

Relationships Are Everything

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[0 : 00] In your bulletin, by the way, there is a statement made in connection with today's message, and it has to do with relationships being everything, and indeed they are.

So, happy Valentine's Day. And we will be talking a little bit, as the article points out, relationships beginning with individuals and God prepares the way for relationships between individuals and other individuals. This is best reflected in the marriage-slash-family dynamics called the nuclear family. And for the young people who may be with us, the nuclear family simply is another way or is a common term that is used to describe parents, that is a mother, a father, and a child, or multiple children. That's generally considered to be the nuclear family, like you have the picture of the nuclei and the items that are circling around it, and they are the offspring or the children. And it's commonly referred to by sociologists as the nuclear family. So, we are going to look at what is involved with that, and it is very, very extensive because we are going to be all the way from Genesis to Revelation.

And this should especially please people who have difficulty finding books in the Bible, because Genesis is the very first one, and Revelation is the very last one. And it is only because of time limitations that we will not be spending much time in between the 64 books that separate those books that separate those books that separate those books that separate those books that separate them into the book. And it is also the very first one. And it is also the very first one. And it is from the pen of Mr. Stamm. And I know you can read it for yourself, but for the benefit of those who are listening by way of radio and electronics, we're going to read it. And you can read along with me if you want.

It is February 14 and how they shine. And I was really struck by this, and I thought, grace people need to hear this. Years ago, while preaching the word at a Bible conference, this is, by the way, from the pen of Cornelius Stamm, who is now with the Lord. And this is just one of many articles you will find in the book, Two Minutes with the Bible, that I've heartily recommended everyone get a copy.

Years ago, while preaching the word at a Bible conference, I noticed a young lady in one of the front pews who wasn't listening to a word I was saying.

[2 : 48] I know that feeling, maybe for different reasons, but he goes on to say, I could understand, however, for evidently she had just become engaged to be married.

Her eyes were focused on the ring on the third finger of her left hand, and her heart and mind evidently on the young man who had placed it there.

With a pleased look on her face and cocking her head from one side to the other. Can't you just see her doing anything? Oh, my.

She gazed at that diamond from every angle. No matter how she looked at it, it shone. Entirely apart from the quality of the stone, it shone because it spoke to her of him and of his love for her and was the symbol of her betrothal to him.

For some time after I had concluded my message, my mind went back to that scene. The ring that had so occupied this young lady's attention made me think of the Bible, the very book we had been studying that night.

[4 : 18] Examine that blessed book ever so carefully. Look at it from any angle, and it shines. It made me think, too, of the grand subject of that book, the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we believers have been espoused as a chaste virgin.

2 Corinthians 11.2 Unlike any earthly friend, he shines no matter how one looks at him.

Examine his words, his deeds, his personal attributes from any angle and ever so carefully, and no matter how you look at him, he shines.

Somebody even wrote a song. I'm not going to sing it for you so you can relax. Shine, Jesus, shine. And that's what he does because that's what he is.

So we are going to be talking about relationships in conjunction with Valentine's Day that is upcoming because I am absolutely convinced, and the longer I live, the more convinced I become of it, that virtually everything is vested in relationships.

[5 : 44] And the people who have the most enduring, enjoyable, loving relationships are the best adjusted and the happiest and the most fulfilled people in the whole planet.

And our ultimate relationship begins with our connection with Jesus Christ. And it is out of that relationship that all others flow.

And I've likened it to our relationship to God is vertical. We are here and he is there and it's like this. But then our relationship with each other is horizontal.

It's like this. And if this vertical relationship is what it ought to be, the horizontal will be what it ought to be.

The problem with humanity is really not so much our horizontal relationship as it is our vertical one.

[6 : 47] Because if we get that one right, this one is taken care of automatically. Assuming, of course, that the full benefits of redemption are in place, which has to do with walking in the spirit as opposed to walking in the flesh.

So we're going to begin talking about relationships. And by the way, today being Super Bowl Sunday, it's a grand contest.

And I don't know if you've ever thought of it this way or not, but all of life is a contest. God is engaged in a contest.

It is the ultimate contest. It is a struggle and a contest between the nature of good and the nature of evil.

And sometimes it looks like the evil is winning. To comfort us and to enlighten us as well, we will not only look at the beginning of the story, we'll look at the end of the story.

