

Revelation 06-02-17b

Let's continue our study now in the book of Revelation. We are in chapter 20. We have seen the angel come down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit.

This pit is not new to us. Do you remember where we saw it earlier in our study? About 10 chapters ago, in Revelation 9, verse 1, at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, remember how it goes? Seals, trumpets, bowls, pretty much halfway in that whole sequence, the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

This seems to be the Alcatraz of heaven, where miscreants are kept, because when that angel under the fifth trumpet opened the bottomless pit, smoke came out like the smoke of a great furnace. The sun and the air were darkened, and out of the smoke came those locusts. They had the power to hurt like scorpions, and they didn't harm the grass or any green thing, but only men who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

They were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. This harks back to Job, where God allows the unseen forces of darkness to wreak limited havoc to suit his purposes. These are not elect angels.

These are not unfallen angels. These are fallen. They are incarcerated.

They are in this smoky, furnace oven, bottomless pit, lockable place. They are locked up in there, and this angel is given a key, and he lets them out. So they are there unwillingly, it would seem.

I don't think angels say, hey, lock me in the bottomless pit. I don't think it's a place people or angels want to go. No evidence that people ever go there.

But smoke comes out like the smoke of a great furnace. Now, it doesn't say fire comes out. It says smoke comes out.

Smoke suggests fire. Fire speaks of judgment. But smoke is not fire.

So this is near to judgment, but not judgment yet is the idea. I think these are angels that have been judged, but not yet punished. God lets them out.

It's kind of like getting a work crew out of the prison to pick up trash on the highway, etc. So I would see it. At any rate, that is where we last saw the bottomless pit.

And now, Satan is incarcerated in the very same place. The heavenly, I like to think of it as the rock, Alcatraz. It's out there.

Nobody escapes. And lives to tell about it. And that's where Satan goes.

The angel binds him. Satan is not yet bound. And human beings don't have any part in binding him.

Even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is an angel, I mean, who is human, does not bind angels. He doesn't bind this angel. And people who walk around blathering about, I bind you, Satan.

I bind you, demon of poverty. I bind you this. I bind you that.

Are complete and total, fruitcake, nutjob, insane, bizarre people. There is not a shred of scripture for people binding anybody in the supernatural realms. In the name of Jesus, I bind you, Satan.

Can you hear people praying this? My advice, stand well clear. Stand well away from anyone who starts bubbling over with this kind of frothy nonsense. It is just absolutely insane.

It's insanity. It is the goofiest, well, at any rate. There is only one recorded time in scripture where Satan ever gets bound.

And unless you think you're the mighty angel coming down from heaven, don't try it. Good grief. So, he bound him and he cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up.

Now, this means shutting the door. He may be saying a lot from behind there. And set a seal on him.

Why do we have this information? I ask myself. You could just say he's thrown into the bottomless pit. You wouldn't expect anybody to come climbing out of a bottomless pit unless someone releases them.

But it says he's cast in, he's shut up, and a seal is set on him. This is security. We have assurance.

A lot of people have been oppressed by the devil or by his agency. And you can imagine the people in Iraq as they watch the coverage of the trial of Saddam Hussein. And those who suffered under his regime, those who lost loved ones, those who were visible and were persecuted in an active way by his Ba'athist, goofball, Sunni bunch are reassured to hear that he is shackled and locked and guarded and confined and that witnesses are screened off from him and there are several, multiple layers of protection between that guy and anybody that he might want to do any further damage to.

And this is by way of assurance. And it ought to reassure us as well. Satan right now is not bound and he's not in the bottomless pit.

And he is roaming the earth seeking whom he may devour. He is accusing saints before the throne of God and the Lord Jesus Christ is interceding. There is a dialogue going on up there from time to time.

And a lot of times people who get in dire straits say, you know, I think the devil is after me. I think the force is in darkness. Some of us have had some very scary oppressive episodes in our life that are sort of personal and somewhat inexplicable in this regard.

