

Rev 26-07-05b

We pick up our investigations here, looking at this concept, this topic of resurrection, and you see the sequence of events. You see the order in which we are raised. We were the last, in a sense, to come into the realm of salvation because of Israel's hard-heartedness.

And so we are the first to enter into immortality. The last shall be first, the elder shall serve the younger. And so those of us who are qualified to rule and reign with Christ, look at your overcomer promises in Revelation 2 and 3, we'll do so at an elevated level.

I would say our closest comparison might be to the way the angels superintend and are almost always invisible to us. And yet they are implementing God's plans and purposes from their spiritual, eternal, and uncorrupted state, existence, and environment. We, I think, will be promoted to that role during the millennial kingdom, those of us who qualify, those of us who make ourselves ready, who wash our robes, who keep short accounts, who pay attention and learn what we are supposed to learn, who listen for those trumpet calls during this life.

We are the called according to God's purpose. We have many purposes that we establish for ourselves, but we, Romans 8, 28, all things work together when we are paying attention to the call. And that calling is a part of everything that continues in verse 29 and 30 of that passage.

We don't have time to review that right now, but this is what is in view in Revelation chapter 20. As we have reviewed it in 1 Corinthians 15, you can go to the parallel in Thessalonians. We've looked at it many times, but let's get back to Revelation chapter 20.

We want to move a little bit forward here. So the Old Testament saints are raised from the dust. We did our dust study a few sessions back, and so many times, it doesn't say anything about dust for the church being raptured, but in Daniel 12, in Ezekiel, many other passages, we have seen that the Old Testament death and resurrection takes place from the dust.

And Job talks about his flesh being consumed, and yet he will stand on his feet, standing on the ground and see his living Redeemer, and so on. Reviewed that as well. So they are represented, and again, there is compression here.

And one thing is put for many things. When God says, let there be, and there was in Genesis chapter one, at a minimum, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit were executing those commands. There is intermediate agency in much of what God does.

My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Do they drop from the sky on golden heavenly parachutes? God uses agency to fulfill his promises. And there are representatives in this metaphorical presentation.

And here, thrones and they that sat on them, judgment was committed to them. And this

judgment is exercised by human beings. These are not angels on thrones.

They are resurrected and glorified human beings. I personally believe they are the 24 elders who were seated on thrones earlier on. Chapter four and following, we've seen them a few times.

Then the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God. The word of God in the beginning was the word. The word was with God.

The word was God. The word became flesh and dwelt among us. The word of God was in verbal form and in written form in Old Testament days.

It was the word communicated by messengers. Your King James says, communicated by angels. The law was communicated by angels slash messengers.

This was the job of Moses, of Joshua, of the Levites to communicate the law that was delivered to Israel. But those who were faithful to it were often persecuted. Persecution in the maximum sense is to be slain, to be martyred.

So interesting that martyr actually means one who bears witness, but faithful unto death. And this is what they like to call in Latin, the a fortiori principle. If you are beheaded for your witness and testimony to the Lord Jesus and to the word of God, all of the lesser persecutions and hardships are contained therein.

If it is true of the ultimate sacrifice, the ultimate persecution, it is true of everything less than that. So the saints and faithful of the Old Testament age are represented by the most recent examples, which are those who live in the last seven years of that age. And they are put for all of those who will be raised.

And you can go to your parallel passages in Daniel and Ezekiel and Job and see these. So these who had not worshiped the beast or his image. This is why we spent so much time.

And I will admit that we spent some time on the scarlet harlot, on mystery Babylon, and that it isn't just some entity that appears out of nowhere during the seven years of the 70th week, during the three and a half years of the great tribulation. This capital city of Babylon, a spiritual capital, like the heavenly Jerusalem, has existed ever since the fall, and especially after the flood. The plain of Shinar, the tower of Babel, Nimrod, and that whole rebellious, we can save ourselves.

