

Rev 26-06-14b

We pick up our study now in Revelation chapter 19, and the reason we are reviewing kingship in Israel is to compare and contrast the kingship of the Lord Jesus as it is now established. It was anticipated with the gold and the frankincense and the myrrh and the promise from Gabriel to Mary that her son would sit on the throne of his father David, which did not even exist at that time. Herod wasn't sitting on the throne of David.

There was no throne of a monarch independent of oppression and the kind of oversight that Roman Empire was putting on the province of Judea at that time. And there has not been a throne of David from that day to this. Actually, from the time Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, saw his sons murdered before his eyes, and then Nebuchadnezzar put his eyes out so that that's the last vision that he had, and he died in captivity.

There has not been a throne in Israel since. And calling Herod a king was a conceit, and he wasn't from the line of David, and it's not the throne of his father David. But that is about to change.

Throughout the book of Revelation, we have been seeing the Lamb as it had been slain. The Lord Jesus appears in glory to deliver this vision to John, the glory that John had previously seen on the Mount of Transfiguration. But throughout the visionary depiction of the 70th week, the last seven years of the age of Israel, you are still looking at Jesus as the Lamb, who is bringing about through his sacrifice deliverance from sin and captivity to it and to those who are the rod of men that God spoke to Saul about.

But when is the fulfillment of these promises? It goes all the way back to Genesis in God talking with Abram in chapter 17. Abraham is 99 years old in Genesis 17. God speaks and says, I'm almighty God, walk before me and be blameless.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it, with the covenant to Saul? I will make my covenant between me and you, I'll multiply you exceedingly. Verse five, no longer are you Abram, you're Abraham. Six, I will make you exceedingly fruitful.

I will make nations of you and kings shall come from you. It's an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you and their generations. Everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

Gives them the land of Canaan in verse eight. Verse nine, as for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep.

This is the condition under which the aforementioned things will be true. You and your descendants after you, every male child circumcised, circumcised flesh of your foreskin, eight

days old in verse 12, born in your house in verse 13, whether born in your house or bought with your money. Notice God doesn't say don't ever buy somebody with money.

I know it is cognitively dissonant to almost everyone to point out that God in general and scripture in particular never comes out against slavery, but it just doesn't. And there is a lot of slavery by another name today. There are people who are so trapped in their job and so beholden to their boss and they can't afford to lose their income that they are effectively slaves.

But notice God doesn't say don't ever buy anybody with money. Slavery is an aberrant, abhorrent evil. He says if someone is born in your house or you buy somebody with money to bring into your house to serve, must be circumcised.

My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. Notice that by coming into Abraham's household, even as a slave, there is blessing and there is covenant promise. And God turns this hardship and this difficult circumstance of being enslaved into a blessing that has eternal consequences.

We talked about this last time. If you put suffering for a certain number of days, weeks, months, or years over the length of eternity, that effectively equals zero. Our momentary light affliction compared to an eternal weight of glory is very well worth it.

But that's the idea here. The uncircumcised male child, verse 14, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant.

It's not that the physical action or the physical status has any material benefit. It is its symbolic reflection of faithfulness and obedience. If you are faithful and obedient, you will do this thing that isn't explained in terms of health benefits or any of the other reasons for which it is still done today.

There are material reasons why people can argue for it and argue against it. That's a whole subject unto itself. It persists down into the present day, not as a sign of the Abrahamic covenant.

It certainly doesn't enter Christians into an Israelite covenant or the Abrahamic covenant. But it represents a willingness to obey God when you don't really know what the action benefits. We are faithful and obedient.

Look at the law of Moses. Why are some animals clean and some unclean? Why does God revoke that in the New Testament? In the past, what had formerly been on the menu was taken off the menu at Sinai. Now it's back on.

So is it intrinsically evil to eat pork and shellfish? No. God distinguished his people and asked them to be obedient in an area that doesn't seem to have a material basis. Later on, they say, well, pork spoils and shellfish spoils, and it was a health benefit, possibly.

But that's not the reason God prescribed it. He also said, put tassels in certain places and do certain things with your beard and your hair and the way you dress and don't mix two kinds of cloth. Is there something evil about wearing a t-shirt, as almost all of us have done and still do, that is polyester and cotton mixed? Look at the law of Moses.

