

Just a quick reminder. I have published a book entitled “**Liberating the Book of Revelation, Returning to the Source of the Message.**”

Liberating the Book of Revelation is intended to help us all know what the Spirit said and how He said it. This book is focused not so much on interpreting the book of **Revelation**, that is what this podcast is for, but on accurately representing the book of **Revelation** in the manner in which the Spirit originally spoke it to John.

I encourage you to go to amazon.com and you can find the book either under the title “**Liberating the Book of Revelation, Returning to the Source of the Message**” or by my name as the author: **Stephen Villanueva**. It is available in hardback, paperback, e-book format, and the *audible* version was recently released.

EP122 Revelation 14 verse 13 P1

In our last podcast we addressed the message of the second of 3 angels who make pronouncements that seem different, but in effect are one-and-the-same message. This angel announced the death of religion in the cry, fell, fell is Babylon the Great. This message serves as a **WARNING** for all those who love their religion and who love what comes with the religion: prestige, power, control, respect, deference, money, and so on. It is also a **WARNING** to reject all the ways we measure and divide by contrasting our goodness with that of another. It is a **WARNING** to get sober and drink only the wine of wisdom.

The Dead Who Are Dying

Revelation 14:13

And I heard a voice from heaven, **now** saying, "You are commanded to write, 'Blessed the dead who are **now** dying in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes, "**now** says the Spirit, "so that they may in the **future** be caused to rest from their labors, for their deeds **now** follow with them."

This is another one of those “it is not what you think” verses. It comes on the heels of a personal **WARNING**, and it is that personal warning that sets for us our context for this **WARNING**. A casual read of these verses, especially given the common translations, does not seem like a **WARNING**, but it is! In fact, this passage is intimately tied to the idea of the **perseverance** or endurance and **faith** of the saints.

This voice from heaven is even **now** saying these things, it is even **now** giving us this **WARNING**.

Who Are the Dead?

John is commanded to write, “*Blessed the dead who are **now** dying in the Lord from now on. Yes, "**now** says the Spirit,*” **This is a very odd phrase.** How are the dead now dying? One would think it would be rendered: “Blessed are the dead who *have died* in the Lord.” But NO! It is rendered in the *present active participle*, “*Blessed the dead who are **now** dying in the Lord.*”

This command is addressing the **willingness** of the people of God to now be dying in the Lord such that they might live in Him. “Yes, **‘now says the Spirit’ ...**” Not later, but now!

Romans 8:10-15

If Christ is in you, though **the body is dead** because of sin, but the spirit life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who was raising Jesus from the dead **now** dwells in you, He who was raising Christ Jesus from the dead will also in the **future** give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who is **now** dwelling in you.

So then, brethren, we are **now** under obligation, not to the flesh, to **now** live according to the flesh — **for if you now live according to the flesh, you now must now die; but if by the Spirit you now put to death the deeds of the body, you will in the future choose to live.** For all who are **now** caused to be led by the Spirit of God, these **now** are sons of God.

Jesus said, “**I now am the way, the truth, and the life...**” The collective idea that is being presented is that if there is a part of our being that is not, through the Spirit of God, possessed by Jesus (the one who is life), then that part of our being is still spiritually dead. As such those areas in our life cannot produce anything of spiritual value, nothing at all, no matter how hard we try. A dead tree produces no fruit.

Therefore, “**if you now live according to the flesh, you now must now die.**” “Yes, **‘now says the Spirit’ ...**” The Spirit is saying that if we are part of God’s household, but still now live according to our *flesh* (regardless of how religious our *flesh* may be), we must now die, one way or the other. We essentially have two options.

- 1) Since the wages of sin is death, and the mind set on the flesh is death, if we are not choosing to be willing to die to our *flesh*, we might find that we are amongst those who in the **future** choose to drink of the wine of the wrath of God and be subject to eternal death.¹
- 2) In the alternative, we can be those who, in our now, choose to let God put to death anything within us that is blocking His rule and reign in our lives. This is the pathway to life. And this is the cry of the Spirit, “Yes, **‘now says the Spirit’ ...**”

In effect, this odd phrase is another way of expressing the **Design Point**. “*I have been caused to be crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who now live, but Christ now lives in me.*”² The pathway to dying to what is dead is a slow and quite painful process of crucifixion, or as the Psalmist described, it is like walking through the valley of the shadow of death.³ But the one sure thing about crucifixion is that it is conclusive. When an area of our life is subject to crucifixion, so-to-speak, the cross accomplishes its purpose in our lives, and it drains that area of all its power and authority in our lives. The result is that Christ gains more territory in our being, and from there He gets to live in us-and-through-us.

