***The Great Invitation, No. 1

RV252-01***

Revelation 22, this morning we turn to verses 16-17. Our title is The Great Invitation. The Book of the Revelation has an epilogue at the very end, which emphasizes the importance of the literal truth of this book and of the divine authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, in all of human history. Jesus is the eternal one. He is therefore described as the alpha and omega, one who is from everlasting to everlasting, as God the Son and as the sovereign God. Jesus is the preeminent one who is the ultimate cause, He is the beginning and the end of human history. He is the sovereign director. Jesus is also presented to us here as the creator, as the beginning and the end of all things in the universe and as therefore the one who is the sovereign creator.

So, we are invited to pay attention to who it is that is speaking to us here. The one who is the supreme Son of God. He is the preeminent one in all the universe. He is the Alpha, the Omega. He is the first, the last, and He is the beginning and the end.

**The Authority of Christ to Speak**

He is always present to fulfill all His promises to us, His promises both of blessing and of judgment. Remember, it cuts both ways. He is the eternal God brought into the world. He brought the world into existence Himself, and He rules over it in time, and He will bring it to its eternal destiny according to His own will. So, all that is revealed here in the Book of the Revelation, you may count on being literally fulfilled, no question about it. This person who is revealing it has the full authority to know what is coming and to execute what He has predicted.

This morning, Revelation 22:16, the revelator Jesus Christ begins with His own personal testimony. He says, "I Jesus." In the Greek language, sometimes the word I is a separate word. It so happens that that is the case in this sentence. When that happens, that's for emphasis. He is using here the separate I when He refers to Himself in order to indicate that it is Christ Himself who is involved. Therefore, we are dealing with someone who has authority. The word I here is a word that conveys authority. This is not some lower echelon angel speaking. It is Christ Himself. He identifies Himself with the name Jesus, which is His human name as the Son of God. This is a name, therefore, of great dignity. So, you have this combination "I, Jesus," that projects the air of dignity and authority. This is a combination found nowhere else in the New Testament. It is the only place where in the Greek Bible you read these two words together, "I, Jesus." When the Holy Spirit does that, that is of special emphasis. So, the indication here is to be very much on your guard to pay attention to what is about to say.

Mary's husband, Joseph, was told to name her son Jesus in Matthew 1:21 because that word has a special meaning, which is significant here when the Lord closes this book and He identifies Himself with this particular name. Matthew 1:21, "And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." The Greek word for Jesus looks like this: iesous, i e s o u s. The angel said name Him Jesus.

In the Hebrew the word looks like this: Jehoshua, J e h o s h u a, Jehoshua, actually in Hebrew, and in English, that is Joshua. So, Jesus' name in Hebrew is Joshua; in Greek it is Jesus. The significance is that you Jehoshua means "Yahweh is salvation," "Yahweh is salvation." "Yahweh" is the most sacred name of God. That is the name that to this day is so sacred, so important to the Jews, that they won't even pronounce it. When they read the Bible in Hebrew and they come across those four Hebrew letters, called the sacred Tetragrammaton, YHWH [Yehoa], they won't say it. As a matter of fact, they have to say something there, so they use the word Lord; which in Hebrew is "Adonai," and they say that instead.

So, here it is, the name of Jesus, the most sacred name of God, "Yahweh is salvation:" that's what Jesus means. So, here, in the end of the Book of the Revelation, in this epilogue making His final declaration to us, He uses this most sacred name connected with His saving work. Christ uses his salvation name, Jesus, in identifying Himself as the revelator of the horrors of the tribulation to come. You can see how fitting that is. There are some people who hate the Book of the Revelation, and they hate God for telling them that this kind of thing is going to happen. They think it is horrible, terrible that God should do such things to humanity as are described in this book and which we have learned in such detail. And Jesus comes along and says, 'Let me tell you something, buddy, I who have revealed this to John, am the Savior. I am not some vindictive God, I am not some unjust creature such as the mythological gods; I am the creator God. I am in charge, I am the sovereign eternal one, and I am the Savior. Everything that I have done has been to take a person from his destiny in Hell and give him a destiny in Heaven. I've made that possible.' So, when He closes this book, He indicates that He is closing it on the basis of the one who is the Savior. All that will come to pass is part of His mission as the Savior of mankind, including the Tribulation. The Tribulation is Satan's last hurrah. The Tribulation is part of the final salvation process of Jesus Christ when sin will be permanently removed.

