

## Rev 25-12-07b

We resume our study now in Revelation chapter 4 after these things. I looked John says and You should look behold it do pay attention a door open in heaven I'm indebted to a really Solid commentary by a gentleman named William Barclay I like what he has to say about this Moment in the book of Revelation He says in the early chapters of Revelation there are three of the most important doors in life I think this is spot-on. I can't say it better than he does number one.

There is the door of opportunity Look said the risen Christ to the church at Philadelphia behold very same word. We just had Behold I have set before you an open door. That was Revelation 3 8 That was the door of opportunity where There is potential there is provision.

There is the presence and power of God available to accomplish God's purpose God sets before each one of us doors of opportunity and If we are amenable to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as he brings to our minds the principles and promises and doctrines of the Word of God we are thoroughly equipped for every good work and these doors of opportunity are Something to walk through I think of the gate that leads to life the narrow road and the straight gate That's a kind of door and Sadly Jesus says few there be that find it if anybody can find the door it ought to be us and It is a door of opportunity. It doesn't mean that every opportunity is One of these doors we also have opportunities to be deceived The serpent can be pointing out the beauty of the fruit and how desirable it is to make one wise We have to be discerning we have to be prayerful but many times God will put before us a door of opportunity as he does for the church in Philadelphia That's number one number two And again, this is William Barclay and I think it's great there is the door of the human heart We saw this in Laodicea Revelation 320 listen says there is in Christ. I am standing at the door knocking Barclay says at the door of every heart there comes the knock of the nail pierced hand and we may open or refuse to open If we are listening if we are sensible If we are aware we will know when the Lord Jesus is Giving us an opportunity for enhanced presence and fellowship You remember back in John 14 the one who has my words and keeps them.

He is the one who loves me. I And my father will come to him and make our home with him And of course, this is him in the classic sense of boys and girls men and women all of us So the door of the human heart the knock of the Lord Jesus This is a different kind of opportunity we have opportunities in this life to Be good stewards of resources to invest time and Material and effort into things that are worthy and are a part of our calling a part of our responsibility Those of us who are spouses there are open doors of Opportunity with regard to our spouse those of us who are parents or who are children or who are employees or who are family members extended family members who are in a community who are involved in friendships any Contact we have with human beings there can be a door of opportunity. That was number one.

There is opportunity in the vertical our opportunities in relationship with Jesus Christ Himself For greater awareness communication fellowship understanding and that active love and

appreciation for the Lord Jesus that we are about to see displayed in the next few verses of this chapter 4 of Revelation Number three there is a door of revelation. I Looked and there in heaven a door stood open Says the seer God offers to every one of us the door which leads to the knowledge of God and of life eternal and I would add to Barclay's words an ongoing opportunity to Know and love God more fully So as the heavens are opened and this is a fascinating Detail Here's a here's a pop quiz Think about your Old Testament and New Testament knowledge, how many times can you think of where scripture says a Door was opened or a heavenly vision was presented I've already mentioned Jacob resting his head on a rock and Seeing the vision of the angels ascending and descending Do you remember Jesus told Nathanael right after the baptism of John and Jesus encounters the first few of his disciples, and he tells Nathanael You think you've seen something great. You'll see greater things than these you're going to see Angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man John was present when Jesus spoke those words But let me give you just a few examples of many in Scripture we've already seen Ezekiel chapter 1 verse 1 the heavens are opened and Ezekiel is going to see visions of God surrounded by the living creatures these living creatures are going to be visible in John's vision as well At the baptism Which we were just talking about Matthew chapter 3 verses 16 and 17 The heavens are opened at the baptism and the Spirit descends like a dove That's also recorded in Luke chapter 3 verses 21 and 22 John 1 51 is the reference for Jesus speaking to Nathanael angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man Stephen you know Acts chapter 7 one of those chapters.