[7 : 58] And when you do, it will be as one dear brother said. I know you're not supposed to read a book starting at the end, but I couldn't help it. Shortly after I was converted, I just wanted to know how this thing was going to end.

And I flipped back to the last few pages in the book of the Bible. And we win. Well, that's true. But in the meanwhile, there is an enormous contest that is taking place.

It is the conflict of the ages. Some refer to it as the angelic conflict. And I can't think of a better place to begin than here in Genesis. And we're going to begin with chapter 1, if we may.

Genesis chapter 1. Well, no, let's not do that. Let's, for time's sake. Genesis 1 gives us the creation account in just one fell swoop.

But we get some more details in Genesis 2. So let's start there. And we'll end up with the revelation. Genesis chapter 2. And beginning with verse 1, we read.

[9 : 04] Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. And by the seventh day God completed his work which he had done. And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done.

Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested from all his work which he had created and made. This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven.

Now, no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted. For the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. And then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

And man became a living being, a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east in Eden, and there he placed the man whom he had formed.

[10 : 30] And out of the ground the Lord God calls to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food. The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

And let's go then to verse 15, same chapter. Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate and keep it.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, From any tree of the garden you may eat freely, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat.

For in the day that you eat from it, you shall surely die. And then the Lord God said, It is not good for the man to be alone.

I will make him an helper, a counterpart, helpmate, suitable for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky and brought them to the man to see what he would call them.

[11 : 49] Whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. And the man gave names to all the cattle, to the birds of the sky, to every beast of the field.

But for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. And he slept.

And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh of that place. And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which he had taken from the man and brought her to the man.

And the man said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.

And for this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

[12 : 59] They had nothing to be ashamed of. And there were no clothes because there was no need for clothes. None of the animals had clothes. By the way, animals today still don't have clothes, do they?

I know some of you people who are dog lovers, you make these cute little jackets and sweaters and things and put on the dogs. I'm not sure how much the dog likes that. But anyway, it makes the owners happy.

So we've got a situation here that begins with creation. And as someone has put it, that everything was fine until verse 21.

And that's when the woman was created. And then everything became quite complicated. And that is true.

But I'm here to tell you as a male, as one of those first created, that it is the most glorious, wonderful, inviting, fulfilling complication that a human being could ever undergo.

[14 : 10] So, and viva la difference. Amen. So, and in connection with this, and I have to tell this little story.

I've told it before, but the women always just love it so much, get so much mileage out of this, that God, after he created Adam and he was standing upright, God stood there and he looked at Adam and he said, hmm, it's pretty good.

But I think I can do even better. Okay, guys, it's Valentine's Day coming up. You have to take your medicine. All right. Well, this is a blissful time of, this is, what we're talking about this morning is not only romance between husband and wife, boy and girl, but it's the romance of redemption.

It's the ultimate romance. It's the romance that began with God as the lover and humanity as the loved.

And for that, let's look to Genesis chapter 3 and begin with verse 21, verse 1 through 21.

[15 : 40] The serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field. Now, there's some question about the serpent. And by the way, I want to just insert something here. I know there are people who read these accounts and they say, this is fiction, right?

I mean, this is fairytale stuff. No, it isn't. And I think this is to be taken literally, and I make no apologies for it.

And I'll tell you why I'm convinced that it is intended to be taken literally and not look beyond it for some deeper meaning and try to read between the lines and see what God was really saying.

What he was really saying is what he really said. And the reason it is put in the terms that it is with this great literal expression is because the object is for people to be able to understand it.

You would be amazed at how much of the Bible you can understand if you just read it as it is, like you would read the daily newspaper and take it for face value.

[16 : 54] Of course, there are places in it that are difficult and some are complicated and some are going to leave you wondering and scratching your head. But in the main, this book is written with the full intent and expectation that people will be able to understand what it says.

Otherwise, it loses all value. If you just have to read it and just wonder about why, wonder what it means, we are supposed to know what it means.

It means what it says and it says what it means. And I'm not going to go into the ramifications of figurative language because we know that there's a lot of figurative language in the Bible, which is almost always identified by the context.

So we take it at face value. And as one brother put it, when the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense. This was written in a code of simplicity, intended to be simple because most of us are not completely brilliant.

Most of us need it spelled out for us. God wants to make sure you get the message. So it's put in plain language so that you can understand.

[18 : 06] And when some who have exalted IQs look at it and say, well, you can't take that literally. The real message is. And then listen, when you depart from the literal, the sky's the limit.