This sentiment is captured in Paul’s explanation of his journey of being dead and dying in the Lord.

¹ See **Romans 6:23, 8:6**

² **Galatians 2:20**

³ **Psalm 23:4**

Philippians 3:7-11

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I chose to have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I **now** choose to count all things to be loss **now** in view of the **now** surpassing value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have been caused to have suffered the loss of all things, and **now** choose to count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be caused to be found in Him, **now** not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, **now caused to be conforming to His death**; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Yes, that was one sentence, one very long sentence. But in effect, the Spirit working in Paul caused him to reevaluate everything that was dead, everything that he had once valued so much. And in so doing, Paul was willing to let the Spirit of God put to death all that was dead and needed dying. And he described the process, "**now caused to be conforming to His death.**"

With that in mind, circling back around to this issue of our **perseverance** and **faith** of the holy ones, in the remainder of this passage in **Philippians**, we are told that many will refuse to walk the path that will lead to their dying to all that is now dead. Instead, they will choose the path of apostasy.

Philippians 3:17-21

Brethren, you are **now** commanded to choose to join in following my example, and you are commanded to **now** mark {literally, take aim} those who are **now** walking according to the pattern you **now** have in us.

For many **now** walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even **now** weeping, that they **now** are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction {the Beast, whose name is "Destruction"}, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who are **now** setting their minds on earthly things.

For our citizenship **now** is in heaven, from which also we eagerly **now** choose to wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will in the **future** transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to **now** subject all things to Himself.

By the way, this passage is a perfect segue since the very next subject just happens to be the time where Christ will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, at the time of the rapture. But before we get there, let us sit on this **WARNING** and the benefits of dying to all that is now dead.

Rest

Yes, "**now** says the Spirit, "so that they may in the **future** be caused to rest from their labors, for their

deeds **now** follow with them." With "rest" being rendered in the *future passive indicative*, this points us to a future state resulting from our **now** dying to what is already dead.

This stands in stark contrast to those who have taken the mark of the Beast. "... they **now** have no rest day and night, those who are **now** worshiping the beast and his image, and whoever **now** receives the mark of his name." Followers of the Beast are tormented in this life with the absence of rest, and they will be tortured throughout all eternity never knowing the sweetness of rest.

Rest & Dying

The **Codex** speaks of our finding and experiencing *rest* for our tired, weary, and burdened souls which get so exhausted trying to navigate through this very difficult and confusing life. For most people, this idea of "rest" – something that can be experienced in the depth of our being, in our turbulent emotions and in the churning of our minds – seems to be not much more than a fairy tale, like a mirage that seems to disappear as soon as we reach for it.

Jesus said, "Come to Me, all who are now feeling weary and have been caused to being heavy-laden, and I will in the **future** give you rest. You are commanded to take My yoke upon you, and you are commanded to learn from Me, for I **now** am gentle and humble in heart, and you will in the **future** find rest for your souls. For My yoke easy and My burden is **now** light."⁴

This all sounds great, but the obvious question we should ask is why is this "rest" something that we will in the **future** find, why not right now? And was Jesus talking future, future, as in the afterlife, or future as in this rest is not something that Jesus is just going to snap His fingers and we will experience now, but it is more something that we will have to learn to experience?

The answer is found in the connection "rest" has to the prior statement, "Blessed the dead who are **now** dying in the Lord from now on!" The Spirit intentionally linked these phrases so we can come to understand their connection. Jesus wants us to know and experience this "rest" in this life, but in effect, it will be experienced in proportion to our dying to what is dead. Perhaps this is the reason that this promise of rest in the depth of our emotional and mental construct has seemed so elusive, like nothing more than a fairy tale. We have not understood this requirement to be dying to that which is dead.

Come – Take - Learn

So, let's break this down. Jesus said, "come," "take," and "learn." These are the precursors to our finding this ever so elusive state of "rest."

COME

Come to Him. Remember, **the source matters, the source is everything!** For a big part of our lives, we come to all sorts of people and things that are not Him to navigate this life practically and emotionally. But the one "not Him" that we depend upon the most in trying to navigate this life is the "ME".

We have all learned to trust in our own wisdom and in our own ability to protect and provide for ourselves, which has only resulted in all manner of dysfunctional coping mechanisms as we grasp to control what is happening in our lives. In this regard, we exalt the **ME** to a place that **Yahweh** wants, a

⁴ **Matthew 11:28-30**

place that **Yahweh** demands, a place that **Yahweh** deserves.

