. If you're not a seeker, you will accept the lie and they are deceived.

And this is the God of this world has blinded the minds of those who are not believers. Lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine to them. They're not interested in that shining.

They're repelled by it and they look for something else and they believe the lie. Believing the lie is being deceived. It's not as though if there weren't a deception and there weren't a deceiver, they would have come to God.

They are deceived because they have rejected God. They don't reject God because they were deceived. The cause and effect is they reject God and they accept the lie.

Read Romans chapter one, the last half. So the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are. Notice this beast is Satan.

The beast and false prophet are already in the lake of fire. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Talk about that another time.

So when you are back in Revelation chapter 17, verse 11, the beast that was and is not, is himself also the eighth and is of the seven and is going to perdition. He is the beast, verse eight, that ascends out of the bottomless pit and goes to perdition. Those who dwell on the earth will marvel whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world when they see the beast that was and is not and yet is.

Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings.

Five have fallen. One is and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

We can cover this in more detail at a future point. Right now, I just want to establish. Don't get tangled in the details.

Revelation is one of the easiest books to trip and fall because you're looking at a detail and you think, well, wait a minute. All we're doing right now is an overview. We want to see the structure of the book.

And we want to see that in the same way that Israel is represented by the woman of chapters 12 and 13. This is the church age and the entity which should be a faithful and obedient. Bride, but is instead a harlot.

Now, what would you expect a faithful and obedient bride type woman to be doing? Where would she be found? With whom would she be associated? Later on, we're going to see the angel tell John, come and I will show you the lamb's wife. And it's the new Jerusalem coming down, right? The Bible never says that the church is the bride of Christ. We draw that conclusion from Ephesians four, but you can undraw that conclusion looking at Revelation 20 through 22.

In any case, this woman is not where she should be. She's not with a husband. She is instead occupied with writing down this beast and she is able to do it.

If this is Satan, this is a woman. Sitting astride Satan and in some way controlling and suppressing him. The 10 horns, verse 12 of chapter 17 are 10 kings who have received no kingdom yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast authority for one hour.

These 10 kings, this is tribulation time. The one hour is the time of the tribulation. So this portion begins to focus on the 70th week of Daniel, this, this age of Israel kind of thing, but they are going to make war with the lamb and the lamb will overcome them for he is Lord of lords and king of kings.

And those who are with him are called chosen and faithful, called chosen and faithful. Verse 14,

king of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus is declared to be this.

He has that name on his thigh in Revelation chapter 19. It occurs earlier in this book. He said to me, the waters, which you saw verse 15, where the harlot sits are people's multitudes, nations, and tongues, the 10 horns, which you saw on the beast.

These will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire for God has put it into their hearts to fulfill his purpose, to be of one mind and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God are fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth. So there is a sense in which a lot of people have said, well, I think this scarlet harlot is the Catholic church.

I think it's, it's some manifestation of the church. Um, and I'm here to say there is a sense in which I agree, but this woman has existed before the 70th week. And she exists after the rapture of the church, when you're back in the age of Israel.

And this is going to be her undoing. She is going to ride the beast until, take a look at chapter 17, uh, sorry, chapter 18. Another angel comes down from heaven, having great authority.

The earth is illuminated with his glory. He cries with a loud voice saying Babylon. The great is fallen, is fallen.

That has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit and a cage for every unclean and hated bird. All nations had drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. The kings of the earth had committed fornication with her and the merchants of the earth had become rich through the abundance of her luxury.

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, come out of her. My people, lest you share in her sins and lest you receive of her plagues. That is to my eye and to my mind, the rapture come out of her, my people.

So there is within this definition, and I am going to say that this is secular Christianity. This is Christianity capital C within which you have true Christians, but under which label and sitting under which banner, there are huge numbers of pseudo Christians, false Christians. I think this encompasses the entire hegemony of the Catholic church.

