

# Satan cast out

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] I think on the timetable I said I would do the millennium today. Sorry if I'm disappointing you. When I thought about it, I thought in order to do the millennium, we really ought to do this chapter first.

So the plan is, God willing, that we'll look at the millennium next time. But my introduction is... The book of Revelation says...

Excuse me, let me just put that out of the way. The book of Revelation says that the reality behind this world is a spiritual conflict, an intense spiritual conflict.

There is two sides at war. So I ask the question, does that mean that God has an enemy, an adversary?

Does that mean that human beings have an adversary? Is there a being, an evil being, that has you in his sights?

[ 1 : 0 1 ] Whoever you may be, just by being human, you have an adversary who means you harm and no good at all. Do the people of God, so specifically God's believing people, do they have an adversary?

And if so, how dangerous is this adversary? Adversary meaning enemy, opponent. What tactics does he use?

What methods does he use? Is he so powerful that he cannot be defeated? Or can he be defeated? How can he be defeated?

And of course, we had an answer, at least one answer to that in the passage, which talked about the people who overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. So certainly he can be overcome, and particular things that are mentioned by the blood of the Lamb and the word of testimony.

[ 2 : 0 5 ] In other words, what Christ has done, and the fact that people believe that, and stick to it, and testify to that, even above holding on to life itself.

And for more information, see this chapter. So let me remind you briefly of my sort of standard introduction, in case you are new to the book of Revelation.

It is the last book in the Christian Bible. It is famous for its visionary depictions. I think last time I said it was weird, but you could certainly say that about it.

It has got in it a lamb. It looks as if it has been slain. It has dragon and beasts. It has armies and battles.

It has women, a beautiful bride, and a cruel and ruthless and heartless prostitute. It has cities. It has the city of Babylon and the city of God.

[ 3 : 0 6 ] So it contains all those things. And over the whole of all these visions and multiple pictures is the throne, circled by a rainbow, and somebody sits on the throne.

The throne is not empty. There's the message of the book of Revelation. There is the Almighty who sits on the throne, and the Lamb also is on the throne.

And these are symbols. They're designed to show the reality behind everyday appearances. So apocalypse, nowadays in common English speech, it's supposed to mean the end.

That's not what it actually means. Apocalypse means the unveiling. It means revelation. It means you can see the surface of things, but let's just take the surface away and see what's really behind there.

That's what apocalypse means. That's what apocalyptic literature does. It aims to show you the reality behind the bit that you see on the surface.

[ 4 : 0 9 ] And I also talked about getting the accent of the book, so we have to listen to it a bit to get what it's saying. Like my friend from Northern Ireland, who is a minister, who talked to his

congregation about fiat, and for months I didn't know what he was talking about.

Justification by fiat, and we walk by fiat, not by sight. And then after a while they got the idea, he's saying faith, but he's just saying it with a Northern Irish accent.

Justified by faith. We walk by faith. So you have to listen for a while, and then you pick up, ah, that's what it's meaning. And as we listen to the book of Revelation, we pick up the sort of way he speaks, the sort of accent he has.

So he uses a lot of numbers. And numbers, he uses them symbolically. He's not telling us to count the number of, when he says seven churches, well there are seven churches, but he means more than that.

He's meaning, I think as we listen to him, we think that seven is the number of completeness. So it talks about the seven spirits of God before the throne.

[ 5 : 16 ] He's not telling us that there are seven spirits of God. He's saying that the whole work, and the multiple nature of the work of the spirit of God, is described in that sevenness.

And then we had 12, and 12 was the number of? Tribes and? And the disciples, yes. And so if you multiply 12 by 12, you get 144, which makes that connection get 144,000, which is connected with 12 and 12 and 1,000, and 1,000 is a big number.

Things like that. In this passage that we had read to us, we had 1,260. What did it say?

Days. Yes, okay, days. 1,260 days. Now then, anybody like to? Yeah, that's right, 360.

