

In our last podcast, we discussed the implications of Jesus being the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. It established, without question, that He is the **Adonai** of all things all the time, and everything outside of time. We also explored the requirement to now be washing our robes. We may have once washed them, but we need to keep washing them in the blood of the Lamb, this ensures that we remain dependent upon Jesus for His righteousness, His goodness. Those who are now washing are deemed to be blessed because they will in the future get the right to access the tree of life and they may enter the city.

Let's continue in **Revelation 22**.

## EP198 Revelation 22:14-16

### Revelation 22:14

Blessed those who are **now** washing their robes, so that they, in the future, will choose to have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

### Side Note: The Right to the Tree of Life

The tree of life was first addressed in connection with the church at Ephesus and a promise Jesus made:

### Revelation 2:7

He who has is **now** having an ear, is commanded to let him hear what the Spirit **now** says to the churches. To him who is **now** overcoming, I will in the future grant to eat of the tree of life which **now** is in the Paradise of God.

Earlier in this chapter we discovered that tree of life was in the midst of the city (the wife of Christ) and was found on either side of the river of living water. The entire scene was a description of **ETERNITY NOW** that will extend into our **ETERNITY THEN**. As we discovered, the tree of life is even **now** bearing twelve kinds of fruit and is even **now** yielding its fruit every month.

### A Return to Eden?

There have been many Bible teachers who have made this picture of the tree of life about God's plan to restore the garden, a return to Eden. But that is not entirely accurate, the issue here is not Eden, it is not the garden, but it is the very source of life, the tree of life, or Jesus Himself, the one who is life. The garden is not even mentioned.

In His promise to those who are now overcoming, Jesus mentions that the tree of life is now in the Paradise of God. This mention of "*paradise*" might be an allusion to the garden, but He did not expand on this idea. The point is not about some epic return to Eden, but the fact that the tree of life, which grows on both sides of the river that bisects the holy city, is situated in and amongst the bride of Christ (comprised of both Jews and Gentiles). And the tree of life is there for a purpose, for the therapy of the nations, for the people that are permitted to "*enter*" the holy city, or to be more specific, for those permitted to be in relationship with those who are the **Called and Chosen and Faithful**, those who are

now overcoming. This is a picture of **ETERNITY NOW** that will extend into **ETERNITY THEN**.

As we discovered, in the **Codex**, there is no direct reference to who or what is the tree of life, but there is an indirect reference. Jesus claimed to be the way, the truth, and the **life** and that those who would eat of Him would live forever.<sup>1</sup> In effect Jesus, the Son of God, is the tree that bears the fruit. Jesus is the source of life, for He is life.<sup>2</sup> As He said, *"I am the resurrection and the **life**; he who is **now** believing in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and is **now** believing in Me will never die."*<sup>3</sup> Thus, we can conclude that the Tree of Life is **Code**, or a metaphor, depicting Jesus.

The point we need to hold to is that the outcome for those who are now washing their robes is that they will, as a matter of fact, dig down deep in their soul and choose to have the right to the tree of life. It is the same idea as what the Spirit expressed about the 144,000, *"These are **now** the ones who are **now** choosing to be coming out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."*

This act of now washing in the blood of the Lamb is how they are even now choosing to have nothing to do with the great tribulation. It is how they are sealing that decision to have the right and authority to the tree of life, to eat of its fruit as a matter of lifestyle. In other words, it is how they choose to be among the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** of God—those who will be rescued from the time of the great tribulation.

## ***The 7<sup>th</sup> Blessing***

*"Blessed those who are **now** washing their robes"* is the 7th beatitude or 7<sup>th</sup> statement of those who are "blessed," found in the book of **Revelation**. It brings a beautiful completion (represented by the number seven) to all the blessings in this book. Let's quickly run through the other 6 statements regarding those who are blessed:

### ***Revelation 1:3***

Blessed is he who is **now** reading and those who are **now** hearing the words of the prophecy and are **now** keeping the things which have been caused to be written in it; for the time is near.

