

# Revelation 3:7-13 – Faithful God

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[ 0 : 00 ] Revelation. And we're in Revelation chapter 3. We have come to the last but one letter to the churches.

! It'll be in the book of Revelation.

What did I say? Maybe you just think I'm thinking ahead. Or I'm still on holiday. Either one. Yeah, so for October we're doing something a little bit different.

And so in November we'll come back to Revelation and pick that up from chapter 4. And I'll tell you all about that next week. So Revelation chapter 3. The letter begins, And to the angel of the church of Philadelphia.

So this is not Philly. Right? This is the original Philadelphia. Not the city on the east coast of the US.

[ 1 : 12 ] The original city was constructed in 180 BC by Adelpius. And it was known. It was like 35 miles south of Sardis. Kind of starting to go back down into a loop.

In this kind of like this big ring road of these churches. And it was known for its vineyards. It was known as a big cultural capital.

So it was the place originally built to take the Greek culture into Asia. And therefore it was known as the gateway of the east. And we'll talk about in a moment where it had two big pillars.

And in the entrance to the city that you'd walk through. And they were known as the gateway to the east. And so it was known as a kind of a little Athens.

Mainly because of a lot of temples that were there. And in 17 AD. And there's kind of like a nod to this in this letter.

[ 2 : 10 ] That it was destroyed by an earthquake. So the same earthquake that destroyed Upper Sardis. Also destroyed this city. And it was rebuilt. And it was renamed Neo Caesarea.

And in verse 12 we read about it getting a new name. I will give you a new name. So it's a little nod to actually what happened. Today it's still a city.

Still a city that is populated. It's known as the city of God. It has a population of about 20,000 people. A thousand of which are Christians. And you can go there today to Philadelphia.

So this is the church that Jesus is writing to. And again he introduces himself in a number of ways from chapter 1. And he writes that he is the one with the words of the Holy One.

Immediately the word holy reminds us of purity and sinlessness. And whilst that is true. That is just an aspect of being holy.

[ 3 : 15 ] Holiness is really most often used as a title. So for example in Psalm 16. The psalmist says that you will not abandon my soul to Sheol. Or let your Holy One see corruption.

And so it's used as a title. And then again in Isaiah 40. The Lord speaks in Isaiah 40.25. To whom then will you compare me. That I should listen to him.

Says the Holy One. As a title. And so the idea is that the Holy One is someone who is particularly set apart. Especially set apart.

And sinlessness comes into that. Purity comes into that. A completely different way of thinking. And what thinking is taking place comes into that.

And look we're going to see this idea repeat itself in this letter. Where Jesus is going to basically say I'm the only one. I'm completely unique. There are things here that exclusively belong to God.

[ 4 : 19 ] That's the idea. Alright. But then God gives them to us. And so the first way Jesus describes himself is that he is holy.

He is completely set apart. He is not like you or I. He doesn't think like you and I. He doesn't think like you know the other angelic realm.

Spiritual realm. He doesn't think like those either. Alright. He is completely different. So the second way he then describes himself is that he is the true one. And the word true means genuine.

So he's the real deal. The genuine article. And again this is going to be important. Because Jesus is going to ask. Or he's going to talk about what is true. And what isn't true in this letter.

He's going to bring up this synagogue of Satan. He's going to compare his teaching with the synagogue of Satan. And he's going to compare that which is faithful to that which is not faithful.

[ 5 : 20 ] To that which is a lie. To that which is true. And Jesus is basically saying. Look you can rely on me. You can depend on me. Why? Because I'm the genuine thing.

Just look at verse 9. Where Jesus describes. Those who say they are Jews are not but lie. Jesus is comparing himself to them. Don't put yourself.

Your trust in those things. Put yourself. Your trust in me. And then the third way Jesus describes himself. Is that he is in possession of something. He says. Who has the key of David.

Who opens and no one will shut. And shuts and no one opens. And this is a quote from Isaiah 22 verse 22. Which says this. God says. I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David.

He shall open. No one. And none shall shut. He shall shut. And none shall open. If you remember in a previous couple of letters.

[ 6 : 18 ] We had references to the Old Testament. Balaam. And we had Ahaz. Two references to. One to Balaam. One to Ahaz or Jezebel.