[back in Revelation 22:16] "I, Jesus, have sent My angel." Jesus has sent this angel, which has been guiding John through his vision. This angel is the personal agent of Christ. The angel’s revelation thus, is the message of Jesus Himself and is therefore true. The angel has not been speaking to John what he thinks. He has been telling John what God thinks and in revelation God has spoken so it cannot be ignored. The Book of the Revelation is a verbally inspired book. It is not merely the religious writings of John the apostle, and because it is a verbally inspired book, meaning every word superintended by the Holy Spirit, it is an inspired book. It is a book of inspiration. That's what the liberals like to say. That way they escape the fact that the words are absolutely inherently true. This book is an inspired book because the angel is quoting God the Son.

In Revelation 22:6, we read, "And he said to me, 'these words are faithful and true'; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angels to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place." Who sent this? The Lord, the God. In Revelation 22:16, Jesus says, "I, Jesus, have sent this angel." So, you put these two verses together, 6 and 16, and it is quite clear that the one who is sending this angel is Lord, the God, which is another evidence of the deity of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit, the Divine author of Revelation, in this way, again stresses the deity of Jesus of Nazareth.

The whole arrangement of communication here is summarized in the very opening of this book, the very first verse. Revelation 1:1 says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John." So, there is a word of transmission. God the Holy Spirit transmits information on the authority of Jesus Christ to John the apostle, John writes it down, and it is communicated to us, the servants of God.

"I, Jesus have sent my angel," and because He is God, that sending and that message is of absolute authority.

And He sent him in order "to testify." The word testify looks like this in the Greek Bible. M a r t u r e o, that's "martureo," and you can see we get our English word martyr from that. A martyr is a person who has testified to his faith in Christ. A martureo means a communication, someone who communicates information, the angel guide sent by John to reveal this information about the seven years of the Tribulation era. The Greek tense tells us here that this is given at the point that John is on the island of Patmos receiving this vision. It tells us that the angel delivers the revelation himself. And then it's the infinitive mode in the grammar; and that tells us that it is God's purpose to inform people about the future. Very important, that little infinitive tells us that God wants you to know what is coming on this earth in the future. He does not want you to be in ignorance about the Book of the Revelation. The Lord Jesus Christ went to great pains to pull this book together, to guide the angel, to guide John. Now we have this marvelous book in the Bible. And it is a book that specifically, as we have already seen, John was told, don't keep it a secret. Explain it. Let people know what is in it.

I "testify to you." The word you looks like this in the Greek Bible, su, s u. But there's something very peculiar here; it is plural. I "testify to you;" and the plural indicates that there's a wider audience for this message than just John. Some people sometimes try to convey the idea of plural you in English by saying "yous'." Archie Bunker does a lot of that. Whenever he wants to talk about a lot of people, he talks about "yous' folks," in order to try to create a plural you, which we don't have in English as such, as they do in other languages. Now, old English, we did. You could talk about "thee" and "ye." And it was clear whether you meant one person or you meant a bunch of people that you were speaking to and referring to in that second person, personal pronoun. But we don't have that in English today. The best way is to use a combination of our Southern speech, "you all." That conveys the impression of more than one. That's what you have in the Greek. 'I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you all.' It's plural, not just to John, but it's to all the people that are going to inherit this Book of the Revelation.

**The Testimony**

He has sent this to testify to them "these things." "These things" refers to the status of the seven primary churches that existed in Asia Minor in the second and third chapters of the Book of the Revelation. We studied about them and we found that there was an interesting correlation between the order in which these churches are mentioned and the progression of church history. What happened in these churches locally was a microcosm picture of what happened as church history progressed over the centuries. And that's just something that we observe is a correlation. But then the main thing that was revealed is the seven-year judgment upon humanity in the Tribulation era. The Tribulation events, the judgments are the "these things" that he's referring to.

Remember that the seven years of the Tribulation are the completion of the dispensation of the Jews. The dispensation of the Jews was to have 490 years, but only 483 years were completed until they crucified Christ. I mean to the very day, that Palm Sunday when they officially rejected him, that was the very end to the very day of the 483rd year. So, the seven years of the fulfillment of that timetable we have in Daniel.