It is subject to your imagination. And one person's imagination is different or greater than another. So there's no way of nailing down anything. And for some, that justifies they're just shrugging their shoulders and saying, oh, it's too deep for me.

I can't understand it. Oh, yes, you can. If you give yourself a chance, you can understand it. All right, let's get into Genesis 3. Serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.

And he said to the woman, indeed, has God said you shall not eat from any tree of the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, from the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat.

But from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said you shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said to the woman, you shall surely not die.

[19 : 15] For God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened. You will be like God, knowing good and evil.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, at least so said the serpent, She took from its fruit and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened. Now, it doesn't mean that they were blind before.

It just means that they were opened in a way that they were not open before. We all know what is meant when someone says, I saw the light.

And you're not talking about fluorescent lights. You're talking about a different kind of light, but we use that term. The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

[20 : 34] Hmm. And do you know what the immediate result of that was? Embarrassment. They were embarrassed because they were naked.

This is a fascinating theme, and I do wish we had time to develop it, but we must hasten along. So, in order to cover up the nakedness, they sewed fig leaves together.

You ladies ever think of Eve as being the first seamstress? She didn't have much material to work with, and she even didn't have a pattern, but they made out. I can only imagine how they looked.

Made themselves loin coverings, and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden. I think this was a Christophany, a pre-incarnate experience, a revelation of Christ.

Walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves. I'm sure Eve looked at Adam, or Adam looked at Eve and said, oh, we can't let him see us like this.

[21 : 45] So, they find some shrubby bushes to hide behind. From the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden, and the Lord God called to the man and said, where are you?

And he said, I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and was afraid because I was naked. So, I hid myself, and he said, who told you that you were naked?

Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? Now, didn't God know this? Of course he did. What's he doing here?

Well, he's making conversation. He's making a statement that requires and elicits a response. He's asking a question. This is what communication is all about. Is there any parent who has not addressed their three-year-old and said, you didn't do thus and so, did you?

Did you? You know very well they did, but what you're doing is you're trying to get them also to take ownership for what they did. And the man said, guys, here is our first line of defense.

[23 : 06] Here's our cop-out. And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest me. So, there are two individuals who are really at fault here, more than Adam.

One is the woman. She gave it to me. And the other is God. You gave her to me. So, actually, I'm only one-third to blame in this whole thing, you know, because I was led astray.

And, by the way, it was your idea. You started this. And the Lord God said to the woman, what is this you have done?

And the woman said, the serpent deceived me, and I ate. And the Lord God said to the serpent, because you have done this, cursed are you more than all the cattle, more than every beast of the field.

On your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life. And I will put enmity, which means I will put a state of war, a state of conflict between these two elements, the human and the angelic.

[24 : 24] And the angelic is Satan, but he is a fallen angel. And between your seed, and that means her offspring, that means the babies that are going to be born of this woman, and their babies, and their babies, and their babies, and their babies, until it gets down to you.

And to me. And we are all babies as a result of this. Some of us are grown up now, but this is where we started. And that's the meaning of seed.

Between your seed and her seed, he, that is, her seed, he shall bruise you on the head. And the idea is, her seed will crush you on the head.

This is a picture of a serpent with its head crushed, smashed. The idea is, it will be a final, mortal blow from which there will be no recovery.

But before that happens, he goes on to say, he shall bruise you, you shall bruise him.

[25 : 48] He's talking to the serpent. You shall bruise him on the heel. And that is a wound that is going to be inflicted at an extremity of his body, namely his heel.

And it is a picture of the fact that his wound is minor compared to the wound that is final with Satan. And we would not consider Christ's death minor, but it is minor in comparison to it being absolutely final, because it won't be final.

It will only appear final. Three days later, it will be proven not to be final, and that will be the difference. And then to the woman, he said, I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth.

In pain, you shall bring forth children. Yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you. And that simply is establishing the order that is intended here for the sexes, particularly in the marriage relationship.

And it relates to the husband being the head of the wife and the head of the home and so on. And that's another subject. So what we need to do now is, and I'm going to try to present this in a way that creates a picture so that maybe you can connect some dots, because it's very important.

[27 : 08] Everything in this book is related to everything in this book. It's all interconnected. It is the work of many writers, but one author.

And the author is the Spirit of God who puts all of this together, and we have the benefit and the blessing of it that is called the Bible. And now I want you, en route to our journey, to go to Genesis chapter 37.

