

THE TRAVAILING BRIDE

David Baker, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 11 January 2026

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Good morning. It is great to be with you again. It is certainly a wonderful time of year to be gathering together. Warm greetings to everyone who is joining us on live stream too. I am going to continue from where we were at the NBS in Brisbane. We were focusing on the travail of the church in Revelation chapter 12 to bring forth the manchild. The manchild is the worldwide presbytery with 24 courses around the throne of the Father. That is the administration that is suitable for the fullness of times. I am working also from page 10 in your little book that you have received in preparation for this seminar [*Hear what the Spirit is saying*] - that little section called 'A travailing bride'. This has been one of the major points of focus that the Lord brought to our attention last year. I am going to begin in Revelation chapter 12. We will turn there in a moment.

I am going to recap some of the points that we made at the NBS in Brisbane. I will also be layering in a few new points as we go. Then I want to come back to Revelation chapters 2 and 3. We will not be necessarily reading there today, but I will be orientating us and introducing that. That is showing us what the present travail of the church looks like; how a presbytery is restored to become the manchild; and what the reward of Christ looks like. Jesus said, 'Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me.' Rev 22:12. Those seven promises to the seven lampstand churches are defining for us what the reward of Christ looks like. I will comment a bit more on that in a moment.

Let us go to Revelation chapter 12. I will read from verse 1 which says, 'Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.' We know that the woman here is the church - the virgin bride of Christ. She is betrothed to Christ by covenant, but the consummation of the marriage between Christ and the church does not happen until the inauguration of the new heavens and the new earth. That is a very important point to keep in mind as we are looking at this. When we are considering the manchild, the manchild is not the fruit of the marriage between Christ and the church. She is a virgin bride who is

travailing and bringing forth the manchild. The manchild is coming from the church itself.

The woman is clothed with the sun which is saying she is revealing the glory of the Father. We will go slowly here as we start. She is clothed with the sun. When you look at the natural creation (which reveals and expresses the glory of God), the sun is the source of the light and the life for every living organism. It is the source. In the natural creation, it is a type: it is revealing the glory of the Father. The Father is the great Architect. He is the Source of the entire creation. Most importantly, He is the Source of all identity. All identities are coming from Him as the Father of lights - the Father of spirits; and He is the Source of your name as a son of God. The church is revealing the glory of the Father in the first case, because the church is composed of worthy houses. We have been considering in this season also, that the covenant of marriage belongs to the Father. It is the Father who gives a remnant of the Spirit (which is the seven Spirits of God as the Father ministers it) to make a couple one. They are one spirit; and the purpose of making them one is to bring forth godly seed (or to bring forth sons of God). We know that that is a two-step process. Firstly, new identities are brought forth through procreation and then each new identity needs to be adopted by God. That is a whole of life process, as we know. It is new birth all the way to the day of resurrection when every son of God receives an *immortal, incorruptible resurrection body*. This is then clothed with the glory of the *heavenly body*, giving to them a *spiritual body*. They are then an eternal temple of the Holy Spirit able to express the glory of God forever in that regard. We have godly families bringing forth sons of God, revealing the glory of the Father.

She [the woman] has her feet standing on the moon. Again, we look at the natural creation as a type, and we see that the moon reflects the light of the sun. We see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The woman is standing on the moon because she is standing on the foundation of Jesus Christ who is the chief Cornerstone that has been laid in Zion. Every worthy house that belongs to the church needs to be built on that Rock. The fact that

the woman is standing on the moon is another important point for us.

She has a garland of twelve stars around her head. When we are looking at the church age. The 12 stars are the 12 apostles. Along with the prophets of old, the 12 apostles wrote the Scriptures under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The stars connect us to the Holy Spirit. They wrote the Scriptures under the direction of the Holy Spirit and have delivered them to the church; so we have the written Scriptures in our hand. In every generation, the church maintains its connection to the headship of Christ through the proclamation of the written Scriptures as a word of present truth. The word of present truth is being proclaimed to us, and that is why we are gathered here over the course of this weekend - to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say to the churches. The word of present truth is proclaimed by the Holy Spirit through the messengers of Christ. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying.' This description of the church has been true since the day of Pentecost. There have been godly families since the day of Pentecost bringing forth sons of God and there has been the restoration of a presbytery all the way through the church age. The Lord does not leave Himself without witness.

