

Rev 26-07-22b

We are in Revelation chapter 21, and there is a sobering section here that we want to cover because we want to be sure it doesn't apply to us in any way, and it is surprisingly easy for it to be pertinent to us. It serves as a warning. God didn't write this in a book and tell the angels now, if anybody acquires these patterns in their life, you be sure and keep them out and drop the rod so they can't enter the city.

It is given to us in the same way that the other admonitions in this book are for our instruction. And those things that were written before time were written for our benefit, upon whom the ends of the ages have come, Paul says. And the same thing is true here.

This is important for us to understand, even though we think we are far from it, and while I would never be subject to these patterns, let's take a look at them and be sure we understand what they are so that we stay well away. When you get to verse 8 and it says, but this is the contrast to the preceding verse where God says, I will personally grant access to the city and to the water of life. He will inherit all things.

I will be his God. He shall be my son, my child, but the cowardly, this is the Greek word. I'm only going to give it to you once.

So if you want to know it, write it down. D E I L O I S D E I L O I S. This is not phobos, like phobia type of fear. This is a very fascinating word.

It only occurs a few times in scripture. For example, Matthew chapter 8, verse 26, the storm on the sea, when the Lord Jesus stands up and rebukes the storm. But before he rebukes the storm, he rebukes his disciples.

Did you ever notice that? Turn back to Matthew chapter 8 just real quickly. It is fascinating to see what is uppermost in the Lord Jesus mind and what he endeavors to remediate as the first and foremost problem. Matthew chapter 8. We're going to end up at verse 26, but start a little bit above that.

Verse 23, Jesus got into a boat. His disciples followed him. Suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea so that the boat was covered with the waves.

He was asleep. Then his disciples came to him and awoke him saying, Lord, save us. We are perishing.

But he said to them, remember now, storm is raging. The boat is getting green water over the bow, and these are experienced professional fishermen who have spent their lives. They grew up as little boys.

Zebedee had a fishing business and his sons, Peter and Andrew, their family, fishermen from the

time they could crawl into a boat. They are afraid for their lives. What kind of a storm was this? A supernatural storm.

And they wake the Lord Jesus up. How tired did he have to be in his human flesh to sleep through this kind of motion of the boat and getting soaked by water and blown by the wind and disciples yelling at each other to try to secure things and try to keep from sinking. Jesus is fast asleep.

How tired do you have to be to sleep through this? They had to wake him. They awoke him saying, Lord, save us. We are dying.

We are perishing. He doesn't stand up and rebuke the waves and then give a Bible class. He says to them, why are you fearful? Guess what the word fearful is here? Delois.

Why are you fearful? You are not thinking your way through this test. If the Lord Jesus Christ is in the boat and his work for the Father is not finished, that boat cannot sink. The disciples are having none of it.

They have never seen this kind of storm. They are sure they are about to die. They manage to wake the Lord Jesus from the deepest sleep on record.

And before he does anything, he looks at them and says to them, why are you delois? You should know better. Primitive reasoning should tell you. I remember as a child, we had a record by Burl Ives that had songs for kids that were biblically related.

And my brothers and sister will remember that there was one called Christ in the Vessel. With Christ in the Vessel, I will smile at the storm, smile at the storm, smile at the storm. With Christ in the Vessel, I will smile at the storm until he takes me home.

Sailing, sailing home, sailing, sailing home. With Christ in the Vessel, I will smile at the storm until he takes me home. Amazing how the things you can pick up as a child will stick with you for decades, but it's valid and it is based on this passage.

Why are you fearful? If we do not escape this kind of response to hardship and difficulty, oppression, danger, challenge, if we don't overcome this, guess where we will be in the name of the Father? It's the very same word. Matthew 8, 26. Why are you fearful? And then he answers the question, O ye of little faith.

Little faith. If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could have calmed this storm. Pray to the Father, Lord, God in heaven, your Son is in this boat.

It should not sink. He needs His rest. Please calm this storm.

Give God a couple of good reasons and He will answer that prayer. He is waiting for us to think

His thoughts and understand His purposes. Nobody got it.

Nobody thought to pray. They're doing all kinds of nautical things. We're fishermen.

We know how to handle this. Oh, it's overwhelming our skills. Oh, no.