Genesis chapter 37. And be reminded, if you will, between where we were reading and where we are reading now, the flood has already occurred, and the earth has been repopulated, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have been on the scene, and one of Jacob's sons is named Joseph.

And we begin reading in Genesis 37 what is going to happen regarding Joseph. Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan.

These are the records of the generations of Jacob. Joseph, when 17 years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth.

[28 : 32] Along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.

Now what we've got here is four different women, each of whom is going to bear children. One will bear four children.

Well, I get Zilpah, well, there are 12 altogether. And the wife that Jacob really loves is going to produce just two children.

One will be Joseph, and then the baby of the family will be Benjamin. He will be the youngest. Is that right? Yeah, I think that's right.

It hasn't changed, has it? So those are the only two. And you have to remember that the relationship here is different, as you might well expect, between four brothers and half brothers.

[29 : 40] All of these have the same father. But there are four different mothers involved and sons born of each of those mothers. But Rachel, Rachel was the one woman that Jacob really loved.

And she bore only two children. And the second one, the baby, Benjamin, she died in childbirth.

So Joseph, then, is now 17 years old. And we read in verse 3, Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons.

Now, we've got a real problem here with parental favoritism. But the flesh is the flesh. And this is a kind of situation where it would seem to be only natural that the man would love the offspring of the woman that he really loved, as opposed to the others.

And he did. Because what you need to keep in mind regarding all of these four fathers, all of these fathers of Israel, patriarchs of Israel, they were all made of the same stuff that you are.

[31 : 00] They were all people of the flesh. Every one of them was flawed, just like we are. Nobody was perfect. So Israel, which is another name for Jacob, don't get that confused.

Israel and Jacob is one of the same persons. Loved Joseph more than all his sons because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a varicolored tunic.

And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers. So they hated him. This is just so human, is it not?

I mean, it's just bubbling out with humanity because this is the way people are. There is a sibling jealousy that is arising here, and it's only natural.

And guess who sowed the seeds of it? Mom and dad. Think of that. So they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms.

[32 : 00] Never had a good word to say to Joseph. Joseph, oh, he's daddy's pet, you know, this kind of thing. Every time they had an opportunity to stick a knife at him and twist it, they'd take a chance.

Every time. And Joseph, Joseph had a dream. And when he told this dream to his brothers, they hated him even more.

And he said to them, please listen to this dream which I have had. I kind of get the impression that Joseph is a kind of a babe in the woods.

Doesn't have all that much savvy. Tends to think of the best of people and not terribly realistic. Probably thinks that his brothers couldn't be capable of doing to him what they're planning to do.

Because he is younger. He's naive. You know, he's, well, let's read on. Listen to this dream which I've had. Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field.

[33 : 01] All of us were together. Binding sheaves. Harvest. And lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect.

Stood straight up tall. And behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf. And I could just see these brothers looking at each other.

Can you believe this twerp? Can you believe this spoiled brat? Can you believe what daddy's favorite is saying? His brothers said in verse 8, Are you actually going to reign over us?

Or are you really going to rule over us? So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Hmm. Now he had still another dream. It's going to get worse. And he related it to his brothers and said, Lo, I have had still another dream.

[34 : 15] And behold, the sun and the moon and 11 stars were bowing down to me.

Now Joseph doesn't have a clue what this is all about. He has no idea why he's dreaming this at all. Actually, it is a dream that is engineered of God. But Joseph doesn't know that. And just out of dumb innocence, he's probably excited about it.

And it had this really strange dream. Can't wait to tell my brothers about it. Well, they're not all that eager to hear it. He related it to his father and to his brothers.

And his father rebuked him and said, what is this dream that you've had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground? Knock it off, Joseph.

This isn't helping anything. I can just hear him chewing him out. And his brothers were jealous of him. But his father kept the saying in mind.

[35 : 18] You know what that means? That means that old dad rebuked Joseph outwardly. Maybe to keep more peace among the other kids. But all the while he's thinking to himself, hmm, that's strange.

I wonder what's really involved there. What is this dream all about? So, if you want to know, you'll have to come back with me to the last book of the Bible.

And that's in Revelation chapter 12. Fascinating, fascinating account. Revelation chapter 12.

John the Revelator is on the Isle of Patmos. As far as we know, he is the only remaining apostle alive of the 12 that Jesus chose.