And they were references from the history of Israel. This one. This quote. Actually isn't talking about Israel's history at all. It's talking about Judah's history. And when.

You know the story that when Solomon. King Solomon died. He was the last of the kings to unite the kingdoms. So Saul, David and Solomon. And when Solomon died. The kingdom was split into two kingdoms.

A northern kingdom and a southern kingdom. And Israel was to the north. And Judah was to the south. And where we have seen kind of the failure. And the judgment of Israel.

Under King Ahab. And others. But you know. King Ahab is the kind of. The stereotypical king that we remember. Is the one who really. Finally. Brought down God's judgment.

[ 7 : 16 ] On Israel. He was the one who introduced. Idol worship. Basically everything that was false. He introduced. Right. Here. What we see is that.

Not a reference to King Ahab. But a reference to King Hezekiah. In Judah. And King Hezekiah. Is known as being the king. Who was a restorer.

He was a reformer. He brought. He brought back. The worship of God. To Judah. He was faithful. And this is the key. And this is why it's being quoted.

He was faithful. At destroying idol worship. So he was true. In that respect. And so rather than. Be a message of failure. And judgment.

To this. This letter. To this church. This message. Is a message of the hope. Of restoration. And blessing. And that's kind of. What we have to hold on to. As we go through. Because there's a lot going on.

[ 8 : 13 ] In this letter. But the basic premise is. That Jesus is coming. And saying look. There is the hope of restoration. There is the hope of blessing. For those who turn to me. And the reason is because.

The godly acts of Hezekiah. Particularly compared to those. Who had come before him. Are held up. In. Kind of.

Our biblical history. Where we see Ahaz. As really the kind of. The low point of Israel. We see. Hezekiah is the high point. Of. Of Judah.

So everything you want to say. Bad about Israel. You'd kind of go. Oh you remember Ahaz. Ahaz. That would be. Stereotypical. Of just kind of like. Let's throw some. Some eggs and tomatoes. At Israel.

And let's call it Ahab. But. If you're going to lift. Anyone up. You're going to refer to Hezekiah. Because Hezekiah was such a reformer. And actually.

[ 9 : 11 ] He wasn't just a reformer. But he was a reformer. In the face of. Opposition to reform. Like he didn't show up. And just like. Oh hey. Let's. Let's just do some reforming. And everybody's like.

Oh yeah. That's a great idea. Like it didn't happen like that. Reform never happens like that. Right. So. So. His grandfather. And this is the. This is the. This is the. The kind of flow.

Of that history of Judah. His grandfather. Was a guy called Jotham. Right. And the story of Jotham. Is in. Second Chronicles. Chapter 27. Verse 1 and 2.

The kind of summary of his life. Right. So Jotham. Was 25 years old. When he began to reign. So he became king. When he was 25 years old. Like that would ruin anyone.

Right. And it did. It ruined Jotham. He. He reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name. Was. Jerush. Jerush. Whoever that is. The daughter of Zadok.

[10:06] And he did what was right. Inside of the Lord. According to all that his father. Uzziah. Had done. Except. He did not enter the temple of the Lord. But the people still followed. Corrupt practices.

So Jotham did what was right. For the country. Probably politically. Socially. But he himself. Was not a worshiper of God. He didn't go into the temple of the Lord. And the people saw that. And went. Well if our king's not going to go into the temple of the Lord. Guess what we're not going to do either. We're not going to go into the temple of the Lord either. Right. So. That was kind of like spiritual temperature.

Of. Judah. Then. Then Jotham had a son. And. And Jotham's son. Was Hezekiah's father. And. Jotham's son. Was the notorious.

Ahaz. Second. Second Chronicles. Chapter 28. Ahaz was 20 years old. When he began to reign. And he reigned 16 years. In Jerusalem. And he did not do. What was right. In the eyes of the Lord.

[11:03] His dad did. But he didn't. As his father. Excuse me. He did not do. What was right. In the eyes of the Lord. As his father David had done. But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel. So that's that.

That point. It's like. You want to. You want to talk about the sins of Israel. Who are you going to use? Ahaz. Because it's almost like. You're setting this up for failure. You're setting this up for comparison.

So then he says. Or then it says. He even made metal images for the balls. And he made offerings in the valley of the son of Hidim.