He testifies about these things in Revelation for the churches. This is the first mention of the Church in the Book of the Revelation since the end of chapter 4, because at the end of chapter 4, the end of the seven letters to the seven churches, to the pastors of those seven churches, the Church is out. It's gone up in the Rapture and it is not on earth during the Tribulation era. Therefore, during the whole seven-year Tribulation era, the main body of the Revelation, there's no reference to the Church whatsoever because the Church is not on the scene. Here, as John closes the book, he makes one more reference to the Church after the Tribulation revelation is completed. The Church is in Heaven during the whole Tribulation period following the Rapture event. There will be some churches left on earth. All the liberal churches which are made of unsaved people, a lot of unsaved people, they will continue into the tribulation. They will be in subservience to the false prophet. They all love ecumenicism now, joining religious groups together, ganging up together. So, they no doubt will find the full expression of their desire for ecumenical relationships and they'll join the ecumenical world religions. Roman Catholicism, of course, will be here in full force with all its pomp and ceremony. It'll fit right into the thing, and the false prophet will make a great thing of them. They probably will be the core of the whole religious system, and the religions of the world will be here in full force. So, there'll be plenty of religious people left behind. But they are all people who are unsaved. They are people who know not the true God. The Revelation given to John is specifically for the seven churches, but it is also for the believers during the church dispensation, all the true churches of Jesus Christ. That was pointed out in the very first chapter, Revelation 1:4, "John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven spirits before His throne." The letter is primarily to those seven churches, but it is also then for all believers of all the church age.

And then Revelation 22:16 turns to the Revelator. The Revelator says, "I am." And again, in the Greek Bible you have the word I separately. This is to emphasize in this case, the humanity of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ says, "I am the root." And the word root looks like this in the Greek Bible, hiza, h i z a. This word is used here to indicate the source of something. Jesus Christ is the source of something. What this word is indicating is the deity of Jesus Christ, because it is referring to Him as the source of the royal family of David. How is Christ the source of the royal family of David? He lived after David. He is the source in the fact that he is the creator of David. He as the creator/God was the one who ultimately has brought David himself into being. We know from the Word of God that every conception is a creative act of God. And from the moment of conception, a bonafide human being, a person is being formed by the creative hand of God. This is why we know that abortion is an act of murder, and there's no question about that. The only people who don't think that abortion is murder are those who are ignorant of what the Bible teaches. We've gone over that recently. So, you're well versed in that. This word, "root," indicates the deity of Christ is the source of Israel's royal family.

But then he says something else that's interesting, and that is, Jesus said I am also "the offspring." This is the Greek word genos, g e n o s. This word means descendent. This refers to His deity, 'I am the source of the line, I am the creator;' I am "the offspring;" this refers to His humanity. So here are these 2 words again; the Holy Spirit very subtly puts in the fact that Jesus Christ was a God-man. He is both divine and human, and He is the root and the offspring both, of David, that is King David of Israel.

Jesus identifies Himself as the root and the offspring of David. He is the root of David as his creator; that declares His deity. He is the offspring of King David as his greater son; that declares His humanity. So, He is both the ancestor of King David and the descendant of King David.

Jesus used this fact one time to confound His pharisaic religious enemies. In Matthew 22, beginning at verse 41 we have that confrontation recorded for us. Matthew 22:41-46, "Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying 'What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?' They said to Him, 'The son of David.'" Jesus proposes a question to the Pharisees who have been questioning Him to try to trip Him up, to try to lead Him into some sinful response, to try to prove that He was not what He was claiming to be, the Messiah. So, Jesus says, "What do you think about Christ, the Messiah, whoever He is, whose son will He be? Well, they knew enough from the Bible, from the Old Testament Scriptures that the Messiah was going to be divine. That was made clear in the Old Testament to them. They knew that He was going to be the son of David. So, very clearly, they knew that He was to be descended from the royal line of David. So, here they say He's going to be the son of David. Then Jesus asked them something very strange in verse 43. "He said to them, 'Then how does David in the Spirit call Him Lord,' saying, "THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT THINE ENEMIES BENEATH THY FEET'"'?" Jesus proceeds to say to them, 'How did David, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,' that's the Spirit which is referred to here, then say and quotes Psalm 110. Psalm 110 where David makes this remark, "the LORD." And please notice in your English Bible that those are all capital letters, capital L, capital O, capital R, Capital D. And that is always done that way to show you that sacred Tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew letters, the sacred name of God, Yahweh. And he said "to my Lord," and you notice that there's a capital L but small o r d. That's because that's Adonai, the word for God, it's a totally different name. So, here he said, "The LORD said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make thine enemies beneath thy feet."

