

Rev 26-07-01a

Good evening, welcome to Wednesday night Bible class at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is the 1st of July, 2026. My, how the time does fly.

We are noting the distinctions, the wonderful comparison and contrast in God's plan and purpose for his Old Testament people and his New Testament people. We'll continue that tonight. Let's ask God's blessing on our fellowship and study and our understanding and our application, and then we'll begin.

Father, what a wonderful privilege it is to have the curtain drawn back and to be given the opportunity to enter into the mysteries that for so many previous centuries were hidden and unrevealed. But in these latter days, they are unfolded for us in the Holy Scriptures. We thank you for the presence of your Holy Spirit to help us grasp what is being revealed and to see its relevance and its application value in our daily lives.

We pray that as we look at this portion of your word together and the parallel passages that attach to it, that we will be good students, we can see clearly, and your divine power will enable us to learn and grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We pray these things in his name, amen. What a fascinating study this has been for me personally.

I will remind you that we are not squarely in the traditional dispensational understanding that you get from the very reliable and wonderful gray heads of the faith that have written books such as Things to Come by Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost, or the Prophecy Knowledge Handbook by Dr. Walvord, the Bible Knowledge Commentary, the Schaeffer Systematic Theology, many other solid dispensational authors and interpreters have come to certain conclusions, have drawn conclusions. This goes all the way back to Dr. C.I. Scofield and the original Scofield reference Bible from over a hundred years ago. We are generally in alignment, but there are some specific understandings that I personally think are an improvement in the sense that they reconcile some difficult passages that have caused problems with previous understandings.

And they clarify the beauty of God's plan and purpose as it was promised, as the inception of its fulfillment is revealed with the coming of the Lord Jesus, the interruption of that program and the formation and growth of the church, which is us, culminating in the two-phase second coming of the Lord Jesus. As with his first coming, we have his second coming, where there is an initial phase, and then there is a culminating and fulfilling phase. This is reflected over and over again in scripture where there will be a beginning, and then there is the consummation.

Much as you have the betrothal, and then you have the wedding proper, just many, many instances of this pattern in scripture. So what we have been looking at in some detail is the Old Testament resurrection, which is what we have depicted in our passage, Revelation chapter 20, represented by in verse four, the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to

Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. You can reflect on these passages almost endlessly.

One of my personal questions, if you develop an understanding of this, feel free to share it with me, but throughout Revelation, from the appearance of the first beast and the second beast and the instigation of the mark and the worship, there is a distinction in the location of the mark. Even here, you would just think, well, did they just take the mark? But notice that it says, these who had not worshiped the beast or worshiped his image, as though those are two different things. What is the difference between worshiping the beast proper or worshiping his image? Is it proximity? Does he have a location? And beyond that location, it's the image that counts, but this distinction is maintained.

You can go back and review the passages in earlier chapters and these are always distinguished. And then the second part, where is the location of the mark? They had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. Are there some zealots that have it in both places? Can it only exist in one place? Inquiring minds wanna know.

You remember the old saw from the National Inquirer. We have an inquiring mind and you cannot tax the scriptures beyond their capability. You cannot look too closely.

You don't have to stand at a distance and fear that, well, if I look too closely, it may unravel. It may reveal contradictions. Every word that proceeds from the mouth of God has significance.

Every yod and every tittle in the word of God is there. It is inspired and it will remain until all is fulfilled. Heaven and earth may pass away.

God's word will never pass away. We will have the wonderful pastime, privilege, opportunity to continue to study God's word and have its revelations and its unfolding panorama of the plan of God, as well as the innumerable instances of the reflection and the expression of God's character, God's grace, God's love, the genius God has in the way he has woven free will into the tapestry and the fabric of his plan and purpose. So that while he allows us to go whatever way we choose, as well as everyone else that ever lives, he nevertheless accomplishes his perfect will and fulfills all of his promises.

The only successful instance of herding cats is our father in heaven. And it is, to use a much overused word, it is awesome. It strikes awe into our hearts when we begin to see the vastness of the universe, the pre-planning that went into what we understand as the Big Bang.