But what we derive from scripture is the fact that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. We ought to put that on our memory verse list because I don't remember where it is.

But we ought to take comfort. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is God Omnipotent.

And the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are greater than Satan. And Satan cannot make a move that is not allowed by God. Look at the story of Job.

Look at this example here. So whether you look in the past or look in the future, we need have no fear. We can respect Satan and his power and his wily activities, his guile, his deceitfulness.

We need to have a healthy respect for him, but we do not need to fear him. And we do not need to spend a whole lot of time thinking about him. We know he is there.

We respect his efforts and his agenda. We don't concern ourselves because God is greater. God decides exactly when and where and how this mighty angel is taken out of the picture.

And he is laid hold of. He is cast in. The door is shut and locked on him.

And he is sealed so that he can deceive the nations no more. And nobody has to worry about him. After these things he must be released for a little while.

So then in verse 4, I saw thrones and they that sat on them. I have suggested to you that this is the overcomer category, the representative overcomers of the Old Testament age. We have passages that suggest this, such as Psalm 49.14. Like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them.

The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning. The upright shall have dominion, this is ruling authority, over them in the morning. What is the morning? Malachi, when the sun rises with healing in his wings.

This is the resurrection, the return of Messiah. The morning is that Sabbath day rest that has been promised to the people of God and will be literally fulfilled for Israel in the millennial kingdom. So these enemies of the faithful, enemies of the man of God, are laid in the grave, death feeds on them.

The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning and their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling. Psalm 122.5. I don't have time to give you the context for all of these, but this says, thrones are set there for judgment, the thrones of the house of David. And

spiritually speaking, what is the house of David? It is the house of the faithful, the house of those who believe Psalm 51, who believe Psalm 23, who believe Psalm 100.

Isaiah 31, verses 8 and 9, Then Assyria shall fall by a sword not of man, and a sword not of mankind shall devour him, but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall become forced labor. He shall cross over to his stronghold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the banner, says the Lord, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem. Zion and Jerusalem are going to be the crucible and the oven and the fire that judge these enemies represented here by Syria.

Same thing in Isaiah 32, verses 1-4, Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice. A king, singular, will reign in righteousness, and princes, plural, will rule with justice. A man will be as a hiding place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest, rivers of water in a dry place, shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

If you are familiar with the lyrics of that hymn, Beneath the Cross of Jesus I Fain Would Take My Stand, the shelter of a mighty rock within a weary land, home within the wilderness, rest upon the way, etc. Well, that comes from this psalm, I'm sorry, from Isaiah chapter 32. A cover from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

The eyes of those who see will not be dim, and the ears of those who hear will listen. The heart of the rash will understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers will be ready to speak plainly. We'll be seeing this in Daniel chapter 7. I watched till thrones were put in place.

We saw this already. The Ancient of Days was seated. Ezekiel chapter 43 verse 7. Son of man, this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.

No more shall the house of Israel defile my holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry, or with the carcasses of their kings of their high places, and so on. Many, many Old Testament passages that talk about the ruling of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennial Kingdom, and the implementation of that rule through intermediate agencies. Jerusalem, Zion, those who sit on thrones.

Zechariah 6.13. He shall build the temple of the Lord, he shall bear the glory, he shall sit and rule on his throne, so he shall be a priest on his throne, and the council of peace shall be between them both. Those who sit on these thrones are given the power of judgment. Now, suppose we have an election coming up here in another month or so.

You see the signs out in the yard. Vote for me. My name is somebody or other, and I am a West Point graduate, and a former Army Ranger, and a Republican guy, and I want to be the judge.

And here's what I stand for. I saw his commercial the other day, and I thought, oh, West Point

guy. Have to make a serious decision about whether or not to vote for him.

Kind of torn in two different directions. But the idea that judgment is committed to someone, they're going to be some sort of a county judge, or a district judge. You say, well, what are your qualifications? How do I know you're going to be a good judge? And with this election coming up, we have to start looking around for papers, and voters' guides, and summaries made by people who take the time to investigate all this stuff that we don't have.

