

Revelation (Quality good)

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Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

[0 : 00] As the Lord may help me, I will speak again this afternoon upon the subject in the book of the Revelation, the seventh chapter, the seventeenth verse.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

The seventh chapter of the book of the Revelation, the seventeenth verse. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

How much there is in the word of God, and in this part of it, to be a comfort and support to our minds under our present difficulties and needs and trials and sorrows, as well as to give us a good and a blessed hope for the future.

But to feel the support of the word in this way for the present and the future, there are two things so necessary.

[1 : 58] And first, that it should be given to us to mix faith with the word. For it cannot possibly be of any benefit and profit to us, even though we may so far understand the nature of its teaching, but it cannot possibly be of any real benefit and profit to us unless we really mix faith with it.

That is what we need.

To give you the comfort of it. To support to your spirit. The incentive to your hope. It's according to your faith. But not wholly so, not exclusively so.

There needs to be something else, and that is the influence and power of the word of truth upon our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

For it is as we know, the work and the very blessed work of the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Jesus Christ and to reveal and apply their truth to our hearts.

[3 : 40] Now, how applicable this is to our subject today. How much there is here for faith to mix with. And how much we need the application of its power to our hearts in a way of power.

Now, the Lord grant this. The Lord grant it often that as his word is read and spoken, our faith may be enlivened, to mix with it.

That we may hear and that we may speak believingly. And that the Holy Spirit may convey to our hearts with power the truth that we believe.

The book of Revelation, to my mind, and I think to most of yours probably, is very difficult to understand.

It does seem to me there are two ways in which to read this book. If we read it as something set before us to explain and understand prophetically, well, I think it is exceedingly difficult.

[4 : 53] And the difficulty isn't made any better by the various and often almost contradictory explanations that are given of it.

But if we read this part of the word of God, not so much to understand these difficult prophecies, but to receive into our hearts the influence and power of the word itself.

It's a very profitable part of the scriptures. Now this morning I was speaking upon this word as the Apostle John saw the blessed state of the saints of God in heaven.

How he marked their number, a great multitude which no man could number. Their universal extraction, they came out of all nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues, and all brought into one, blessed, eternal, holy unity of love.

And of their appearance, that they appeared to him clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands.

[6 : 14] And I said as I believe, that these white robes mean their personality, or their character. Or I thought perhaps after the service this morning, I might perhaps better have expressed what I meant by their spirit.

For every one of us in a certain sense is clothed with their own spirit. But there's so much in their own spirit that is of the flesh, and that is sinful.

We need our spirits washed, that we may be clothed at last with a pure, cleansed, sanctified spirit.

And our profession, and our life and practice. Well now, these their robes, they'd washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and made them white.

Now let us take another look at them. As the Apostle John sets them before our minds in this passage. And first, we look at their past, then at their present, then at their future, their past.

[7 : 38] That is to say, their past life, as they lived it, in this world, and their pathway as they walked it, here. And, this is said concerning them, with regard to that.

What are these, which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest, and he said unto me, these are they, which are come out of great tribulation.

Writers, who deal with the prophetic, part of this book, or some of them, seem to understand that this great tribulation, refers to some period, when tribulation, or persecution, was especially, prevalent, and bitter, and intense.

Well, that may be so, but, I think it's more, safe, and, scriptural, and certain, to regard this, as being characteristic, of the path of them all, in this world.

Now, the Lord Jesus himself, said, that, we must, through much tribulation, enter, into the kingdom, of heaven, and, if you consider, the tribulation, that, the, church of God, has endured, in this, world, all through the ages, and consider that, in the aggregate, sum it all up, what a great, tribulation, amounts to.

[9 : 41] Very great, indeed. I know, of course, that some, have suffered, greater tribulation, than others. But, more or less, I think that's true, well, it must be true, because Jesus, has said it, that there's no way, to heaven, except through, tribulation.

tribulation. And, this tribulation, is varied. I mean, no one person, has to bear, tribulation, in every aspect, of it.

It is so varied, some bear it, of course, through affliction, and pain, of body. Some bear it, through the circumstances, of life, the sorrows, the frustrations, the trials, of life, constitute, their tribulation.