It is the world's largest pool table, if you will, with thousands of billiard balls, and with one break and a single cue ball, all of them roll exactly to their destinations and enter the pockets that God pre-designed. It is stunning. The star furnaces that create the elements of which carbon is so essential and very difficult to produce but by creating galaxies of stars and millions of galaxies so

that there are enough stars that form these elements and then go supernova, explode, and scatter these elements into the universe where they can be incorporated into our planet and then incorporated into life itself with its design and its intentionality, the information that is encoded into the genome, not by accident, not by happenstance, not by a God who started things rolling and then walked away, as the deists might have it.

He is an intentional, a purposeful, an involved and imminent God, immanent with an A in the middle, which means he's in the middle of things as well as transcendent above and beyond it. He is in our dimensions and in our space and time and he is also outside them. It is a wonder.

Here in Revelation 20, God is going to fulfill every promise that he made to his Old Testament saints, the patriarchs, the antediluvians like Enoch and Methuselah, the post-diluvians, Noah and his descendants, in particular, the descendants of Shem, in particular, those from Abraham and then Isaac and then Jacob. There are specific and detailed promises that God has made. Looking at the beauty and the comprehensive nature of God's fulfillment of those promises gives us confidence in our hope that God fulfills his promises to us as well.

Most importantly, centrally in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, the head of all things to us as his body, the church, and looking at the Old Testament program, the Old Testament, Testament meaning covenant, the Old Covenant promises to the original people of God, which culminate in Israel, and then the New Covenant, which is the church, originated and given birth at the Feast of Pentecost following the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus at and shortly after Passover of that same year, we are a new people. We have a new covenant founded on new and better promises, as Paul reveals. You remember our study when we were doing the pastorals, 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus, and you remember that that's a sandwich, 1st Timothy, then Titus, then 2nd Timothy in order of writing.

But Paul, as he describes himself as the apostle of the mystery, and we did a detailed study of every mystery that was heretofore unrevealed, that pertains to us, given, unfolded, communicated, explained, and interpreted by the apostle Paul. He is the apostle of the mystery, and we went to every passage where he says, behold, I show you a mystery. Look, pay attention.

One of which, and one of the most exciting, is we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. This brings us to our subject tonight, which is the distinction between the Old Testament resurrection, which is represented here by the bringing back of the martyrs of the last seven years of the Old Testament age. They are the point of the spear, as it were.

They were the last saints of that age. They are the ones that represent all of those who died in faith, not having received the promise, detailed in Hebrews chapter 11. In the same way that the 24 elders early on were representative of church age believers from Pentecost till now, and until this age concludes, and God stops the pendulum on our cuckoo clock, and gives the one on the

clock of Israel a tap, so that those last seven years will run, representatively, we have here the return of Old Testament saints.

We saw the passages. You can review them if you missed any of them. They are in the outline and the transcripts from our recent last few classes.

I don't wanna go back through those because we wanna move this morning and look at the distinction. There are themes that are parallel. The coming of the Lord Jesus, both in his first coming and in his second coming, are characterized by phases.

The Lord Jesus was born, but he didn't walk from behind a glorious Holy of Holies curtain and come out and begin his earthly ministry. He was born as an infant in Bethlehem. And it was 30 years before the second phase of his coming kicked in and became effective.

First phase, his birth. Second phase, his active ministry. The second coming is going to happen in like manner.

The first phase of his second coming is the rapture of the church. We meet the Lord in the air. He takes us to the place prepared, John 14, one through three, so that where he is, we may be also.

This is not the millennial kingdom. He is going to the heavenly realms to prepare a place for us. We do not live in the millennial kingdom.

When Christ comes and we meet him in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord, this dwelling place is heavenly. This return, the second phase, when he comes, Zechariah chapter 14, and plants his feet on the Mount of Olives, and it splits in two, and there are geographical changes in the earthly realm of Israel and the environment of Jerusalem. This is the inception of the earthly millennial kingdom.

And as Daniel says in chapter 12, one and two, at that time, many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. The inception of the kingdom is what we are seeing here in Revelation chapter 20. Satan will be bound for the duration of that kingdom.

We are not given any promise or need for Satan to be bound once we are raptured. Dead in Christ rise, those who alive remain join everyone in the air. The church is with the Lord, the groom and the bride, the wife that has made herself ready.