We'll build something that the next time God sends a flood, we can go to the top. We will look at the stars. We will figure out how the world works and how the heavens work.

All of this was wrapped up in the tower of Babel. And ever since, man by man's efforts, seeking to raise himself by his own spiritual bootstraps and failing, Satan, in his own power, trying to run the world and the kingdoms of the world, which belong to him. He is the God, small G, of this world.

That is God's plan. God gave him the authority to be the God of this world and to have sway in all of the nations that have existed from the time the cherub was posted at the entrance to the Garden of Eden until now. Satan has been crawling in the dust.

Once again, him that has the power of death, whereas by one man's sin entered the world and death by sin, so the death passed upon all men because all have sinned, that was instigated by the serpent, Satan. So when it says that they have not taken the mark and they haven't worshiped the image, this is not just people who can only take the mark and see the image in the tribulation period. Spiritually speaking, this image and this mark, this dedication, this worship of that which is not God has gone on throughout fallen human history.

And these individuals are representative of all those. They live and reign with Christ for the thousand years. Now, verse seven, we're moving forward.

When the thousand years have expired, when the thousand years have expired, how many times do I have to say it? Numbers in Revelation are not approximate. They are literal, they are exact. If it says 1,260 days, if it says 1,335 days, if it says three and a half years, a time, times and a half a time, you can take those numbers to the bank.

Many metaphors, many symbols, numbers are real. Now, they can have value, seven, 12, 40, we've seen these over and over again, but that doesn't make the period of time any less literal. So this is a literal 1,000 years, 10 centuries.

When they have expired, Satan will be released from his prison. The bottomless pit is a prison. Interesting to me that God did not set up prisons in Israel, but he has set up prison in the heavenly realms.

When you look back at the angel that falls from heaven like a star and is given the key to the bottomless pit, Jesus said, I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning. And when Satan says, I could prove my point, I could show that I can rule the world and I can make things work without a divine presence or divine enablement, but I don't have enough help. You've got some of my best guys locked up in the bottomless pit.

He or another angel is given the key to the bottomless pit and these demons are allowed out. It is a prison. When the 1,000 years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison.

We saw this back in verse two. He will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth. During the millennial kingdom, there are still nations.

Satan has been attempting to rule the nations and failing for millennia, millennium upon millennium upon millennium, thousands of years. He's been running nations. There are wars.

There is the perpetration of grotesque, evil exterminations. Look at the totals just in recent history

under various evil kinds of government, some of which ignorant people are trying to resurrect in our own country and perpetrate quote-unquote democratic socialism. This is what happens when education fails and people don't know history and are doomed to repeat it.

Let's try a form of government that has failed and resulted in the death of millions every time it has been tried. Let's do that. This is the postmodern age where decisions and opinions are not based on rational thought.

When you say, how could somebody think this? How can they fly in the face of facts, evidence, history, certain knowledge, graphic examples? This is postmodernism. This is how the last seven years will unfold and be accepted and be followed by a worldwide population. The lasting remnants of Judeo-Christian influence that stems directly from the word of God is further and further suppressed.

And one of the things that goes is reason, cause and effect, spotting a fallacy, spotting a faulty superficial argument. Oh, the reason he's doing this is for that. No evidence, no outcome of that nature, but it is believed because it is convenient and it is attractive, not because it has any actual merit, value, evidence, factuality whatsoever.

We are seeing the foundation of sand being laid right now for that seven year house. And when God's storms come and hit it, it is gonna collapse and great will be the fall of it, represented by mystery, which is Babylon. So he will be released and will go out to deceive the nations.

Whose idea is this, that Satan gets out of the bottomless pit? Does he ingeniously, he's allegedly the smartest creature God ever made, just goes to show you smarts aren't everything. Did he pick the lock? Did he do the great escape? The, what was it? The rock with Sean Connery and he depicts a guy that manages to get out of Alcatraz. No, he is released by God and he goes out to deceive the nations because this is a part of God's demonstration that after 10 centuries of perfect justice, perfect government, you can't blame, I mean, they will, but in reality and in truthfulness, you can't blame bad government for what people do at the end of the millennium.