And burned his sons as an offering. According to the abominations of the nations. Who the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. And he sacrificed and made offerings. On the high places. And on the hills. And under every green tree. Later on in that verse. In verse 27. 24. We read this. Ahaz. And we read that.

[12:13] In verse 19 of chapter 28. That during Ahaz's reign. The Lord humbled Judah. Right. This was like. A humiliation for Judah.

Why? Because now Judah. Had become even worse in Israel. Right. That was humiliating. Because for years. And years. And years. They were like. Well we're not Israel. We're not like Israel.

And all of a sudden. God is condemning. Judah. For being like Israel. Under the reign of Ahaz. And so he says. The Lord humbled Judah. Because of Ahaz.

King of Israel. For he had made Judah. Act sinfully. And had been very unfaithful to the Lord. Now look what's taking place. We just read that Jotham. Didn't go into the temple. And Ahaz. Shut the doors to the temple. Now contrast that with Hezekiah. Second Chronicles chapter 29 verse 1. Hezekiah. Began to reign when he was 25 years old.

[13:10] And he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah. The daughter of Zechariah. And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. According to all that his. All that David his father had done.

In the first year of his reign. The very first thing he'd done. What was his priority? Look we've heard of this before right. So you know when Liz Truss came into power. First hundred days. Really important aren't they?

First hundred days set out the priority for the prime minister. King's doing exactly the same right. King Charles. What did he do? First thing. Starts calling people. First thing he's going to do is go to France.

Right. He's got his priorities. Now you might question his priorities. But that's not the point. He's got his priorities. He's laying his priorities out for the first hundred days. And so what does Hezekiah do? First year of his reign.

In the first month. Forget a hundred days. First thirty days. What's his priority? He opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them. Jotham didn't go into the temple.

[14:10] Ahaz shut the doors to the temple. What does Hezekiah do? He opened the doors to the temple and repaired them. And the keys of David at the beginning of this letter are a reference to

Eliakim who was the treasurer under Hezekiah.

Listen. Being a king. I don't know this. But it's what I imagine. Or actually I know. I know that being in leadership is not about one person who leads.

Yet you have here. What you have here is Hezekiah going, guys, this needs to change. We need to return to the Lord. Hezekiah, open up the doors to the treasury.

Sorry. Eliakim, open up the doors to the treasury. I'll get my words right in a minute. Does that make sense? Hezekiah is saying, we need reform.

Reform is going to cost some money. Eliakim, show me the money. And Eliakim goes, yeah, all right. Eliakim is the one who empowers Hezekiah to make those changes.

[15:19] And this is that reference then to the keys of David. So it was this finance minister, Eliakim, who under King Hezekiah made all of that happen.

Made it so that all of the spiritual revival could take place. And as a result, He was given the keys of David, the keys to the royal treasury. Now we might say, why is Jesus coming declaring that He has the key of David?

One of those reasons is that in verse 9, we're going to see a group of Jews who no doubt dispute the right of Jesus to give entrance to the kingdom of David.

Jesus has already presented Himself in chapter 1 as the one who holds the keys of Hades and of death. And here He presents Himself as the one who holds the keys of David, which is talking about the claims to the kingdoms of the earth as well.

And so this is the idea of Jesus being the unique one again, the faith one, holy and true, the genuine one who has the power to admit into or exclude from His kingdom.

[16:37] And now Jesus moves into verse 8. And it's worth noting that He skips on any word of correction. Do you notice that?

Like in the letters before, He said, I like this about you, but I don't like this about you. This needs to change, right?

But here in this letter, there is no word of correction. There is no rebuke. Now let me ask you a question. Do you think that this church is perfect? Probably not.

Now we know that not only because we know theology, but we know our own hearts, right? And we know people don't change. Do you think that this church had everything figured out?

Probably not. So then why doesn't Jesus rebuke them for the things that they're not doing right?

And I just think that the answer is that not every sin is worth mentioning.

[17:46] And what I mean by that is that when we think of the people in the church of Philadelphia, it's impossible to imagine, isn't it, that everyone in this church is perfect. It's impossible to imagine that everyone's serving vigorously and praying faithfully.

That's impossible for us to imagine, isn't it? Like anytime you get people, you get problems. But Jesus doesn't mention their shortcomings, failures, and sins.