The earthly kingdom is substantially different. So notice the pattern. There are two phases of Christ's first coming.

There are two phases of his second coming. There are two covenants to Israel. The first covenant, the law of Moses, the promises given at Sinai were not sufficient to take away sin.

The new covenant to Israel, where they are freed from sin the way we are at the point of

salvation. The blessing of the Holy Spirit being poured out which we receive and enjoy throughout our life as believers, particularly as we cultivate it in its fullness. We can ignore it and push it into the background, but we have the universal opportunity to be blessed by the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, to enable us to overcome the weaknesses of our flesh.

Old Testament Israel did not receive that except in rare cases where it was necessary to empower a judge or a prophet or a king. But the run of the mill believing Israelite didn't have the assistance of the Holy Spirit. At the resurrection, at the inception of the millennial kingdom, God says in his new covenant, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.

Your young men, your old men, your sons and daughters talking to Israel will receive the blessings of revelation, seeing visions, dreaming dreams, and so on. And it's exciting to see this, yet this we've seen in detail that this is a mortal resurrection, a resuscitation and enhancement of human flesh. Look at the review for the past few sessions, especially what pertains at Ezekiel's temple.

The priests, the Levites are mortal. They have families. They can sweat.

There is death. There are all of these characteristics that reflect mortality, but greatly enhanced mortality, much as there was before the flood. Great longevity, strength, and so on.

But the characteristics are such that looking at the passages, we think that there are survivors of the tribulation period and its attendant judgments. Keep your finger here in Revelation. Turn back real quickly to the aforementioned Zechariah chapter 14.

Zechariah, second to the last book. If you find yourself in the Gospels, flip a little further back. Wonderful study we did in this book in conjunction with the post-exilic prophets.

Zechariah 14, notice in your New King James, if it's like mine, it is subtitled, The Day of the Lord. The day of the Lord is coming. Your spoil will be divided in your midst, for I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem.

The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. This is, as we saw in Daniel, the point at which history in the Old Testament day, which was fulfilled at the time of Nebuchadnezzar and the captivity in Babylon, leaves the runway and takes off into its fullest fulfillment, which is where we are at Revelation chapter 18, 19, and 20.

Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations. We are now at Armageddon. As he fights in the day of battle, and in that day, his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley.

So interesting that modern seismology and geography and people that figure out such things have found that there is a giant fault that runs directly beneath the Mount of Olives from east to west. The preparation is already there. We will make a very large valley.

Half of the mountain shall move to the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through my mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah.

Thus, the Lord my God will come and all the saints with him. Your Bible in the New King James says, you scratch it out, it's him. Who's coming with him? Those of us who qualify, who are overcomers, who are prepared to walk with him in white, to ride with him on horses, and to be in his presence and accompany him and help to implement all of the things that are coming, much as the hosts of angels have done in times and days past and present.

So, the Lord my God will come and the holy ones, the sanctified ones, with him. That would be the church. It shall come to pass in that day, verse six, that there will be no light, the lights will diminish.

It shall be one day, which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but at evening time, it shall happen that it will be light. It will be evening, time for it to be dark, sun no longer illuminating, but the presence of the Lord Jesus and his shining sanctified ones with him will illuminate the night sky in Jerusalem. And in that day, it shall be that living water shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the Eastern Sea and half of them toward the Western Sea.

In both summer and winter, it shall occur. Notice, millennial kingdom, you still have seasons. This is the earth, which will persist and continue.

It will be greatly cleaned up, but it is still the earth that you and I open our eyes and see every morning. Winter and summer, and the Lord shall be king over all the earth. This is formally and indisputably the millennial kingdom.

In that day, it shall be, the Lord is one. This goes back to the Shema. The Lord our God is one, Lord.

Go back to Deuteronomy 6, verse four. And his name is one. All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Ramon, south of Jerusalem.

It shall be raised up and inhabited from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate and the corner gate from the tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. Inhabited by whom? By the resurrected, you could say resuscitated if you want to distinguish it, because this is unlike the transformation that the church age believers have experienced seven years earlier. Notice, they do not go to dwell with Christ in a heavenly place that he has prepared, as mentioned in John 14.