But we are in a very unique day now where the church is in travail to bring forth a manchild that will rule the nations with a rod of iron. That has not happened at any other time through the course of the church age. This is a unique travail that belongs to the seventh world kingdom, and we are experiencing that travail *now*. That is really the key point. This is a unique travail which is specifically experienced by the church during the reign of the seventh world kingdom. Let us read verse 2 which says, 'She was with child [We are talking about a corporate bride here - distinguishing this from an individual family where a woman is in travail to bring forth a child as a son of God. We are now talking about the bride of Christ corporately. She is with child to bring forth a corporate manchild], and she cried out, being in labour [that is travail] and in pain.'

I want to highlight these two elements here. She is in *labour* and she is also in *pain* to give birth. There are two distinct elements. The manchild, as we

have said, is the worldwide presbytery that will be seated on the 24 thrones which are the administration of the throne of David. This will be established over the nations and belongs to the dispensation of the Father. Reinforcing the point: we are not talking here about the new heavens and the new earth. We are talking about this present heavens and earth - the 17 prophetic days that have been ordained by the Father. This entire dispensation belongs to Him. It is the Father's dispensation and this is when the manchild is brought forth.

Our first key point concerning the manchild is that the manchild is in the church (or the child is being formed in the woman). That would seem a very obvious point to make; but it is a point that has very big implications because we are saying that every presbyter must have a worthy house. Where do you see a presbytery emerging? It is from worthy firstfruits houses. I love the illustration when Paul is establishing the churches in Galatia. On his first round, he goes and he proclaims the gospel of God, and he is looking for worthy houses. A worthy house is a house that is willing to receive the ministry of the messenger. We know Paul experiences all that persecution, and he keeps moving from place to place. Then he says, 'Let us go back and see how they are doing.' On his return journey, he is looking for firstfruits. He is looking for men like Stephanus who was in Corinth. This is when he said, 'You know the household of Stephanus, that he and his house are devoted to the ministry of the saints.' He is commending the Corinthians to be in submission to such men. So Paul is going back through the region of Galatia. We know Stephanus is in Corinth and (using him as an example) Paul is looking for that kind of person. He is appointing elders on that basis. The manchild is in the church. It is not firstly ministry grace or deaconing capacity or any of these other things. It is emerging from worthy houses. That has been a very big reorientation for us over the last five or six years particularly - to really understand that. The Lord is continuing to emphasise that point to us. The woman then (I just want to highlight this) is in pain. We know that this means again that it belongs to this age, because there is no travail or pain in the new heavens and new earth; but there are two elements here.

I am going to step sideways for a minute and raise a point that you are very familiar with: There is a difference between *chastening* and *circumcision*. When we look at our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, circumcision is dealing with what belongs to the flesh that needs to be removed or cut off. That is a very significant element of our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ because the other law does need to be circumcised from our heart. But chastening is completely focused on the new creation. When we are looking at the wounding events of Christ... (this is a point that Vic has been highlighting to us again this year) ...when we are looking at the seven wounding events of Christ, each wounding event is a chastening - each wounding event is a travail - bringing forth something new. Chastening is completely focused on the formation and the maturity of new creation.

When we are looking here at the experience of the woman, we also have these two elements. There is a *travail*, and we know that there is *pain* that is associated with travail. Every woman who has had a baby knows that there is pain associated with travail or birth pains. That is what we call them. That is all proactive in the sense that it is necessary to bring forth a baby. You have that element.

But you also have this other element. She is in *travail with its associated pain*. The Scripture says 'in pain'. That literally means 'torment'. This is a very interesting dimension. It is the very same word (to highlight) meaning that there is something completely contrary to what is being brought forth. I think this is important for us to understand in terms of our own experience and our participation in travail and bringing forth a manchild. It is going to be within the context of something that is completely contrary and oppositional to what is being brought forth. I will give you some examples using the very same word.