Why? Because not every sin is worth mentioning. Sometimes people are trying to walk with God and follow Jesus just the best they can. And they're growing in their knowledge of Him. And whilst they aren't perfect, there is nothing rising to the level that needs addressing.

And I think the lesson that we can draw from that is that if you're prone to always look for the problem and the sin, you need to learn from Jesus.

Because like Jesus isn't blind, right? He's going to say, I know your works. Like He knows not only their works, but the motivations of their works.

[18:59] But what this church needs is not rebuke. What this church needs is encouragement. And encouragement can be so powerful, can't it?

Jesus is writing to them and He says, In effect, I see what you're doing. I know it's hard, but I love you very much. Well done. Keep going. And the effect of that encouragement is that this church are able to keep going.

They are able to open their doors for another 1,200 years. While all of the other churches are now in ruins, the Church of Philadelphia keeps going.

If you're a parent, you know, you can speak a word of life to your child that could set them up, set them going for the rest of their lives. That's the powerful force of encouragement. And so Jesus is coming along the scene and He's like, You know what?

These guys don't need their sins to be highlighted. What they need is encouragement. And so Jesus skips the rebuke.

[ 20 : 13 ] And instead, He's going to pour encouragement on them. And He says in verse 8, again, I know your works. As many times as I've read those words, as we've been journeying through this book, I'm still shocked and a little stunned by what Jesus gives attention to.

You know, nowadays, the thing that grabs our attention is normally the thing that is on the end of our hand. Our phones, right? Like we can barely live without them, right? Have you ever been in a situation where maybe you've got your phone on you and you're in a crowded situation and all of a sudden you get that and everyone is like, Oh, maybe that's mine.

Right? We're giving attention. You know, people are walking around, getting run over in the street because they're giving attention to their phone, crossing the road, not even realizing they're crossing the road.

On a Saturday afternoon, some of you give your attention to the football results, right?

It's clocking down, isn't it? Getting to 45 minutes, 90 minutes. If you're a Leeds United supporter, you're praying hard. Prayer is the only thing that will help.

[ 21 : 37 ] But you're giving your attention. But you know, the thing that Jesus gives attention to is his church. That's what he gives attention to. He cares a lot about the local church.

And can I remind you that he is writing to the local church, not a local Christian. But Jesus is blowing the water out of the concept of individualism and consumerism.

Jesus says, I know your works. And that work is to serve God and serve others. You see, there are some people that during the week in Philadelphia are thinking about God and how they can serve others.

And we all know that that is a rarity, isn't it? In the church. I mean, you do get people who some during the week are thinking about God and how they can serve others.

But there are also other people during the week that are not thinking about God and how they can serve others, but rather how they can serve themselves. And those people don't have any works.

So Jesus isn't writing to those people.

[ 22 : 49 ] But as a Christian, you and I, we've been created to serve someone else. And I don't use that term lightly in terms of we have been created for that purpose.

And I don't use it lightly. Why? Because the Apostle Paul actually tells us that. In Ephesians 2, verse 10, he says, we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works.

Which God's prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. In our day of individualism and consumerism and selfishness, the antidote to those things is the lordship of Jesus and a devoted life to good works.

Doing whatever you can to serve whoever you can in the name of Jesus. So he says then, behold, I know your works.

Behold, I have set before you an open door which no one is able to shut. Which again is that kind of play on words with the open door, the gateway to the east that Philadelphia was known for.

[ 23 : 55 ] But it seems that Jesus has applied the key of David that he has and he's opened the door for the church. And he's holding it and now he's applying it.

Now look, elsewhere in the New Testament this idea of an open door refers to the opportunity for ministry and evangelism. Okay? So Acts chapter 14 verse 27 we read, when they arrived and gathered the church together they declared all that God had done with them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

Right? But whilst it is probably true in terms of how the concept is worked out, this is actually a reference to the reign of Jesus not ministry and evangelism.

The use of David's name in verse 7 reminds us of Messiah's right to admit into or turn away from David's future kingdom. In the Old Testament God promises his people that David would come and reign again.

Jeremiah chapter 30 verse 9 they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king notice whom I shall raise up for them. which is a clear prophecy about Jesus.

[ 25 : 08 ] Because in Luke chapter 1 the angel Gabriel says to Mary about Jesus that he will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David.