It's kind of like a pastor looking into the Word of God, pulling together a bunch of stuff that the rest of us don't have the time to go look up. One person does that, and everybody gets the benefit of that research. Well, we have people who do that.

We have different associations of people who we trust, who we think have a fairly good perspective. And we say, look, you go research these people, and give me a summary, and I'll look at that, and then figure out who I'm going to vote for. Because I can't go down to the courthouse and read all of this stuff and try to figure out who's a good judge.

Well, look at these people. Thrones are set up, and people are sitting on them, and judgment is committed to them. Now, who decided that they get to be a judge, and why? This is my question.

Is Uriah the Hittite going to be one of these judges? Is Jonathan going to be one of these judges? Is Simon the Magician going to be one of these judges? Is, you know, the old Agagite that got all the priests at Nob destroyed? King Saul, is he going to be one of the judges? Is Jephthah going to be one of the judges? The judges in the Old Testament, is he going to be a judge? That got his daughter all tangled up by a rash oath, and so on. Who's going to be a judge, and why? Well, guess who's picking the judges? Who's deciding? The judge of all is going to decide this. Jesus said, All authority has been given to me in heaven and in earth.

So, if there's any other authority, it's delegated from Him. So, He's going to choose these judges. Why? Why will He pick some people to sit on these thrones, and render this judgment, and not others? Because they are qualified.

Because they are prepared. They have the preparation. They have the qualification to render just decisions.

And that's what these people are going to be called upon to do. These are people, and they are called upon to look at situations, to weigh facts, to gather evidence, and to render decisions. This is not a jury of your peers here.

This is a judge who hears the thing and says, Okay. Remember the parable of the unjust judge? The woman keeps coming, and so on. It's not a jury.

It's not a big vote. It's not a town hall meeting. It's a judge.

And he says, Well, for various reasons, here's my decision. These people are going to have that kind of authority. How did they come to have this qualification and this experience, do you think? Those who have the Word of God and keep it.

Who live their life by it. Who come to know the reality of it by experience. I was talking to a guy, not long ago, about refrigerators.

And I said, Excuse me. Can you tell me about this refrigerator? And the man said, You're not going to believe this, but I have literally only worked at this store for 15 minutes. True story.

I have only been here 15 minutes. I really can't tell you anything about this refrigerator. But there's a man who works here who's training me.

He'll be back in a minute, and he can tell you everything you want to know. So, very soon after, here comes the man who has worked at this particular store for 14 years. Knows everything about every refrigerator they've ever made and sold.

And which brands last and which ones don't. Which ones they've had trouble with. What's up, what's down, what's all around.

He can answer any question you have. So I asked him my question. And he gave me satisfactory answers.

And I ended up moving forward on the purchase of this refrigerator. And he says, Do you want the service agreement? And I said, No, thank you. And he said, Why not? And I said, Well, my philosophy is if you're willing to bet that the thing's going to work, so am I. And, you know, if you're going to take my money assuming you won't have to spend it all, then I'm willing to keep my money assuming I won't have to spend it all.

And he said, Well, you know, that used to be true. But seriously, let me tell you about these refrigerators. And then he began to tell me some things and talk me into it.

And I got the service agreement. And I'm already beginning to think I'm glad that I did. My point here, well, there are blue sparks coming out of a switch.

That's why. But here's the point. I trust the advice and the judgment of somebody who has been around the machines this long and can tell me in detail why he is making this recommendation and what his experience is and what has changed and what's new.

And he shows me a piece of paper where here's a thing from an independent deal that says, Have you noticed how the manufacturers who are creating these things have backed off of their three-year manufacturer's warranties to one year across the board? They're only warranting their work for one year where they used to warrant it for three to five. And this has sort of quietly come out. And this thing was dated within the last few months.

And they said Frigidaire and GE and Whirlpool and all these other manufacturers who make all the fridges that get branded with everybody else's name are quietly saying, Hey, we're only going to fix this thing for a year. Why are they doing that? Because they break. And you better get a warranty.