You should know right off the bat. It's a it's a landmark it's a signpost and after the Wonderful review and summary of Israel's history and many of Israel's failures Stephen as he is being stoned to death for his testimony and witness Sees the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at God's right hand Peter in Acts chapter 10 remember the sheet that is let down from heaven is that Yes Acts chapter 10 verse 11 here in Revelation chapter 4 verse 1 and John is going to see the heavens opened again in Revelation chapter 19 verse 11 The heavens are opened and the Lord Jesus Christ on a white horse is Going to ride forth and bring to pass the consummation of The things we're going to see in the next 15 or so chapters so In addition to these specific references to the heavens being opened you have heavenly visions think of the elders of Israel with Moses and Aaron Nadab and Abihu along with the 70 elders in Exodus chapter 24 verses 9 through 11 on the slopes of Mount Sinai See God on the glassy sea the sapphire like pavement Micaiah in first Kings 22 19 and 2nd Chronicles 18 18 sees the Lord God on his throne with the hosts of heaven Very funny story there And I think it's funny I Isaiah chapter 6 verses 1 through 8 where Isaiah sees the Lord high and lifted up The seraphim the temple filled with his glory and so on Ezekiel chapter 1 and Ezekiel chapter 10 he in both places sees the Throne of God the chariot throne of God the cherubim wheels within wheels and that Daniel chapter 7 verses 9 through 14 where the vision of the ancient of days and One like the Son of Man who comes before him, but he is enthroned This is something that is very harmonious with what John is about to detail for us We are going to continue to see the throne mentioned over and over again in this context I Believe in this Chapter alone. We are going to see the throne mentioned some 13 times And There is The word throne appears 45 times in the

book of Revelation Only 15 times in the whole rest of the New Testament So Some have called Revelation the throne book of the New Testament The throne is Mentioned in every chapter this again is William Barclay The throne of God is mentioned in every chapter except chapter 2 chapter 8 and chapter 9 of the Revelation and this of course is the sovereign power and Creator God authority that is manifest So We are privileged to behold this revelation from John Come up here and I will show you things which must take place after this one of the things you can watch for is in chapter 1 especially We saw the Lord Jesus in his resurrected and divine glory and There is a lot of general description the only sort of specifically Israelite reference you can think of is that he has the key of David David is mentioned once there and then in chapters 2 and 3 when he's talking to the churches He harks back to those elements of that chapter 1 presentation Which evidently was prefixed to each of these letters when John finally got them delivered to the churches of Asia To understand their greetings.

They would have had to have chapter 1 so all of the churches got the first three chapters of Revelation at a minimum and Probably this entire book But it's not understandable without chapter 1 Interestingly and you can watch for this beginning here in chapter 4 and extending through chapter 19 The language is going to so largely change and be much more rooted in the Old Testament in Israelite Revelation in Jewish Understanding of the Old Testament scriptures. That's where much of the vocabulary and imagery is going to come from There's a reason for that Because we are going to see things to come on the earth and In our understanding which is the best understanding I can find We are about to view the unfolding of the 70th week of Daniel Which is the last seven years of the Old Testament age Those who come to faith during this period are not Church. They are not body of Christ the body of Christ has left the building Old Testament covenant promises apply and Just as before the time of Christ Before Pentecost those who came to faith were heirs of the covenant promises in the Old Testament so to Those who come to faith in this upcoming period to be described you will notice that just before judgment falls and There is the command to seal the servants of God in their foreheads they are not described in terms of church or Body of Christ or those who belong to Christ or servants of the Lord Jesus.

They are the 12 tribes Levi included Dan excluded 12,000 from each tribe, but the servants of God on the earth are all identified as Israel and That is a strong clue That these events do not pertain to the church You cannot believe the attack made on the doctrine of the rapture especially the pre-tribulational rapture or The veracity of this book and the inspiration of its content This book is being attacked as never before in human history Dispensational understanding in general and the doctrine of the rapture in particular is under attack and is now quite the minority view and people discredit and disavow and dismiss the Schofield reference Bible with its understanding of dispensations the Strong foundation and the illumination of the scripture so many additional truths have been revealed and come to light Given that foundation and that framework within which we understand our responsibilities vis-a-vis those of the nation of Israel why Parts of the law still pertain to us and others do not you cannot make sense of scripture apart from understanding God's dealings and the only place I

have ever seen this is in our church, but the Dispensations are clearly marked out. Not only by the traditional changes in in guidance and in governance But as we have seen by diet God changes the food that people are supposed to eat Every single time that that framework moves forward and changes every single time and It once you see it, you can't unsee it If you ever begin to doubt that we have a firm grasp and a clear vision of New Testament teaching In and through Respecting what scripture says about itself Paying close attention to the words You don't amalgamate the rapture in the second coming because one takes place in the air. The other takes place on the earth Jesus is preparing a place So that he can come and receive us to himself so that where he is there We are and that is not the Millennial Kingdom.