But look, what is interesting is that Eliakim, do you remember that guy? Eliakim, the treasurer of Hezekiah. The name Eliakim means to raise up.

God will raise up. And so whenever we see this reference to David the thing that we need to remember are two things king and kingdom.

Right? For the most part when the Bible talks about David what he doesn't have in mind is the shepherd that we met on the hills of Judea tending sheep.

Okay? For the most part almost, not exclusively but many, many times. It's about a kingdom. It's about a kingdom. And so when the Old Testament applies that to Jesus or the New Testament applies to Jesus we're saying the same thing.

[ 26 : 12 ] King, kingdom. Right? And so what we're looking at is a king who controls the opening and closing of access to his kingdom.

That's what we're talking about. and the resource for the kingdom are promised to the church. The keys of David. And this is going to be even more enlightening now as he moves in to talk about how this church really doesn't have any power.

We don't have any power. Why? Because it's Jesus is the one. He's the king with the ability to open and close doors to his kingdom and he's given the treasury of his kingdom to the church that doesn't have any power.

So three things that Jesus notices about this church. Number one I know that you have a little power. Secondly even though that is true you have kept my word and the result is that you have not denied my name.

And so notice the contrast. Jesus is saying that all of the riches and treasures and powers and strength is yours. I am the holder of those things and I'm ready here to give them to you. Right?

[ 27 : 24 ] But you in contrast you have but a little power which is why we drink coffee. Just amen. Yeah. But even so you have kept my word.

And in verse 10 there's this kind of reward attached to this that we'll look at there in a moment. You have kept my word and you have not denied my name which leads us into verse 9. Behold I will make those of the synagogue of Satan which is actually a denomination at the time but I don't think it was their official name but Jesus renames them that.

Right? Top tip. If it has Satan in the title it's probably off track. Can we agree on that? Like the temple of Satan is the most popular organization for Satanists in America today.

And you're like does that even exist? Yes it does. Do you want to read their mission statement?

Just for the geeks. So the mission of the Satanic Church Satanic Temple quote a religious organization is to encourage benevolence and empathy among all people reject tyrannical authority advocate practical common sense and people that's the Satanic Temple.

I know. If you take the word Satanic Temple out there's not many of us that would go it's a religious organization to encourage benevolence and empathy upon oh that's great sounds good yes but they worship Satan.

[ 29 : 08 ] Like that's the problem. So when Jesus says who say they are Jews and are not but lie Jesus is saying that those who follow Satan are liars and look there has always been and will always be those who say that they love Jesus and say that they read the Bible but contradict what Jesus says in the Bible and there is always the temptation for the Christian church to compromise to become more acceptable but Jesus is here rebuking that idea.

The outcome isn't good enough is my point. We can't just go oh we want to encourage benevolence and empathy among all people don't we? Of course we do.

We want to reject tyrannical authority of course we do. We want to advocate for practical common sense in a world where there isn't any. Yeah we want to do that. We want to oppose injustice we're all about that.

Oh but worship Satan is that what we've got to do? Wow. Some have said yeah that's I'll do that. I'm quite happy to do that because the outcome is the same and Jesus says no no no no that's a problem.

That's a problem. He says you've not denied my name. You've kept it. You've kept it. And that means that there was a lot of pressure in that day as there is today to deny the Bible and to deny Jesus.

[ 30 : 37 ] Listen where does that pressure come from? Ultimately clues in the text Satan right?

The pressure comes from Satan. Why? If you don't take anything away from this take this Satan hates the church right?

Satan hates this church. And let me say that we probably need and I'm speaking to myself as much as anybody else that we need to watch our criticisms and our frustrations and our bitterness. Because if there is another local church who love the Bible and love Jesus we should pray for them and want good for them and not criticize them.

when it comes to our own church again we need to be careful how our own criticisms are handled and no one no one is no one and nothing is above criticism right?

