

Rev 06-04-21b

We resume our study here in the final section of Revelation chapter 22. We have seen the injunction to John in verse 10, not to seal the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is at hand. This is the same phrase that Jesus used of himself as the cross approached, and he said, my time is at hand, the hour is at hand, when the Son of Man must go, and so on.

And the word here is kairos, K-A-I-R-O-S. There are two words used in Greek to refer to times, kairos and kronos, K-R-O-N-O-S. Kairos often refers to a period of time or a season.

Second Timothy chapter 3 and verse 1, know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. Kairos. In Acts chapter 14 verse 17, nevertheless he did not leave himself without witnesses, in that he did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

Fruitful seasons, fruitful times. So the season is at hand. Now we tend to think, well, don't seal up the prophecy because the time is at hand, and this is the time of the fulfillment of all these prophecies.

The time of all of these happenings is at hand. But what this literally tells us is the season is upon us. This is the season to do something about the words of the prophecy of this book.

Don't seal them up because the season of their application is at hand. The time of doing something about it is at hand. If these were sealed up, we would say, well, the season where they make a difference, they'll be unsealed at that time.

This is the situation you have back in Daniel, as we're going to see in our Daniel study when we get there, where Daniel is told to seal up the vision and the prophecy until the time of the end, because the time of application for those things is not near. What season is Daniel living in? He's living in the time of rebuilding the temple, rebuilding Jerusalem, returning to the land, getting a Jewish nation and a Jewish culture reestablished in time for the coming of Christ. It's not the time in which those prophetic words that deal with the 70th week and with the foreshadowing that takes place in the latter chapters of Daniel is going to be manifest and be applicable.

But John, writing to and for the church, is writing for the kairos, the season where these things are near. Each of us only has a short space of time. The Bible talks about the human lifespan being 70 years and by reason of strength, perhaps 80 years.

And most of us are well into that allotment of time already, and we don't know if we're going to get that full allotment or not. So we have a limited amount of time to see what the plan and purpose of God is in history and to respond and to lay hold of the things that the Lord Jesus Christ has made available to us. We are uniquely positioned in this age.

We are uniquely provisioned in this age. And we are uniquely called in this age as never before. Moses, Joseph, David, Ezekiel, Daniel, the great believers of the Old Testament age, Abraham and Daniel and Noah and Enoch, would love to have lived in this age.

They looked forward to it, the Bible tells us, and longed to see this day. We're in it. And what a shame that so many believers just take for granted these things.

Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, and it's the book that is still, that the ink is hardly dry, as John continues to write, for the time, the season is at hand. Now, this is an interesting statement. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still.

He who is filthy, let him be filthy still. These are imperatives, by the way. If you're unjust, stay unjust.

If you're filthy, stay filthy. If you're righteous, let him be righteous still. He who is holy, let him be holy still.

What an odd thing to say. He's just got through saying, don't seal up the book, because the season is at hand. And now he's saying, well, if you're filthy and unrighteous, stay that way.

If you're holy and doing good, stay that way. My first thought is, well, then what's the point of keeping the book unsealed? If everybody's going to be what they're going to be, then what a strange, unexpected thing to say. What does it mean? Well, I have, I will confess to you, I have stared at this and puzzled over it for some time, and I will give you the conclusions that I've come with.

First of all, I look at the vocabulary. Unrighteousness is, you know, dikaios is the word for righteous. You put an alpha primitive in front of it, an A, and it makes it negative.

So this is the adikon. This is a present active participle. And it means a state of being.

You know, present active participle, this is the one doing unrighteousness. And it's a habit. It's a practice.

It's a pattern. It's the climate of life. So the one performing unrighteousness, ha-adikon, A-D-I-K-O-N.

The unrighteousness doing one would be an awkward literal translation of this. Then we have ha-dikesato. And this is the verb form of that participle in the imperative form.

It's an aorist active imperative. Now, there's two different kinds of imperative in Greek. There's the present imperative, and there's the aorist imperative.

The present imperative basically means keep on doing what you're doing. It means continue to

do a thing. The aorist imperative means, normally it's used in an adversative sense, sort of like an aggressive aorist, the beginning of an action.

Start doing this. And these are aorist imperatives. So it says, the one performing unrighteousness, this is actually a singular, the one who is performing unrighteousness, and then it says, let him start performing unrighteousness.

And you think, now wait a minute. This ought to be a present imperative. But, and it's odd, and I think a Greek speaking person would have read this or heard this read and said, what? And that's exactly what it's supposed to do.