Matthew 14 verse 24 is talking about when the disciples are in their boat and they are in the storm. This is just before Jesus walks on the water. The Scripture says that the boat was in the middle of the sea, tossed or battered by the waves, and the wind was contrary. That word 'tossed' there is the same word - pain, torment. It is the torment of something that is resisting you or it is in complete opposition. They were trying to row their boat and

the storm was contrary. This is the very same word when Jesus comes across the Sea of Galilee and He meets the demon-possessed man who has a legion of demons in him. He says to Jesus, 'What have I to do with you Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Please do not torment me.' Even the demons were recognising that Jesus was the Son of God who was completely contrary to the demons. The demons here trying to destroy the identity of the man that they possessed, and Jesus was coming to deliver him and set him free and heal him - something completely the opposite (just to paint the picture). Lot's soul was tormented in Sodom by the contrary culture of the city. In Revelation 20 verse 10 the devil, the beast and the false prophet in the lake of fire will be tormented day and night forever and ever because the fire of God's presence is completely contrary to them.

This is an interesting element here concerning the travail of the church. Why? Because it is not just travail; it is also pain. I have been picturing it this way (and obviously Revelation chapter 12 bears this out): The woman is in pain because there is a dragon in the delivery ward. I remember when we went to the hospital to have our children, one of the questions as they admit you was, 'Is there anyone that you are not wanting to visit you?' They are obviously recognising there are a lot of estranged families and very difficult family situations in the world now, so it is a legitimate question. That is just concerning the ward. When you actually get to the delivery room (which in itself should be a safe place), you only want people in the delivery room whom you really trust and who really need to be there. You want it to be a safe place, a peaceful place. You might have some music playing or whatever it is that you are doing. You certainly do not want a dragon in the delivery ward! Can you imagine now for a woman, as she is bringing forth a child, you have the pain of the birth pains; you have got that travail; that is enough. Imagine the torment of knowing that there is a dragon in the delivery ward wanting to devour the child as soon as it is born! Is this helping to paint the picture for you? We have these elements here. This is very important because this is what Revelation chapter 2 and 3 is really showing. The church is in *travail* but also needing to *overcome* in

relation to what is completely contrary to the new creation that is being brought forth.

There is another sign in verse 3: 'Another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great, fiery red dragon [that is Satan now. He is called the 'serpent of old'] having seven heads... [now we have discussed the nature of the seventh world kingdom a lot (that is not our focus today). The seven heads are the seven administrations; and the ten horns are ten leaders who particularly belong to the latter phase of the seventh world kingdom. They are the same as the ten toes on the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's statue] ...seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems or crowns.'

I want to highlight this point that the seven heads with the seven crowns is the revelation (or the expression) of the throne of Satan. Think of a throne: that is the seat of authority in a kingdom. The person who sits on the throne (the sovereign) has a crown placed on their head signifying that that person, while ever they wear that crown, is expressing the authority that belongs to that throne (and the throne has greater longevity than the person who sits on it). Satan has obviously had a rulership in relation to every world kingdom, but it has been progressively building, so that during the seventh world kingdom, we see the full expression of the throne of Satan. I want to make the point that the primary focus of the seven letters is addressed to the church during the seventh world kingdom. This is why he says to one of those churches, 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is' - during this phase here where we have seven heads and they are all crowned.

Revelation 12 verse 4: 'His tail swept a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she might give birth, he might devour her child.' We know the stars here are not the twelve stars on the head of the woman. The stars are the seven stars in the right hand of Christ - talking about the presbyteries of lampstand churches. The tail of the dragon is the 'prophet who speaks lies'.

There is a distinction between the *tail* of the dragon and the *mouth* of the dragon. You have a dragon with seven heads and that is revealing the

throne of Satan. That dragon has a mouth, and the mouth is wanting to devour. Let us be very clear: the dragon cannot devour the manchild. That mouth (as scary as it may be, and whatever is coming out of that mouth) [cannot devour the manchild].