This is dwelling, first and foremost, the representative sanctified ones who have been faithful and been obedient previously will be resuscitated to dwell in an earthly form, in an earthly kingdom, in a wonderfully transformed, sanctified, purified, and improved Jerusalem and its surrounding vicinity. They shall dwell in it and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. You think of the ongoing attacks from surrounding nations that have taken place, particularly ever since 1948, May 14th, when a nation was born in a day.

This shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem. This is what is going to happen at the end of the battle of Armageddon. Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet.

Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the Lord will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor and raise his hand against his neighbor's hand.

Judah also will fight at Jerusalem and the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together, gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance. Such also shall be the plague on the horse and the mule, on the camel and the donkey, on all the cattle that will be in those camps, so shall this plague be." This is the culmination when the Lord Jesus ends that conflict. And it was difficult in previous days to see this as anything but metaphorical language.

We now know ever since the days of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that there are earthly consequences, earthly weapons that can produce this kind of result. Knocking out communications, confusing the enemy, not to mention ground zero and for however many miles around it, everything dissolving, melting, disintegrating, becoming irradiated. Vehicles, animals, and so on.

Verse 16, it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all of the nations, this is a compelling passage because it has always been a dispensational understanding that the passages we have reviewed in recent sessions that talk about mortality, about children, about marriages, about sweating, about dying at the age of 100, and the other indications that there is mortality and there is capital punishment and other things that are attendant with mortal life were explainable by tribulational survivors entering in their mortal bodies into the millennial kingdom. Here you have one of the passages that supports that idea. These, it literally says everyone who is left, everyone who remains.

If you read some translations, it says the survivors, but this is what is left over, what is still there. This word was used, for example, in the plagues in Egypt when what had not destroyed the crops previously and remained was destroyed by the hail. The sequence of plagues, what survived or remained after one plague would be destroyed by the next.

So everyone who remains of all the nations which came up against Jerusalem, you get the idea

that this is a civilian population back home, the armies, all of their equipment, everything they brought is destroyed, melted, dissolved, utterly perishes, but back home, there are those who were not subject, it's not a worldwide destruction. And so they remain. And so they shall go up from year to year to worship the king, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

There's always been a difficulty because believing that the Old Testament saints are raised in the same manner as the church, and yet they are living on the earth in the material millennial kingdom, so you've got glorified and unglorified people mixed together. You've got mortals who came across after Armageddon and then the raised and glorified Old Testament saints. Our understanding harmonizes this by understanding that all of the earth dwellers are basically in a mortal state, greatly improved perhaps, longevity, health, and so on, but yet you don't have a mixture.

It's not the church age saying, go ahead and shoot me, I'm immortal, or Old Testament saints having an equivalent resurrection to that which was experienced by the church seven years earlier. Old Testament Israel, Old Testament saints, going all the way back to Adam and Eve are raised to experience the fulfillment of God's promises. All the nations of the earth will be blessed.

God will pour out his spirit on all flesh. This is the new covenant to Judah and to Israel. We've seen these passages.

So what you have is a uniform population of mortal people living on the earth for this thousand year period. It's a question that scripture doesn't seem to address of whether the tribulational survivors get an upgrade or whether they simply last as long as their normal mortal life. It could be that the environment improvement is such that genetic abnormalities and diseases and viruses and all of the other things that tend to end our lives after 70 or 80 years are eradicated.

And even these survivors receive the blessing and are in a sense equivalent to the raised Old Testament saints. But this is necessary because these people died in faith, not having received the promises. They are raised to receive them.

Who do you have on the earth during the millennial kingdom? Not us. The Old Testament believers, the survivors of the tribulation. And I would suggest, I would speculate that all of the children, whether it is aborted fetuses, up through sudden infant death syndrome, crib deaths, toddlers, those who do not come to self-awareness and the ability to recognize right from wrong, to have a sense of self and to recognize that that self is sinful and in need of salvation, that's a lot of people.

But for my own amusement once, I did a calculation based on estimated mortality rates and world populations. And if you raise every single unborn child or children who die before what we like to call the age of being accountable, the age of accountability, they will still fit comfortably. Bring them all back, every single one.