Mixing two different kinds of material in a garment is prohibited, severely so in the law of Moses. Why? I am asking you to do this thing that seems to have no other meaning, says the Lord to his people. Do this for my sake.

I have told you this is what I want you to do. Will you do it or not? People say, why can't I pick up sticks to make a fire on Saturday? And yet, right after the Ten Commandments were delivered, the very next day, the very next Sabbath, after Moses reads out the law, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. You'll do no regular work on that day.

Well, Sabbath comes, the guy goes out and picks up sticks and he gets stoned for it. And it's one of the only cases you can see where Sabbath breaking is punished by death. Why? God is making a point.

I'm not kidding about what I ask you to do. It's serious stuff. You see how kings rise and fall based on obedience.

Our status on this Revelation 19 occasion, where the table is going to be set for the eternal future, where will we sit or will we even be at the table or even in the room or even in the city? These things are coming. They are real. They are more real than the world around us, which in many ways is constructed by our brains due to what our senses take in.

The actual universe is energy and dust, teeny tiny particles and energy. The reason we see, feel, experience, hear, all of that is something God has given us the ability to perceive because we have not just a brain, but a mind, a soul. And if you care to delve into such things, there is a book called *A World Appears* that describes in detail and gives an explanation of the scientific inquiry into how is it that we know that we are, that we are self-aware, that we have perceptions, that we have emotions, that we can make plans.

You can't prove the existence of anyone else's thoughts. You can't prove that someone you know had a dream. They can tell you, but that's hearsay.

You have to take their word for it. And yet, our own dreams, our own experiences are very real, but there is no material existence to it. They can't put a couple of sensors on your brain and tell your thoughts.

They can tell there's electrical activity, but this is kind of like you're watching a video on your computer and somebody puts electrodes on that PC. They can tell that there's something being read off the hard drive and they can see that there's electricity flowing through the circuits and the

chips. They can't see the movie, can't watch the movie doing that.

And our existence is a miracle. We are made in the image of God. And the reality of our consciousness and our self-awareness is a reality that is immaterial and invisible to anyone but ourselves.

But it is absolutely real. The fact that you are hearing me, watching me perhaps, and understanding what I say and what the Word of God says is not in the material world. It exists above and beyond the brain that gives expression and form to some of these things.

The eternal future is similarly real. And it is not a dream. It is hyper-reality.

This is going to be the construct. This is the hologram. This is the blue pill, red pill, what was that thing with Keanu Reeves in it? I don't know.

What was it? The red pill wakes you up. But what was the name of the movie though? Matrix. The Matrix.

If you want an idea of this concept, that Matrix movie, it's weird in other ways, but it does tell you that you can think you're in one existence when you're really in another. And you wake up to a higher reality. This is what is going to happen.

These things in Revelation are coming. Make plans. Make decisions.

Pay attention to what happens when people do or don't listen to God's conditions for participation in His plans and purposes. The opportunities are enormous, but we've got to shake ourselves awake from thinking that life is just about what we get done in a day. Life is about faithfulness and obedience, having God's words and keeping them, and being ready when that day comes.

Patty and I were just discussing the tenuous grasp that we have on life, and you just don't know what day or what hour is going to be your last. I used to run with a guy, a good friend, that we went to seminary together. He was from a somewhat well-known family.

His father was an Olympic athlete and runner, and he was a great runner. I was a Marine and in the best shape of my life, and the guy ran me into the ground effortlessly. Didn't break a sweat, didn't breathe hard, and I was dying.

But he had a track meet because his kids were gifted in that same area. On the way back, a drunk driver crossed the center line, head-on collision. His wife and one of his children were killed.

The other one was hospitalized, and his whole life changed. He was instantly made a widower, lost his wife, lost his child in the blink of an eye. They will be reunited in glory.

They did missions work. They did stuff in Mexico and had a grasp of the language and had a

wonderful set of opportunities from the Lord. You would think, well, God's going to keep these people around because look at all of the good they're doing.