Virtually all of the others have died a violent death. Peter may have been one of the last to go. Tradition says that Peter was going to be crucified.

[36 : 31] And he requested that he was not worthy to be crucified as his Lord. Would you please be kind enough to crucify me? Upside down. And the Romans accommodated him and crucified him upside down.

So, we've got this great sign appearing in heaven that John is describing.

It is a vision that is given to him. And he is simply writing what this vision unfolded. Describing it as best he can.

And what we have here in the Revelation is the end result of the things that he witnessed and is writing them. He'd been told early on, the things which thou hast seen and heard, write.

And John begins to write. As I've said, he was the oldest and the last of the apostles living there on the Isle of Patmos. And he is writing the Revelation there. And a great sign in this vision that John saw appeared in heaven.

[37 : 38] It was a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet.

And on her head, a crown of 12 stars. Just to remind you of anything.

This is Genesis 37. This is Joseph's dream. Being spelled out in this vision. And he is talking about the sun is his father.

The moon is his mother. And all of the other stars in the crown are his 11 brothers. And she was with child.

This woman is with child. And she cried out, being in labor and in pain, to give birth. Who is this woman?

[38 : 44] The woman is the nation of Israel. It's God's chosen people. That's who is representing.

That's who the woman is representing. She was with child. And she cried out, being in labor and in pain, to give birth.

This woman is Israel the nation. And that to which she is about to give birth is Yeshua.

Yeshua HaMashiach. Jesus the Messiah is going to be the birth product of Israel. In verse 3, And another sign appeared in heaven.

And behold, a great red dragon. This is none other than Satan or Lucifer. Having seven heads and ten horns.

[39 : 49] And on his heads were seven diadems. We just cannot go into the meaning of these because that would take us too far astray. Verse 4 says, And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven.

Now these stars of heaven are not literal stars. This is another place where I've told you that there are figurative language expressions in the Bible.

And these are angelic beings. And they are sometimes referred to as stars. and it simply means principal ones. Now we use this term all the time.

When you go to see a movie, you want to know who is starring. Who's starring in the movie? What does that mean?

It means who is the principal players? Who's the hero? Who's the villain? Who's... That's the star of the thing. And these angelic beings are referred to as stars in the same way that the moon and the sun are actually people.

[41 : 03] These stars are angels. And we are told in verse 4 that his tail, that is the serpent's tail, Satan's tail, swept away a third of the stars of heaven.

These were the fallen angels that Lucifer, after his fall, recruited other angels to follow him in his rebellion and they joined forces with him.

That means one-third of the angels that God had created rebelled against him under the leadership of Satan, Lucifer.

two-thirds have remained loyal. And as far as we know, and I cannot absolutely say this is the way it is, but I can't imagine what else it could be, we surmise that these fallen stars or fallen angels have become the demons.

They have become fallen angels and are demons in the same sense that we are fallen human beings and we are from our first parents and we are fallen as well.

[42 : 14] So we've got fallen angels and we've got fallen humans and what this does it establishes a huge cosmic conflict that is continuing even as we speak.

It started in Genesis and it will end here in the Revelation and in the meanwhile everything between Genesis and Revelation is the romance of redemption.

Genesis opens with paradise wonderful the garden the fruit the simplicity the beauty it's as good as God could make it and then paradise lies lost through the rebellion of our first parents and their rejection of God's authority and they forfeited the position the exalted position under which they were created where the text tells us that God gave to Adam and Eve dominion that word dominion is related to dominate it means that they were the dominators of the planet the rulers of the planet everything was under their authority and to demonstrate how they exercised authority over everything

God brought all of the animals to Adam and Adam named them and even though it is a concept that we do not fully understand it is the assignation of a name from one individual to another that demonstrates the ownership or the superiority of that which is named the Bible places a great deal of importance upon names probably a lot more than we do and the idea is that which you name you control and when the three Hebrew children I can't even remember their Hebrew names but when they were carried into Babylonian captivity and put under the authority of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon he changed their names and that was the signal that says hey boys your whole life has changed now you belong to me you are conquered and I am the conqueror and I'm going to change your names and it had a psychological emotional effect as well and their names became Shadrach

Meshach and Abednego so he changed their names God changed Jacob's name from Jacob to Israel indicating that God now has a new relationship and Jacob has a new relationship with God and that is reflected in the name change so name changes and names were very very important in the Bible in fact to as many as believed on his name to them gave he the authority to become the sons of God the word is used so many times and it is very very significant so let's continue on here in Revelation chapter 12 war in heaven gave birth to this son we have the stars and what they are representing and we are told in verse 5 that she that is