When Satan is released, he goes out and deceives the nation. What is the deception? What is he telling them that is the lie? It's just like the first lie in the garden. Remember the symmetry of Genesis and Revelation? The serpent told Eve, now what God tells you is not so.

He knows if you eat this fruit, you will be like him and you will know good and evil. Is that logical? Would God purposely put a tree in the garden and tell them not to eat of it because he's afraid if they do eat of it, they will somehow be like him. We're supposed to be like him, but that's an illegitimate way.

And if God didn't want that to happen, why did God put the tree there to begin with? Eve did not reason. She didn't stop and think. She saw that it was beautiful.

It was good for food and desirable to make one wise. And she was in the grip of desire and emotion rather than facts, evidence. Just stop and think.

If God knows that if I eat this fruit, something he doesn't want to happen will happen, why did he put the tree here? 10 seconds of thought would say, if God doesn't want it to happen, well, just, you know, faith can uproot trees. Faith can move mountains. So if faith can move them, that means God's moving them.

God can move the tree. If we just stop and think. But she didn't.

Same thing's gonna happen here. Satan was a liar from the beginning. He is a liar and the father of it.

And what does he do? As soon as he's released, he goes into lying mode and he deceives the nation. What is he telling them? You don't need God. We can do this together.

We can build another Tower of Babel. We can live and exist, govern ourselves. We can decide what's right and wrong.

You don't need God. Haven't you been chafing for all of these years under these sons of David and his greatest son, Jesus Christ? Don't you find this odious and abrasive? Don't you chafe under the restrictions, the justice that doesn't let you fulfill your fondest wishes? Because you love darkness rather than light. And this is a kingdom of light.

I want darkness, but I can't do it. Too much light. Don't you wanna get out from under? And they are fooled into believing that it will be better.

Life will be better. I will be happy. I will be fulfilled.

If I change myself in some way, change the government, change my body, change my gender, change my locations of fat deposits, change something, I will be better. I will be happier. I will prosper.

This will gratify me. This is the lie. There is no life except in God through Christ.

There is no future except with God through Christ. Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man and makes flesh his strength. How much more cursed the one who puts his faith in Satan and trusts in Satan to get it right.

That's what happens here. So he goes out to deceive the nations, which are in the four corners of the earth. Again, metaphorical language.

The four corners mean as far as you can go. If you have a rectangle and you're at the center, the farthest you can go is to a corner. The sides are closer, right? Think of your right triangles.

The corners simply mean the farthest distance you can travel from where you are. Four corners of the earth. Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle whose number is as the sand of the sea.

We've done Gog, Magog in our Old Testament Kings and Prophets and I'm not gonna review that, but they are put for all of the nations that Satan rules. Gog and Magog, you put an M in front of it, it's Gog and everything that comes from Gog. M as a prefix means of or from.

So Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle whose number is as the sand of the sea. Somehow forgot history. Think of the present day.

Do you remember the last time the nations were gathered against Jerusalem? Little thing called Armageddon. Who won that one? Ah, we've got a better, we're gonna do it different this time. You hear the echoes of this satanic deception around us today.

They've elected more than 30 socialists to run for public office in our country. Avowed communists, a rose by any other name smells as sweet and the opposite is also true. Call it what you will, we know what it is, but it is already these seeds of dissatisfaction, the seeds of I'm wiser and I can do better.

We're seeing an anticipation of that in our country today and as much as we celebrate this weekend, the two and a half centuries of our formal existence, there are black and white striped animals in the woodpile. So gather them to battle. You're going to fight God's King and God's people.

You're gonna surround the camp of the saints. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. We've always got these cities.

They went up on the breadth of the earth. This is an enormous crowd. There have been a thousand years to reproduce, to confederate, to quietly below the radar, snark and criticize and find fault, finding fault with that which is perfect.