And, some pass, through much, more severe, distress of mind, spiritually. Their experience, of temptation, is much more, distressing, than others.

That constitutes, their tribulation. Very many, of the saints, of God, have suffered, persecution, for the truth's sake.

[11 : 05] Especially, at certain periods, that has been, their tribulation. But, there are these things, concerning it, that call, for our consideration.

These are they, which came out, of great tribulation. Therefore, as I have said, it's clear, that they were, once in it. They never came, to heaven, to their blessed state, in an easy way.

a path, that was strewn, with just comfort, and the like. They wrestled on. They bore, the conflict.

They endured, the sorrows. They, sustained, the distresses, and trials, that fall, to our lot. they came out, to it.

You know, my friends, it would not be, it would not be better, if it were otherwise. I'm sure, that tribulation, has its important, place, in the work of God, in our salvation.

[12 : 17] It has no place, of course, in salvation, meritoriously. But, in all those, other aspects, of salvation, the spiritual, discipline, the tribulation, that worketh, patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope, even the hope, that maketh, not ashamed, because, the love of God, is shed abroad, in our hearts, in that tribulation, has its essential, place.

The Lord, brings his people, through a fire, to glory. I will bring, the third part, through the fire.

And why, through the fire? It couldn't be, merely, that they should, experience, whatever that fire, may mean, to them.

The fiery trial, Peter speaks of it, of faith. The fiery trial, it isn't, merely, and only, that they should, pass through it. There's a reason, it's a purging.

I will bring, the third part, through the fire, and will refine, them, as gold, is refined, and try them, as silver, is tried, and they, shall say, the Lord, is my God, and he will say, and they are my people.

[13 : 52] Now, in the mysterious, and to me, it is a mysterious work, of the Holy Spirit, in sanctification, tribulation, as its, necessary place.

and, if it could be possible, that we could escape it, imagine it so, imagine that, we could by any means, have such a path, as that there would be, no tribulation in it, no trial to bear, no distress, to endure, no fire, no trial, to try, our faith, suppose it could be so, and, we could reach, that blessed state, and company, set before us, in our text, how should we feel, they came out, of great tribulation, we escaped it, how should we feel, it would seem, almost, I was going to say, as though we bypassed, the way, and slipped into heaven, somehow or other, when they went through, the open, road, led to it, the road, of tribulation, well, they were once in it, then, when we read, that these are they, which came out, of great tribulation, we may, understand this further, that, as they were once in it, they were sustained, they were, they were, they were, they were, sustained under it, now they came out, of tribulation, it didn't overcome them, it didn't sink them, into apostasy, and that is, no doubt, the end, and purpose, of,

Satan, in temptation, and tribulation, it is to overcome, faith, or what may profess, to be faith, God's purpose, is for faith, to be tried, purged, Satan's purpose, is for faith, to be overcome, but you may say, then, surely, Satan knows, that faith, can never be overcome, well, we don't know, what he knows, and this is certain, that a good deal, that has professed, to be faith, has been overcome, by persecution, and tribulation, some have gone back, some have not held on, to the end, well now, they were sustained, under it, I don't believe, to you, that the Lord, has ever left, one of his dear people, to sink under tribulation, if on the one hand, he has permitted it, to be heavy, on the other hand, he has given grace, sufficient to sustain, their spirit in it, and, if it is, considered, what instances, we may see, at least I have seen, wonderful instances, in which the spirit, has been sustained, and upheld, under fiery, trials, and tribulation,

I, think, often, when I get along, this line, of that, word of Bunyan, where he, in the interpreter's house, describes, a fire, by the wall, on which, one was continually, pouring water, to extinguish, the fire, and yet, the fire, continued to burn, notwithstanding, which seemed, very strange, to the pilgrims, why a fire, should continue, to burn, when, water, was continually, being poured, upon it, to extinguish it, until, the pilgrims, were taken round, to the other side, of the wall, and there was one, secretly, pouring on oil, behind the wall, and Bunyan says, whereas thou sawest, that the man, who poured on the oil, stood behind the wall, it is to teach thee, that, saints in tribulation, can scarcely, understand, and see, how they are maintained, and sustained, under it, well, they were sustained, in their tribulation, ever great it was, they were not, deserted in it, as those three, faithful Hebrews, went into,