[ 31 : 39 ] Because no one is without sin. But Satan is already doing all that he can to harm churches because Satan hates God's church and he hates this church and sometimes he will even empower a bitter believer to be a point of great division in the body of Christ and we need to be careful we need to be careful that we don't help Satan Satan is a liar and he hates the church and he hates this church but listen where our church is hated look at verse 9 again it is also loved behold I will make those the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews and are not but lie behold I will make them come and bow down before your feet and they will learn that I have loved you right so

Satan hates you God loves you I would question I would ask you this morning do you know that do you know that God loves you that Jesus loves you that he knows your works he knows you and even though he knows you he loves you and God and Satan aren't comparable you know that they're not opposites and so God's love for you while we might see all the carnage in the world in terms of Satan's hatred for you and the church his hatred for you and the church doesn't compare to God's love for you and God's ability to hold you despite the fact that we have a little power despite the fact that there are challenges all we need to know is that Jesus loves you he loves us verse 10 he says because you have kept my word about patient endurance I will keep you from the you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth.

Now, we don't have time to go into the details of one of the most hotly debated verses in the book of Revelation. I know that you're thankful for that. So I'm just going to summarize what I think Jesus is saying. And if you want to bend my arm afterwards, then fine. Jesus says that there is a reward for those who keep his word about perseverance. That's the text.

This is just not, this is not just normal perseverance that we read about in the Bible, like, well done for reading your Bible, well done for keeping going through Leviticus, well done.

[ 34 : 51 ] Right? This is because you have kept what my word says about my perseverance. The perseverance isn't the perseverance of the church in Philadelphia. It's the keeping of what is true about the perseverance of Jesus. What perseverance? Perseverance on the cross.

So this is talking about the trial that he endured on the cross. It is talking about holding to the cross of Christ. He says, because you have kept my word about what my word says about my perseverance, that the cross of Christ is true and all that it means.

Then the reward is to keep. In the same way as those who keep his word about his trial, he is going to keep them from another kind of trial. Now, what does Jesus say about this other kind of trial? He says at least four things. Number one, he says that it's an hour. It's a specific time. It's an hour. He doesn't say six o'clock.

Right? He says it's an hour. It's a specific time that it's going to start and a specific time that that hour will end. Secondly, it's a trial, which is the character or substance of the time.

Thirdly, who it's going to affect? The whole world. Fourthly, the purpose to try those who dwell on the earth. And that's a specific word. It's literally earth dwellers. If you've got an old translation of the Bible, sometimes it's translated just earth dwellers. It's used 10 times always in the revelation, always in reference to unbelievers, those who don't follow Christ.

[ 36 : 37 ] So what we understand about this hour of trial is that its focus is on those who aren't Christians, those who aren't followers of Jesus. So the hour, the time is going to be described for us in chapters six through to 19. Takes about an hour to read, probably less than that if you're a bit quicker.

It's also known as the great tribulation in the Bible. It's also known as the time of Jacob's troubles in Jeremiah 30 verse seven. It's also known as Daniel's 70th week in Daniel chapter nine verses 25 to 27. But look, the other thing that we learn is that Jesus promises deliverance or protection to his children from that specific time. Right? He doesn't promise that believers will escape all kinds of tribulation and challenging problem, like we saw a few weeks ago. There's no such promise. But this one he does. And because the believers here in Philadelphia had kept his word, Jesus is

promising also to keep them. This verse promises that those who know and follow Jesus will be delivered from the great tribulation. Now, just pause there because Daniel B. Wallace, if you don't know that name, you should know that name. He is the most eminent Bible Greek scholar alive today. Daniel B. Wallace. He's involved in, if you remember when we were talking about a while ago, some manuscripts that had been uncovered probably for the first time. And Daniel B. Wallace was looking into the Gospel of Mark and how the Gospel of Mark has been dated within 30 years of the death of Jesus. Like super, super early. Daniel B. Wallace is the Greek scholar is kind of involved in that.

He says, and this is what he says, not what I'm saying, but like he's like a good guy. He's saying that this verse is not proof text for a pre-tribulation rapture of the church, but it's also not a proof text for a post-tribulation rapture of the church. Now, if you know what that means, just take it, think about it, great. If you don't know what that means, take it, think about it, great.

All right. So Daniel B. Wallace is saying that there is no grammatical reason in this verse to suggest that Christians will disappear from the earth at the beginning of the seven years, but there's also no grammatical reason why Christians will go through and be delivered at the end.

What that means is you can't use this verse as a proof text for either one. What it does mean is that either way from this text, God's got you. You will either be delivered before or delivered during.