So in those days, a year would be taken to be 360 days. 360 plus 360 plus half of 360, 180.

[ 6 : 25 ] Three and a half years. Next time I'll use Windows and see if it does it on Windows.

Right. Three and a half years. And three and a half years is mentioned in here again, isn't it? It's in verse 14, where he says, there's a time, times, and half a time.

So a time is one, times is two, so now we've got three, and half a time, three and a half. So different ways of counting three and a half years. Three and a half years is, well, three and a half years is half of seven, so it's not complete, it's partial.

And I didn't look this up, but I'm pretty sure that three and a half years is the amount of time that, was it Elijah prayed that it wouldn't rain?

Should we check that up? I think it's in the end of James. Let's see whether it's there. I should have done my homework better, shouldn't I? End of James, James' letter, chapter 5, verse 17, says, Elijah was a man just like us, he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

[ 7 : 56 ] Again, he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops. So, three and a half years seems to be a period where, well, in this case, it didn't rain.

So, God's judgment was hanging over people, he was waiting for them to repent, and at the end of that time, Elijah prayed, and it rained.

So, there's at least one connection of three and a half, we'll find some more, I think. A period of time it didn't rain in the time of Elijah. Another thing that we discover by just listening to it is, seems pretty clear that further on in the book is not necessarily further on in time.

So, we have this control system which allows you to rewind, and he seems to go forward and then rewind, and go forward and then rewind.

So, he goes around things several times having pressed the rewind button. And chapter 6, verse 17 is an example of it where it says the day of God's wrath has come.

[ 9 : 08 ] It's the end. It's clearly not the end of the book, so he must have pressed the rewind button. We also notice that he uses symbols, and he sometimes uses them in a way you don't expect, so that's why I put the word subverts symbols.

So, from his own culture, the goddess of Rome would have been Roma. That's my depiction of Roma, and that is an actual coin with the name Roma on it there.

So, that's what Roma looked like to the people who used currency in those days. And he also uses symbols from the Bible, so he uses this symbol of locusts, and locusts in the Bible where?

Begs on Egypt, yes. So, when God is judging Egypt and indicating his wrath, but also giving them reason to change their mind and soften their hearts, instead of hardening their hearts, he sends locusts.

So, there we are. Right, let's look at the chapter that we're looking at today. So, we're in 1119, so if you've got your Bible there, please open up there.

[10:22] Chapter 1119, which is where I think the section starts, starts with God's temple in heaven, and it goes on through a number of visions, and we're just going to look at the first part of this in chapter 12.

And in this part of the vision, Satan is cast down. What I would cast down, meaning thrown down. There's a lot of throwing goes on in this chapter.

Even in verse 15, the serpent throws water out of his mouth. It says a lot of throwing, hurling, things get chucked all over the place.

So, let's first of all look at the characters. There's the child, there's the red dragon, there's the woman from whom comes the child.

Then we'll look at the action. Who goes where? The war, the casting down, the pursuit in the desert. And then thirdly, we'll try and look at the interpretation in two particular stages.

[11:27] Okay, first of all, so we get the characters, then we'll look at the plot, the action, then we'll look at the interpretation. Okay? Right, so let's first of all look at the child.

Now, who is this child? Now, we're told that, so in chapter 12, verse 2, she is pregnant, so she's about to give birth, this woman, and in verse 4, the dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.

She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter, and her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. Okay, the child, so let's think about the child, the child is born of the woman, he's going to rule the nations with a rod of iron.

That's a reference to something, what's that a reference to? Psalm 2, Psalm 2, we sang it, that's where it comes from, Messiah will rule the nations with a rod of iron, it's a reference to Psalm 2, there's a rod, it indicates the kingship of the child, yes?

Psalm 2, he's also born of the woman, and there's a reference to Genesis chapter 3, do you remember what that reference says about the seed of the woman?