You just don't know what the plan of God has in store. We've got to be ready because Revelation is just as close as our last heartbeat, the last spike on the EEG, as I've said many times. But we've got to remember this.

We are not here to get stuff done only in this life. Remember what Paul says in Corinthians? If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. And he's talking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ as evidence and motivation to anticipate our own resurrection.

That is when we are going to graduate from this. You can think of it as a simulation and as a trainer. I haven't talked about it in a while.

I used to use this. Those of you that have been in Grace & Truth for a long time remember back in the day they had driver training simulators. This is in the days of the dinosaurs.

But there were little mock-ups that had a brake pedal and a gas pedal and a gear shift because we learned to drive a stick. And there was just a movie screen up in the front and they would show a movie and you practiced driving. As you're going down a city street at 35 miles an hour, suddenly a woman comes out in front of you with a baby buggy and you're supposed to see her presence, hit the brake, hit the clutch, you know, and respond.

If you fail, you are monitored in the back. There was some kind of a tracking thing in the back. But this was to get you ready for real driving and to be able to drive a real car where if you fail there are dire consequences.

This life is like the driver training simulator. It's very realistic. Think about immersive movies you watch where a door slams and you jump because you're inside the universe created by this movie, especially 3D movies.

It's so much fun to be immersed in a 3D world. But you then leave that and carry on with what we call real life. Just transfer that one level up and remember this momentary light affliction, this brief few years that we spend in this material universe is going to be superseded by what we are seeing and where we are going, detailed no more explicitly than you find it here in Revelation.

This is as much detail as you could ask for. And what is the challenge while we are here in training, while we are here in preparation? Pay attention. Did you ever take a class and not really pay much attention and then you realized you really needed that information? Really wish you had had paid more attention whether it's just taking the test or the final or actually having to go do the job and you didn't really learn that part very well and you have to learn the hard way and you get bumps and bruises.

We want to learn what we are here to learn. We're not here just to get things done. We're not here just to survive a day and have some laughs along the way.

This is all preparation for what we see happening in Revelation chapter 19. And God gave information to his people Israel. You've got to get ready.

You're going to have opportunities in this life and as a people you're going to have opportunities. The church is going to become a unique people that belongs to the Lord Jesus with opportunities both personally and corporately. That all comes to fulfillment in Revelation 19.

So look at it. The first thing John sees is the Lord Jesus Christ in verse 11. Heaven is opened.

Notice heaven isn't opened and the white robe throng all goes up there. Heaven is opened and the Lord Jesus emerges. But the first thing John sees is the white horse.

He who sat on him is called faithful and true. I am the truth. John 14 6. We've got to know the truth.

The truth liberates us, frees us from the deceptions and the short-term thinking, the myopia that happens to us in this life. It is the truth of the word of God. That's why we're all here this morning, right? We know this.

Faithful and true. And in righteousness he judges and makes war. We talked about that last time.

Eyes like a flame of fire. On his head many crowns. Think about this now.

All of this from 4-1 up until 1911, we've been looking at Israel. 144,000 from the 12 tribes. Israel, Israel, Israel.

Here comes the Lord Jesus. What is Israel's expectation? There is a king, son of David, to sit on David's throne. Here comes the Lord Jesus Christ who is the root and offspring of David, the lion of the tribe of Judah mentioned earlier in this book.

But does it say he's wearing David's crown? He's wearing many crowns. He has a name written that no one knew except himself. Harks back to one of the overcomer blessings.

Go back and look it up. One of the overcomer blessings is to be given a name that is only known to us and the Lord. It's a private name.

Some nicknames need to be private. There are husbands and wives that have nicknames for each other. And I really don't want to hear those.

That's something private. That's something for behind closed doors. I don't want to hear that.

It's private. It's special. It is in a domain in which just those people dwell.

In the same way, what is the purpose of a name that no one knows except the Lord Jesus? Well, who gave him that name? He didn't give it to himself. It's between him and his father. He has other names written on him that are publicly visible.

One of them being King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Clothed with a robe dipped in blood, his name is called the word of God. That's the outward facing name.

He has another name that reflects his closeness with his heavenly father. Our name that is known only to us and him is a reflection of closeness. You don't rebel against someone that you are that close to.