How many governments have been manipulated by bishops and cardinals and the Pope himself? How much of world history has been influenced by Catholicism? How many people's blood is on the hands of the Catholic church, both interior with your inquisition type activities and exterior with going forth to conquer and enrich itself and push the Catholic version of a gospel on those people? That's your cup of blood. Drunk, that's the promiscuity and harlotry. And fornication with the kings of the earth who have used for so many centuries the religious power wielded by the threat of perdition and the threat of loss of salvation and of excommunication and of losing your

loved ones and indulgences and all of the heinous, heinous abuses and misrepresentations in the name of Christ and in the name of God.

And in our modern day, you've got even Protestant Christianity doing a lot of the same things in a milder sense. You don't necessarily have bloodshed, but you have a lot of abuse. You have a lot of corruption.

You have a lot of self aggrandizement. And in the latter part of this description, you have the lament when she's finally fallen. Beginning in verse nine of chapter 18, the kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her.

Now, I don't have to describe for you in detail the amount of commerce, the amount of money that changes hands over Christian music, Christian merchandise, Christian olive wood artifacts from the Holy Land. There is a huge amount of merchandising and commerce that is done surreptitiously or underhandedly to take advantage of Christians and their belief and their faith. And they are marketed to and they are a huge part of the demographic.

And so when Babylon falls, which is Christianity proper, once the true believers are removed, this is when Babylon is judged. And guess what? One of the reasons they're not going to think the rapture has taken place is there going to be so many people still here in the 70th week claiming to be the church. And while I'm a Christian, look, our peers are still nearly full.

Now, that can't be the rapture because we're all still here and we're Bible thumping and we're wearing our crosses and playing our Christian music. And having our theater shows in our churches and selling our books and pushing our programs. And this is Babylon.

She's got the name Mystery on her head, but she's a harlot, a prostitute, prostituting the name of Christ, misrepresenting the name of Christ, being an enemy of the cross while claiming to be a supporter of the cross. Merchandise, verse 12, gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of wood, every object of ivory, every merchandising selling into those who think that by buying this thing, by associating in some sort of general way with Christianity, they've got a good luck charm. The fruit that your soul has longed for, verse 14 of chapter 18, has gone from you.

All the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you. Riches and splendor. Luxurious enjoyment of material circumstances is associated.

And this is the comfortable secularized church that stands for nothing, that believes nothing, that commits to nothing, that suffers for nothing and certainly doesn't die for anything. We'll compromise. We'll go along to get along.

We'll adjust. We want to keep the numbers coming in. We want to keep the budget supplied.

We want to be sure we can pay for our huge facilities and all of our outreach ministries and our

television time and our websites and all the rest of it. Verse 16, the merchants of these things who became rich by her will cry out and say, alas, alas, the great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple and scarlet adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls in one hour, such riches came to nothing. And you get the idea that a nation that identifies itself as the home of this woman.

Could look like the woman, act like the woman and be judged like the woman. And it's a little scary to see the blue and scarlet and white linen associated with this woman. It's the very same colors in the American flag.

And who is more associated with modern day Catholicism and Christian Protestant secularism than the United States? We are the merchandisers of that all around the world. And in the tribulation, after we are gone, you could imagine that when the judging of this false Christianity takes place, which is largely Catholicism, but also the faithless Protestant Christianity that still claims the name, God is going to judge it horrifically and permanently. And the smoke is going to rise and people are going to marvel and they're going to grieve because they've lost a great source of revenue.

Money drives the secularized church. It is driven by money and it is driven by power. Now, back to why she's riding the beast.

How can she do that? She can only do it until God's true people are withdrawn and taken out of her. And she justifies herself and believes that she is invulnerable and invincible because the things of Satan are suppressed and in some way, to some extent, controlled by her. That power is going to leave when the true saints leave.

We are like the 10 people in Sodom. Sodom is not destroyed so long as there are 10 people in it. But when it's only Lot and it gets down to that faithful few, when they are taken, Sodom and Gomorrah and the other three cities of the plain were destroyed.

Three people, actually four people, three and a half. Lot's wife made it halfway. But that's sobering in and of itself that you can be saved and yet not.

But that model is pertinent. A horrifically corrupt thing can escape judgment so long as it harbors. The people of God, when the people of God are taken out, it is destroyed.