I want to refer to rulers (in the days of Peter and John in the very early church) who did not know what to do with the apostles after they had healed the lame man. They say, 'What will we do?' This is 'Why do the nations rage and plot a vain thing and the rulers take counsel together?' 'You know what we will do? We are going to *threaten* them severely. We are going to threaten them.' But they could not punish them. They could not (in that account) touch them because the apostles Peter and John had the authority to proclaim the word of God. The Lord had given them Solomon's portico to be their cathedral to proclaim it. The Sanhedrin is counselling together: 'What will we do to stop this?' This is like the mouth of the dragon now. 'What will we do to stop this? We will threaten them severely.' But there is no substance to the threat. The dragon cannot devour the manchild. Peter and John rightly say, 'Is it right to listen to you or to listen to God? You be the judge.' They throw the question back to them. But they were very clear what they were going to do. I am feeling that as a big point in my spirit. You have a mouth of the dragon, but the dragon cannot devour the manchild.

What is more of a worry is the *tail* of the dragon which actually has purchase within Christ's lampstand churches. There is a distinction between the tail and his mouth. The *mouth* belongs to the head, but the *tail* is another thing. The tail is the 'prophet that speaks lies'. Jesus identified the tail of the dragon in the seven lampstand churches. It includes those who belong to the synagogue of Satan, those who proclaim the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of Jezebel. We have looked at all those things. It is pulling a third of the stars and throwing them down. I would like to turn that around because we have to recognise that every star *starts* fallen. A star is not starting in the heavenly places. That is where a star has been called to be. No star starts there in relation to a presbytery. Every star starts *fallen*. This is why Jesus says to the first

church - the church in Ephesus (or the presbytery in Ephesus), 'Remember from where you have fallen? When He is saying 'remember', He is not saying, 'You had this previously and you need to return to that.' He is saying, 'You need to be illuminated by the Holy Spirit to know what was foreknown for you from before the foundation of the world that you have never known before.' You start fallen. Christ is addressing a fallen star, and He is coming to fully identify with a fallen star for the sake of recovering that star to His right hand and to the heavenly places; but all stars start fallen. Let us rejoice that Christ recovers two-thirds. I think that that is a better way of saying it. We have a third fall. That is the end result. This is like the Scriptures - always working from the end backwards to say what it looks like; but He is recovering two-thirds. There are two-thirds being brought forward here - maturing to become a manchild.

Verse 5: 'She bore a male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Her child was caught up to God and His throne.' As we said, we know the manchild is the presbytery. This has been a major point of clarification for us last year. That is why it is in the little booklet. I referred to that because this has been a point that the Holy Spirit has only really brought to our attention last year. It is remarkable how many things have been just last year. The manchild (or the presbytery) is a very simple exegesis really. We know this because this is the fulfillment to the promise that was made to the presbytery in Thyatira. This is very simple point. Jesus said to that presbytery (and we know that all seven presbyteries need to appropriate all these promises. He is saying this to every star in His right hand) this promise: 'He who overcomes, and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations - "He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels"- I have also received from My Father.' Rev 2:26-28.

So the rod of iron firstly belongs to Christ. It is the authority of His kingship over the nations. We see that very clearly in Psalm 2. It is the authority of His kingship over the nations. When the presbytery receives the rod of iron, it is the authority to proclaim the word of God to the nations. I am really alive on that point. It is firstly the authority to proclaim the word of God to the nations and then

to establish the Father's kingdom on the earth by commanding all men to repent and recognise Christ's lordship and bow their knee. In relation to the nations that refuse, it is the instrument of judgement. All those who refuse to bow in that sense are then shattered by that very same authority under the judgement of God.

We see this very clearly when Moses goes down to Egypt in relation to the first world kingdom. God sends him down there with the rod of God in his hand and He says to him, 'You are as God to Pharaoh and you have the authority to go down there and proclaim the word of God. Go down there and proclaim, "Let My people go! They belong to Me, not you." ' Pharaoh could have received that. He could have bowed the knee. He should have bowed the knee, and he should have said, 'Yes, these people do belong to the Lord, and I know that the Lord has promised to give them the land of Canaan. Here I am, and here are my armies. We will go ahead of you, and we will clear the land out for you.' That is why God had raised up Pharaoh - to be a servant to Moses as he led the people into the promised land. Pharaoh resisted all that - rejected all that. Ultimately the nation of Egypt in that day was shattered by the rod of iron through those ten plagues and ultimately buried in the Red Sea.