Oddly enough, it is a place that He will not force us to surrender to Him. He wants us to be *willing* to let Him have that place, to let Him put the **ME** to death so that He alone might live in-and-through our lives, so that we might find *rest*.

Our Blasphemous Names

What we do is not much different than the Beast, whose horns are covered with blasphemous names which ascribe to himself the attributes of **Yahweh**. We too have born (and even now may bear) all these blasphemous names. Thus, we come to the **ME** to be our source of all that we need all of the time.

For illustration, since the name “**Yahweh**” is rooted in the “*Hiyah*” – the name “**I AM**,” which speaks of existence and completeness, we will utilize the **I AM** to understand that **the source matters, the source is everything!**

Yahweh Adonai. I AM the Lord, the despot, the absolute ruler of my life and I get to determine what I do and when I do it, and no one is going to tell me differently. My choices may have hurt me, but they are my choices and not yours or that of anyone else. In the same manner, my success is due to my hard work, my intellect, my creativity, my cleverness, my wisdom, my focus, and my good choices. I do it and I have done it, and I will continue to make it happen for me.

Yahweh Nissi. I AM my shelter, my place of refuge, my banner, and my rallying place. When people and circumstances have been terrible to me and are overwhelming me, I look within. I run within, and I gather myself together to figure out how I will get through this situation and what I am to do. I center myself, and I listen to that still small voice within that I have trusted all my life. To me this voice is like a colorful banner flying in the clear blue sky. As a result, I have learned to trust myself, comfort myself, and given some time, I will gather my wits so I can get back out there, one-way-or-another and do life.

Yahweh Raah. I AM my own shepherd, my own guide. I may look to others to help so I can glean from them some wisdom and learn from their experiences, but I will figure out my own way. After all, I am my own ruler of my life, and I will make my choices and guide myself through the very difficult decisions of this life. I have the wisdom within, and if I just listen to myself and not let others distract and deceive me, I will know what to do and where to go.

Yahweh Rapha. I AM my healer. I have learned how to soothe myself when I am hurt by others, and I lean on my expertise knowing how to make myself ok. I have even utilized all manner of techniques, from meditation to counseling as well as other therapies to help me heal from all my wounds. I have put up boundaries in my life (and learning how to do that all the time), but when it is all said and done, my healing is up to me and the power of my mind and the strength of my intention.

Yahweh Shammah. I AM there for me always. That is the one thing I can count on. People let me down, betray me, disappoint me, and fail me, but when it all is said and done, I am there. I am the one I can count on.

Yahweh Tsidkenu. I AM my righteousness—in effect, my own standard for goodness. Unlike the standard of God, I consider my good intentions in all things. Though I may not always handle myself correctly, if I intended to do good, then I know that I am still essentially a good person at heart, and I believe people should recognize that in me. I have learned that I can be good for God by not sinning, by disciplining myself, by being accountable for my sin, by serving God, serving the church, and being a

witness to others, never putting the name of Christ or the Church in a bad light by what I do. In that light, I can be good for others, I can give them a disciplined, and loving example for them to follow, so they too might be good like me.

Yahweh Mekoddishkem. I AM the one responsible to set myself apart from the world and from my sinful *flesh*, I AM the one who makes myself holy in all my behavior because God commanded me to be holy because He is holy. Though I am not yet perfect, I know I cannot do it entirely on my own. Therefore, the Spirit helps me in those areas where I am weak, and together we become more and more holy, more and more disciplined, more and more set apart for God.

Yahweh Qanna. I AM jealous for me. I am very weary of how others use me and take advantage of me, my time, and my resources. Therefore, I have my guard up and my weapons always ready, because if I do not care for myself, no one else will. I will fight for me, for my rights, for my ways, for my intentions, for my way of seeing things, for my voice, for **ME**, for **ME**, for **ME**. I will love me, even if no one else does.

Yahweh Jireh. I AM my provider. I have learned that nothing in this life is secure, nothing can be truly counted on but **ME**. Therefore, I will take care of and provide for **ME**. This is **MY** job. These are **MY** kids. This is **MY** spouse. This is **MY** home. This is **MY** money. These are **MY** friends. These are **MY** things. This is **MY** ministry. This is **MY** food. This is **MY** dog. I have provided for **ME** by my hard work and good efforts, and it is up to **ME** to continue to provide. And when God bless me, I know it is **MY** efforts that have pleased Him, and that I therefore am doing it right.