### ***Revelation 14:13***

... blessed are the dead who are **now** dying in the Lord from now on! Yes, **now** says the Spirit, so that they will in the **future** be caused to rest from their labors, for their deeds **now** follow with them.

### ***Revelation 16:15***

Behold, I **now** choose to come like a thief. Blessed is the one who is **now** staying awake and is now

<sup>1</sup> See **John 14:6**

<sup>2</sup> See **1 John 5:20**

<sup>3</sup> **John 11:25-26**. Note: "believes" is rendered in the *present active participle*

keeping his clothes, so that he may not **now** walk about naked, and men may not **now** see his shame.

#### ***Revelation 19:9***

... blessed are those who have been caused to being invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he **now** says to me, "These **now** are true words of God."

#### ***Revelation 20:6***

Blessed and holy is the one who is **now** having a part in the resurrection the first; over these the second death now has no power, but they will in the future choose to be priests of God and of Christ and will in the future reign with Him for a thousand years.

#### ***Revelation 22:7***

And behold, I now choose to come quickly. Blessed is he who is **now** keeping the words of the prophecy of this book."

These are the descriptions of those who are blessed of God. They are the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** of God, those who are His bondservants, His wife, the holy city, and the New Jerusalem. The point the Spirit is making is that those who want to be blessed need to now and continually be: hearing, heeding, dying, resting, staying alert and properly clothed (without shame), being part of the wedding celebration with Jesus, being part of the resurrection the first —the rapture—having conquered the Second Death, being a priest of God, a ruler of the nations, heeding all the words of the book, and washing their robes continually in the blood of the Lamb. Don't forget these truths; they are indeed blessings that God wants us to own and fully experience in our **ETERNITY NOW**.

## **Those Outside of the Holy City**

#### ***Revelation 22:15***

Outside the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who is **now** loving and **now** practicing the lie.

In contrast to those who enter the collective of true believers, the holy city, and have a right to the tree of life, there are those who simply do not and will not have a place. They are relegated **outside**. We will discover that this is a statement on **ETERNITY NOW**, the allusion of which extends to **ETERNITY THEN**. Unlike the Righteous who get to, even **now**, enter this collection of bondservants and experience Jesus, there are those who are excluded by God and they remain outside.

## Dogs

It is not clear why “dogs” get a bad rap. Dogs are awesome and are a treasured blessing and a great source of comfort and companionship. It is likely that the Greek word translated as dog should have been cat, and the rendering as “dog” must be a translation error. Ok, all kidding aside. Those who lived in the first century and before must not have experienced the same type of relationship with dogs that we tend to have in our day-and-age, and so the idea of a dog became part of the **Code**, and it is a metaphor used across the **Codex**.

For example, there is the famous prophecy depicting the crucifixion of the Messiah in **Psalms 22:16, 20**: *“For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.” “Deliver my soul from the sword, My only life from the power of the dog.”* This is likely a layered passage addressing both the violent and hateful men who surrounded Jesus (the “dogs” plural) and the demonic spirit who was motivating it all (the “dog” singular).

Elsewhere in the **Codex**, there is an allusion to “dog” like behavior that is referenced in the letter to the **Galatians**, *“But if you **now** bite and **now** devour one another, you are commanded to **now** take care that you may not be caused to possibly be caused to be consumed by one another.”*<sup>4</sup> And in writing to the Philippians, the Spirit warns, *“You are commanded to **now** beware of the dogs, you are commanded to **now** beware of the evil workers, you are commanded to **now** beware of the false circumcision.”*<sup>5</sup> And very early on in the **Codex**, dogs are even used as a metaphor for male cultic prostitutes.<sup>6</sup> Go figure.

In general, this imagery of “dogs” references those who are unclean, dangerous, destructive, and evil doers within the household of God and it is likely a layered picture that includes the demonic influences affecting those people. Perhaps these are those apostates whom **Jude** talked about: *“ungodly people who are **now** turning the grace of God into licentiousness.” “Grumblers, finding fault, **now** choosing to be following after their own lusts; they **now** speak arrogantly, **now** flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.” “These are **now** the ones who are **now** causing divisions, are worldly people, and **now** not having the Spirit.”*<sup>7</sup>

## Sorcerers, Immoral Persons, Murderers & Idolaters

Next, we get a string of nouns. Being nouns they are not so much describing what someone does but who they are, and therefore how they exist.

