

Rev 26-03-18a

Greetings, welcome to another night of revelation here at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is the 18th of March, 2026. We are at the end of chapter 13, the threshold of chapter 14.

We are looking at the pattern of prophecy as it recurs throughout scripture and culminates, some would say fulminates here in Revelation, looking at the archetypes, the prototypes, the anticipations in the rest of scripture helps us understand the message that we are getting from the Lord Jesus through the angel, through his servant, John, and through this inspired record that is before us. Let's take a moment to ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and study, and we'll begin. Father, it is such a privilege to gather and spend this time together, looking at your word, seeking to improve our understanding of it, and through that, our interpretation and application so that there is a bright light on our path and we can see clearly how best to invest our time, our efforts, our labor, to curate our conversations, our thoughts, and make the most of the time that remains to us in this life, knowing that there is a wonderful time of perfection and glory in your coming kingdom.

We pray that as we look at this portion of your word together, the Holy Spirit will enlighten us, impress these truths in our hearts in a way that is meaningful and productive in the days ahead. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen. We are, as I said, in Revelation 13, and we have looked at the final verse of the chapter.

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate. In this case, calculate the number of the beast, 666.

We have seen that this is almost certainly a historical reference to Nero. I think this letter was given to John to set down these visions, the letters to the churches. This entire package was given to him in the ninth decade of this era, AD 666.

90 to 95, somewhere in that realm. And Nero would have been history by this time, as would be the destruction of Jerusalem some 20 years earlier, 20 to 25 years earlier. But in order to properly interpret, to really understand the message, we want to remind ourselves of the way God typically couches and channels revelation.

So we looked at this in our previous set of sessions Sunday, and we have seen the pattern that pertains so often in the Old Testament, in particular, and in the New. We've seen the narrative sections of scripture describe this. We have seen the prophetic sections anticipate this.

There is a lot of noise being made about the regathering of Israel in 1948, and there may be something to it, but I am more interested in understanding the typology for our daily application. It is interesting to map. There are those who count days as years and come forward 2,300 years.

And by working the math a certain way, they arrive at May the 14th of 1948 on the day, based

on a decree and coming forward. There are those who then come further forward to 1967 and find the exact date of the 1967 conflict and retaking of possession of parts of Jerusalem. Taking nothing away from that, there could well be something to it.

I personally, and let me just make a quick aside. I personally don't put too much emphasis on that kind of thing. I think it's interesting.

It is certainly worth taking a look at. You can search for these things from commentators and find them online. The question I have is, in order to make the math work for these calculations from the days of Daniel or Cyrus or Artaxerxes, Longinus and the various decrees and working the calendar dates forward, you start to run into issues.

I believe that a hard and fast rule of interpretation is a year to God is a set of feast cycles. The four spring feasts, the three fall feasts, that's a year. Anything that starts multiplying years times 360 to get a number of days and then dividing it by 365.25 to get Gregorian calendar, it just gets very complicated.

What about leap years? What about the shift from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar several hundred years ago where they just skipped over 10 days and just jumped forward from something like October 1st to October the 11th and just skipped 10 days outright? To try to do all of that complicated math and not knowing in the days of Daniel that there's actually a quarter of a day in a lunar cycle, and it's too much. I don't think God expects us all to have big sheets of paper and lots of time to try to calculate and to understand the 10 day shift and even the leap years are not exact. If you say it's a quarter of a day, well, it's not.

And over the course of hundreds of years, you wind up still being off. And that's why they went from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar to fix these things. And there's several decimal points after the 0.25. It's too much.

I don't think God expects us to have a calculator to figure all this out and then turn the corner into personal application. There is plenty for us here without trying to fix the date. Jesus made it very plain.

No one, including himself, knows the day or the hour. If things are falling on anniversaries, it's very fascinating. You can look at things in the biblical record that fall on Pentecost or on some other date of interest.

And it is a tribute to the integrity of God's revelation, to the symmetry of God's plan. But I'm more interested in how should I live today and tomorrow and in the days that remain to me in this life. With that in mind, there are patterns in scripture that don't require extensive calculations across the centuries.

And, oh, did you remember that there's no year zero between B.C. and A.D. and so on. So we're taking a look at these. And this is biblical typology that is in my Bible.

I can sit down and read this and take note and say, this reminds me of another instance of this kind of pattern. For example, turn in your Bibles to Acts chapter seven. This is one of the more fascinating things I've run across recently.

Acts chapter seven, if you know some of your pertinent chapters, you know Acts seven is the historical account of Stephen just before he is stoned. He recounts the history of Israel. It is a fascinating and inspired summary.