And at the last, they wake the Lord Jesus and they don't say, Lord, you are about to perish. They say, we are about to perish. Save us.

They're not worried about Him. They're worried about themselves. You have a combination of self-centeredness, lack of faith, and it creates this kind of fear.

Deloos. That's who is going to be outside the New Jerusalem. That cannot be us.

That will not be us. We will be people of faith. We will be people of prayer.

We will be people who are outward-looking, objective, and not subjective. God has a purpose in this. Let me think and figure out what it is.

Despite the storm, despite the waves and the wind, the Lord Jesus Christ is a couple of feet away and He's not worried. Why should I worry? Deloos. Same thing in Mark chapter 4 verse 40.

That is where you find this word. That context conditions our understanding in our passage. That's cowardly, unbelieving.

This is the alpha privative, the A that you put in front of a word that says no. If you are aerobic, you're getting oxygen. If you're anaerobic, you're not getting oxygen.

The A in front of a word in Greek changes it to its opposite. So the word for being a person of faith is pistos. P-I-S-T-O-S.

That's the root. And so someone who is pistos, P-I-S-T-O-I-S, is faithful. A person of faith.

Faithful to Him who calls us and believing the promises of God, taking them to the bank, basing our attitudes, our choices, our decisions on what God has said and His faithfulness. Faithful is He who calleth you who also will perform it. He calls us to something.

He will get it done. We want to be involved. We want to be an integral part of that.

But God is doing the work. Ah, pistos is our word here. Faithless.

Now think about this. These are believers who did not get tossed into the lake of fire at the Great White Throne, but the judgment of works, it was a giant flash fire of wood, hay, and stubble. They are not overcomers.

What is the victory that overcomes the world and everything that's in the world, everything that's

in this life? Faith. God knows what He's doing. God has given me grace that is sufficient for every need.

Grace that is greater than all my sin. Grace to help in time of need. Whatever this situation, God has made provision.

I am never tested above what I'm able to bear. So I'm not going to let any creeping thoughts into the back of my mind that something bigger than me is going on and it's going to get me. I'm going to suffer.

I'm going to have a bad time. God is in His heaven. He is my Father and He loves me.

I will trust Him. I will lay hold of righteousness in this situation by that faith. Faith.

I am faithful. What did the Lord Jesus tell the people in Smyrna? Be faithful unto death. As long as you are alive, be faithful.

Be faithful until you die. Don't let the prospect of death, don't Paul says in another place, you can suffer the loss of all things. You cannot lose what is stored up in heaven.

Moth and rust do not corrupt. Thieves do not break in and steal. You cannot lose your inheritance and your treasure in heaven unless you willfully give it away, like Esau.

Be faithful unto death. That's our call. So those who fail to answer that call, who can't trust God, who don't really believe His promises, who don't soothe their souls in the washing of water by the Word and the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's formal name is Paraclete, the one who comes alongside for comfort. We should have peace. We should have patience.

We should have joy. Love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control. Those are the fruit of the Spirit.

Otherwise, you're with the rest of the faithless, outside. Your inheritance went into the lake of fire and perished with the second death. That is the unbelieving.

Abominable is the third. What is abominable? We have recently studied what is labeled an abomination in Scripture. This is a fascinating Greek word.

It starts with BD, B-D-E-L-U, S-S-O-M-A-I, Delusomai. And one of the things you learn in Greek is when you've got that omai, like ginomai, which means to become, the O-M-A-I portion of the word talks about an ongoing condition or status. It's kind of like our I-N-G word.

We can talk about to swim, or I'm going to take a swim, but if you say swimming, it talks about a duration of an activity or a status. I'm resting, I'm sleeping, I'm walking, I'm running. We put I-N-G

on a word and it has this durative length to it in terms of time.

Well, Delusomai has that which is intrinsically as a state, as an ongoing condition. You can fall into a pile left by a cow, or a collection of horse apples in a pasture, and you are momentarily socially unacceptable. You are covered in some sort of fresh animal dung.

And for that moment, and until you go and wash yourself off, you are not going to the store, you're not going to sit down and have tea with someone, you're covered in fresh steaming fertilizer, right? That's not Delomai. Delomai here, Delusomai, actually, I'm mispronouncing it. Delusomai, the O-M-A-I says this is something that is intrinsically unacceptable, intrinsically abominable.