That is not the earth We are going to see next time in detail all of the scriptural evidence that supports the biblical teaching of the coming of the Lord Jesus That begins at the rapture and culminates at the end of the tribulation when he Returns and plants his feet on the Mount of Olives In the same way that the Lord Jesus did not appear one day by the Jordan River as an adult and say Hi there, John John says behold the Lamb of God Let me baptize him and get him underway The Lord Jesus was born as we are about to celebrate I personally think he was actually born in the spring but since we don't know when this is as convenient a time as any so we celebrate the incarnation the Coming of the Lord Jesus, but he came some years before He began his ministry. The first coming of the Lord Jesus is phased. He is born and For 12 years, we have no information.

He appears at the temple and Is found by his folks a few days after they depart to go home and realize he's missing and he is there Confounding the scholars of Scripture with his understanding of the word So you have this brief View of the Lord Jesus at age 12 Right around the time of the beginning of his adult life his his Bar Mitzvah, if you will Then we don't see him again for another 18 years but it's all one coming and Yet there are aspects at his birth there are aspects at the temple so important at the temple when you look at the at the 70 weeks of Daniel and the Decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem and count the way God counts time which is feast cycles and come to the 483 year mark and 483 years after the decree that allows the Jews to restore and rebuild their life and their City their capital city Jesus is at the temple his first public Appearance the first time he comes to notice by the religious leadership And they dismiss him as a precocious kid. They don't say Could this be the Messiah at least we don't know of any that did But then he's going to return and his public ministry is at the end of a 30 to 33 year long period in the same way his second coming is going to begin with the Removal he delivers us from the wrath to come we are not of those who Dwell in the dark and in the night and who sleep we are not of those who are overtaken like a thief That which restrains Which is the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit doesn't drift around blowing through the trees He is in the hearts of Believers in the Lord Jesus when the believers leave the Holy Spirit leaves when the Holy Spirit leaves that which restrains is taken out of the way and The man of sin is revealed and that begins this period that we are about to see Do not be deceived Let no one deceive you This is the only way to understand scripture properly and Because of that understanding to make good solid personal application We are those upon whom the ends of the ages have

come all these things were written for our instruction So that we can apply them so that we can be those who by faith and patience inherit promises It's not about being a prophecy nut. It's not about cutting a hole in a sheet and jumping up and down because today is the rapture This is about using the time wisely being prepared being ready for the eternity which is to come and The beginning of the end of this earth is what we are about to see and We need to see it from a heavenly perspective Why doesn't this vision continue with John on the earth and looking at the descent of plagues and wormwood stars and Scorpions with stings in their tail John doesn't see these things from an earthly perspective.

He sees them from the standpoint of heaven we don't see the events of Old Testament Israel from a personal perspective They are history. We look back and we observe and we interpret and we apply we are now looking at the future but we've already had the Enormous number of books of the Old Testament to give us a perspective on God's dealings with Chosen people with his people. We have the New Testament that tell us how we should then live now We are going to see God's dealing and judgment with those who are not Old Testament Israel and are not church but are left on the earth and There is a remnant of Israel There are the 12,000 from each tribe, but the rest of the earth God is now going to test and let me just tell you in advance.

Why? the destruction There are people who rail against this book and say the gentle Jesus of the Gospels would never be the Jesus of Revelation he would never condone or consent to throwing people into beds and letting them be judged and Knocked out of their place. He's not a Jesus of judgment and a fire and torment and these horrific Unimaginably painful judgments. That's just not the Jesus of the Gospels this is important to understand Because there are two comings of the Lord Jesus He is both The Lamb as it had been slain ie it Died at the hands of men It wasn't slain by a wild beast.