And as much as I would like to review the whole thing, let's look particularly at verse 23 and following. He's looking at the career of Moses. Pharaoh's daughter takes him, brings him up as her own son.

Moses has learned in verse 22, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and is mighty in words and deeds. Now, verse 23, when he was 40 years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. Seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, struck down the Egyptian.

He supposed that his brethren would have understood. What we're looking at here is, this is the first coming of Moses as a potential deliverer of the people. Think the Lord Jesus Christ coming the first time as a potential deliverer of his people.

Look at Stephen's words here in verse 25. He, Moses slash the Lord Jesus, supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. John chapter one, he came unto his own and his own received him not.

Which is the culminating point in this sermon by Stephen. So the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, tried to reconcile them. Men, you are brethren.

Why do you wrong one another? Sermon on the mount. Do unto others. Why do you wrong one another? And fail to forgive one another.

Why are you not peacemakers? And so on. He who did his neighbor wrong, pushed him away saying, who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian? At this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian where he had two sons. So as a result of the rejection and the accusation, the false accusation, Moses leaves.

While he is gone, he has two sons. Remember the two leavened loaves of Pentecost we talked about on Sunday. Potentially reflecting Israel and the church separate and yet united in this age.

There is neither Jew nor Greek in this age. And yet the Jews remain distinct, identifiable Jews and Gentiles. Even in the church, in the same way that we can note that there are males and females, most of us can tell the difference.

And we know that there are those who are blue collar and those who are white collar. There are

those who are employers and those who are employees. And yet we erase and ignore and eliminate distinctions with one another love that takes no thought for those actual factual distinctions.

They don't matter when it comes to applying the law of love, the law of supreme sacrifice. But the differences do in fact exist and none more clearly than Jew and Gentile. And we love the Messianic Jewish community and we learn a lot from them in terms of Old Testament interpretation and so on.

But two sons, while he is gone, during his absence, these sons come into existence. And it's just a suggestion. It's part of the pattern of appearance followed by absence, followed by reappearance.

Potential salvation the first time, actual salvation the second time. And so when the 40 years had passed in verse 30 here, angel of the Lord appears, flame of fire, Moses sees it. I'm the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Moses trembles and so on. So he brought them out after he'd shown them signs and wonders in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness 40 years. They could have gone directly to the land, but what happened? Idolatry, golden calf, almost wiped out with no thought of return.

Moses intercedes on behalf of the people. Stephen makes this point that, verse 35, this Moses whom they rejected, saying, who made you a ruler and a judge is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. He was sent by God, but he didn't succeed because they rejected him.

By the way, ask yourself how reformed theology can make this work. God intentionally sends a deliverer, but the negative response of people obviates the deliverance. But as you move further down, verse 44, our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness as he appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, who found favor before God.

So there is a pattern here. It's a double pattern. Moses himself first comes to deliver people.

They're not ready. He disappears for 40 years and then returns and delivers them out of Egypt. Israel has a pattern where there was deliverance available at the beginning when Moses does come and lead them out of Egypt, but there is failure and they die in the wilderness.

That generation, the Exodus generation dies, and it is the next generation, a kind of resurrection that actually goes in and takes the land. There is this pattern of initial opportunity, failure, absence, then a second opportunity that is accepted and results in deliverance. During the time that Moses is gone, between the slaying of the taskmaster and coming back with

Aaron and doing the 10 plagues, Moses takes a Gentile bride.

Remember, in Midian, you have Zipporah. There is an anticipation of the Lord Jesus coming, being rejected, taking a Gentile bride, and then returning to deliver Israel. And that is this time of great tribulation that we are looking at in chapter six and following of the Revelation.

There's more we could say. We're just touching on the subject of the Bible. We're touching the hem of the garment here.

Think of, secondly, King David in 1 Samuel 22-24. David is anointed king back in 1 Samuel 16 by Samuel, but he does not yet sit on the throne. He is hunted by Saul.

He is forced into the wilderness. He lives in the cave of Adullam. The nation follows a false king, Saul.

And there are a small group of individuals who are dedicated to the true king. And they recognize David's authority and they follow him in exile. Then David eventually emerges from the wilderness.

Saul is slain. And David takes the throne in Hebron and later in Jerusalem. The Lord Jesus is the anointed king, but he is currently, quote unquote, in exile.

He is a king not in the land and on the throne of his father, David. As Gabriel told Mary, he would one day occupy. From the world's perspective, the Lord Jesus is off the scene.