This is the principle and (as I said before), Peter and John had been given the authority by Christ to proclaim the word of God and that is where that verse is from: 'Why do the nations rage and why do the rulers take counsel together?' Psalm 2 is where that is quoted from in the New Testament - in relation to that incident where Peter and John are proclaiming the word there.

The presbytery will be caught up to God and to His throne when the Father takes His seat for the purpose of dwelling among His people in the heavenly Jerusalem. This administration will reveal the Father and will exercise the authority of His throne over the nations in the time of the end. Significantly, when the Father takes His seat and Christ stands up in heaven to rule in the midst of His enemies, the authority that belongs to the rod of iron will be expressed through the one worldwide presbytery on the earth.

After the Father has given the scroll with the seven seals to Christ, the apostolic administration of Christ and the presbytery will sing a new song to the Lamb. Let us read this. Revelation 5 verses 9 and 10: 'They sang a new song, saying [this is to the Lamb, to Christ]: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth." ' They are there with a prophetic new song proclaiming the fulfilment of the prophecy to Daniel when Daniel said, 'And the time came for the saints to receive and possess the kingdom.' Dan 7:22. We shall reign on the earth. We know we are talking about the kingdom of God which is the kingdom of sonship.

This is the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham. The Lord addressed Abraham as the possessor of heaven and earth. Abraham's faith - he was completely preoccupied with the heavenly city - the heavenly Jerusalem. He is walking around the land of Canaan as a pilgrim (or a stranger), but nonetheless the Lord had promised to give to his descendants that piece of land. But the promise to Abraham is far more than that - it is the whole earth! In speaking about the blessing of Abraham (or receiving it), Jesus said, 'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.' Mat 5:5. When Abraham is up on Mount Moriah, the word comes to him a second time, and says, 'Your descendants are going to possess the gates of your enemies. The mountain of the Lord's house will fill the whole earth.' That is heaven and earth. The kingdom of God will be established on the earth.

Let us continue. This is Revelation 12 verses 6 and 7. Verses 1 to 6 is the major summary in its own right. Verse 6 obviously jumps right forward to speaking about the three-and-a-half years where the woman is protected in the wilderness during the reign of Antichrist. We see the parallel of that down in verse 14. As you are reading Revelation 12, you come back to verse 7 where it is another summary - but it is really focusing in on the overcoming now - the overcoming that belongs particularly to the travail then all the way through to the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Verses 7 and 8: 'And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon: and the dragon

and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.' That also enables Michael to stand up. That is not yet the end of the 2300 years, but it does enable Michael to stand up. It is Michael who then proclaims, 'Who is worthy to open the seals?' He stands up before the seals begin to open. He is *enabled* to stand up. He was trampled because of all the corruption by the priests in the temple and he is enabled to stand up again when there is a genuine overcoming presbytery.

The church will have angelic support in the time of the end to possess the kingdom (or possess the land). Satan has access to the heavenly places because of the uncleanness. We are just working on this - 'There was a place found for them no longer.' Satan has access to the heavenly places because of the uncleanness in our houses. This brings it home. Every one of our houses belongs to the heavenly Jerusalem. Why does Satan have access to the heavenly places? It is because of the uncleanness in our houses. That is why the Lord is addressing us and bringing reformation to our marriages and the sanctification of our houses so that Satan has no more access.