It, by its nature and its characteristic, it is permanently smelly, permanently unacceptable. And so these come to mean that which is abhorrent. Exodus 5.21, remember Exodus 5? This is before the Exodus proper, when you've got Moses interacting with Pharaoh, and the people come to Moses and complain about him bringing about these episodes of affliction for the Egyptians.

And they say to Moses and Aaron, let the Lord look on you and judge because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants to put a sword in their hand to kill us. You've come in and made things worse. They did just enslave us and oppress us.

Now you've put a sword in their hand to kill us. You have made us abhorrent. And in the Septuagint, this is the word that translates that Hebrew, repellent.

Leviticus 11.43, you shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps, nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them. This, of course, is a category of unclean food that is prohibited. Isaiah 49.7, there are many, many passages.

I'll just give you one more. Isaiah chapter 49.7, thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, their holy one, to him whom man despises, to him whom the nation abhors, to the servant of rulers. Kings shall see and arise.

Princes also shall worship because of the Lord who is faithful, the holy one of Israel. And he has chosen you, you who were formerly despised. Rank, overt, energetic anti-Semitism, if you will.

To him whom the nation abhors. Kings shall see and arise. Princes will worship because of the Lord who is faithful.

So, we can practice bad patterns of thinking, self-centeredness, insensitivity to those around us, the opposite of reflecting the character of the Lord Jesus, the opposite of producing the fruit of the Spirit. As believers, we can develop a stench in the nostrils of the Lord. You can, there are believers who practice a lifestyle of immorality, of hedonism, of homosexuality, of perversity, of cultivating practices and habits, and use of substances, and many things you could name in this.

They are believers, but they have made themselves abominable in the Lord's sight. God still honors the new birth, honors the application of the blood of Christ for salvation, redemption, atonement, and cleansing, but not even taking five steps down the narrow road. Got my ticket.

I believe in the Lord Jesus, but I'm busy down here. I've got experiences I want to have and pleasures I want to enjoy. I am looking for the crafty harlot to take me down the alley to her boudoir, and I don't care if I wake up in the morning with ashes in my mouth, I'll do it again tonight.

Abominable. Permanently abhorrent in terms of choices and practice. Certainly don't want to be that.

The next one is murderers. This is phone use, and I have my own ideas about this. I think sometimes when we find this word phone use, it has been copied by attraction to be murderers when it is actually something else, but we'll take it as it stands for now.

I've talked about this in other studies. There is another word that differs by just one letter that means something else, but take it as it stands. Murderers.

You can, according to the Lord Jesus, murder someone in your heart. If you have a permanent grudge, you can murder the relationship. You can murder the fellowship.

You can treat someone as though they are dead to you, and you avoid all concourse, and you bear a judge. The hatchet is not by any means buried, and in the spiritual sense, this is the opposite of embrace and one another love. You push them out beyond the enemy realm of love, and in a spiritual relationship sense, in a brother and sister in Christ sense, you've pushed them right out.

Hyper-religious families that are Muslim or other sort of energetic alternate religions, there are practitioners of conservative Judaism. If they have someone in the family who turns to Christ, you are dead to me. We held a funeral.

I don't know you. I don't talk to you. You are out of my circle entirely.

There's nothing you can do or say to restore any kind of relationship. Well, that's murder. And to arbitrarily be the servant who cannot forgive their fellow servant when they have themselves been forgiven an enormous debt by the master.

You remember Jesus' parable about the unjust servant? He's forgiven much, but he can't forgive a small debt of a fellow servant. That's what is likely in view here. Murderers.

The next word is pornoise. Pornoise. And porne, we've covered this in other studies, isn't simply the physical act of fornication or adultery or some other coloring outside the lines of proper marital sexual activity.

This doesn't dwell on the physical action. It is the breach of trust of the pledge and the covenant that you make or that you will make with a spouse. We are to keep ourselves until the point that we pledge our truth, plight our truth to someone else, and then we are faithful to that person as long as we both shall live.

And the pornoise aspect is by whatever means and in whatever way to break that faith, to violate the trust of someone with whom you have become one flesh. And you can do that in prospect just as much as in the present. That is why young people should be careful in their dating life to not break that faith in advance.

We are enjoined, the Apostle Paul says, keep yourselves pure. And people say, oh, nobody can do that. It's biology.