You don't fail to listen to what they say. You don't fail to love them and have sensitivity and motivation to live in a way that is pleasing to them, to not disappoint them, to not hurt them, to not fall short of their expectations. When you have a deep love relationship, you want to be everything that they hope you can be and fulfill that potential.

Verse 14, this is you, this is us if we pay attention, if we remember who we are and why we're here. The armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed him on white horses, followed him on white horses. Notice, he is coming in power and mobility and majesty.

These who are riding on the white horses are reflections of him, are like unto him. Remember this same John says in the resurrection, we do not know what we will be like, but we will be like him and we will see him as he is. This is the real world that we are preparing to enter.

You can't just be dropped in there like a newborn baby and try to figure things out. That has other implications for consciousness by the way. When do you have enough organization in the brain to access your soul to the point that you can form memories and understand what's going on and become self-aware? In the same way, we want to arrive mature, ready, knowing what's going on.

I know what this is. I learned about this in school, back in human life. White robed armies, following him on white horses, having been delegated potential to serve, to accompany, to be a part of the same purposes and same accomplishments that the Lord Jesus himself is involved with.

Out of his mouth, the sharp sword, we saw this back in chapter one, with it, he should strike the nations. This is quite fascinating. You can look up striking the nations.

Sometimes it's the rod of iron. Sometimes it's a sharp sword, but this sword is the word of God. Why does the word of God strike the nations? Because it has been made apparent to them.

He himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He himself treads the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. He has on his robe and on his thigh a name written.

When it says robe and thigh, is this two instances of the double name or does his robe say king

of kings and his thigh say Lord of lords? It's not clear if this is written across the two. You've seen people walking with matching t-shirts. I belong to her.

She belongs to me. There's arrows pointing in each way. Is this a matching set or does each occupy each? The name occurs twice.

King of kings and Lord of lords, king of kings. This is the fulfillment of the covenant promises to Israel that Israel will be at the top and not the bottom. It will be the dominant kingdom of all kingdoms in the world.

And the Lord Jesus, as the king of Israel, becomes the king of kings because of who he is. Israel is elevated above the other kingdoms of the earth. Then verse 17, I saw an angel standing in the sun.

He cried with a loud voice saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather together for it says in your New King James, the supper of the great God. That's the wrong order. It is the great supper of God.

Great belongs with supper because this is a supper unlike any other. This is the carnivorous type. These birds are coming to pick the bones clean like vultures.

Come together for the great supper of God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, flesh of horses, and those who sit on them and the flesh of all free slaves, small and great. This is kind of a gruesome sight that you have these corpses that are being consumed by these birds. I saw the beast, the kings of the earth and their armies gather together to make war against him who sat on the horse and against his army.

God predicts the outcome before it happens. Birds get ready. Birds of the air uniformly represent evil.

When the mustard seed blooms into a tree and the birds of the air nest in its branches, that's not a good thing. When the Lord Jesus as the sower of the seed scatters it on hard ground and birds come and devour it, that's not a good thing. These birds of the air are not unfallen angels.

They're not Christ-honoring, obedient, and faithful believers. This is the dead burying their dead. This is evil trying to make something out of judgment.

Remember the merchants that look at the destruction of Babylon? You get the idea that they see the destruction of these armies, and so they're going to go try to make a profit on that. They're going to go pick the bones clean. Not everyone is destroyed.

The armies are destroyed. The beast, but there are these others that aren't a part of the armies and are not immediately destroyed. During the course of this destruction, they are going to try to make something of it.

It's grotesque. It's what happens when you see roadkill and you see the turkey buzzards and vultures come and pick the bones. It is nice that they clean up, and God has put that in the environment, but it's not something you want happening on your front lawn.

So, the beast, kings of the earth, and the armies gather together to make war. The beast is captured. With him the false prophet who works signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

These two are cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone, at which point they cease to exist. There is the smoke of their torment that ascends, but entrance into the lake of fire is destruction, here and in the next chapter. There is no surviving in there.