[12:54] Yeah, do you want to look at it, Genesis 3, 15, this is another thing about a child born of a woman, chapter 3 verse 15 of Genesis, this, so this is the Lord back in the garden speaking to the serpent and cursing the serpent and saying in chapter 3 verse 15, I will put enmity, conflict, between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers, so it's about the seed of the woman or the offspring of the woman and the serpent or the snake and his offspring, he, this offspring of the woman will crush your head but you will strike his heel, now striking the heel is unpleasant but it's not a terminal thing but having your head squashed that kills you, so the offspring of the woman will crush the head of the serpent but the serpent will damage the offspring of the woman and it next says, going back to the revelation that he is snatched up to God and to his throne, so he's no longer on earth, he's snatched up to God and his throne, so given those descriptions who do you think the male child is referring to?

Yeah, Jesus, isn't it? That's his ascension and his enthronement and symbolically then he's talking about Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, the Son of Mary, the seed of the woman, the King, the Messiah who sits on Zion's hill, who rules all the nations.

Okay, so we've got one person in this drama, we've got who that is, okay, the child. second person in this drama we'll look at is the red dragon.

So that's the one who's seen second in chapter 12 verse 3, another sign appeared in heaven, an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.

His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them or hurled them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth so that he might devour her child.

[15:31] So this dragon, this red dragon, has seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his head.

So that's quite an impressive description. The seven meaning something about completeness of power.

I'm not sure about the ten. I'll have to think about more about that. But there's the dragon with seven, what was it, seven heads, ten horns and seven crowns on his head.

So powerful and with kingly sort of power. And this dragon has destructive power. So whatever is meant by sweeping a third of the stars out of the sky and flinging them onto earth, that surely is an expression of destructive power.

I've got some stars which we can fling down to the earth. This being has angels attending. It's there in verse seven. There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the

dragon and his angels fought back.

[16:41] So he has angels attending him and he is actually described quite fully. Verse nine, the great dragon was hurled down. The ancient serpent called the devil or Satan who leads the whole world astray.

The deceiver. He was hurled to the earth and his angels with him. So the snake, the devil, he's telling us who this person is. We don't have to guess, do we? He's the Satan, which means the adversary, the enemy, the great enemy.

He's the deceiver because he deceives, leads astray. One of the things that he, the big things that he does is blind people to the truth, to lead them off in the wrong direction, as I was saying to the boys and girls.

And he is the accuser. Now where does it say he is the accuser? It says that in verse 10. The accuser of our brothers who accuses them before our God day and night has been hurled down. So it's quite a comprehensive description of the work of the evil one. He's the enemy, he's the deceiver, and he accuses the people of God.

[18:02] And he seems to do that pretty non-stop. He accuses them, doesn't it say? Night and day. So here is the second person in the drama, the red dragon, the evil one, our enemy.

It's a good thing in battle to know your enemy, isn't it? Not to be underestimated. We're not ignorant of his devices. We're not paralysed with fear by him, but we know that every day of our lives, this being will have in mind to do us harm, to oppose the purposes of God, and to do so by deception, by temptation, by accusation, and he is a powerful enemy.

So we should not underestimate that. Jesus is greater, but we are in a powerful war situation.

Our saviour is greater. Okay, that's the red dragon in this vision. Now, let's look at the woman.

She's the first person to appear, actually. A mega sign appeared in heaven, chapter 12, verse 1, a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, a crown of 12 stars on her head.

She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. So she, too, is a formidable person, clothed with the sun, didn't attempt to draw that, the moon under her feet, and the crown of 12 stars.

[19:50] Well, I didn't do 12, but there, she's quite a person, isn't she? And I clicked too quickly. The 12 makes us think of what?

12 tribes, yes. This is a number of the people of God. God. So she's got a crown of 12 stars. 12 makes us think of the people of God.

Can you think of the place in the Bible where somebody says, I saw the sun and the moon and stars bowing down to me? Joseph. And who were the sun and the moon and the stars in that case?