Keep in mind, what is the context? The angel has just told John, don't seal up the words of the prophecy of this book. And it is with a view toward the words of the prophecy of this book that these imperatives are spoken. Here are the words of the prophecy of this book.

And those who are performing unrighteousness, now that they have seen the content of this book, now that they have heard the words of this prophecy, let them do their unrighteousness. Because now they're without excuse. They've been outed.

The nature of human history, the nature of the future, the hope that is laid before them. So, if you're doing unrighteousness, look at this prophecy and now do your unrighteousness. It goes on to say, the one who is huparos, h-r-u-p-a-r-o-s, and it literally means dirty.

And this is just an adjective because it's not referring to an action, it's referring to a state of being. Dirty. And the one who is dirty, then we have the aorist passive imperative.

Let him remain dirty. The one who is dirty, let him remain dirty. From this point, from the point of the arrival of this prophecy, from the point that he reads the words of the prophecy of this book, if he's performing unrighteousness, well, now let him go perform unrighteousness.

If he's dirty, now let him remain dirty. If that's going to be his decision in the light of the words of the prophecy of this book, let him do it. Because the words of the prophecy of this book establish a point of accountability.

Now we have Windows XP. And also Windows Millennium Edition does the same thing. And what happens is you've got your Windows operating system.

You come up and you've got your little start button and you've got your desktop and your wallpaper and all that. And if you decide to install a new piece of software in these new versions of Windows, you know what happens? As soon as you make a change like that, you install something, the machine stops for a moment and says, wait a minute. I'm going to take a snapshot of everything you've got right now.

I'm going to record your registry and your startup settings and your essential machine status right

now. And it takes several seconds and it records all of this stuff and it sets what is called a restore point that you can get back to. Then it goes ahead and installs your new software.

Now if your install blows up and it screws up your machine and now a bunch of things don't work and it's all twitchy and it develops a green screen with purple spots, you can go into the Windows utilities and say, take me back to that restore point. Get me back to that point. And the utility will go find those backup copies of your essential configuration settings and copy them back in and it undoes whatever that last thing was that messed up your machine.

And it's really a pretty handy thing. It has saved my bacon on more than one occasion where something just blew up for no apparent reason. I was able to get back instead of having to reinstall everything.

Well, when it comes to the life of a believer, when we study this book, when we become aware of the contents of this prophecy, the words of this little book, it creates a point of accountability. We now have been exposed to the truth of God's plan for the present and for the future. The destination for mankind has been illuminated.

The opportunity has been made clear. Now, what are you going to do? If you're a worker of unrighteousness, now let's see you perform your unrighteousness. If you're dirty, go ahead and stay dirty now because you are without excuse.

This revelation from God has created an accountability point. He goes on to say, he who is righteous, and this is exactly the opposite of the first term. We had adikón.

Now we have ha-dikaíos. And the righteous one, let him perform righteousness. And here we have ha-dikaíos, dikaíosune, and then poieo.

And we have this aorist active imperative from poieo, which is to make or to do. Remember in the unrighteousness sense, we had the one performing unrighteousness, participle, let him perform unrighteousness still. And the verb was the unrighteousness verb.

Here we have let the righteous perform righteousness. and it's split into two words. Poya'o, to make or to do, and this is an aorist, active imperative, let him from this point start doing righteousness, and you get the idea this is in a new way, with a new sense of purpose, with a new motivation, with a new realization of what that righteousness is.

It's such an odd thing that someone that's already doing righteousness is given an aorist imperative to do righteousness. Start doing righteousness, and the implication is this is a new and living way of doing righteousness that's different than the way you did righteousness before because you are now aware of the words of the prophecy of this book. And the final phrase, he who is holy, let him be holy still, and this is the adjective hagyas, which you might expect, and then we have the aorist passive imperative from hagyzo.

Now, if you step back and look at this, there are two descriptions that are negative and two descriptions that are positive. In the negative descriptions, we have a negative action being performed, unrighteousness, and we have a negative state of being, dirtiness. On the positive side, we have a positive action being performed, righteousness, and we have a positive state of being, holiness.

You are something and you do something. In the light of this prophecy, you either are dirty and you perform unrighteousness, or you are holy and you perform righteousness. Remember back in 2 Timothy, all Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for what? Doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction.

Doctrine tells you what you ought to be. Reproof tells you what to stop doing. Correction tells you how to be what you should be.

And instruction and righteousness tells you how to perform those good deeds. Doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction, and righteousness address these very same four areas. What we are and what we do when we're on the negative side.