And, you know, the hormones are raging. And listen, God wouldn't ask it of us if we couldn't do it. We can.

And we do. And there is no excuse. Don't let Satan whisper in your ear and, oh, everybody, it's the way of the world and nobody's going to hold it against you.

And what does it matter? And it's a small thing. And no, anytime you see the word pornoise, pornoia, or any of its word group, it is talking about the fact that these acts aren't just something that you do. It has an effect on other people, either in the future, much more in the present.

And that matters to God. It is injury done to another person, in our case, to another child of God. And God does not take that lightly.

When we make promises and we pledge fidelity and exclusive relationship with someone, you better keep it. It is a vow before the Lord. Read the Old Testament passages about what happens if you fail to keep your vows.

And vows are in view with pornoia and pornos, and those who are pornoise, untrustworthy, vow breakers, where it counts the most. No more important promise than when you make to a spouse. Better keep it or you're going to end up outside roasting weenies over your inheritance.

So the next word here is sorcerers. This is our old friend. Pharmacusei is the adjectival form here.

It comes from pharmacos. We get pharmacy from this because of its association with that which alters the mind. Sorcery, dark arts, we see it here both in 21.8 and in 22.15. It is mentioned twice.

This is what consciously someone endeavors to alter your mind and to invoke some other power. When people go to recreational drugs, hallucinogenics, I want some uppers, and my spiritual life is not sufficient to my sense of well-being, my sense of purpose, my enjoyment of life. I want to invoke a power outside myself that will artificially enable and empower me in some area of gratification.

You can go to the Witch of Endor. You can go to a sorcerer, someone who invokes something from the spirit world to make things happen. This is a direct substitute for the power of God in the life of the believer, isn't it? God and his word and his spirit and his provision is not sufficient to my happiness.

I want something else, and I'm going to turn to something else. Cursed is the man who trusts in man, who makes flesh his arm, and his heart departs from the Lord. He is going to be like a shrub in the desert and not see good when it comes.

There is no more perfect example of that than the good that comes in the new heavens and the new earth and the new Jerusalem, and you're outside. Because God wasn't enough. God's provision, God's promises were not enough.

God's Holy Spirit, a co-equal and co-eternal member of the Trinity, dwelling within us at all times, ready always to comfort, encourage, to bless, to guide, to illuminate, to sustain isn't enough. I'm going to turn to something outside myself and get that to help me down some apparent road of happiness. Pharmakaia, sorcerers.

Next word here is idolaters. Idolatria. Paul helps us understand what this means in an updated context.

We don't take little teraphim and set them up on the mantle and pray to them. Covetousness is idolatry. Most idol worship down through history was to obtain the unobtainable, to guarantee something that was in doubt.

I will make sacrifice to the gods of the harvest so that I will have good crops. I will make sacrifices to the God of war so that I will win this battle. I will make sacrifices to the goddess of love so that I will get the woman of my dreams or the man of my dreams.

I want something and I am turning to a personified. This is unlike Pharmakaia in that you're looking for a sort of a generic power. But idolatry, this is personified.

You can idolize a person and look to them for happiness. There are people who are acolytes of entertainers, follow them wherever they go, buy tickets to all their concerts, buy all of their merchandise. And they are never happier than when this particular individual has released something that they can get or they can somehow be in their presence or enjoy something that comes from this.

We've got a program called American Idol for crying out loud. But this is power not just in a drug or in a visit where we're going to invoke unseen forces in a seance. We're going to speak with the dead and get some information that God hasn't given us for whatever good reason.

This is personified outside agency. Idols always have a face and a name, don't they? And we are

looking to something that we idolize when God says, thou shalt have no other gods before me. If you've got a problem, come to the Father.

If you think the solution lies in something or someone else that has a face and a name, that is idolatry. And this is always motivated by covetousness. There is something I want.

There are people who get married because they want a happiness that they have been unable to find because they haven't properly pursued a spiritual life. Well, I don't like the whole conditions and requirements of spiritual life. I'm not interested in that.

I don't want to get closer to God. I want to get closer to someone who is going to make me feel good. It wasn't Barbra Streisand that sang, I love the way he makes me feel.

And that's idolatry. Looking to a person for fulfillment and happiness. And all liars.