[46 : 07] Israel Israel the nation she gave birth to a son that is Yeshua Hamashiach Jesus the Messiah a male child who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron and that rod of iron is the scepter when a ruling monarch comes to the throne and we've seen pictures of Queen Elizabeth and by the way she is the longest continually reigning monarch in the history of England I can remember when I was a kid a teenager watching her coronation on television and it was quite a sight back then and if you see a picture of Queen Elizabeth she sits on her throne with her royal robes on and a crown on her head and she has this thing called a scepter that she holds across her breast and it is a rod that is about 18 inches long and it is encrusted with gorgeous jewels diamonds all kinds of expensive things and who knows what kind of value it has on it and it is put on display in the

Tower of London today so that visitors can go through there tourists can go through and you can actually see the royal jewels and the scepter that scepter is spoken of here as a rod a rod of iron and what what's the difference but you know a scepter that is beautifully inlaid encrusted with diamonds and beautiful jewels and everything is designed to be more than anything else a showpiece and it is a symbol of authority and when she goes to knight someone and introduce them to the honor of knighthood so that they will be known as sir somebody she can use the scepter and she takes the scepter and she places it on her on the shoulder of the one and she says I dubbed thee sir so and so and this is all British pomp and circumstance and nobody can do it like the

British can and that's called knighthood she's been knighted but Jesus is going to have a rod of iron what does that mean that means it isn't for looks it's for authority it's for power it's for justice a rod of iron can smash when Jesus Christ rules and reigns it will be a no nonsense reign everything on the planet will be as it ought to be and when there are items or people that are out of line they will be corrected and checked the twelve tribes will be presided over by the twelve apostles as Jesus promised and they will be exercising jurisdiction over Israel Christ himself will be ruling and reigning and David his son will be there as well so let us look at this verse 5 he will rule the nations with a rod of iron and her child which of course will be

Jesus was caught up to God and to his throne and the woman that's Israel fled into the wilderness where Israel is going to go during the tribulation period this will be south of Masada this will be in the area of southern Jordan presently known as name escapes me Petra the city there's a city of Petra there but this is a huge area that can accommodate several hundreds thousands of people and they will take refuge there the Antichrist will be seeking to destroy them but they will be providentially protected with food and water during that time and the Antichrist will simply be unable to get to them and these are the people this will be a small remnant a small remnant of Jews and by a small remnant I mean out of all of the Jewish population that will exist on the earth at that time two thirds of them are going to be eliminated

Adolf Hitler succeeded in eliminating one third of all Jews who were living during World War II he had six million Jews of the 18 million that were available put to death this time the body count is going to be even higher and the Jews that remain will be referred to as the remnant and they are going to be protected providentially for the last half of this tribulation period and they will have the most incredible Bible classes and Bible studies that the world has ever imagined and they will come to the truth of who Jesus of Nazareth really was and they will mourn and cry out to God apologizing for their ancestors rejection of Jesus and begging God to send him back and here he comes in response to the repentance and request of this group of

[51 : 53] Jews Jesus will make his second visit to the earth and as I've said this time he will not be in a good mood when Jesus comes the second time he's coming to collect on what he paid for when he was here the first time this is redemption this is the conflict this is the great contest that is going on it's cosmic and it is going on as we speak it has never ceased it has resulted in world wars high body counts conflicts betrayals deaths murders you name it that's all part of this great conflict that's going on it is taking place all over the globe right now it's taking place right here in Springfield Ohio this conflict contest between good and evil they are at loggerheads and they are incompatible in every way and what we are experiencing is the stress and the body count and the conflict and the confusion and all the heartache that goes along with it is part and parcel of this fallen world folks you understand this is how we got to where we are and this picture is telling us how it is going to end she gave birth to a son a male child who was to rule all the nations with a rod of iron and and and her and and and and that's where

Jesus is right now at the right hand of the father waiting the time when he is to return and the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God and I do believe that's Petra so that there she might be nourished she's going to be sustained miraculously sustained with food and water in the same way that when Israel came out of the land of Egypt God provided for them and protected them with the quail with the manna from heaven with the water from the rock and all the rest of it that will be a reversal and this will be the benefit thereof she had a place prepared by God so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days what's that that's half of the tribulation that's the second half of the tribulation and there was war in heaven Michael and his angels