Well, his family, wasn't it? His mum and dad and brothers, the tribes. So I think John is picking up on that symbolism, and he's telling us that this woman is a depiction of the people of God.

Something like that. Let's carry on without giving the game away too quickly. So she gives birth to the Messiah. She gives birth to the Messiah.

[20:55] From her comes Jesus. Yes? That's right, isn't it? her story doesn't end there.

This woman, after she is given birth to Messiah, in verse 13, the dragon pursues the woman who is given birth to the male child, and the woman, verse 14, is given two wings of a great eagle, and she is looked after in the desert.

And verse 17, the dragon was enraged at the woman, went off to make war against the rest of her offspring, so she has further multiple children. So who is she?

Well, who is she? So I suppose one answer that comes to mind would be, is she Mary? In a way, she is, because Mary was the specific mother of Jesus.

Now, Mary wasn't any old person. She was of a particular nation, wasn't she? She was of the nation of Israel, so you could say, oh dear, you could say that she was a particular example of this, but I think there must be more to it than Mary, mustn't there?

[22:20] Because the story goes on in generations after. so is it Israel? Because in the prophecy, in prophecies, the nation gives birth to Messiah, or the city of God gives birth to Messiah.

So I think we could say that there's certainly truth in that, but it's more than that. I think what we would like to say is that he is depicting here the whole church of God, Old Testament and New Testament, the people of God from whom Messiah came, and then onward the people of God who continue to be the people of God in the New Testament times.

Does that make sense? It's rather a remarkable picture to think of the whole church of God, Old Testament and New Testament, as I think what he was referring to, in these magnificent terms, crowned, clothed with the sun.

We see the church in her rather scruffy appearance here on earth, sometimes just scraping by, sometimes living by the skin of her teeth. But the church in her and the form seen here is a glorious institution.

That's how God sees the church, this glorious group of people, made glorious by his grace. So I would go with that. So we've got the three people, yes, the child, the dragon, and the woman.

[ 23 : 49 ] Let's look at the action as it takes place. So the action is that the dragon, verse 4, has swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them on earth, and the dragon stands in front of the woman who's about to give birth to devour her child the moment he's born.

So there's the dragon, he disrupts the stars, and he's poised to devour the newborn child. He would love to do that. I'm so sorry about this. Let's try unplugging it, see if that makes the slightest bit of difference.

It's poised to devour the newborn child. Do you remember what King Herod tried to do? He tried to kill all the babies, didn't he?

So I think Herod was the instrument of the dragon at that point. Now the woman, she gives birth to a son, the male child, who will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

There's the woman. She gives birth, and the child is snatched up to heaven, so he's no longer able to be got at by the dragon.

[ 25 : 13 ] He's snatched up to God and to his throne, verse five. Then the woman goes into the desert. So let's put her in the desert. Off she goes. There's the desert. And she is provided for.

Let's just look at what happens here. So it's in verse six. The woman fled into the desert to the place prepared for her by God where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

So she's looked after in the desert. desert. And that is returned to in verse 13 and 14 where she's given some wings, which I think I've come to in a moment.

But she's looked after in the desert. Let's follow the action. So the sea now turns into heaven. So I think there's a little bit of a rewind here.

Verse seven, there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough and they lost their place in heaven. So the universe in the book of Revelation is a three-decker universe.

[ 26 : 20 ] It's got heaven, earth, and under the earth. But we're just looking at heaven and earth at the moment. And we have Michael and his angels versus the dragon and his angels.

And in this conflict the dragon loses his place in heaven and is hurled down. So this is chucked, chucked down. And in heaven, verse 10, there is a loud voice, a triumphant saying, now has come the salvation, the power, and the kingdom of God and the authority of his Christ.

For the accuser of our brothers who accuses them before our God day and night has been hurled down. So there's a loud voice saying, this is great news. So there's the voice saying rejoice.

But, says the voice, not so good news for the earth. Verse 12, rejoice to you heavens and all who dwell in them, but woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has gone down to you.