When Jesus sent the 72 and they were going and looking for worthy houses and proclaiming the gospel of peace, every house that received their ministry was delivered from their vain traditions. As cleansing and healing is coming, they are also turning from their vain traditions, and they are finding deliverance from all the familiar spirits. As they come back, Jesus is saying, 'I was watching Satan fall like lightning from heaven.' What we see here, from the moment Michael stands up, is war in heaven and there is a progressive overcoming then. We are not grabbing a hold of Satan by the scruff of his neck and throwing him out of heaven. That is Michael's job to do that. He does that once there is no longer any place for him in the heavenly places because he has been overcome. There is a progressive overcoming firstly by the presbyteries of lampstand churches, then by the 144 000. They are sent *overcoming* and *to overcome*. I will come back to that in a moment. Satan is overcome by the great multitude of worthy houses and then finally by those who come in as part of the great harvest and choose to remain. It is notable that the Scripture says concerning the 144 000 that they

went forth overcoming and to overcome. It highlights an 'A' and a 'B' because we are firstly needing to overcome... (and this is true in every phase) ...we are needing to overcome in relation to our own house first. As we are overcoming in relation to our own house, then we are also finding the capacity to bring forth fruit and overcome Satan in the world. We could just say it very simply, that as we are overcoming in relation to the culture of our own house, then our capacity for evangelism is becoming effective. If you look at the phases of the presbyteries' overcoming, this needs to be true for every presbyter. It needs to be true in relation to his own house first. And as there is an overcoming, there is a grace that the presbytery is receiving to overcome and proclaim a word which is recovering and restoring a remnant in lampstand churches.

The fruit of the ministry of a presbytery that is overcoming is the 144 000. And then the 144 000 are overcoming and they are also sent to overcome. They are overcoming Satan as they are sent, equipped by the presbytery and then sent to look for worthy houses. Then the houses that receive their ministry (as I said before) are turning from their vain traditions and they are repenting and receiving faith as they are receiving that ministry. They are overcoming and then being equipped and disciplined to also go and overcome. Those houses (the great multitude in Revelation chapter 7) come out of great tribulation. The 144 000 are sent at the opening of the first seal to look for worthy houses. Those worthy houses are found during the phase of great tribulation from the opening of the second seal through to the opening of the sixth seal.

At the opening of the sixth seal, you see this great multitude of worthy houses who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and they have overcome by the word of their testimony. Their testimony is that 'salvation belongs to God'. There is a testimony of regeneration, and they have learnt to love not their life to the death.

As they have overcome, their evangelistic ministry then becomes effective, and they are then harvesting over half of the world's population. It is that great harvest that comes in that becomes very interesting because it is coming in during a phase

of peace when the mountain of the Lord's house has been established over all the hills and the kingdom of God is filling the whole earth. That is a very interesting period. They also need to overcome. But in one sense it is the most dangerous period because when the seals are opening, it is warfare everywhere. The church is hated of all nations. You have the judgements of God being manifest in the earth. It is a bit like the generation that goes into the promised land. They are receiving it and they are possessing it as they fight all the enemies. It is on for young and old. This great multitude of worthy houses that come out of the great tribulation (the 144 000 and then that great multitude of houses) are pretty solid.

But the crowd then that come in after that is a bit like the next generation in the promised land who did not have to fight any giants. They land in there and it is a land flowing with milk and honey. That is where the danger is in terms of forgetting God and saying, 'The power of my own hand has made me rich.' This is where it is very interesting - the church that Paul had the most trouble with was Corinth in a lot of ways. It was the one church where he endured no persecution or opposition. As we said before, all the way through Galatia, he is being stoned and he is suffering all this persecution. In Ephesus he is constantly suffering persecution and opposition. Up in Philippi and Thessalonica they are receiving the word in much affliction and in tribulation. He gets down to Corinth, and he has a pretty good run. But that is the church that he has the most problems with because they are the ones who are puffed up. Get a bit of a sense of the nature of those seven years. That is why I keep saying that 'over half the world's population', because there is a great falling away there. That group, their point of overcoming is really the gospel that will be proclaimed by Antichrist. That is the major crisis there. There is an overcoming for them, but it is a fairly unique scenario. I say 'over half the world's population' because there is a great falling away, but we still believe that we get half the world's population. In the end it is two thieves either side of a cross - two against three, three against two, etc. The Lord will polarise the whole world. I hope this is giving you a bit of a feel for the phases as well.