**Sorcerers** The word translated as “**sorcerers**” comes from the Greek word “*pharmakos*” from where we get our word “pharmacy.” It literally means a druggist, one who makes and sells drugs. In the biblical context, drug use was most often connected with forms of witchcraft, magical arts, and the concocting of spells or potions to create a bridge or a connection to the demonic, to entities, powers, or dominions in the spiritual realms. So, beyond what they do, sorcery, it is who they are. They are those who facilitate the physical and spiritual bondage and the domination of others through their craft.

**Immoral Persons** comes from the Greek word “ *pornos*” – which is translated into our day-and-age as pornographers, which would include those who are given over to sexuality as a lifestyle, as a business, as

<sup>4</sup> **Galatians 5:15**

<sup>5</sup> **Philippians 3:2**

<sup>6</sup> **Deuteronomy 23:17-18**

<sup>7</sup> **Jude 4, 16, 19**

an existence. Sexuality defines their personhood.

**Murderers** comes from the Greek word “*phoneus*” which carries with it the concept of intentional homicide. Murdering others defines their existence.

**Idolaters** (like murderers) means exactly what it says, those who worship idols, which would include the idolatry of the **ME** (the hedonistic obsession with humanism, including personal goodness) and all that is associated with the **Woman Who Rides the Beast** and her form of religious apostasy.

People whose very personhood are defined by these descriptors will be **outside** and not allowed into the holy city. Stepping back, this list seems obvious, even though in our day-and-age we have been numbed to some of these lifestyles for they have become ingrained in our society. But the next description once again makes this personal in terms of the household of God and those who love their goodness.

### **Practice the Lie**

“... and everyone who is **now** loving and **now** practicing the lie.” Both “loves” and “practices”, are rendered in the *present active participle*, and “lying” (as it is rendered in most translations) is a **noun** and not a verb. It is also singular, hence, **the lie**.

This is somewhat of a recapitulation of **Revelation 21:8** which said, “*But for the cowardly and unbelieving and those caused to being abominable and murderers and immoral and sorcerers and idolaters and all the liars, the part theirs in the lake that is **now** caused to be burning with fire and brimstone, which **now** is the second death.*”

When we studied this passage, we talked about the liars – those who know the truth, but they refuse to live according to the truth. They live as if there is some other truth, even though they know differently. They live a lie. These people were highlighted all throughout **Jude**, which we studied as a prelude to **Revelation**.

Whether blatantly or tacitly (by their love for religion or the love of self—the idolatry of the **ME**), they are liars because they deny that Jesus is **Yahweh Adonai** even though they know the truth. Some believe they can be their own **I AM** and Jesus can perhaps fill in as their **I AM** where they fail. They have even twisted the idea of grace to fit this so-called gap of mercy where God helps us when we come to the end of our own ability. Still others just turn away even though they know the truth, for the cost is too high. They do not want to die to live, so they choose to abide in this world as liars. Therefore, He will not let them be His disciples.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the indisputable fact that **Only God is Good**, they stay so very busy trying so very hard to be good for God, honestly believing that their good intentions and many good results should be impressive to God.

This statement is another stab at the **Called**, and the **Called and Chosen** who never make the decision to become the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** of God. They have seen Him work, they have experienced His power and His glory, they have tasted of the joys of eternal life, they have been converted or “born-again,” but they never make the subsequent decision to live like a little tiny child who is dependent upon

<sup>8</sup> **Matthew 10:37-39; Luke 14:26-27. See also Hebrews 6:4-8, 10:26-31, 35-38; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; Romans 1:18-22, 28-32**

their Father for all things all the time.<sup>9</sup> They may have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb, but a while back they stopped altogether washing them white.