Well, this comes from somebody who has been immersed in this. This is what they do for a living. They're around it.

They know things. They've seen things. That's what these judges are.

These are people who know things and have seen things, who have had their hands on it, have had it apart and put it back together. You know, do you want advice from a guy who reads an auto magazine? Or do you want advice from a guy who has taken apart an engine and put it back together in his own garage and is driving around successfully in it? I mean, who do you want to have looking at your case? Who do you want to judge fairly? These are people who have the Word of God and have lived by it, who know it experientially, not just from an academic point of view. I saw thrones and they sat on them.

And these people are comfortable sitting down on those thrones. Now, you and I might think, Oh, well, I don't want somebody to sit me down on a throne. Listen, you know why a lot of people run for Congress? Because they get sick to death of watching other people run for Congress and go up there and make a complete hash of everything.

And they say, Look, I could do a better job than this guy. This is why Clint Eastwood ran for mayor of Bel Air. This is why Sonny Bono ran for mayor of Palm Springs.

This is why Ronald Reagan ran for governor of California. This is why Schwarzenegger ran. This is why the wrestler ran up there in Wyoming or wherever.

A lot of people just say, You know what? Even I could do a better job than these yo-yos. And they go and time will tell if they do or not. But my point here is this.

What do you and I learn when we look at this section right here in verse 4? I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. These people are qualified. They are capable.

They are selected. They are commissioned. And they are serving God.

Why? Because they have served God. What did God tell Moses? And it's quoted in the New Testament, although you have to look carefully. I will have mercy upon whom I have had mercy.

I will have compassion upon whom I have had compassion. Exodus quoted in Romans chapter 9. He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is much. Remember the parable of the talents? The guy says, Here is a guy I give five.

Here is a guy I give three. Here is a guy I give one. The guy that I gave five, he made five more.

He says, You are going to be ruler over so much. He has made ruler over cities because he was good with a couple of coins. The guy with the three coins makes three more.

He says, You have been faithful in a few things. I am going to make you ruler over many things. Here is a guy that is only given one coin, and he wraps it in his sweat rag and stuffs it in his pocket and doesn't do anything with it.

He says, Take that guy's stuff and give it to one of these guys who knows how to operate with what is given to them. This is our opportunity. This is our example.

We are entrusted. I heard Dr. Criswell today as I was transferring stuff to digital. I was speaking at the Southern Baptist Convention back in 1963.

He had been talking to a lady who had, back then, they called them a mongoloid child. I had lived next door to a guy who was mongoloid. His name was Ted.

He was a great guy, one of my best friends when I was growing up. There is a certain physical appearance and a certain genetic problem with those folks. Back in the early 1960s, it was a common term.

It wasn't derogatory. Anyway, he said, I was talking to a lady, and she has had a baby, and it is a mongoloid child. The woman came to me and said, Why did God do this? Why didn't God let my baby be born normal? Dr. Criswell said, in a nutshell, I basically presented it this way.

God said, I have got this child that is hurt, that is in need, that is not all that it could be. It has to come into this world in this condition for my purposes and my reasons. I need someone to take care of it.

Who can I entrust with this special task, with this special child? God looks all over the earth to find someone who is qualified, who has the heart and the compassion and the fortitude and has what it takes to care for this child. Dr. Criswell told this lady, God chose you. You are the one that God chose for this precious child and this special task.

To look at it as a privilege and not as a burden. To look at it as an opportunity, not as a mistake or a happenstance. These people have lived lives on earth and have faced challenges that were, in many cases, severe.

Look where they are now. They are qualified to sit on thrones. They are qualified to receive this judgment that is committed to them because God has prepared and equipped them and they were faithful in their task.

They were faithful in small things. God can now use them for big things. That is our opportunity

as well.

Souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus. A lot of people would probably look and say, boy, that person made a pretty big mistake in their life. That was a poor choice.