Nebuchadnezzar's, burning, fiery furnace, and the Lord, was with them in it, and they came out of it, unsigned by it, so the Lord, is with his people, his children, in their tribulation, then they came out, they came out of it, and we may, understand, not only, that there are, times, when the Lord's people, are brought out, of their troubles, and there are times, when they are brought out, of them, and delivered, but finally, they are brought out, of their tribulation, when they are received, into heaven itself, they are brought out, it's all behind them, the cross, is behind them, the sorrow, the trial, it's behind, they've come out, to them, then, there's another, point to, consider, and to lay hold on, believing me, and that is, their, present state, and service, there before, the throne of God, and serve him, day and night, in his temple, heaven, is a state, of rest, but it's not, a state, of inactivity, it's not, a state, of slope, it's a state, of service, they serve him, day and night, in his temple, it is their heaven, to serve him, in exactly, what way, they serve him,

[20 : 49] I'm not going, to attempt, to describe, because I don't, understand it, I only, take it, as my, as a text, and the word, puts it, before me, and before us, they serve him, for this, we may certainly, say, they serve him, without, weariness, and that's, a kind of, unwearied, service, that we don't, know, we get, weary, I know, sometimes, it's, being said, we get, weary, in the Lord's, service, but not, weary of it, well, I don't know, that one can, altogether, make that distinction, weariness, is weariness, anyway, and, we do feel it, so, there is a, weariness, our power, sometimes, seems to, tag, even the Lord's, service, seems to be, heavy upon, our, spirit, and, there's, reasons for it, of course, the carnality, of our present, state, the low, state often, of our spirituality, if we were always, filled with, zeal, and love, and warmth, and energy, always, we might serve him, even here, without weariness, but it isn't so, our strength, weakens, our powers, lag, we find, even the Lord's, service, sometimes, is more than, we can, sustain, it's weariness, well, they serve him, without weariness, they serve him, day and night, they're not even, weary, in the sense, that they need, a night's rest, continually, unbrokenly, they serve him, with all, their ransom, enliven, invigorated, powers, they serve him, without weariness, they serve him, day and night, in his temple, they serve him, without interruption, day and night, now, we may not know, how even, our most, favoured times, get interrupted, you may have a good day, on the Lord's day, feel your affections, enliven, and, the Lord, to be near, and precious, to you, and, with your hearts, you serve him, you serve him, in worship, in affection, and, and then,

Monday, may be a very cold day, black Monday, sometimes, friends have caught it, and our sweet, holy, sacred, Sabbath feelings, are interrupted, by the demands, of life, upon us, how soon, they seem to be, gone from us, there's so much, to interrupt, besides, unbroken, service, doesn't belong, to this present, time state, the disciples, said on the Mount, of Transfiguration, Lord, it's good for us, to be here, let us build, three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias, but what about, the state of affairs, at the foot of the Mount, they had to come down, to it, they had to come down, to it, they couldn't stay, on the mountain, and they never saw, that glory again, till their ransomed, souls, were admitted, into that glory, in heaven, we read of Abraham, that the Lord, left communing, with Abraham, and he returned, to his own place, our spiritual, seasons, get interrupted, we cannot serve him, day and night, without interruption, many things interrupt, and break our serving, of the Lord, they serve him, day and night, in his temple, without interruption, and another thing, they serve him, day and night, in his temple, they serve him, without sin, and in some sense,

I think that's the, the most attractive, you are at all, they serve him, without sin, we can't rise, to that perfection, here I don't think, our service, if we serve the Lord, in faith and love, is not sinful service, but there's sin in it, sin stained all we do, they serve him, without sin, not a sinful motive, spoils it, without sin, well now that's their present, state in heaven, and further, we read, that the lamb, which is in the midst, of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them, unto living fountains, of waters, and God, shall wipe away, all tears, from their eyes, every word, is beautiful, in its meaning, and sweetness, the lamb, the lamb,