David called the Messiah, my Lord. That meant God and God said this to him, God said, "To my God," is what he is saying. God, Yahweh, said to my God, Adonai, referring to Jesus Christ, or to the Messiah the Christ, "sit at my right hand until I put enemies thine beneath thy feet." So, David calls the Messiah, who is to be descended from him, as God. David knew that the son he would have who would become the Messiah in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant promise was someone who is more than human. He was also divine. Therefore, it was very clear to David that he said God the creator said to God, my God the Messiah, I'm going to make your enemies your footstools.

Well, that was quite a question, because these people were saying 'you can't be God, Jesus of Nazareth; because you're a human being.' Jesus was saying, 'yes, I can because I am a God-man, and David knew it. You dunderheads can't figure it out because you're not paying attention to what the Scripture says.' And the impact of that was so tremendous that Jesus ties it up, and says, "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?'" If David calls Him my Adonai, my God, how can he call Him my son? Only one way; He has to be divine, the eternal God incarnated in human form.

The result was total defeat for the Pharisees. Verse 46 reads, "And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question." They were smart in that. The Pharisees refused to admit the teaching of Scripture that Messiah would be both divine and human as the root and offspring of David. That's what they didn't want to admit. Jesus had pushed them right to the corner and they had no answer.

They could admit He was going to be human, but they just could not admit that He was going to be divine and that Jesus therefore was indeed a God-man. The Bible says they just decided not to question Him anymore. That was very smart of them. These guys are the ones who have the university degrees, the doctors of the Law. They're supposed to know something. And every time they open their mouths, they come off looking like fools. I have learned personally, a long time ago, it's better to let people think you're a fool, than open your mouth and remove all doubt. That was the principle upon which these bozos worked at this time. It took a great deal of patience on the part of the Son of God to take this kind of abuse of these puny little minds, which are trying to discredit the One who has brought them into existence themselves as the Creator.

So, in our passage in Revelation, Jesus says something very significant: 'I am the root, the source; and I am the offspring, the descendant of David.' As a descendant of David, Jesus Christ will properly become Israel's last king in the millennial kingdom, fulfilling the promise of the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7:16, where David is told that he will have a descendant to rule from his throne forever. That descendant will be Jesus Christ. Jesus was born, as you know, King of the Jews by His royal family lineage, Matthew 2:2. Jesus died as the King of the Jews; it was put over his cross, Matthew 27:37. Jesus will reign forever as King of the Jews, Zechariah 9:9 tells us.

Then the Lord identified Himself in another way. He says that He is "the bright morning star." Aster in the Greek, the bright morning star. A morning star, as you may know, appears in the pre-dawn darkness just before the sun rises. The brilliant morning star applies to the planet Venus, which shines with a great brilliance as it rises at the morning dawn. The star was a familiar symbol in Jewish writings for the expected Davidic Messiah King. That is why on the Israeli flag you see the star of David, because that star was the symbol of the Davidic king. It is on the Israeli flag to symbolize the fact that they have a kingdom. And most people don't know when they see that star on that flag that the Jews are saying we're going to rule the whole world: we are a kingdom of people, which in God's time will be established as the kingdom above all kingdoms, and nation above all nations. That, of course, is exactly where history is rapidly moving. So, the star was a familiar symbol in Jewish writings of the expected Davidic Messiah King.

Jesus describes Himself as the promised shining bright morning star. We have the scriptural reference to this fact in Numbers 24:17. Balaam making his prophetic declaration says, "I see him but not now; I behold him but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, And a scepter shall rise from Israel, [referring to Christ as the star, the Messiah, and the scepter from Israel is the King.] And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, and tear down all the sons of Sheth." So, here's the prediction that there is a star to arise who will be the Messiah. So, that connection is made there once more.