You chose and look, your head is cut off. John the Baptist, you were such a talented preacher. You had charisma.

Think of the things you could have done for God if you had just avoided that whole Herod wife of your brother business and gotten yourself locked up. You played your hand wrong. You got your head cut off and you screwed up your failure.

You died as a criminal. Your family is embarrassed. You are anathema now.

These souls who were beheaded for their witness to Jesus were probably ill thought of in their generation and their families probably took it all. Yeah, I heard about your brother. I heard about your father.

He is that criminal that got executed down there for being a ne'er-do-well and a fanatic and a goofball. Didn't know when to not rock the boat. And look what happened to him.

Got his head cut off. What kind of sense does that make? He should have been here providing for you. How selfish of him to go off on this religious tangent and wind up getting executed.

How thoughtless. How careless. How insensitive.

God looks at these souls who are beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God who were faithful unto death. Now there are a lot of ways to be faithful unto death that don't involve death. A lot of times it's much more difficult to be faithful and stay alive and live and see the consequences of that faith.

And it's not always happiness and roses and flights of angels singing you to your rest. Sometimes you make hard decisions that reflect the glory of God and reflect the guidance of the word of God and nobody appreciates it. I'll give you just a single sort of metaphor for this.

It's not even actually an example. But in my mind it's an example. You remember when Anita Bryant came out and said boo on homosexuals trying to get into our schools? What happened to Anita Bryant? Where is she now? What happened to her career? And if you bring her up in any circles that even remember who she is and know the nature of that, I mean she got hit in the face with a pie which was then broadcast all over television.

I've seen the film. And she is judged. I mean her career ended.

And she is a byword in liberal circles. Oh yeah, that's the religious right for you. Stuck in the mud, bigoted, prejudiced, religious, fundamentalist, etc., etc.

Every name in the book gets hurled at her. And what did she do? She said, I don't think our children ought to go to school and be taught by homosexuals. Well, those who did not worship the beast or his image may not get any credit in this life.

In fact, quite the reverse. Who do not receive his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Now these here specifically are Old Testament saints who will walk into the fiery furnace, who will take a trip to the lion's den, who will go to prison in Egypt or whatever else God calls them to. Live by the brook Cherith. Live on the outskirts.

Live in the cave of Dallin. The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. Now, this is an interesting statement.

The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. What comprises the group rest of the dead? If you just drop in on a parachute in Revelation chapter 20, as people are wont to do in Romans chapter 9 and so on, you would say, well, you've got those who are beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and the rest of the dead. And that's all there is.

Now, you and I have waded very carefully through 19 chapters of this book. Of the dead who are dead at the point that this book picks up, how many are already now up and walking around and operating? We saw the church age believers way back. 24 elders sitting around the throne, waving the branches and song of praise and so on.

We have also seen that same group represented by the white robed army coming back down. They are not the dead anymore. So, the church is off the table in terms of who are the rest of the dead.

We have also seen the 144,000 raised. And they are up and about. And if they are up and about, so are the rest of the Old Testament saints.

In the same way that we have seen this in the comparison of the 24 elders whom we saw first, and then we saw the rest of the innumerable multitudes, every tribe and nation. We have seen the 144,000, and we have also seen all of these that are spoken of many other places in the Word of God, such as Daniel. Many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to a resurrection of righteousness, others to a resurrection of shame and contempt.

It is a resurrection in the singular, same resurrection. Some of them are approved, some of them are disapproved, just like our resurrection, same model, same basic idea. So, if the Old Testament saints are raised, and the New Testament saints are raised, who are the rest of the dead? Un-saints.

Non-saints. The rest of the dead live not. You cannot complete and fulfill the promises to Israel in

the Millennial Kingdom if Israel is not raised.

You just can't do it. Job said, I know that my Redeemer, the One who pays for my soul, lives, and I will see Him from my flesh on the last day. Even if the worms eat me, I will still be there.