He is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short. So the voice saying woe to earth. Right, let's follow the action on. What happens on earth?

[ 27 : 29 ] Verse 13, when the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. The woman was given two wings of a great eagle. So there's the, can I give her two wings?

Yes. And she's in the desert and she's cared for in the desert. It says she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, which is three and a half years, which is the same as 1260 days.

And then there's some more action. The serpent throws water, spew is the same word here as throw or hurl.

He throws water like a river to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent. So there's the, like a sort of flood. It's a little bit like the image of the flood that God sent, but this is turned round now.

This is Satan doing this. And does she get flooded? No. What happens? How is she rescued from the flood? The earth swallows up the water.

[ 28 : 38 ] Yeah, it's a strange thing to happen, isn't it? So the earth opens its mouth to swallow the water and she's safe. Yep. And the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring.

So I think we just have, he, it continues with the rest of her offspring, she's, the dragon is making war on them. And I think we're told who these people are.

It is in verse 17, those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. So I think the readers would say, I hope that's us.

I hope we are the people who obey God's commands and keep to the testimony of Jesus. Okay, so that was the action. Did you follow the action, the things that happened, like that? Okay, let's look at the interpretation then.

So let's look at this in two parts. The first part is Satan cast out. Now then, Jesus died on earth.

[ 29 : 42 ] He died on a cross on earth and he was raised from a tomb on earth. He did ascend to heaven. When Jesus did something on earth, this affected things in heaven, didn't it?

Didn't it have a heavenly effect? So what Jesus achieved on earth had a military effect in heaven.

Now we're told about this, we're told our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, authorities, powers of this dark world, spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

We're told that the things that we do on earth have repercussions and connections with heaven. It's a weird thing, isn't it? But somebody said, Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.

So there's things that we can do here on earth, which might sound rather feeble, you know, gathering in a room for a couple of hours and talking, apparently to nowhere, prayer, can have a colossal effect in heaven.

[ 30 : 55 ] So that's the nature of the Christian life and he's opening our eyes to that. Let's look at the particular thing about Satan's presence in heaven.

And the Bible invites us to think of heaven as being like, I don't know, number 10 Downing Street or the White House where the one in charge talks to people, makes decisions, gets advice, listens to advice, makes further decisions.

Heaven is the heavenly court, people sometimes talk about. The court is a place where the king lives, it's also a place where judgments are given, isn't it? Court can have those two sides to it. So heaven is God's headquarters, that's where the top decisions are made. And for example, in the book of Job, you will remember, do you remember this?

That Satan was found in heaven. Let me just read it to you. It's an interesting beginning to a book. I've now got Esther, which is not the right book, is it?

[ 32 : 11 ] One day the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. And the Lord said to Satan, where have you come from?

And Satan answered the Lord from roaming through the earth and going to and fro in it. So it's a place where God has conversations with Satan and Satan can bring up points and God can answer them and that's what seems to be happening in the book of Job.

And Satan is saying to God, have you noticed Job? He's such a hypocrite, isn't he? And they have a conversation in heaven about Job on earth. other things happen in heaven.

There's a scene in the prophet Zechariah where Joshua, who's a key figure in the kingdom at that time, is, chapter 3, verse 1, standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.

God's God's kingdom. And he's standing before the Lord and Satan is up there too and he's saying, I guess things like this, you see this Joshua?

[ 33 : 24 ] You know he prayed such a wonderful prayer the other day but when he got home he hardly prayed at all. Isn't he rubbish? Or you know the things that he promised that he would do? You know he hardly did any of them. And the things that he said he would do in such and such a way, he completely messed them up.

He's rubbish. Get rid of him God. That's what Satan does. He accuses the people of God. And he's in heaven doing that. Yes? And you might have overheard him because he talks about you like that. He talks about you like that. See that person? Call themselves a Christian? Do you hear what they said? Did you see what went on in their heart when they were thinking that Satan accuses the people of God?