**The Day of Christ/The Rapture**

**How Then Should We Live?**

Jesus Christ, as the bright morning star, will herald, first of all, the dawn of the day of Christ. You may remember the day of Christ as one of those technical terms in the Bible. You should be complimented if you can tell me immediately now what the day of Christ stands for in the Bible. If not, seal it to your mind. The day of Christ is the technical term for the Rapture of the Church and the Judgment Seat of Christ, when rewards are given to believers for their service to God on earth. The Day of Christ is the Rapture of the Church and the Judgment Seat of rewards, which follows immediately upon that. This is referred to in many places in the Bible, the day of Christ. The idea of the Rapture is not some isolated invention.

Please notice 1 Corinthians 1:7-8: "so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Once you know that the day of Christ is the Rapture, confirm you to the end blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, you know that he is saying the day of the Rapture and He's going to keep you blameless. That doesn't mean He's going to keep you sinless because you won't be. But you will be blameless before the justice of God to the very end, to the very Rapture, you have no concerns on that part.

You only have to concern yourself how you live your life now so that God can bless you now in time, how you use those 7,000 promises in the Bible, which are no good in Heaven, they can only be used this side of eternity. And every time you use them, it means blessing poured upon you. 1 Corinthians 3:13, "each man's work will become evident; [Here's the Judgment Seat of Christ] for the day [There it is, the day of Christ.] will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire." Fire itself will test the quality of each man's work, whether it's human good or divine good. That word, "the day" refers to the Rapture.

Then in 1 Corinthians 5:5, "I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ." Here is this sitting member in this congregation in the Corinthian church, recorded for us here in 1 Corinthians 5, a case of incest that was taken on, nobody was doing anything about it; everybody is looking the other way. Paul says, "I'm taking charge here because I'm an apostle and I have authority over this church. I'm delivering this person formally by an official act of my apostolic authority into the hands of Satan so that he will have great physical and other sufferings brought upon him to remind him that the time has come to repent. Paul says, "I'm doing this so that I can preserve, hopefully, his life for the day of Christ, so he doesn't waste his life, so he gets back on track in temporal fellowship and gets back to earning rewards through his service.

2 Corinthians 1:14 also refers to this day; "just as you also partially did understand us, that we are your reason to be proud as you also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus." So, there again, Paul says, 'I'm going to be proud of you the way you people have been serving God.' This is the second letter to the Corinthians who are a very sinful church. They corrected a lot of their problems. He wrote in the second letter and says, 'I'm glad to hear that things are so much better, that you repented, and that you changed your ways. That's going to make me happy at the Judgment Seat of Christ and you will be happy in me at the Rapture and the Judgment Seat because I brought you around and didn't try to keep your approval and good will by not letting you know the problems that you were guilty of.'

Philippians 1:6, "For I'm confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." [This is a] variation of the same thing. Philippians 1:10, "so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ." There it is, the day of the Rapture, the day of the Judgment Seat of Christ again. And one more, Philippians 2:16 says, "holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain." "Holding fast the word of life," do I have to tell you what that means? Holding fast to Bible doctrine, if you've had enough sense to be here and to be taught it, and then to be positive in your volitional response to it, so at the day of Christ, or at the day of the Rapture, at the day of the Judgment Seat, he may have cause to glory and you may have cause to glory, that is to be honored, to be pleased, because you did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

If you know doctrine, you are not going to be involved in human good things on this earth. If you know the Word of God, your life will count for eternity and you will not waste it. That's a very significant point and should constantly be the emphasis for a Christian, the day of Christ. That's what it's all about. Keep your focus on that. Don't let anybody distract you on this earth or anything distract you from this.

So, Jesus Christ is the bright morning star who signals the arrival of that day of the Rapture. 2 Timothy 4:8 incidentally, also refers to it as "that day," and that's referring to the Rapture. He [Jesus] appears as the bright morning star of the Rapture. That's, of course, what we read about in 1 Thessalonians 4. Just to remind ourselves, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, "For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord." [That's the] Very same thing that Jesus promised in John 14:3-6.