But you could see us as those who follow him at the cave of Adullam. You can also map that over the 144,000 during the tribulation, which I think is a bit more likely, who are faithful even unto death, who recognize him while others are wrongly serving Saul. You think of Doeg the Edomite, slaying the priests at Nod and so on.

Souls under the altar. How long, O Lord? So David, there is an opportunity, but the people get ahead of God's plan and program the way Abraham did when he took Hagar and had a son that wasn't in line. Thirdly, you think again, we talked about this last time, the day of atonement and the two goats.

This is a little bit different perspective on the Azazel. The first goat is slain. This is the first coming of the Lord Jesus in prospect.

The second goat, the scapegoat, is led by a fit man into a land not inhabited. This all is in Leviticus chapter 16. Leviticus 16, scapegoat, Azazel.

So the first goat is slain. Second goat, scapegoat, is led by a, quote, fit, a suitable man, into a land not inhabited, a remote place where it cannot be seen. Sin is removed as far as the East is from the West.

The goat's disappearance represents this interval where Christ is out of sight in the heavens,

having carried away the sin of the world. His reappearance is anticipated when the high priest emerges from the Holy of Holies on the day of atonement and blesses the people. And so the goat that leaves bearing sin emerges typologically, metaphorically, with the high priest coming out with a blessing from God on the people whose sins have been atoned for.

But there is this gap of time in between. Keep in mind this gap of time. It's an interesting observation, but it has application, which we'll see when we finish our observations.

Number four, Boaz and the threshing floor. Again, we talked about Ruth, Naomi, Boaz. Naomi losing her place in Israel due to famine, going to a far country.

And when she returns, how is she restored? This is a different observation from that same book. You think of Boaz first meeting Ruth in the field where she's gleaning. And he provides for her and ensures that she has plenty to take home.

Ruth responds, comes to him at the threshing floor, lays at his feet. Boaz tells her, you've got to wait. He goes to the city gate and has to settle the kinsmen redeemer issue.

And there is a delay before Ruth can be accepted and brought into relationship with Boaz and through her, Naomi. And you're familiar with the outline of this and how Ruth seems to represent the Gentile bride, the church, and that has to be resolved before Naomi representing Israel, who says at the beginning, call me Mara, bitter, but she is ultimately blessed through Boaz, who first enters into relationship with Ruth, the Gentile bride, and then is in a position to bless and restore Naomi. Naomi is associated with death, the loss of her husband and her two sons.

Boaz brings her situation back to life. So after the legal obligations are met and settled with the throwing of the sandal and the abdication of the closer kinsmen, fascinating in itself, Boaz returns and takes Ruth as his wife. So this is the sort of already, but not yet tension that we see in the transfer of Joseph to Egypt.

We see it in Moses, who is going to be the salvation of Israel, but there is a gap of time between his initial foray and his ultimate success in that ministry. Believers have come to faith in Christ. We have been redeemed.

We have our Redeemer, but the legal redemption of the earth and the wedding are not yet fully realized. And this includes the world itself. Paul says, all creation groans, waiting for the redemption of the sons of God.

There is a gap. We have an already not yet eternal salvation. It is sure and certain, but we're not experiencing it yet.

We are training to make the most of it and exploit it when it comes. The kind of training that we can never get later on. It is only in the here and now that we can prepare ourselves to fully enter into and enjoy and serve in our ultimate redemption.

That was number four, Boaz and Ruth. Number five, Elijah. This is one you might not see coming.

You remember there is a gap when it comes to Elijah, if you think about it. In his first contact with Israel, he confronts the prophets of Baal, great success on Mount Carmel. Ultimately, he is to commission.

He's to do three things. He only successfully completes one of them. He does manage to recruit and anoint Elisha.

The other two things he was supposed to do, he doesn't get done. And in that sense, he sort of represents Israel itself. But he's eventually taken up in the whirlwind.

People think this is a picture of the rapture, but I think it is more the disappearance of national Israel as God's witness to the world. But he's absent from the earth. Elijah is absent from the earth.

But in Malachi chapter four, verse five, you will recall there is an explicit prediction of Elijah's return. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Elijah comes and ministers.

There is a gap, but Elijah will come back before the great and terrible day of the Lord. So this foreshadows the two-fold coming of the Messiah, the two-fold witness of Israel as the people of God. And it is separated by this significant period of absence.

You can think of the number six, the widow of Zarephath in first Kings chapter 17. The pattern, Elijah is rejected by his own people during a famine. So he goes to a Gentile widow, the Gentile woman in Zarephath.