Yahweh Shalom. I AM the source of my peace and my rest. I am learning to no longer have that inner turmoil, conflict, and anxiety simply by just accepting myself for who I am, truly loving myself. When I stop trying to be what others want me to be, or even what God wants me to be, I can have peace in my soul by just being and accepting me for who I know I am right at this moment. I may be and likely will be different down the road, but what matters is this moment, what matters is now. And in this now, I am amazing, I am capable, I am secure, I am safe, I am smart, I am wise, I am a good person, I am worth being loved, and I love myself.

Yahweh Yasha. I AM my own Savior. I have been able to get myself out of so many situations and troubles that I have amazed myself. I am getting pretty good at it. I have also learned that with the right amount of training, discipline, and focus, I can overcome my weaknesses and all the various dysfunctional coping mechanisms I have adopted. I can overcome! I am an overcomer. I can also continue to do good and be good and make sure that my goodness outweighs my sin and my failures, so that way even God will want to bless me. I can do it.

Yahweh Sabaoth (the Lord of Heaven's armies), This might be the only name that most of us have not blasphemously tried to bear, though some have. There are people who try to command the spirits and the angels to do their bidding.

Come to Him.

When Jesus commands us to come to Him, He wants us to come because we realize that **the source matters the source is everything! "... FOR APART FROM HIM WE CAN DO NOTHING!**⁵

Jesus is **Yahweh**, He is the **I AM**, the **Hiyah**. Therefore, in this command, Jesus wants us to no longer

⁵ *John 15:5*

come to the **ME** to be our resource for *any* aspect of our lives. Rather, He wants us to come to Him to be all that we need, all the time.

This is how we take **Step-2** and become like a little child who is abjectly needy for **Yahweh**, without any area of exception. This is the process by which our entry into the heavenly kingdom is secured.⁶

Because we have spent so many years of our life trusting the **ME**, most of us find it hard to come to Jesus lock, stock, and barrel (with everything). We come to Him looking for something, needing something, and He gently brings us into His Household. And there, in this place of protection and safety, we are given opportunity after opportunity to learn **WHY** we should come to Him and **HOW** to come to Him in all the other areas of our lives in which we have been trusting the **ME** and trusting ourselves as our own I AM.

Take

Jesus commands us to take upon ourselves His yoke. This yoke is not forced upon us, but it is offered to us. Many people come to Jesus, having said the proverbial “sinner’s prayer” seeking their escape from the fires of hell, but never choose to take upon themselves His yoke. And that is a problem, a serious problem.

A yoke is an instrument of control. It is a contraption (usually a wooden beam) that goes over the neck of an animal (or a pair of animals) with reins that a farmer would hold to guide the animal in the right direction and to help the animal pull the load, for instance a plow to furrow the ground. If you remember, we discussed this crossbeam, this yoke, in **Revelation 6:5-6**, when we addressed the opening of the third seal and the image of the rider in black who was holding a crossbeam, a yoke, in his hands.

It should be obvious why this yoke is not taken by too many. After years and years of being yoked to the **ME** and holding our own reins, we simply do not want to be controlled by someone else. It may be nice to not have to carry such a big load; therefore, we often feign compliance in an attempt to get what we want. But when it is all said and done, we really do not want to be controlled.

Encouraging us to take His yoke upon our lives, to let Him control us, the Spirit said:

Psalm 32:9-10

Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control. Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unending love surrounds those who **trust Yahweh**.

Our **willingness** to be yoked to Jesus, to be controlled by Him, is our exercise of faith. It is our active belief, our decision in the now to trust **Yahweh**. This only occurs when we come to realize that **the source matters, the source is everything!** “... **FOR WITHOUT HIM WE CAN DO NOTHING.**”

Though He commands us to take His yoke as a manner or as our way of life (rendered in the *aorist active imperative*), He will never force us to take His yoke, He will never force us to do His will or to be under His absolute control. This is something to which we must agree, hence, the verb “*take*.”

⁶ See **Matthew 18:3**

Learn

Next Jesus commands us to learn from Him. There are two preferred ways we can learn and one not so fun way to learn. We can learn by example, we can learn by instruction, and, in the not so fun way, we can learn by experience.

Example

The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the **Codex** to document how **Yahweh** has interacted with humanity. This would include His interactions with Adam and Eve down to the things Jesus said and did. There are so many examples in the **Codex** of who God is, what He does, how He relates to all of His creation, as well as the examples of real people and how they too interacted with **Yahweh**, both for the good and the bad.

The Spirit even provided us a list of people who lived by faith, heroes of faith, whose lives we can study as both an encouragement but also as an instruction tool to understand what they had to face, how they viewed their circumstances in the light of how they viewed **Yahweh**, how they responded, and how they moved forward through this life.