What we are and what we do when we're on the positive side. They go hand in hand. This is the message of the book of James, isn't it? If you have faith, it ought to come out in your works.

Being faithful, that's a state of being. A person of faith, a person who looks at the truth and makes it the object of their faith, that is cleansing yourself. It's the washing of water by the Word, transformed by the renewing of your mind.

You become something as you look at the truth of God's Word and make it the object of faith. And then it results in action. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

By their fruit ye shall know them. A good tree doesn't bring forth bad fruit. A bad tree doesn't bring forth good fruit.

We are something and we do something. So, in the light of this prophecy, we have to choose. Are we going to be dirty and perform unrighteousness? Or are we going to be holy and perform righteousness? This sets an accountability point.

And what an appropriate place in this book to make this statement. Worship God. Don't seal the prophecy of this book.

This creates accountability. Now Jesus speaks. And He says, Behold, Erechomai Taku.

I am coming quickly. He doesn't say, I will come quickly. This is the season.

This is the hour. This is the time. I am coming.

It's a present tense. He is in the process of coming. What did Jesus say in John chapter 14? How many times have we referred to it? The one who has my commandments and keeps them.

He is the one that loves me. I and my Father will come to Him and make our home with Him. There is certainly the eschatological sense, the prophetic sense in which Jesus is coming.

Coming back for the church. Coming back to rule through His Prince Regent in the Millennial Kingdom. But there is another sense in which Jesus is already coming.

Behold, I am coming quickly. Taku. And my reward is with me.

To give to everyone according to His work. Working unrighteousness or working righteousness? What are we doing? That is going to determine the reward. The wage.

The word here translated reward is misthoughts and it means wage. I was reading a discussion by Pentecost in Things to Come in the last chapter. And he is talking about the idea of retribution.

And he was talking about the fact that originally the word retribution didn't have a negative connotation. It was used for reimbursement of any kind. It had the same sort of neutral sense as reimburse.

And retribution might be a good thing or might be a bad thing. Well, misthoughts is the same way. My wage is with me.

Are you going to reap the wages of unrighteousness? Or are you going to be paid the wage of righteousness? To give everyone according to His work. And this harks back. When was the last time we saw that phrase? Each one according to His work.

Chapter 20. Great White Throne. Render to each one according to His works.

And we think, well, sure glad we dodged that bullet. We didn't have to go to the Great White Throne. But, here it is talking about the people of God.

And there is an echo. There is a similarity in the nature of the judgment. In the nature of the reward or lack thereof.

Or opposite thereof. Among the people of God. My reward is with me.

To give to everyone according to His work. He goes on to say, I am the Alpha and the Omega. The beginning and the end.

I'm going to be, this is one of my minor questions. Because Jesus was Jewish. John was Jewish.

Did this whole dialogue take place in Aramaic? And get translated into Greek? Or did it all take place in Greek? Is Jesus really the Aleph and the Tau? Or is He the Alpha and the Omega?

There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. And the first one is Aleph. And the last one is Tau.

Is He the A and the T? Or is He the A and the O like a W? The idea, of course, is made explicit here. He is the beginning and the end. The first and the last.

If you recall, we did a study on this a while back. In our study of Hebrews. Where Jesus humbled Himself.

And took on the form of a servant. He emptied Himself. He has been at the low point.

And He has been at the high point. Jesus is first and last chronologically. He is first and last in having been the most humble.

And the most exalted. It reminds you of the dimensions of the New Jerusalem. Whichever way you slice it.

Forward and backward. Left and right. Up and down.

Jesus is the limit. The statement He makes time and again. That in the kingdom the last shall be first.

And the first shall be last. And He Himself is the first and the last. He has, as Paul says, I know how to be abased.

And I know how to abound. So does the Lord Jesus. He was emptied.

He was tested in all points like as we are. And this has a lot more to say than just chronology. That He was in eternity past.

And He will be in the eternity future. Before Abraham was, I am. I am the Alpha and the Omega.

The beginning and the end. The first and the last. What does this same author say in the beginning of his gospel? By Him were all things made.

And without Him was not anything made that was made. He is the author. He is the creator.

He is the intermediate agency through which God, the Father, accomplished the work of creation. And He is going to be the light and the glory. And be seated directly beside God in the eternal future.

Blessed Makarioi are those who do His commandments. What's interesting here is there's a division in the textual evidence here. And one text tradition which is followed by the New King James says, Blessed are those who do His commandments.

The Nestle Island United Bible Society or the NA2627 slash UBS text has a different reading here. It says, Blessed are the ones washing their robes. Plunantes tastolas.