And he provides her with miraculous supply of oil and flour. This is life and sustenance and raises her son from the dead. Jesus himself refers to this in Luke chapter four, verses 25 and 26.

And he says, because Israel rejected the prophets, God has turned his attention and his miraculous provision and power to the Gentiles for a season. This anticipates the gap where the gospel is preached to the nations before it returns to Israel. So this two-visit pattern becomes more and more apparent once we're sensitive to it.

You can see it in Jonah, the career of Jonah and the sign of Jonah. Another one that Jesus specifically refers to, Matthew chapter 12, verses 39 and 40. No sign will be given to this generation, but the sign of Jonah.

Most people focus on the three days spent inside the great fish. But if you step back and look a bit more broadly, there is this same two-visit structure that you see in the life of Joseph or in the life of Moses, David, et cetera. So Jonah's first call in chapters one and two of that book, Jonah is sent to the Gentiles.

Israel, the descendants of Abraham, are by covenant to be a light to the Gentiles, to draw those from Gentile nations to Israel, to be incorporated into the people of God, to be proselytes. You can think of many examples, Ruth, Uriah, many others. So the first call to Jonah, he is sent to the Gentiles at Nineveh, but he refuses and he flees from the presence of the Lord, trying to go to Tarshish, to Tarsus, future birthplace of Saul.

And there is a great storm. He's heaved overboard, swallowed by the great fish. Inside the fish, how long is Jonah in the fish? Three days and three nights.

Jonah describes that experience as being in the belly of Sheol, the grave, much like national Israel. After the ascension of the Lord Jesus, within 40 years, the nation is no more. Titus Vespasian, 70, AD 70, destruction of the temple, destruction of the city.

All of that time that Nehemiah spent building the wall, all the time that Ezra and the others tried building the second temple and Herod refurbished it, it's all knocked down and destroyed, utterly destroyed. One stone not left upon another, as Jesus foretold. So there is this gap or death interval.

Jonah is removed from the world for three days and three nights. Then in Jonah chapter three and four, after his resurrection, quote unquote, on the beach, Jonah is sent a second time. This time he obeys and an entire Gentile city repents.

The Lord Jesus said, the Gentiles, the Ninevites, repented at the preaching of Jonah and a greater than Jonah is here. Jesus came into his own. Like Jonah's initial rebellion, the sign of his presence was rejected, especially by the leadership.

Just as Jonah is missing for three days and nights, Jesus is missing in the heart of the earth. When the Lord Jesus is raised, and this was noted even by some of your early church fathers like Justin Martyr, after Christ's exit from the fish, his resurrection from the dead, the gospel goes to the Gentile world, Nineveh, where it did not go the first time, but it resulted in a massive harvest while Israel remains in a state of unbelief or bitterness. And this is Israel, this is Jonah chapter four, his grumbling about God's mercy to the Gentiles.

So the gourd that withered, sort of the temporary protection or election of Israel, their designation by God as his witness, but it withers. Paul uses this logic in Romans chapter 11 and says that Israel is jealous of the mercy shown to the Gentiles. So the gap in the Jonah story sort of reflects the rejection of God's plan going through trauma and eventually accepting it.

And this current time, this gap, it serves as the time of contemplation when God returns to focus on Israel during the 70th week, there is going to be a response and you're going to have that 144,000 servants who are faithful. And we're going to see those servants again in our upcoming chapter 14. Can't get two verses into it before you see the 144,000.

So this helps us put them in perspective. They are in effect, the remnant of Israel. You insert this great gap of time.

There are those who don't want to believe that there has been a pause in the Israel clock and that somehow the church is the replacement for Israel and God's fulfilling his literal promises to Israel spiritually to the church. And we are now Israel. And Israel in the Old Testament is the church.

You'll see commentaries where they talk about, oh, this is the church doing this, that, and the other in the Old Testament. There are two distinct programs. You cannot take some of God's promises and prophetic claims literally, and then spiritualize away others and say, well, Jesus is on the throne of his father, David, because he's reigning in my heart.

I'm sorry, but people are arrogant if they think their heart anywhere approaches being the throne of David. It isn't, and it doesn't. And shame on anybody who thinks that they are worthy to be a personal fulfillment of God's promises to entire nation of people.

All these died in faith, Hebrews 11 says. Not having received the promise, the fact that you and I have a wonderful relationship with God through Christ, presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and access to the manifold treasures of the word of God doesn't dig up old Israelites and bless them. God has to raise them, and God has to fulfill his promises to them individually.