They are those who are now loving and now practicing the lie that somehow, with enough effort and sincerity, they can be good enough for God through all their attempts to be like God. Keep in mind, some think they need to be good to inherit salvation and still others think they need to be good to inherit the blessings of God; therefore, they engage in a life-long (beyond tiring) battle with sin.

They are found in the temple of God (the “*hieron*”) so busy serving God, ministering to the masses, and even interceding on behalf of others, just like all good priests do, but they are not found to be now worshipping in the Sanctuary (the “*naos*”) of God.

As hard as it may be, we must **NEVER** forget that **Jude** and **Revelation** targets those within the visible church with a message which separates those who stand only on the goodness of God from those who are trying extremely hard to be good for God. It is a message to those who abide in the household of God—those who must choose if they will live in **unrestrained freedom** as a son of God or as a slave to the law, whether that is the law, my law, your law, or any law from wherever it is sourced.

Like those who exists as dogs, sorcerers, immoral persons, murderers, and idolaters, those who are now loving and practicing the lie will abide forever in the **Lake of Fire**, outside of the city, as their destiny is the **Second Death**.

## I Jesus: For the Churches

### **Revelation 22:16**

I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I **now** am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.

Sometimes it has been hard to know who was talking throughout this book, but there is no mistaking this statement; Jesus owns it. And except for the few times that Jesus intervenes and speaks for Himself, most of this message has been delivered to John via an angel. As it says in **Revelation 1:1**, “*He was sending and communicating by His angel to His bondservant, John.*”

This angel speaks upon the authority of Jesus; thus, all he has said and shown John is true and worthy of our trust.

In **Revelation 1:1**, we were also told the revelation about Jesus Christ was given by God and its target audience is the bondservants of Jesus Christ, so that they might know the things which now must soon choose to take place. John in turn targets the message to the seven churches that are in Asia. The point is that this letter was not written to unbelievers, but to those in the Household of God and it serves as a huge, gigantic **WARNING**.

Here, at the end of this letter, Jesus confirms, “*I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches.*” This point is critical and drives a stake into the heart of some very bad theology. The

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<sup>9</sup> See **Matthew 18:3-4**

revelation was to educate the bondservants of Jesus Christ, but it was a message that was broadly sent to the churches.

## Fiction Alert

### FICTION ALERT

Throughout this study, we have spent a significant amount time discussing the pre-tribulation rapture **fiction**. Circling back around to this topic, let us reason together for a moment. If everyone who ever said the “sinner’s prayer” has a golden ticket to heaven and is supposed to be raptured before any of the events depicted in this book transpire, then what is the point of this book, for none of it outside of **Revelation 1-3** would apply to them. And even then, the **WARNINGS** in the letters to the churches would be negated if everyone was already guaranteed to be raptured because they said the magic prayer, as is so often explained in evangelical Christian circles.

### *The Restrainer*

Let’s look at the pre-tribulation **fiction** considering this letter is a message to the churches. A key aspect of the pre-tribulation **fiction** is the belief that the one who is even now restraining the man of lawlessness is the person of the Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup> The teachers of this lie claim that He (the Holy Spirit) will be taken out of the way, therefore the Holy Spirit’s work in and through the church will at that point be completed. As we learned, they believe this occurs in the narrative right after **Revelation 3** at the beginning of **Revelation 4**.

That **fiction** stands in stark contradiction to what we discover in the book. We know the 144,000, addressed in **Revelation 7**, that great multitude which no one could count from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues give testimony for Jesus Christ. And the **Codex** is clear, one cannot give testimony to Jesus absent the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup> Besides, they are those who even **now** cry out with a loud voice **now** saying, “*Salvation to our God who chooses to now be sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb.*”<sup>12</sup> Being rendered in the *present active participle*, this speaks of a present reality, not a depiction of future events.

These are the ones, we are told, who are **now** following the Lamb wherever He **now** goes. These have been purchased from among men as **first fruits** to God and to the Lamb.<sup>13</sup> Further, they are those who choose to **now** be coming out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>14</sup>

With all these statements being rendered in the *present* tense, we know this is not talking about some group that lives only after the rapture. This is dealing with the Spirit’s present work in the church, in our now.