And Satan in heaven is the accuser and being in heaven he has what Americans would call leverage, but perhaps we might call influence. And he's there making his point powerfully before God. You don't want to bless any of those people. Call themselves Christians. They're rubbish.

[ 34 : 34 ] Get rid of them. Forget them. Dispose of them. Delete them from your database. They're rubbish. That's Satan accusing.

He says that about me and he says that about you. And this is telling us that that facility is no longer accorded to Satan.

that something has changed in his leverage, in his ability, in his capability of making those accusations.

Now Jesus talked about his cross in this way. He says, now is the time for judgment on this world and the prince of this world will be driven out. When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to myself.

Jesus talks about his cross and he says, something is going to change when I go to the cross. Something is going to change. Now is the judgment on this world. I will show what I think of this world.

[ 35 : 41 ] But the prince of this world, he will be driven out. All the arguments that he uses will be brought to nothing.

All the leverage that he has, he'll have the ground taken from under him. Because I'm going to die on the cross and that is going to change things there. And in heaven, when Jesus has died on the cross, he goes up to heaven and we're told that we are, the Bible says that we're not to sin, that we're commanded not to sin.

But it then says, but if anyone does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense, Jesus Christ, the righteous one who made a toning sacrifice for our sins.

And there is another key person in heaven now. And when Satan says they are rubbish, they don't deserve your blessing, don't listen to their prayers, there is someone else who says, shut up, I died for those people, I shed my blood for those people, I paid in full for their sins.

Shut up, get out, you're done. And Satan is cast out. I think that's huge good news, isn't it?

[ 37 : 10 ] Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Justifies means he declares them innocent.

Okay, when Satan says, look at what this person has done, list, list, list, list, list, list, list, this is what the sort of person you're dealing with, God.

And God says, I have decided that I declare that person innocent. I know that all the things you said about this person are true, but I declare this person innocent and I do this because another person has brought argument to my throne.

it is Christ who died. It is God who justifies. Who is it that condemns? Who can overturn God's verdict in heaven?

It is Christ Jesus who died. More than that is raised to life, is at the right hand of God interceding for us. And when Satan says get rid of them, then the argument from Jesus is I died for them.

[ 38 : 18 ] How dare you accuse them? Get out of here. He is interceding for us. He is putting the case for us. And that case is so strong that no one can contradict it.

Sometimes we are not convinced, are we? Sometimes in our consciences we think, well, maybe the blood of Jesus isn't enough to cleanse from all sin. God says, oh yes it is.

Oh yes it is. You'd better believe it. If you're a believer, you'd better believe it. You're overcome by the blood of the lamb. God says to Satan, you have no right to accuse.

Get out of here. There is a story about Martin Luther, isn't there? He was a man with a lot of mental activity and he sees, doesn't he see Satan coming and writing a list of all Martin Luther's sins and Martin Luther throws the inkpot at him and says it's all paid for by the blood of Jesus.

No, we need that, don't we? We need that. We need robustly to realize that our standing with God is not based on who we have been, who we are, what we have done, what we have not done.

[ 39 : 45 ] Our standing with God and our identity with God is based on what Jesus has done. He gets in the way, he stands up for us and he says, I've died for them, that end of story.

And Satan is cast out. He no longer has that leverage and we shouldn't let him have the leverage on us. if we're going to be holy people, we need to be holy people out of deep gratitude because our sins are wiped away.

What better motive can there be to be holy and completely committed and dedicated to the service of Jesus than to realize how much he has done for us?

how much he has done for us? Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all, doesn't it? That's the motive, isn't it?

Okay, interpretation number two, the woman persecuted but cared for. So going back into Revelation, we have the scene in heaven, Satan was cast out. Now, question, does that mean that he is finished, dormant, inactive?

[ 41 : 07 ] And the answer is no. He is angry and active. He is even more angry now, but we are safe and protected. So hence the idea of being in the desert.

The eagle's wings, where does it say eagle's wings in the Bible? They will mount on wings as eagles.