Pharisees told us, showed us how it's done. So they surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Now, is there a battle? We've got another white horse, another army of white robed saints on horses? No.

Now again, there is a lot of compression here and the actual means by which this battle is resolved may be much more detailed. We don't have a need to know at this point. All we need to know is that fire, which represents judgment, comes down from God out of heaven and eats them, swallows them up, devours them.

And the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are. Those individuals, the first and second beasts of our recent chapters have already been cast in there 10 centuries earlier at the beginning. This is verse 20 of the preceding

chapter.

These two, the beast and the false prophet were cast alive into the lake of fire, burning with brimstone. They partake of some sort of what we would call angelic existence. This is not simply two human beings.

And angels are different from us and their judgment in the lake of fire is different from us. The judgment that gets put on angels apparently does not consume them. This lake of fire judgment for them is not perishing and Apollia, you perish and you are no more.

They've been there for 10 centuries and they are still there. Satan is cast in. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Who is the they? These three, these three signature lead angels who have spent the entirety of human history sponsoring, perpetrating, encouraging, developing evil. They have a special fate. They're made out of special stuff.

We don't know what it is. We just know that they have a unique punishment. Jesus tells us that the lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels.

Doesn't say it was prepared for every unbelieving human that ever lived, although there's gonna be a destination for them. But that wasn't its original purpose. Verse 11, well, let me just close verse 10.

They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Is there day and night forever and ever? What about the new heavens and the new earth? This just means there is no end in sight. It's not for a thousand years.

It's not for 1260 days. It's not for 1335 days. It's not for a time, times and a half a time.

It's not for a goodly while. Whatever duration it has, it's out of our observation. We don't know, we can't understand it.

So day and night, this means without ceasing. They don't knock off after an eight hour day. It is continuous and it is unending as far as we can see.

A highway can be unending as far as you can see. It doesn't mean it doesn't end somewhere. We just can't see the end from where we are.

So this has duration. It has continuity and it is unique to these three angelic creatures. The first beast, the second beast and Satan himself.

The unholy Trinity, the holy Trinity persists in holiness for all eternity. These three persist in evil for all eternity as far as we can see. I'm prepared to say this could be unending torment for Satan

and this first and second angel.

They are Satan's angels. So verse 11, then I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it. From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away and there was found no place for them.

This is an anticipation of the elements melting with a fervent heat. The heavens being rolled up like a scroll. The first verse of our next chapter, I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, passed away.

They are no more. Day and night characterize this heaven and this earth, you've got celestial bodies, you've got orbits and rotations and revolutions and gravity and all of the laws of physics and astrophysics and so on. But at the great white throne, this is at, during, connected with the destruction of the elimination of the removal of this present cosmos, the heavens and the earth, not just the earth, the heavens and the earth.

This tells you by implication that the stars, which are often symbolic of angels, they're in the heavens. The heavens are gone, there's a new arrangement of stars. If there are any stars, there's no mention of stars in the new heavens, overlooking the new earth.

Be hard to see them because there is no night in the new earth. But the face of God causes the earth and the heaven to flee away. And there was found no place for them.

They don't get thrown in the lake of fire. They flee, they are gone. They are no more, they do not exist.

Then John says in verse 12, I saw the dead, small and great, standing before the throne. It says, God, I don't think it makes a big difference. Here, I think the better Greek text is the throne.

This is the great white throne. Obviously, the throne is metonymy of the adjunct. It is put for the one who sits on it.

In the same way that the face of God in the preceding verse is put for the presence and power, the holiness and righteousness and justice of God. From his face, they flee away. Face, the throne, all of these are closely associated with God.

And books were opened, many books, a lot of books. And another book was opened. There's a collection of books.

And then there is this unique singular book, which is of life. It doesn't say book of, another book was opened. This has to do with life.

We can call it the book of life for convenience. And the dead were judged. Which dead? Everybody that is still dead.