<sup>10</sup> **2 Thessalonians 2:7**

<sup>11</sup> **1 John 4:1-3**

<sup>12</sup> **Revelation 7:10**

<sup>13</sup> **Revelation 14:4**

<sup>14</sup> **Revelation 7:14**

Not having a solid work around for these scriptures which address a collection of believers who have the Holy Spirit (which, by definition, is the church), these teachers of religious licentiousness modify their position to say that the *restrainer* refers not to the person of the Holy Spirit, but to the Holy Spirit's role in the church, stating that He is not completely removed from the earth, evidenced by His role with the 144,000, these so called "tribulation saints."

This position, however, is another spin of their religious licentiousness and it cannot in any way be supported contextually nor through any other passage in the **Codex**. It is a compromise that inserts a made-up understanding to support their presupposition that the church is raptured prior to the totality of events depicted in **Revelation 4-22**. It is all nothing but *fiction* that is built on *fiction*.

Besides, we are told that because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the Word of God, the 144,000 (also referred to as the 2 witnesses) were killed but came to life, and that they have a part in **the resurrection the first** (which is the rapture, as there is no other "first" resurrection mentioned in the **Codex**). As the Spirit says,

*"Blessed and holy the one who is **now** having a part in the resurrection the first; over these the second death **now** has no power, but they will in the **future** choose to be priests of God and of Christ and will in the **future** reign with Him for a thousand years."*<sup>15</sup>

But if they missed the rapture, how is it that they have a part in the resurrection the first? Well, it does not stop there. Some teachers get so carried away with their religious licentiousness and preach that "the resurrection the first" happens in stages such that the church is raptured at the end of chapter 3 and then the tribulation saints are raptured much later, but it is all still part of the "first" resurrection. It is literally insane how they just make up *fiction* after *fiction* after *fiction* to force their narrative and completely ignore the **Code** and any rational process for interpreting the **Codex**.

Perhaps that it is because of these *fictions* that the Spirit intentionally used the definite article "*the*" on either side of "*resurrection*," hence, "*the resurrection the first*." He did not want us to be confused and buy into the lies and distortions proffered by those who love their licentiousness.

Besides, there are different Greek words that we translate into English as "first." The word used in **Revelation 20:6** is "*protos*" which means first in time or place, and it is rendered as a *singular* adjective and not plural. So, there **CANNOT** be a multiple of firsts, there must be just one first: "*the resurrection the first*."

As we have discussed over-and-over again, the 144,000 are true believers, the bondservants of Jesus Christ. If the "church" and the Holy Spirit's work on earth through the church is removed at the rapture, then writing a letter filled with so much instruction exhortation, correction, warning, promise, and so on **to the churches** and **for the churches** is nonsensical. **NONE of it would matter**. It would all be for someone else—those on the other side of the rapture. But this letter is addressed to the bondservants of Jesus Christ and sent out to the seven churches.<sup>16</sup>

And even then, if the Holy Spirit in its operation in the church is removed from the earth prior to the beginning of the tribulation, there would be no churches on the other side of the rapture to receive this instruction. But Jesus made it clear: "**I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the**

<sup>15</sup> **Revelation 20:6**

<sup>16</sup> **Revelation 1:1, 11**



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churches.”<sup>17</sup>

**REVELATION WAS PURPOSED FOR THE BONDSERVANTS OF JESUS CHRIST BUT  
WRITTEN AND DELIVERED TO THE CHURCHES.**

We must not lose sight of the truth that this message, with all its warnings, exhortations, instruction, and guidance is for the bondservants of Jesus Christ, that they might have hope to endure to the end. To reinforce this truth, Jesus again sends us an intense **WARNING** to not be deceived by the false light.

Let’s stop here and in our next podcast we will pick up with a look at the Root and Descendent of David, the Bright Morning Star and dive into an interesting expose on the false light, the imager of the Bright Morning Star. It is beyond fascinating, so tune in next week to learn more about the Angel of Light.

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

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<sup>17</sup> *Revelation 22:16*