If there were any duration at all, it would be because these are angelic, or partially angelic, hybrid individuals. These are not two human beings. They are something other, and they will be cast into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire is the second death. It's not the second torture. It's not the second endless pain and suffering.

The lake of fire is destruction. The rest were killed with the sword, which proceeded from the mouth of the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh. This tells you that Armageddon is not going to be over in an hour or a day.

It is going to be protracted, and as this slaughter takes place, there will be camp followers and opportunists, and the supplies that are no longer flowing are going to be seized and co-opted and reused. You think about when there's a disaster, and there's aid relief, and then people waylay the relief and take it to themselves. You've got warlords and things in far-off countries.

This is what is going to go on. Armageddon isn't going to be over like the one hour in which Babylon is destroyed. This is going to last a while.

It is a battle, and not until chapter 20, verse 1, is it over. So, what do we take away from this? Remember who we are and why we're here. This is absolutely going to happen.

It is in symbolic terms. The literality of it in this world is hard to know, because we see pattern matches all down through history, and we see pattern matches even today. The fact that Israel is back in the land makes the potential that much more likely that it will be soon.

But it is as soon as our last breath, and we need to be ready, because we do not know at what hour the Master will return. Every believer that is no longer with us, between Pentecost and now, had the expectation that they might be in the rapture generation, and they weren't. These all died, not having received the promise.

But in my view, their next conscious perception is the shout, the voice of the Archangel, the trump

of God. They rise, and they see the Lord Jesus. No need to sleep, or hang in suspended animation, or have some kind of temporary residence body.

God is the God of time. God invented time. We dwell in time the way we dwell in space.

And when you leave space, and you leave time, you're in the eternal realms. And that is what happens at the rapture. And it is soon for all of us.

Are we ready? Are we keeping our priorities straight? Go back and read the Davidic covenant. The same promises were made to David. If your sons are obedient, your house is going to last forever.

Why does the house of David last forever? Because there's a perfectly obedient son in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The only one who is perfectly obedient. You know what happened to Solomon? Read the Song of the Shulamite.

He turns into a rascal, commonly called the Song of Solomon. It's the Song of the Shulamite. She's the one that wrote that.

And she describes Solomon's failures. He can't be faithful anymore. He comes and goes.

He promises to be there, and he's not. She waits for him, and he doesn't show. He's shallow.

He's superficial. What a wonderful book, once you figure it out. But we need to be ready this day, the next day, the next day.

We have to live in this life. These are our story problems. These are our exercises.

These are how we learn and then demonstrate. You learn a principle, you might have 10 problems on the test, that all are the use of that formula or that understanding. That's why we're here.

This is the day we're getting ready for. Will we be robed in white? Will we have enough righteousness we've laid hold of by faith to have a linen robe, to be issued a white horse, to ride with the Lord Jesus into victory and furtherance of the plans and purposes of the Father, to enter into the unimaginably great opportunities that are coming? It is a decision we make, hour by hour, day by day. I can't believe that nobody is really talking about this.

It's the only thing we should be thinking about. Take the class, learn the material, pass the tests, and be ready to engage in the reality and the function of it, because it is coming soon. We don't want to be in the darkness, which is outside.

We don't want to be spectators. We want to be on the field. We want to be in action, entering into those privileges and those glories that are promised and that reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus and reflect the glory of our Father, our Creator, our God and Savior, who doesn't want to enter

into that? We must be distracted and deceived to fail to see how wonderful and how important it is.

Well, we'll continue here. We're now in Chapter 20, just three chapters to go, 20, 21, and 22 in our study of Revelation. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the grace that is greater than all our sin, the wonderful work of the Lord Jesus to deliver us from ourselves, from this present evil age, to give us the presence and power of your Spirit, the illuminating light of your Word that enables us as we hide it in our hearts to avoid sin, to walk the narrow road headed for the straight gate that leads to life, future life, the life of opportunity, of blessing, of inheritance, of eternal wonder and greatness that is beyond our human imagination. But we trust in your promises, and we pray that we will remember by the constant voice of the Spirit that this is our time to redeem. This is our potential to exercise.

This is our place to represent the Lord Jesus now and be with Him and walk with Him in white in the ages to come. We ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.