And I am encouraged by the passage in Isaiah that talks about the Lord Jesus and His reward is with Him and the lambs are in His arms. The Lord Jesus comes back and He seems to be associated with and accompanied by young sheep. So it is a speculation.

I wouldn't die for it, but these are human individuals and anyone to whom God has granted a soul must by the justice, the righteousness, the character of God be given the opportunity to make their own decision in real time about salvation. Do they want to live eternally with God or does the whole idea of God and His sovereignty and His righteousness and His justice off put them the way it does Satan and the fallen angels and they will never reconcile. They will never accept.

There is nothing God can do to change their mind. It's the old saw, don't bother me with the facts, my mind is made up. And all such individuals go to the lake of fire, but always as a result of the exercise of personal choice.

Personal volition, personal free will. So these that died without getting that opportunity, assuming that they are in fact genuine human souls, unique and special in God's sight, if they didn't get a chance to decide in this life, as far as I can see, they have to come back so they can make that choice. So I believe that the millennial kingdom population is composed of three parts, resuscitated and greatly improved Old Testament saints, tribulational survivors.

And I like to think that God may winnow that group with the plagues and destruction where a third of the earth is destroyed. I think those who have a good chance of coming to faith might be in the fraction that survives the plagues that we have studied in such detail, and they survived so that they have a similar opportunity and a fulsome exposure to the Lord Jesus and the word of God on display on a daily basis and have a very good opportunity to fulfill that which the Lord Jesus describes in the sheep and goats judgment that you find in Matthew chapter 25 verses, I believe it's 31 through 43, if memory serves. But the latter part of Matthew 25, where he describes the sheep and goats judgment, it says, he will sit on his glorious throne and the nations will be gathered before him, the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

They are judged not according to faith. Do you have faith? Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, Hebrews 11. These people have seen the word of God in personal living incarnate form for a thousand years or a good portion thereof, depending on their lifespan.

And it becomes evident whether they believe in God and want to enter into the eternal future with him by love. When I was naked, you clothed me. When I was hungry, you fed me.

When I was sick and in prison, you visited me. And it is a judgment. Almost everybody, and I freely admit, I am pretty much at the end of a single set attraction to the unbroken snow in believing this.

Almost everyone believes that the sheep and goats judgment occurs at the beginning of the

millennium. Sorry, but being tossed into eternal fire is not a judgment that is characterized at the beginning of the millennium. This is the great white throne.

I think the sheep and goats judgment is the great white throne judgment that we are about to see in the next portion of our chapter. But they are the nations and they are judged according to what they did. If you have done it to the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me.

You either love me or you hate me. You either care about me or you don't. It isn't a matter of faith in the millennial kingdom because everything is visible.

There is no unseen element, but there is still a decision. If you accept the Lord Jesus as the living, redeemer, savior, and son of God, then you are going to treat those associated with him as such. How can there be sickness and imprisonment and nakedness and hunger in heaven? There can't be.

But there is in the millennial kingdom because the greater distance from Jerusalem, Mount Zion, Israel, and the temple, the greater darkness can prevail. This is why there has to be, the Lord Jesus doesn't rule with kind words and psalm singing. He rules with a rod of iron.

And those who rule with him also rule with a rod of iron to break in pieces these hardened, implacable, and no longer impressionable pieces of clay. They will not mold, they will not bend, they will not conform to the hands of the potter on the wheel, so they will be smashed. This is the millennial kingdom.

And at its close, the Lord Jesus, sitting on the throne of his kingdom, already knows, had 10 centuries to observe, are you for us or against us? Those who are against go into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, because that is the attitude that is shared. So characteristics of those who are mortal in the millennial kingdom, they marry, they have children, they can sin, they can die, and they fill the earth. This explains the aforementioned passages, Isaiah 65, Zechariah 14, the priesthood mentioned in Ezekiel in chapters 40 through 48 the continuation of nations and human government, death, which can happen in the millennial kingdom, and the rebellion characterized by Gog Magog that we are about to see in upcoming verses of our chapter.

This is distinct from the church as glorified saints who are immortal, have resurrection bodies that are like Christ. That is what we are going to talk about when we come back from the break.