Michael is an archangel he and Gabriel are both archangels and apparently Michael and Gabriel and Lucifer were created apparently of the same kind of rank as equals and there is now great conflict between these angelic beings his angels waging war with the dragon these are the good guys and the bad guys and the dragon and his angels waged war these are the fallen demons and they are described in numerous places but particularly in Revelation and they were not strong enough and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven that is the fallen ones were not strong enough and the great dragon Lucifer Satan was thrown down and the serpent of old who was called the devil and Satan multiple names so he is identified without any controversy the one who deceives hate man fucked in his

Think of that. That's why we live in a fallen world. It's fallen people who do fallen things.

We are all related as humanity, and we still insist on injuring and killing and maiming and destroying our own kind.

[56 : 23] And we, we are the epitome of sophistication, of technology, of know-how.

Can-do people put a man on the moon. What is going on? Don't you get the picture? Don't you see why the world is the way it is?

Don't you see why we desperately needed a Redeemer? He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come. For the accuser, Satan, of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

And they overcame him, that is, Satan, because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.

[57 : 46] Wow. That's the scene. I would close with going back to Revelation chapter 4, if you'll look just back a couple of pages. Revelation chapter 4.

And for time's sake, we must begin with verse 9. The living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne, to him who lives forever and ever.

The 24 elders, and I still do not know who these are, they will fall down before him who sits on the throne, and will worship him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou our God and our Lord, to receive glory and honor and power.

Why? Because thou didst create all things, and because of thy will, they existed and were created.

Do you see that? Because of thy will, they existed and were created. And if you come down a few verses, in the chapter 5, we have these same 24 elders in verse 8.

[59 : 07] When he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

And they sang a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book and to break its seals.

Why? Because thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

This is the wrap-up. This is the end of the great contest. The cosmic conflict will end when Satan is finally deposed and Christ rules and reign.

And the coming is actually depicted in Revelation 19, and we'll have to reserve that for another time. But I simply want to emphasize in all of this, what we're talking about is relationships.

- [60 : 24] That's what it's all about. Everything is about relationships. And if you want to spend your time on this earth, no matter how long you have, work on your relationships.
- Work on deepening and strengthening and enjoying your relationships. relationships. And the greatest relationship a human being can have is a connection with God.
- And the second greatest relationship a human being can have is a connection with another person. And despite what is going on in our culture today, let me make this clear.
- It is having a loving relationship with another person of a different sex. That's the only kind that matters.
- That's the only kind that's legitimate. God is not into same-sex marriage. I don't care what society or the sociologists are telling us.
- [61 : 35] It is for this cause. A man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. And they, husband and wife, will be one flesh.
- And out of that union comes the blessed product of that joining together in the next generation.
- And how blessed we are to have babies underfoot. Nothing like it in the world. That's the nuclear family.
- That's God's design. And that is one of the things that our nation greatly suffers from. The loss and the depreciation of the nuclear family.
- We have so many people today who are entering the marriage relationship without the benefits of marriage. And it isn't a marriage relationship at all. It's a live-in thing. And it is so easy to do because so many people doing it almost automatically ascribes the legitimacy to it.
- [62 : 46] But the end thereof is never good. So we'll reserve that for another time. And I have some things I want to share with you next week about marriage on the rock. And we'll talk about that then.
- Wish I had time for Q&A;, but I don't because I took all your time. So let us pray, shall we? Father, we recognize that there is still so very much about what has been revealed here.
- And we just don't understand nearly as well as we would like. But you've painted a clear enough picture that provides all the enlightenment that we need.
- And even as one of your beloved apostles said, seeing that these things are coming upon the earth, what manner of men and women we ought to be in all holy living and conversation.
- And our prayer today is for anyone here or anyone listening by way of radio or computer or whatever who has never really come to grips with the reality of their sin and the willingness and ability of Jesus Christ to deliver them from it.
- [63 : 55] Our prayer is that they might partake of these truths that have been shared, knowing that a simple trust and confidence placed in Jesus Christ because of what he did for us is all that is required to receive eternal life.
- We don't have to join anything. We don't have to give anything. We don't have to promise anything. There's nothing to pay because Jesus paid it all.
- I can't begin to thank you enough for this wonderful, marvelous story of redemption. We bless you and thank you again in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Amen.