**Christ's Appearances As the Bright Morning Star**

Once the morning star Christ arrives, and the dawn of the Rapture begins, there will descend upon this earth, the dark night of the Tribulation. And that order again stresses a pre-Tribulation Rapture, which tells us, as the Book of the Revelation says, that God has not selected us for tribulation but to escape that and to go to glory; we will not be here on this earth during the Tribulation era.

Jesus, following this dark night of the tribulation, comes to the end of that seven years. He will also appear as the bright morning star on that occasion, before the dawning of the glorious age of the millennium. At the point when the world is spiritually the darkest for Christians, at the point when the world is spiritually the darkest for the Tribulation saints, Christ returns as the bright morning star signaling a new spiritual day for them.

The Romans viewed Venus as the symbol of victory and sovereignty over a nation. Therefore, the Roman generals, when they went into battle, sought the favor of the goddess Venus in their military campaigns. By applying this morning star concepts to Himself within this society, and within this culture of New Testament times, Jesus is declaring Himself to be the victor over Satan, His adversary, and is declaring His own sovereignty over the nations He has conquered. So unless you knew the background of the times, you wouldn't catch that. The fact that He is associating Himself as a bright morning star, which associates with the planet Venus, which is the goddess Venus of the Romans who looked upon her as the one who gave them victory and sovereignty over nations, Christ is thereby declaring Himself the victor and the sovereign one over all nations. The crucified, risen Jesus Christ is the Savior and the Lord of mankind. He signals the new age of righteousness and peace with His coming for the Church. He signals a new golden age for mankind in His Second Coming to reign during the Millennial Kingdom.

He signals the final dawning of the Day of God, which is another technical term. You've had Day of Christ. There is also the day of God. That is eternity. The Day of God is eternity. Every time you read about the day of God in the Bible, it's eternity. The day of Christ is the Rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Aren't you glad you were here this morning? Two very important technical terms that will make the Bible read for you with great understanding that it did not before you knew that.

**Be of Good Cheer!**

So, it is clear from Scripture that Jesus Christ is the sinless God-man and is the rising star who heralds the dawn of a victorious new day, the day of God eternity. It is not Satan who is going to bring in that new day. Satan himself will be entombed forever in the darkness of the Lake of Fire. We Christians are to be of good cheer as we watch the sky for Christ's appearance. We are not to be discouraged by Satan and his world system.

And I give you that not only as an admonition to yourself, but the admonition to myself, because we all face the same serving the Lord surrounded by the potential discouragements of the way things ought to be: the way things ought to be among Christians, the way Christians ought to be, the way Christians ought to be doing, and the way Christians fall short of what they should be, what they could be, what God is destined to be, and how they rob themselves both in time and eternity of enormous blessing, what ought to be. Satan is the one who frustrates; it's very tempting for us to lose heart and say, what's the use? Some of these people are never going to learn. Some of these people can never be consistent. Some of these people can never be depended upon. Some of these people can never rise to their position in Christ and their royal prerogatives. But we should not feel that way. We should indeed be of good cheer because we know the morning star, Christ our Lord, is on the horizon.

Revelation 12:9 gives us this encouragement: "And the Great Dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." This is at the midpoint of the tribulation when Satan is finally thrown out of any access to Heaven. So, Satan is doomed. He should not be permitted to discourage us from fulfilling our mission and from, if necessary, gutting it out on the line of combat when that becomes necessary.

Because the end is in Revelation 20:10: "And the devil who deceived them was thrown in the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever." So, Satan's destiny is total defeat. He's going to be in the darkness of the Lake of Fire forever and ever, and every second of it is going to be a very painful experience. You're not going to be there. You're not even going to be in the Tribulation. So, whatever the difficulties that come to you in your personal life, they are nothing that should cause you to lose your good cheer, not to readjust and to go on, but at least recognize who you are and at least recognize the opportunity that is yours, because you do know the Word of God if you have half a brain that has been paying attention.

2 Peter 1:19 adds to this "And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts." Peter says, 'Be of good cheer believers.' He's writing a book to help people in their sufferings, he says be of good cheer. You are destined to discover the morning star arising, and with that morning star will come the Rapture and you will be in the Lord's presence and all will be well. So, knowing the end of the story should give you great encouragement and comfort now. Do not be discouraged from using your spiritual gifts, from using your treasures for eternity, for you investing your time in the things of God's work. That's the best of all lives.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1989

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