Church age believers raised at the rapture. Old Testament saints resuscitated 10 years later. I'm

sorry, seven years later.

And then 10 centuries later, at the fleeing away of the heavens and the earth, in order to enter into eternity, corruption must put on incorruption, right? So by extension, by implication, just drawing a reasonable conclusion, the still mortal but highly improved Old Testament saints who are of faith, evidenced in obedience, will have their rapture, so to speak, at the end of the millennium. And when the heavens and the earth flee away from the face of God to enter into the eternal future, they have to be incorruptible and immortal. So we don't need to know much about it, but they will have the equivalent, the rapture of Israel, if you will.

Most of them will be alive and a few dead, where for us, most of us are dead and a few will be alive. But that will take place right here in verse 11. When the earth and heavens flee away, where are the millennial saints? The raised Old Testament saints.

If they're going into the future, they have to be incorruptible. So that's where I'm putting their transformation. They join us in the incorruptible body like the Lord Jesus.

And they've had 10 centuries to get ready for it, just like we have time in our life to get ready for it. So the books were opened. These are obviously books of works.

It's not nature books. It's not books on astronomy or chemistry. These books are where works are recorded.

Remember Jesus saying at the beginning of Revelation, I know your works. These works will follow us. Their works follow them, we're told in another place.

So the dead were judged according to their works by the things which were written in the books. The dead are judged according to their works. We have already had this judgment 1,007 years earlier in terms of being judged according to our works.

This is, and again, the example is pastors and teachers that Paul gives. No other foundation can be laid but Christ, but everyone needs to be careful how he builds. Think about building a house on the rock.

He's specifically talking about pastors and teachers. I planted, Apollos watered, God gave the increase. We've laid the foundation.

The foundation is Christ. Let everyone, and he's talking about teachers, be careful how you build. Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble.

But that is put for these pastors as leaders, so to speak, as communicators, at least, are put for all believers in the church age. All of us have to be careful how we build, and there will be a judgment. And we don't want it to be a flash fire of wood, hay, and stubble.

Where do we get the gold, silver, and precious stones? Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven. Righteousness by faith. Figuring out all of the things we talked about in the first session.

Judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gives up the dead which were in it, and Heth and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. This is sort of difficult.

Why are there three different locations for these unbelieving dead? I think that it speaks to the human experience, the human observation of the death of others. The sea, this, you go to sea and you don't come back. We don't know what happened.

They left. This is the unknown death. The sea also speaks of chaos.

These are the ones that lived out in the chaotic world, the fallenness and the corruption. They lived out there. Can't even see them, don't know what happened to them.

The sea is the unknown kind of death. Death and Hades give up the dead. Two different places.

There's death and there is Hades, which is Sheol. This could possibly be a reference to believing Israelites who died during the millennial kingdom. And they are not so much in a different place as they experienced a different kind of death.

David said, you will not leave my soul in Sheol. I will go to death, but I will come back. My son has died.

He can't come back to me, but I can go to him. I can join him in death. So it could be that death and Hades are death that is visible and seen, maybe even publicly viewable in terms of capital punishment.

Hades could potentially be, and these are just suggestions. They are just ideas. I don't think it really matters.

It just tells us that from the living perspective, there are different kinds of death. No matter how you died, out of sight, out of mind, in the arms and in the observation of your loved ones, if you were a believer, if you were an unbeliever during the millennial kingdom, everybody from whatever destination of death they seem to go to, they are all coming back. And judged, each one according to his works.

This is important because again, you can see that there is going to be a judgment of works much as there is for living believers at our rapture. There will be a similar judgment of works, I think, for Old Testament saints who will be rewarded for their faithfulness or penalized and lacking in inheritance and opportunity in the eternal future, just like us. It's just 1,007 years distant from our judgment, but there are multiple things going on at the great white throne.