Stole like a mink stole. It's a long robe. Blessed are the ones washing their robes.

Doing His commandments. Washing His robes. Meaning-wise, there's not a whole lot of difference, is there? These are the overcomers.

These are the faithful. These are those who pay attention to the words of the prophecy of this book, who are clean and who are performing righteousness. They will have the right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city.

Clearly, this is a subset of the saved. This is a smaller group. These are the overcomers.

Outside, verse 15, are who? The dogs. This is K-U-N-E-S here. Kunes.

We get canine from the same basic root. Outside are the dogs. Why are they called dogs? What's the first thing you think of when you think of dogs? Remember Jesus talking to the woman who was a Gentile.

He said, I'm sent only of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And she said, well, even the dogs can eat the crumbs that fall from the children's table. He said, woman, great is your faith.

And her prayers were answered. Her daughter was healed and so on. The dogs are those that were considered to be unclean.

Dog, in the Hebrew vernacular, is a synonym for that which is unclean. Not acceptable. And the pharmakoi, the druggies, or those who dealt in potions and magic and mysticism in the ancient world.

Pharmakos, pharmakoi, these were the ones who looked for a power in substances and in mystical things. And the pornoi, those who cannot keep a covenant. Those who will not keep a vow.

Those who break faith. And the phonais, the murderers. And the idololatreia, idolaters.

Paul says coveting is idolatry. Materialism. Putting something as the object of your affection and the object of your efforts and so on instead of God.

And everyone who is loving, this is a present active participle. Loving and doing deceptions. Loving and performing deceptions.

Playing games. Doing a fan dance. Hypocrisy.

Wearing a mask, doing something different behind it. Loving and practicing lies, deceptions. Sudas is the word here.

These are all practices. These are behaviors. These are patterns of life that are chosen by those who are huparos.

Those who are adikaioi. See the word of God, hear the word of God, and ignore the word of God. Look into the perfect law of liberty, walk away and straightway forget what they saw, according to James.

These are believers who do not establish a pattern of life characterized by transformation, by growth, by production. And will dwell outside the city. Denied entrance, denied access to the tree of life.

I, Jesus, verse 16, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. This is for us. I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star.

The spirit and the bride say, come. Let him who hears say, come. And let him who thirsts, come.

Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. Look at that. Any of us who desire it can be a city dweller.

A new Jerusalem, name on the forehead, access to the trees and to the river of life. Citizen of that heavenly capital, just by coming. That's all it takes.

It's the very same word that Jesus used of himself. I am coming. And he says, you need to be coming.

Let him who thirsts, come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book.

Notice, this is the issue. Now that you've heard it, you're accountable. You're responsible.

If you add to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part. God will take the meros, the inheritance, the share, the apportionment, from the tree of life, the wood of life, the zulahe of this life, and from the city, the holy city, the one having been written, all the things which are written in this book.

It is available. It is accessible. It is the heritage and the right of believers to be citizens, property owners in this city.

But, to take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God takes away inheritance. And that book of life is the Lamb's book of life. Taken away from the holy city.

Taken away from the things which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, Surely I am coming quickly. Amen.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen.

What a powerful closing for this fascinating and illuminating book. If we are not motivated by the judgment of God, as it is illustrated and elucidated and manifest in this book, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowls, the clear call to faith and obedience, the results of disobedience, the result of choosing the lie, the judgments as over against the opportunities and the blessings of the new heaven, the new earth, and in particular, the new Jerusalem. If this doesn't motivate us, what will? It is an open book.

It's an unsealed book. The scroll, those seven seals, remember the seven thunders spoke and John wasn't allowed to write because the contents of that book, that scroll, are sealed. But this book, this revelation, is exactly that.

It's unsealed and it's here to motivate us. You can't get a better picture of what God has in store, at least a suggestion of what eye has never seen and ear has never heard and what has never entered into the heart of man, than this great, exciting description of the eternal future. May God impress on our hearts the things that we have seen and heard in the chapters of this book, the first three chapters, and all the rest of them right up to these closing verses.

And we'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truths that you have revealed through the angel, through your servant, the Apostle John, and through the living words of this prophetic book. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister them to our hearts and not allow us to forget them or to shuttle them aside, but that we will be constantly reminded that the time is short, the time is at hand, this is the season for application, this is the season to avail ourselves of your grace, of the opportunity that has been given to us by the extraordinary work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf.

We pray that our lives can reflect your glory and his glory, both now and in the ages to come. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.