Jesus Christ, that is, that he has spoken of, as the lamb, and not only, in this passage either, he bears that designation, in heaven, he is the lamb, for one thing, of course, he is the lamb, with regard, to his sacrifice, worthy, is the lamb, that was, slain, lamb, and he is a lamb, with regard, to his spirit, and meekness, he is the lamb, in heaven, there is that, meekness, gentleness, tenderness, and affection, that characterized, him as the lamb, of God, on earth, that characterizes, him, as the lamb, in heaven, Jesus, is tender, in heaven, lamb, like, he looks like, a lamb, that had been, slain, and wears, his priesthood, still, and, he is in the midst, of the throne, he is the center, when you read, the midst of the throne, you understand, the center, of whatever, the throne, symbolizes, it would be, impossible,

I suppose, for this, to be true, metaphorically, I mean, actually, but it's true, metaphorically, now what does, a throne mean, first of all, it means, glory, and majesty, a glorious, high throne, we read, is our God, Jesus, is in the midst, of the throne, in the sense, that he is, in the midst, of his glory, right there, in the center, all the glory, of God, is in Jesus Christ, he is in the midst, of the glory, of heaven, the throne, implies, supremacy, power, and authority, Jesus Christ, is in the midst, of authority, and power, in heaven, all power, operates, in and through, that blessed, person, the throne, implies, supremacy, it is a metaphor, to show, the eminence, of the king, above all, his subjects, the throne, is emblematical, of supremacy,

[29 : 25] Jesus Christ, is in the midst, of the throne, he is in the midst, of all the, supremacy, and preeminence, of heaven, the lamb, which is in the midst, the ransomed souls, stand before the throne, the elders, they bow, before the throne, the angels, they are round, about the throne, but Jesus, is in the midst, of the throne, the very center, the center, of heaven's glory, majesty, light, and power, is Jesus, and he, is in the center, of the throne, as the lamb, he shall feed them, feed them, how are they fed, in heaven, do they need, feeding in heaven, apparently, the lamb, which is in the midst, of the throne, shall feed them, what does it imply, well,

I think it implies, a continual, sustenance, only not, a continual, sustenance, as we understand it, naturally, of our food, but spiritually, I believe, it means, simply this, that the lamb, sustains them, in their heavenly, state, with continual, emanations, of himself, to them, continual, emanations, of his love, of his grace, of all that he is, he feeds them, with himself, brethren, everything, everything, of Jesus Christ, is food, to living souls, everything, everything, of Jesus Christ, is food, his person, is food, his precious, body, is food, his atoning, blood, is food, his love, is food, his grace, is food, his compassion, his tenderness, is food, his sweetness, is food, everything, of Jesus Christ, is food, to living souls, now, when you feel that, here, sometimes, when that nourishes, your heart, and every spiritual, feeling, of faith, and hope, and love, and thankfulness, you're really being, fed by the lamb, of God, now, in heaven, that reaches, a perfection, above any present, experience, the lamb, feeds them, feeds them, with his own, life, there's a wonderful, expressive word, of Dr. Watts, they drink, immortal, pleasures, in, and the, immortal, pleasures, are the, pleasures, that flow, from,

Jesus Christ, I can't say, more than that, the lamb, that is in the midst, of the throne, will satisfy them, sustain them, nourish them, and he will, satisfy, and sustain them, and nourish them, with and from, himself, he will lead them, to living fountains, of waters, and where can, those fountains, be, but in his own, infinite, heart itself, and God, shall wipe away, all tears, from their eyes, brethren, brethren, that there is, such a heaven, is a, wonderful thing, that we should, have a hope of it, that's, wonderful, and that there, should even now, be a preparation, for it, being wrought, in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit, and sometimes, sweet, pure, holy, foretastes, of it, that's, wonderful, for the Lamb, that is in the midst, of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them, to living fountains, of waters, waters, of eternal life, and holiness, and purity, and love, living fountains, of waters, and God, shall wipe away, all tears, all tears, of sorrow, and grief, and distress, love, everlasting, will wipe, all tears, forever away, oh, may the Lord, bring us there, may the Lord, bring us there, for his dear, name's sake, amen.

Thank you, we've been here, we've been derealding, and there's so much and there's so much and there's so much