And that's what he says. The worms may chew up my flesh, but I will stand there in my flesh on the last day. Now, how does he know that? Because this has been a known fact, a known promise of God since before Moses wrote down what God revealed at Sinai.

It has been known from earliest times. I was making a point to somebody earlier this week. Somebody was sort of poo-pooing Christianity because, oh, this is a Bronze Age religion.

You're basing, essentially, it's based on Judaism, etc. This is all stuff from back in the Bronze Age. And if you're going to pick a Bronze Age religion to live by, well, there's lots of others.

I mean, why don't you find one that fits your needs and that suits you? You can become, I don't know what he thinks, or the other Bronze Age religions that have any traction today. But the idea is, you're living off a bunch of dusty old Jewish myths from thousands of years. By the way, the Bronze Age was like, what, 2500 B.C.? Early Bronze is 2500 to 1400.

Middle Bronze is the time of the Exodus down. Late Bronze is like 1000 B.C. on. Bronze Age is a couple thousand years before Christ.

And so they're saying, what's the matter with you? You're bringing this. Well, let me ask you this. Just assume for the moment, for the sake of argument, hypothetically speaking, there really is a God, and He really is holding people accountable for their decisions.

Now, when is He going to let us know about this? Is He going to have man go on for thousands of years and wait for you, oh, 21st century person, to come along and say, oh, well, now is the time to let you know that I'm God in heaven. Of course He's going to reveal it way back. I mean, what is the... Do you think this is a criticism of Christianity and or Judaism that God revealed it in ancient times? If He's a God of justice and righteousness and a God of salvation, if He's holding people accountable, one would expect, fairly, that He would let the early people know and not wait till you got here, oh, center of the pre-Copernican universe, and that it's all about you.

God told people a long time before you came, what's going on. Well, the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years are finished. These are the dead not in Christ, the dead not in Abraham's bosom, i.e., they are not believers of the Old Testament age or of the New Testament age.

Now, all of the unbelievers are not dead. There will be unbelievers in the Millennial Kingdom, hence, the Gog-Magog rebellion. The Gog-Magog rebellion is not a big Mardi Gras for disaffected believers.

It is unbelievers who have grown up. Now, where do they come from? Well, we'll talk about that a little more when we get to Gog-Magog, which is very soon near at hand. The rest of the dead did not live again.

Did not live again. People are going to live again. And this particular group that is in view are Old Testament saints who are living again.

And you get the idea that they are living perhaps the same kind of life they lived before. It doesn't talk about the church. It doesn't talk about the 24 elders or the white-robed throngs, every tribe and nation, those on the horses.

It doesn't say they lived again. This group, it says, they live again. The rest of the dead do not live again like these are living again, is the idea.

And one gets the suggestion crossing the blank landscape of his mind that this is a resuscitation rather than an immortalization. To live again, this is a life such as one lived before. You do something again, you did it before.

If I go to 6 Fives again, it's like when I went before. This is the first resurrection. What is the first resurrection? This.

What does this refer back to? Everybody that is now living is the first resurrection. In this view, there are two resurrections. Because you can say, well now, wait a minute, I can slice that much more finely.

Jesus is the first born out from the dead, that's the first resurrection. Church is the second resurrection. Old Testament saints are the third resurrection.

Why does it call it the first resurrection? We have a little aid to our understanding called the second death, which has been introduced and referred to a couple of times already in the book of Revelation. If you have the second death, what must you have? The first death. There are two deaths.

What about the death of Christ? Was it a unique kind of death? We're not talking about that. You have the first death and the second death. It is appointed for man once to die and after that to judgment.

Well, that's good in its context. That doesn't mean that there is no second death, because Scripture talks about the second death. We have to harmonize, we have to compare Scripture with Scripture, let Scripture inform Scripture, the Bible illuminates and interprets itself.

The first death is the death that everyone is appointed unto. Nobody lives forever. John is not walking around 2,000 years after Christ.