I will begin to wrap up here. In all cases, the process of overcoming is the same. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. That is by participation in the seven wounding events of Christ. I am connecting this particularly to this phase where we are now in terms of the seven lampstand churches, because in every church the promise is 'to him who overcomes'. We have to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and also by the word of our testimony - by having a testimony of regeneration in our own lives; own marriages; our own families; and then also by loving not our life to the death.

I want to connect that one there to the lordship of Christ. It is an interesting phrase - 'loving not your life to the death'. What death are we talking about? We are talking about the death of the cross. That has two sides to it. I will quote these passages. Matthew chapter 10 verses 37 and 38. I think this is the 'loving not your life to the death' on one side of the cross, it is the expansion of 'He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take up his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me [verse 39 - this is the big principle]. He who finds his life will lose it [or he who seeks to save his life...].' That is the opposite of not loving your life to the death. 'He who seeks to save his life will lose it; and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.' That is on *that* side of the cross.

Then we also have that we are receiving capacity in the word of faith that is proclaimed to us, and we are born of the divine nature, and we are receiving the power of the seven Spirits of God through the Holy Spirit to be able to lay down our lives for one another. We have these three elements of overcoming. We are overcoming Satan's three major tools that he has in his tool belt - victimhood, shame, and the fear of death. As we are overcoming by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and loving not our life to death, we are being delivered from those three things - victimhood, shame, and the fear of death. As we are being delivered from those things, Satan is being overcome.

I will draw to a close here and make this point concerning the context and the timing of the book of Revelation. The apostle John received the

revelation of Jesus Christ while he was in exile on the island of Patmos during the reign of the sixth world kingdom. We know that. We are presently living in the latter phase of the seventh world kingdom which is characterised by a multipolar world order. We read this in Revelation chapter 17 verse 10. It says here that 'There are seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. [That is the seventh] When he comes, he must continue a *short* time.' We will pick up this phrase 'a short time'. Even though the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation during the reign of the sixth world kingdom, he foresaw that the book would be proclaimed by the messengers of Christ under the direction and lordship of the Holy Spirit during the short time that belongs to the seventh world kingdom. Jesus addressed those lampstand churches and that was the *first* time. But then that same word (and it is the same word) is proclaimed during the reign of the seventh world kingdom as a *second* time. This is when the time for its fulfillment has come. Now John introduces the book of Revelation by saying, 'Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy.' We are rejoicing that we have it in our hand. We have the Scriptures in our hand, and we know that we also need to hear it proclaimed to us. We cannot receive illumination without it being proclaimed to us. We are rejoicing in that, and it is, 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' There was always a timing in view in relation to the proclamation of the word that was written. 'Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.' Rev 1:3.

When it says 'keep those things', it means 'be obedient'. That is the first point. We are not just hearers of the word only. We do need to be obedient to what we are hearing. But more than that, it is talking about those who are blessed. Blessed are those who 'read and hear and keep'. There is a blessing that belongs to those who are granted a participation, because of their response to the word as it is proclaimed to them - a participation in the fulfillment of the things that are written. Does that excite you, that you, in our day, are being invited to have a participation in the fulfillment of what is written in the book of

Revelation concerning our day and the time of the end? 'Blessed are those who keep the things which are written in it, for the time is near.' When John wrote the book of Revelation toward the end of first century, the time was not near, and nor were the events described in the book about to take place.

However, since the beginning of the seventh world kingdom (and we have had the seventh world kingdom now for 80 years), that is a sobering point because it is only a 'short time'. However, since the beginning of the seventh world kingdom the time has been near, and the events will shortly take place. The short time that belongs to the seventh world kingdom is the period when lampstand churches will be restored. The Father will take His seat to establish His kingdom. A great multitude will come into the kingdom from every nation and Satan will be overcome and cast from heaven forever. The Lord will do a 'short work' on the earth during the 'short time' that describes the period of the seventh world kingdom. Revelation 22 verse 6 is where we will close. 'Then He said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel... [This is the presbytery who is revealing to John the bride city. He is saying to John] ... "These words are faithful and true." The Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. [Verse 7] "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." [Down in verse 12] "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work." ' That is just highlighting the reward of Christ which we will pick up in our next session. Thanks everyone.