So. 17 and 18, I believe, are the church proper church capital C, which includes everyone who claims the name, but within which only a tiny fraction are actual true believers. And I think the proportion was probably much greater in the early generations, the early centuries of the church and has gradually diminished until this day and age where most of the people who claim to be Christians are not.

And I think the rapture may end up being a minor blip on the news cycle because so few of us will

actually disappear. And there will be a large remaining woman sitting astride the beast. And it isn't until this part of the 70th week that those nations turn and destroy her and are able to destroy her because it is part of God's judgment on false profession.

If you want to look for false professors, it's not the terrors amongst the wheat, it's not the. Some of the things that are identified as that in the parables, this is it and why the cup is so full of the blood of saints and martyrs, you think back over the last 2000 years about what has been done, the horrific, criminal, tragic perpetrations that have been done on masses of people, millions of people. By people who've got a cross on their hat and a cross around their neck and a cross on the end of a set of beads.

And that's going to continue into the period after the true saints are taken out of her. And so if you want to circle a rapture passage, that is your verse four of chapter 18. Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins and lest you receive of her plagues.

We have to separate from that now by our actions and by our confessions and by our practice of faith and obedience to be separate. And ultimately we are going to be called out physically and permanently so that judgment can take place in the same way that the Antichrist claims to be Christ and Satan claims to be God and the second beast claims to be the Holy Spirit. These people are going to claim to be the people of God and they are going to sell out to the dragon and the two beasts and they're going to be judged.

Well, that's all the time we have tonight, but hopefully this has been useful as an overview and also as a source of application. How important is it to be distinguishable as a genuine believer in Christ? Are we wearing so much camouflage? Do we blend in so well that people don't know that we're any different from Christians who are Christians in name only and who are, uh, have bought into the lie and represent the lie and lead others into the lie who are also willingly deceived. Blinded minds of those who are faithless.

We cling to the gospel. We cling to the word of God. We cultivate the ministry of the spirit of God.

We want to represent the Lord Jesus Christ as his body on this earth in the time that remains to us. And if God's plan calls for affliction, if it calls for a measure of suffering, we know that God loves us. He never allows us to be pressured above what we are able to bear with every test.

There is the means to either be delivered through it or out of it. And it is for the glory of God and believing the promises of God that this is a momentary light affliction working for us an eternal weight of glory. We with Job would not change any detail.

It is a privilege. It is an exciting opportunity with the test. We are given the strength to make it through the test.

It's God's strength. Therefore, it's God's glory. And if you've got the power of God in your life, why

should I fear what man can do unto me? Man may do unto me, but I don't fear it.

And this is a powerful reminder of just how great our salvation is in Christ, how great the love of the Father is for us, how awesome in the true sense of the word it is to have the presence and power of God reside in us through his spirit and through his word, the Lord Jesus and the Father themselves coming to dwell with us and make their home with us. What would you not trade for that with the prospect of all that it means both now and in the ages to come? So we look at these pictures in the future in the same way we look at pictures in the past from the Old Testament and from the early days of the church in the New Testament. These things were written for our instruction, for our benefit, to bless us, to strengthen us, to encourage us, to give us optimism and hope and patience and endurance.

The testing of our faith produces patience and let patience have its perfect work that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. Suffering doesn't take away from us. It doesn't diminish us.

It adds to us. Challenge and opportunity to persevere in adversity adds to us. It completes us and fits us for every good work.

We'll close here in a word of prayer and pick up our study next week. Father, we thank you for the truth of your word. We thank you for the exciting times in which we live and the opportunities that you have given us, equipping us through your word and the presence of your spirit to not only survive, but to prevail, to overcome, to lay hold of those wonderful rewards and blessings and opportunities that are a part of the victory package that the Lord Jesus Christ himself secured by winning the victory over sin and over Satan on the cross.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will keep us mindful of these things and help us to see the specific pertinence and applicability in our own circumstances in these times and in these days so that our lives will truly reflect your glory and the glory of our Savior. We pray these things in his name. Amen.