All liars. This is reflected in what is and is not allowed into the city. Do you remember it? In our chapter, verse 27, 21-27, there shall by no means enter the new Jerusalem anything that defiles or one who causes an abomination or a lie.

A lie. This is the filtered list. It can represent and stand for everything we're seeing in this longer list.

But what is not allowed to enter the city? Notice the correspondence with the more fulsome list we're looking at. Anything that defiles, there is still the potential that something could defile. And if there is something that has that potential, it will not be allowed into the city.

Or anything that causes an abomination or a lie. Only those who are written in the book of life. Notice the Lamb's book of life is not the book of salvation.

It is the book of the new Jerusalem. This is why I said before, to be the bride who has made herself ready and is adorned for her husband, the new Jerusalem, it is comprised of believers who are in the Lamb's book of life. That is the book that gets checked at the gates of the city.

Are you in the book? In you go. There is a book of life. There is the Lamb's book of life.

And it is not enough to have been granted eternal life to have access to the city. You have to be in the Lamb's book of life. We'll see that when we get to this final verse of the chapter.

But liars have their part. I've mentioned this over and over again. I cannot emphasize enough.

Through the day, when decision points come up, when conversations are undertaken, when attitudes well up in our souls, when reactions and responses to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that we navigate every day, when it comes up, we need to try to remember that our thoughts, our deeds, our attitudes and our actions, our words are recorded in the book and it determines our inheritance. Remember, we are here to be overcomers. We are not here to

fail.

We're not here to be leased in the kingdom. We are here to improvise, adapt and overcome by God's grace, in God's strength, by God's power. He has given us his Holy Spirit.

He's given us his word. We have got to prevail. I want my name in the Lamb's book of life.

Jesus told his disciples, don't rejoice that you had power over the demons. Rejoice that your names are written in heaven. You're going to be in the city, in the kingdom of the Father.

He wasn't just telling them, rejoice that you're saved and you're not going to the lake of fire, which they probably didn't even know about yet. Rejoice that your names are written in heaven. You have an inheritance and a reward for your faithfulness in this commission that has been issued and that you have undertaken and that you have accomplished.

Don't rejoice that you've conquered demons. Rejoice that your names are written. And we know if we are being faithful.

We know if we are relying on God's grace and God's provision. We are people of prayer. We are people who look outward.

We constantly think about the spheres of love and we look for service and function in the one and others and in the neighbors and in those who are outside and in the realm even of our enemies. Love is the measure of how our faith is functioning and our hope is motivating us. Love is the measure.

Faith is the means. Hope is the motivation. This is our motivation.

You can't get more motivated than what God has promised. This is why I don't like veggie tales and I don't like cartoon depictions of Bible stories. This is not a fable.

It's not something that is an aphorism or a helpful perspective. This is reality. There is an actual Kingdom of the Father with a real solid material, New Jerusalem.

And we either will or we won't be allowed in. To what extent will be able to partake of these inestimable, unfathomable, exponentially beyond our comprehension blessings? What did we do today? How careful were we about our thoughts and our words and our actions? What is the characteristic of our life? Do we partake of pattern failures or do we have goals and values and priorities that reflect an understanding of where we are inevitably going? It ought to make a difference. That's why the Lord Jesus as the final push for His people, the Church, gave us this book of Revelation.

These are His final words from His first coming. This is what to concentrate on. This is what will get you through.

This is what will prepare you for that service and function in the ages to come. Well, how fascinating. We don't want our portion to be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Remember the overcomer promise to not be hurt by the second death. It's not you won't go into the lake of fire. What a silly overcomer promise.

If you're saved, you're not going to physically be anywhere near the lake of fire. It's inheritance. Inheritance is on the line.

Opportunity to be in the presence and to be functionally useful to God in the future. That's what's on the line. You can see it so clearly here.

Well, we'll pick up next time Sunday morning here and we will close out chapter 21 and move into chapter 22, our final chapter in this wonderful book. Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for how powerfully and effectively it communicates to us the reality that transcends what we see around us, what the world throws at us, what the devil tries to make us think, what our fallen nature tries to drag us into.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will neutralize those negative influences and enable us to see clearly the tremendous opportunity we have, by your grace and through the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus, to enter into these tremendous blessings, both now in prospect and in the ages to come. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.