[ 39 : 44 ] Delivered before, taken out, delivered during, martyred. Only two options. That's Daniel B. Wallace speaking, not me. But I do agree with him. So there you go.

But as a matter of Greek grammar, I just want to clear that up just in case anyone was going, I wonder what a Greek grammar is regarding kept from. Just because I know you think that. So look, but I would say, look, more emphatically, we understand that what Jesus is saying to be true about, I will deliver you from this hour of trial, this hour of trial being the great tribulation that's coming upon the whole world, is because look what he says in verse 11.

I'm coming soon. Right? This is eschatological in nature. All right? Which means he's talking about the end times. He's not talking about some general time of persecution.

He's talking about a period of tribulation that comes immediately before he returns. Like Jesus hasn't come back and we don't know about it. Like there's going to be plenty of evidence around to suggest this is all true.

What Jesus said was true and Jesus is on his way. And so what happens then is this encouragement to hold fast in verse 11 to what you have so that no one may seize your crown, Stephanos crown or the victor's crown.

[ 41 : 15 ] In the games, this would be a laurel wreath. And it's like you won. You're an overcomer. And they promise in verse 12, the one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.

Solomon's temple.

In the courtyard to Solomon's temple, as you entered through the door into the kind of the outer court, there were two pillars called Boaz and Jachin. And these pillars, they were six feet thick and 27 feet high, made of bronze.

And everybody who wanted to go into the temple through that entrance would go through these pillars. But, and Boaz means, the name Boaz means to strengthen and Jachin means to establish. And I like that. But what's God going to do with you? He's going to strengthen you and he's going to establish you. But interestingly enough, what Jesus says here is even more, is even better and more crucial for us to understand.

[ 42 : 43 ] He says that he is going to make him a pillar in the naos, in the holy of holies, not in the outer court, but in the holy of holies, where the presence of God is.

This is where we get our strength, isn't it? By being in the presence of God. He says, you have a little strength, but I'm going to, I'm going to establish you. And I'm going to strengthen you right in my presence.

And look what he says, and never shall he go out of it. Why? Who has the keys? Who opens the doors that no one can shut?

So you're never going to go out. You're going to stay there. And I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem. Again, that idea of the city was renamed Neocaesarea, which comes down from my God out of heaven.

And on my, and my own new name, he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Let's pray together. Father, thank you for your word.

[ 43 : 54 ] Lord, we thank you that you give promises to us. Lord, we thank you that you encourage us just to keep going. Lord, thank you that you're not, you're not a miserable God or just negative all the time.

And Lord, many of us, you know, know our struggles, know our sins. Lord, we thank you for the gentle way that you point them out. And we know that you're a great teacher and we are slow to learn.

So you point them out multiple times. Lord, we thank you also that you're a nurturing God. You're a helping God. You're a supporting God. Lord, and we know that sometimes we just need that encouragement to keep going.

And Lord, we thank you for the encouragement today. Lord, that we find the strength to keep going by dwelling in your presence. Lord, and would you help us this week, Lord, to come to you, to open your word, to speak to you, to join together with other Christians, Lord, that we might find strength. And we thank you, Lord, that that door is always open. You never kick us out. You never get tired of us. You never say, well, that's it. I'm going to bed. You guys leave.

[ 45 : 12 ] Lord, thank you, Lord, that you have promised to strengthen and establish us in your presence. Lord, with almost no back door, no way out. Lord, thank you that you have promised that where we would draw close to you, you would draw close to us.

Lord, and so we thank you this morning, Lord, that we have someone who is faithful to that, someone who is true to that, someone who doesn't lie to us.

And so we pray this morning, Lord, and we're just reminded of King Hezekiah, Lord, would you restore to this place, to this church, to our own lives, that revival that took place then.

Lord, would you help us to prioritize those things in our own lives, Lord, that would see the return of your spirit to us, that we would pray vigorously and faithfully.

Lord, that we would know you, Lord, that this open door, Lord, we would hold open for many to come into your kingdom, knowing that it's you that opens the door, Lord.

[ 46 : 22 ] But we ask this morning, Lord, that as we are opening that door, Lord, you would be doing that work in the lives of people that we know, that they would come into your kingdom. And so, Lord, would you help us to do that this week?

Lord, help us to know you and be known by you. Lord, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.