Yes, thank you, they will, that's right. Yeah, and there's another one in Exodus, where it says, I brought you to myself on eagle's wings.

This is God taking his people across the desert. He says, I brought you on eagle's wings. And I think this is what, he's slightly changes the metaphor, doesn't he?

But this is God looking after his people when they're on pilgrimage, when they're yomping across the desert.

[ 42 : 12 ] Do you remember yomping? No, okay, well, look that up on Wikipedia, yomping, but crossing the desert. And God says about that time, you know, your shoes never wore out.

I don't think that's connected with eagle's wings, I think it's just another way of saying God looked after you. I mean, you still had to make the journey, and it still had all its challenges, but there was a sense in which you were looked after all the time.

Looked after all the time. There's a song by Murray McShane which says, not till then how much I owe. Anybody help me with that?

Yes, that's right. The song is inviting us to look back on the way God has led us. And we don't know the half of how much God has looked after us and the half of how he spared us from things and kept us from things and kept us through things.

Well, I think the shoes not wearing out is a little image of that. And when they were in the desert, God provided manna. I know they grumbled about it, said it's not like burger and chips.

[ 43 : 31 ] And God said, well, you know, don't be complaining, you're being fed every day. And God guided his people by cloud and fire. And that three and a half years, I think, is a time of provision.

You know, it's not a time of plenty, but it's a time of being looked after. So we have enough. That's right, isn't it? God gives us all we need. All I have needed, thy hand has provided.

It's a time of being cared for. And when the flood comes, and there's a place where it says when the enemy comes in like a flood, and I don't know where that is. Is it a psalm? Anyway, when the flood comes, help comes too.

Where's the other place where the earth opens her mouth and swallows? Who or what is swallowed?

Yeah, the sons of Korah, the rebellious priests are swallowed by the earth. Not a very nice swallowing, isn't it? so the earth swallowed up the rebel priests.

[ 44 : 42 ] But here, the earth swallows up the threatening waters. I don't think I've got a picture of it. So it's a different provision.

The creation itself is on the side of God's people, and in this rather unexpected and surprising way, when the flood comes, the earth swallows up the flood, and the woman is kept safe.

Rather, in an inspiring thought, I think. And of course, on the way through the desert, it's the way to the heavenly city. That's the destination at the end, where the pilgrimage leads to.

So that's some thoughts about that second part of the action, which tells us that woman is persecuted but cared for. So here are my conclusions.

Number one, we have a saviour in heaven who rules the nations. So he is king of kings and lord of lords. The lamb is upon the throne.

[ 45 : 46 ] He's taken up to the throne of God. Second conclusion, the accuser has been cast out of heaven. The accuser has been cast out of heaven.

This is glorious news for sins. We are justified by Christ, accepted by his grace. It's almost unbelievable, isn't it?

But that's what the gospel is, it's believed it. Thirdly, this does not mean that the accuser is less active, but actually in a sense more active. But the people of God are safe.

We're held in the hands of the saviour and no one can pluck us out of those hands. And on our journey we are cared for, given eagles' wings, protected, transported, with unexpected deliverances.

We thought something was going to really get us, but the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the threat and we survived. And the action point of all of the book of Revelation is, okay guys, these are brilliant truths.

[ 46 : 59 ] Now, we must overcome. The action point is that we must fight and keep on fighting and not give in and overcome.

All the promises at the beginning of the book are to him who overcomes, yes? The lamb is the one who has overcome. The lion of Judah has prevailed, same word, has overcome.

He's overcome and we must overcome. We must not give in. We must not stop believing. We must not stop persisting. We must not go back on our promises.

We must not soft pedal following the Lord Jesus Christ. We must carry on, we must keep on and we must overcome and not give up. And as it says here, we overcome by the blood of the lamb and by the word of our testimony and we defeat the evil one by so doing.

Let's sing 868, which is a song about crossing the desert. Let's sing Holocaust. Let's sing Holocaust.