Some of this is a judgment of eternal life or death. That's why the book of life is there and why it is checked. It isn't that nobody who is judged is found in the book of life because they've all been raised.

There are going to be some who died during the millennial kingdom who are believers. Could be many. They will be raised and judged.

And I think this judgment is put very similar to the judgment seat of Christ for us. Judge according to their works. There are consequences.

It isn't just, I believed in Jesus when I was nine. I'm saved forever. It doesn't matter how I live my life.

Works matter. Faithfulness and obedience matter. They determine eternal things.

So judged according to their works. Then when this judgment is complete, there is not going to be any more death. There's no more mortality.

There's no more corruptibility, which tells you that there was during the millennial kingdom because it is at this point, after the thousand years are complete, that death and Hades, departure from life for believers or unbelievers is no more. Notice the C is not mentioned because in the eternal future, there's nothing that isn't visible and known. And you don't have chaos.

You don't have the nations. You don't have Satan's rule of the world. So the C isn't even brought back.

But death and Hades, and I think this speaks of, is there the possibility of disbelief, of rebellion? No, and therefore there's no need for the judgment and the destination. So death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

This entire thing, this is like the El Eto'odot in Genesis. These are the generations of. And they put that as verse one of several chapters in Genesis.

It's actually the last verse of the preceding chapter. This that I just talked about is the generations of. Here, this is the second death.

Everything we've just talked about from the heavens and earth fleeing away, the great white throne judgment, this is the second death. It is the second and it is the last. There is no more death.

Anyone not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. It doesn't say anyone whose works didn't measure up. Works is a judgment that determines the status of believers who are moving forward.

All of us determine where we're gonna be and what we're gonna do in eternity based on our works now. That's why we can't get distracted and think life is just something to live, tasks to be performed, obligations to meet, entertainment to be enjoyed. Eternity is on the line.

We will be judged according to our works. The judgment, the books are opened and people are judged according to their works. You can see in this that unbelievers say, but wasn't I a good man? If you're not a good person, your works fall short.

But anyone not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. Well, sobering words, sobering thoughts, and a reminder of what a privilege it is to be alive. My old pastor used to say decades ago, if you are still alive, God still has a plan for your life.

Don't get discouraged. Don't give up. Don't say I've won too many failures.

I think God's through with me. You know, there used to be that little bumper sticker or something, please be patient. God is not finished with me yet.

If you're alive, God has a purpose. He is granting us life and breath and opportunity and provision and support in the person of the Holy Spirit and in the light of his word and in the example of the Lord Jesus to redeem this time, to prepare ourselves. I don't want to show up and sit in the car and not be able to turn it on.

Did you ever get a new car and it takes you like two weeks before you figure out where the light switches are? I got a new truck and I couldn't figure out the first time I wanted to put gas in. How do you get the gas thing open? You look all around and in the usual places and it's all different. It has changed.

I know the functions, but I don't know where the controls and the handles are to do them. You get in, it's night. You get out, you open your door and the light doesn't come on.

You think my old car, there was a little button switch. I can't get the lights to come on. You hunt all over the place.

We don't want to do that in our spiritual life. Now is the appointed time. Now is the day of deliverance.

Read the first part of Hebrews. While it is called today, don't follow the example of faithfulness when Israel dropped in the wilderness. Seize the day.

Redeem the time with an eye on eternity. We have trumpet calls every day. That gets us ready for the last one.

The last time God has to call to us with a shofar will be the one that takes us to glory. What an opportunity. Let's be ready for it.

Father, thank you for the privilege of studying your word together. We thank you for the fellowship and the prayers and the concern and the love and faithfulness of all those who join us for study and fellowship. We pray that your Holy Spirit will enlighten us, help us to see the pertinence and applicability of what we have studied together.

We pray a blessing on each one, every believer everywhere that is seeking to walk the narrow road and enter through that narrow gate that leads to life. We pray for ourselves. We pray for them.

We pray for our nation. And we ask all these things in Jesus' name, amen.