He's not gonna raise them and say, well, see these church people? They're the fulfillment of the promises I made to you. Your great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandchildren rejected Jesus when he came, so you don't get the promises. Try telling that to Abraham or Isaac or Jacob or David or Moses or Joshua or all of those who died in faith, the great heroes, just representative individuals in Hebrews 11.

I'm sorry, but that is not the God of the Bible. When God makes you a promise, he is going to fulfill it to you personally and individually, not to some far distant future person and then raise you up and say, well, you know that promise I made you? See that guy way, way, way down the road? He got the blessing that I promised to you. How people can make this work in their minds is as puzzling as what you see going on in the social and political world today.

How people can make some of their ideas work is completely beyond me. I can't enter into it. Postmodern thinking doesn't work for reasonable, rational, common sense people.

It just doesn't. Don't let the deceiver push that kind of nonsense and diminish the glory and the power of God. God made David a promise.

You are gonna have a son to sit on the throne of your kingdom. My soul and your soul and aggregate all of the people throughout the church age and stick all the souls together, that is not the kingdom that God promised to David. The Lord Jesus Christ is going to sit on a literal throne, ruling over the literal kingdom that God gave to David and to his son Solomon.

And nothing else will do. If that promise does not literally come true, you can have no confidence in the promise of your own salvation. What if God just spiritualizes eternal life? And well, what I really meant was, is you'll have a slightly better time while you're alive, but when

you die, it's over.

It's blasphemy. It is heinous. It is irredeemably and incontrovertibly wrong.

But the majority of Christianity today, and this will shock you, most Christians are taught in their churches that the promises to Israel will not be literally fulfilled. Most churches are amillennial, beginning with the Catholic church and extending forward. They do not believe in a literal thousand-year reign of Christ with the raised Old Testament saints receiving the blessings that God promised them or the judgment that God promised them.

If they were faithless and disobedient like the Pharisees, they will see many coming from the Northeast, South and West, sitting down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom. That's from the lips of the Lord Jesus. What is he talking about? You will see people sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Are you and I sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in some spiritual form of the kingdom? No, you make a liar of the Lord Jesus Christ if you push that false theology. Don't let anybody speak that heresy in your presence. Set them straight.

That is flat out unbiblical, unchristian. Is there anything else bad I can say about it? There are other three-day-to-visit gaps in Scripture. This pattern becomes so clear, and it verifies, it substantiates, it essentially proves the proper understanding that you and I share, that God has a plan and purpose for Israel.

He has a separate and distinct, although related plan and purpose for the church. We are related to God through the Lord Jesus Christ as his bride. Israel is related to God through Jesus Christ as their king.

He is Israel's Messiah. He is our head, head of all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all things in every way. Some of this is a bit of review and overlap from what we covered on Sunday, but in Genesis 22, verse four, Abraham and Isaac heading to Mount Moriah.

Do you remember? Genesis has been a while back. Do you remember how long it took Abraham and Isaac to get to Mount Moriah? How long was it from the time they left until Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off? Three days. Three days.

Exodus chapter 19. Again, your map of important Bible chapters. Exodus 20 is the 10 commandments.

So Exodus 19, this would be everybody gathering at the mountain and getting ready. Days of preparation, right? Exodus 19, verse 11. God tells Moses to prepare the people because on the third day, the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people.

The gap is two days of sanctification and washing. Abraham and Isaac travel for two days

before they see the Mount of Sacrifice, which looks like it is gonna be a place of death, but ends up being a place of redemption, atonement, and deliverance. Looks bad, ends up being good.

After two days, on the third day, Abraham lifts up his eyes and sees it. Abraham is gonna literally be raised after two days and is gonna see deliverance at the inception of the millennial kingdom. Sinai, after two days of purification and preparation, God the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people.

Most clearly, if you didn't get it by observation, think of Hosea chapter six, verse two. After two days, he will revive us. In the third day, he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight.

A day with the Lord is as a thousand years. A thousand years is as a day. Israel has been off the scene as a nation for two days.

Early in the morning on the third day, just like the Messiah, their King, and our Savior, head of all things to the church, early in the morning on the third day, they will be raised. In the third day, he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight. The third day will be the millennial kingdom.

What a wonderful pattern that establishes the truth, the substance, and the great brilliance of our hope. It should sustain us, it should encourage us, it should motivate us. The God of the Old Testament, the God who established and fulfilled these patterns is doing the same for us on a daily basis and will do so in the broad sweep when the shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God are heard in the heavens.

Now is our time of purification and preparation. Now is our time to get ready. And we need to redeem the time because left to themselves, the days are evil.

We'll pause here and take a break. When we come back, we'll pick up our study.