This is the Passover lamb Christ our Passover sacrifice for us Passover lambs were sacrificed by human hands You weren't allowed to bring a torn animal in for sacrifice it had to be slain With our own hands because it tells us the magnitude of sin how egregious it is It's not a peccadillo. It's not a mild Disagreement with God about what's right and wrong It is Serious to the point of life and death so in the past God has revealed himself as it says at the beginning of Hebrews in Diverse manners in many parts and in many ways God revealed himself in days past He continues to reveal himself in it through the Lord Jesus Christ we have seen the Independent volition the human heart with the free choice given by Almighty God to choose Exercise in a number of different environments perfect people in a perfect environment in the garden Fallen people in a fallen environment both with and without the presence of God With and without various degrees of revelation with and without various degrees of miraculous manifestation of God's power Does a human heart respond does the the knowledge of God that resides in the heart of every man? impel or compel Seeking Will people seek and find the Lord when they search for him with all their heart Proverbs chapter 2 do we receive the words do we hide the commandments up with us? Do we incline our ear do we apply our heart do we seek it do we search for it? Do we cry out for it? every different level the revelation details the final Kind of test of human free will that's what we are about to see with the seals the trumpets the thunders

and the bulls Because Responsive people have lived and died There is still going to be a witness there is going to be a remnant the servants of God you have the two witnesses Who proclaim the truth of God you have the 12,000 from each tribe that are present? Anybody can ask them. Why do you believe what you believe? But largely the world is now occupied by those who are faith less who are God rejecters so Think of the old carrot and stick analogy Can you be drawn? By promise Can you be drawn by a sense of need and the provision of a solution to an intractable problem of sin? weakness shortcoming Knowledge of our fallenness can we be drawn? by a Righteous standard in the Old Testament given in the law Can we be drawn by the self-sacrifice of the Lord Jesus here in the church age God's Going more than halfway in expressing his love for us Enabling us to love because he loved us first Can we be drawn? That has been done that test will be fulfilled and be completed all of God's patriarchal Old Testament Mosaic Levitical Revelation in the Old Testament his New Testament Revelation in and through the body of Christ and the example of the Lord Jesus Himself And those of us who reflect him and continue to do so That's done in The final seven years of the age of Israel God is now going to consummate The stick the judgment side Remember how many times God would come to Israel and judge Israel? Look at the Gilgal pattern in the book of Judges.

Look at the 721 BC a Syrian Captivity of the Northern Kingdom look at the 586 BC taking of Judah and Benjamin by Nebuchadnezzar 70 years of captivity will you repent will you turn and they do sort of when you look at the post-exilic period There is a lukewarm Response they build the temple, but God doesn't fill it with his glory. They obey but reluctantly being browbeaten by Haggai and Zechariah and the other prophets Malachi What's going to happen? Will you will the hearts of the fathers turn to the hearts of the sons or do I have to come back and smite the earth with a curse last word in the Old Testament Turn your hearts or I will smite you with a curse That's how the Old Testament age ends the Old Testament Revelation ends Yet there's seven years to run and that is going to return is God going to need to smite the earth with a curse to get people to turn the final test of freewill in human beings is How painful do I have to make it to get you to turn I have tried giving you examples of justice and a fair governance and of morality and Of righteousness and of cleansing in the Old Testament age. I have given you self-sacrifice and the law of love in the New Testament age You don't respond you don't turn you don't Respond when I whitewash the cliffs and write the law of Moses Before I send Joshua in to destroy all of you Amorite nations.

You had a chance to be attracted by Righteousness and morality and the law of God it didn't draw you I've sent my son surely. They will respect my son in the parable They slay the Sun let's slay the Sun and take what's his the Step forward in love and self-sacrifice and non-judgment for so many people does not work In the final test of human volition, that's what's upcoming in this book. Why are these judgments so severe? Why are they blistering heat and famine and destruction and misery? People crying out for the rocks to fall on them because God is turning up the heat you're going to come to me It's a great white throne and say if you had only given me an idea of how bad the judgment would be I would have turned I didn't turn when you Displayed righteousness and justice and morality in Old Testament terms.

I didn't turn when you self-sacrificially offered your son and Were non-judgmental and accepting coming to me all you who labor under heavy laden I will eat with publicans and sinners come to me if you're drawn to God Now the last test is the last argument at the great white throne is going to be I just didn't know What was on the line? Well, there's going to be a segment of humanity that is going to be on the earth in these in this seven-year period and God has reserved them he has Determined when and where they will be born and they are like Pharaoh God is not determining their decision, but he is using them as an example of the way human choice works if you won't respond to Example if you won't respond to self-sacrificial love Will you respond to the stick of judgment and so these judgments begin and they get more and more Severe and we will see that in the severest most egregious destructive part of the judgment People say hide me from the wrath of the Lamb let rocks fall on me. I'm seeking death and it won't come They do everything except repent everything but repent This is the kind of judgment this time of Jacob's trouble Again a clue that this is the last seven years of the age of Israel is unlike anything history has ever seen God didn't test everybody's volition before he sent the flood. He just drowned them all and started fresh this time in anticipation of the great white throne How is there any amount of pain? That will get people to change their mind about God and they don't they just hate him all the more You can see examples in our modern political climate where there are people it doesn't matter how good a job They do if you hate them, you're going to find something wrong with them and what they do The hate defines your view They can't do anything to dispel the hate the hate is there and It is a red lens through which everything the person says does and is is viewed You're going to see this Unfold in the Revelation.