What is it to you if you should live till I come? That remark by Jesus, in case you're wondering, was a reference to this book. What did Jesus say after the little girl was raised in the upper room? There are some of you standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. Remember when Jesus said that, right after He raised the little girl? And a few days later, what took place? Transfiguration.

And they saw, before they died, the Son of Man, quote-unquote, coming in His kingdom. They saw His revealed glory, His anticipatory glory, flanked by Moses and Elijah, the Law and the Prophets. He's the Word of God, just as He's shown to be here in Revelation.

In the same way, Jesus is talking to Peter. What's it to you if he tarries till I come? John's going to live a long, long life, and at the end of his life, he gets this vision and sees Jesus coming. He has lived without dying until he sees Jesus coming.

And Jesus is fond of these little word plays, where if you're really listening, you know what I'm saying, and if you're listening superficially, you're going to be dazed and confused. And most of the world is dazed and confused about the New Testament. So, what do we have here? The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.

This is the first resurrection. Everybody that's alive during that thousand years is a participant in the first resurrection. That's Jesus, that's the Old Testament saints, that's the Church Age saints, that's the overcomers of the Church Age, that's the overcomers.

Everybody that's alive, this is the first resurrection. Everybody we're bringing up is up. There's nobody that's supposed to be here that's not here.

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. One of my favorite verses. Blessed and holy.

What does it mean to be holy? Take time to be holy? Speak oft with thy Lord? You know, the words of that song. What does it mean to be holy? Hagios. It means to be a sanctified one, to be a cleansed one.

What does it mean to be blessed? This is makarios, happy is he. Fortunate. In the secular Greek world, makarios, you're lucky, they would say.

You're a happy man. Happy and holy is the idea here. Happy and holy is the one having a meros.

M-E-R-O-S This is the technical Greek word for your part, your share in an inheritance. When a will was probated, and the sons and brothers and whoever else assembled, and the will was read out, here is your section. You get the house.

You get the car. You get the summer home. You get the boat.

You get the favorite cane and a kiss on the cheek. You get five bucks and a ticket to Milwaukee. Whatever the person decides, that's your portion, that's your part.

Blessed and holy, it doesn't mean, hooray, you got raised. Blessed and holy are the ones who aren't just raised, but are given an inheritance, a portion. The spoils of victory that the Lord Jesus Christ divides between his bride overcomers and his kingdom overcomers, Israel and the church, those people are the blessed ones.

Those people are the holy ones. You can get raised and not be blessed and not be particularly happy. You might be weeping.

You might be wailing. You might be gnashing your dental apparatus. Hopefully your own teeth.

Fortunate and holy. Blessed and holy. Happy and holy.

The ones having. This is echon. It is the present active participle.

It doesn't mean you took part in the resurrection. That would be an aorist. Raised is kind of an event.

You use the aorist for an event. Hey, that happened. Now it's over with.

We wrap it up. This is a present participle. The ones who are possessing a part in the first resurrection.

Resurrection here is anastase, stasis, the word that means to stand. You put somebody in stasis, they stand still. Ana is again.

You stand again. You were standing once. You stand again.

You're raised. You're resurrected. The proto, the first one.

Protos. You got the proton standing again. Over these, the second death has no authority.

Those things that are your inheritance cannot be touched by the second death. What is the second death? We talked about it in the beginning of our Revelation study when we were in the letters. We'll look at it again.

Because understanding the first and second resurrections and the first and second death are all important. Over such, the second death has no authority. This is exousia.

But they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Remember Israel? Lots of people. How many of them are priests? A fraction of a twelfth.

These people will be priests of God and of Christ. You can't have all chiefs and no Indians. You

can't have all priests and no people.

These are going to be the priests of God and they're going to be the priests of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years. This is the opportunity that you and I have to partake, to be possessors of this great and wonderful inheritance. We'll have to pick up here in chapter 20, verse 6 and 7 next time.

Father, thank You for this great hope that motivates us and sustains our faith and our love as we live our lives before You. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will enlighten us, illuminate us and impress these truths in our hearts. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.