This list includes the likes of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, and so many more of whom the world was not worthy.⁷

Instruction

We can also learn through instruction, by taking the word of God into our minds, into our hearts, and with it at the forefront of our consideration, asking the Spirit to let the living and active word of God teach us **WHY** we can trust control of our lives to Jesus. The Spirit explains the process this way:

Hebrews 4:12-13

For the word of God is **now** living and active {literally, “powerful”} and sharper than any two-edged sword, even **now** choosing to be piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there **now** is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are *open/throttled* and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

The word translated as “*open*” comes from the word where we get “trachea” and it literally means to seize someone by the throat or neck to expose their gullet for slicing their throat open, hence the comparison of the word of God to a sharp two-edged sword (a “*machaira*” – a smaller weapon for up close and personal battle).

Oh, and by the way, this passage comes on the heels of some intense instruction as to why we do not want to miss out on the promise of *rest* simply because of our ludicrous “unbelief.”

Since the word of God is now living and active, if we expose ourselves to it, the knife will cut us where

⁷ See **Hebrews 11**

we are most vulnerable. It will pierce the depth of our being and discern what is really going on inside of us. We may live in a lot of delusion and denial, but the word of God is able to separate and divide between what is real and what is a lie.

The word of God, therefore, is a very effective means of instruction. It exposes all things to the opportunity for slaying (for the slicing of the throat), for dying to that which is dead.

Experience

The worst way to learn, but probably the **MOST** effective, is by experience. Many of us have studied the examples of great men and women of faith, and we have constantly read and studied the word of God, but we have stubbornly refused to agree that it is safe to trust ourselves to be controlled by Jesus. We may not like what He has done in the lives of others, we may want nothing to do with that sort of drama. We have not liked the path that we have walked heretofore, and He makes no guarantees that the path forward will be any easier. In fact, He promises it will be filled with troubles and difficulties, suffering and persecution. So, we default to what we know best, the way of the **ME**.

At least with the **ME**, we are familiar with the pain that is caused by relying on the **ME**, and we have survived it so far (so our delusion tells us), and so we go with what we know, with what we believe is certain, and with what we are convinced is far safer than surrendering control of our lives to **Yahweh**.

After all, **Yahweh** seems to be very interested in the knife (the two-edged sword), as well as the fire. Who in their right mind voluntarily runs toward a sword or is willing to leap into the fire, much less pay **Yahweh** for the fire, as we will find out, He instructs the church at Laodicea.

But despite all our rancor, when we agreed to enter the Household of God, we agreed (whether we realized it or not, whether we read the fine print or not), that it is His job to teach us **WHY** we can find safety under His control and **HOW** to find safety under His control. Therefore, He teaches us the inane futility of continually relying on the **ME** to be our I AM. And being jealous for us **Yahweh Qanna** will do whatever it takes to get us to agree that **Yahweh Mekoddishkem** can set us apart for the purposes of **Yahweh Adonai** only.

To whatever extent, we all must learn through experience as our human hostility for God captured in the nature of the *flesh*, will simply not naturally believe. Some things, ok yea, we can believe though leaning by example and instruction, but due to the imbedded hostility and hatred of our *flesh*, most of us still MUST learn to believe by experience.

Oddly, one of the first things we need to come to believe and understand at the depth of our being is that everyone of us hates God and is furious at God, whether we want to admit or not, because that is the nature of the *flesh*. Until we can understand the depth of its hostility, we will have a very hard time letting go of its control over our lives.

As the Spirit says, no one is **now** seeking for God, all have turned aside. Our throats have been caused to being an open grave (filled with death), with our tongues we keep deceiving, and the poison of asps is under our lips (by the way, serpents are a picture of the demonic). Our mouths are **now** full of cursing and bitterness (which can also be translated as anger, hostility, or resentment).⁸

In short, learning by experience is extremely effective, but it is rarely fun. It is far better to be **willing**

⁸ See **Romans 3:10-18**

to let the Spirit teach us by example and instruction. And if we are struggling with being willing, ask the Spirit to do what is necessary to help us become willing. He even carries that responsibility, *“For it **now** is God who is **now** working in you both to **now** will and to **now** work for His good pleasure.”*⁹

Let’s stop here and in our next podcast we will pick up with the “Why of it All” – why it is a good idea to be yoked to Him, and to let Him put His burden on our lives. After all, He says that He is **now** gentle and humble in heart, He promises that His burden is **now** light, and that we will in the **future** find rest for our souls.

I am glad you “tuned in” and have been “ready to listen.”

⁹ *Philippians 2:13*