That's why you have the seals and the trumpets and the thunders and the bowls of judgment and Over and over again. We have the notice They did not repent They did not cry out to God. They didn't say enough.

I See your point You're right. I'm wrong Save me You see no examples of repentance in Revelation people like to characterize the 12,000 from each tribe as Evangelists and they're going out and evangelizing. There is no account of evangelization or fruit of evangelization anywhere in this book Everyone who is of faith gets martyred and their souls are under the altar saying how long O Lord These people hate you so much that they kill us Because we claim your name It is a necessary demonstration and It applies to all of human history.

Nobody can say if you had loved me enough. I would have come to you Greater love hath no man than what Christ demonstrated on the cross No one is going to be able to say at the judgment seat if you had just spanked me hard enough If you had shown me what is on the line if you had wrought Havoc and shown me what divine judgment looks like I would have turned Satan and the third of the angels that joined him have seen all of God's character displayed positive and negative And they do not turn the lake of fire is prepared for them because there is nothing that will change their mind They are free agents. They have made their choice and they cannot be compelled cajoled persuaded They will not change their minds Individual human beings are possessed of the same quality of free choice and it is important

for us to remember as we go forward The holiness of God the power of God to dictate the terms Under which those who possess free will can move forward into an eternal future with him and those who can't There is a malignancy there is a destructive cancerous quality to rejection of God that will inevitably Destroy everything around it and ultimately itself And God will not permit it to move forward into the new heavens and the new earth the new Jerusalem Why? Let me show you what it has done to the people of God in the past Let me show you the cup that the whore of Babylon drinks from that is full of the blood of God's sanctified ones let me show you the Absolute resistance to God or anything that reminds someone of God no matter how bad it gets No matter how good it gets or how bad it gets from God.

There are people who will not turn there is no One so blind as he who will not see That's what the rest of this book up to chapter 19 is about and It is a sobering reminder That we can pray for those in our periphery who are far from God But God respects human choice. He created it. He assigned it He issues a call to it But it is independent and I can't change it.

You can't chase it. God will not change it It is free and it is self-determining There is every opportunity to be buoyed by the grace of God into the beatific ethereal realms of glory and be sustained and blessed there for all eternity to come But you have to want it you have to choose it. You have to decide that God is Worthy to be praised worthy is the Lamb Worthy is he who sits on the throne? We're going to see that in the upcoming section of this next chapter, but so important to give us perspective We want to be the opposite We want to be those who hear what the Lord Jesus says who see what he reveals and respond positively emphatically dedicatedly Energetically I Want to be as far from the people that are Displayed in the upcoming portions of this book.

I don't just want it. I don't even want to be a Laodicean Lukewarm, I want to be hot on fire. I want to be Notable in the eyes of the Lord for my love my faith and my hope Greatest possible distance between that and what's upcoming.

That's our call. That's why we are encouraged to behold The one who sits on the throne and the Lamb at his side This is just it is right. It is violent.

It is destructive. It is horrifying in many ways What is it going to take to get someone to turn and if after all of this they will not turn what's left? Only the lake of fire Only elimination from existence. That is the only thing God can do With recalcitrant rebellious rejecting angels and humans sobering thought however There is an alternative and we're going to see the 24 elders.

We are going to see those who surround the throne we will be in that number and That is a wonderful Scene that we will look at in detail next time. We'll close here in a word of prayer father We thank you for the truth of your word We thank you for the revelation of these truths that can't be seen by human eyes or understood by the carnal mind They're spiritually discerned. We are grateful to have the gift of your spirit and the encouragement of the Lord Jesus to See our lives through his eyes to live our lives According to his example and to look forward to being reflections of his glory We pray that as we reflect on what we've seen we will

see clearly how to make personal application that these Scriptural truths will make a difference in the way We think the way we speak in the way we live in the days ahead.

We ask it in Jesus name. Amen