

## Revelation 14 (Conrad Bowman) (July 27, 2008)

We're going to start in chapter 14 – Revelation 14 this morning. Well the crowd has thinned out some, hasn't it? Maybe we've exceeded capacity. Revelation 14. Let's have a word of prayer, please.

Father, for the message that You passed to John, we're profoundly thankful. Help us to stay right on target and not drift from what You gave to Your apostle, and what he recorded for us. We thank You for it. We thank You for health and for energy and for life itself as we get it day by day. We thank You for the work of the Spirit in our life and around us, and for eyes that can see it, and hearts that can respond. We just ask You to guide us through out time of study this morning, in Christ's name. Amen.

Now, we went through chapter 13 last week, and we're in chapter 14 this morning. We're going to take a look at a few things here, and then I want to remind you of a few verses that go with this as we move through chapter 14. Adam – he's not here yet – Adam went through and referenced for me and made a list of verses that pertain to the Anti-Christ; verses that pertain to the sea; to the beast; and to the false prophet from Daniel; Zechariah; Revelation and Matthew. And he collated for us onto this sheet. Then in addition, he went through Satan and Michael, the man-child of Christ when He was born, and the locations that He came from; and he gathered all that together on this one sheet; and I haven't had time to integrate it because he did this on – he gave this to me on Friday evening kind of late when we were studying together. So I'll have that for you next week, and I'm also incorporating it into the Notes, so we'll have everything together.

Let's start with chapter 14, verse 1, and start moving through this. Now, what's important about this is, as you know, the Church is going to be taken out. Now everybody doesn't believe that. Ok. I'm a Rapturist. I believe the Church is going to be taken out prior to the Tribulation. A large segment of conservative fundamentalist Christianity believes that the Church is going to be taken out just before the severe tribulation at the end of the seven years of tribulation. There's a whole movement out of Florida that are following the work of a guy down there who was a pre-tribulation Rapturist, and he made some changes, and now he believes that the Church is going to be here through all these difficulties right on up to the last twenty-five percent say, of the Tribulation Period; and then the Church will be taken out. He still believes that the Church will not be here when God Himself dumps His wrath on the earth. But he believes the Church is going

to be here through much of the Tribulation Period. I'm telling you that, because if you read literature dealing with this period and the return of Christ – even sound literature written by guys like Tim LaHaye and Hal Lindsay – you'll run into quite different positions than what I'm teaching as we go through here. Because I believe the Church is going to be taken out just before the Tribulation Period starts; that it will kind of trigger some things; and the Tribulation Period then will begin after the Church is taken out. So ...

Joyce Wood. Conrad?

Conrad Bowman. Yes?

Joyce Wood. Why do you believe that?

Conrad Bowman. Why? Well it's right. [Laughter]. Would you have expected anything else? No. The reason I believe – it hinges on several things, and some of the verses we're looking at and the reason we started going back and looking at Daniel and going back and looking at Matthew is because my conclusion is based on a collation of what Christ taught; what Paul taught – some of the things he taught will impact this as well; and a collation of these verses from Daniel and Matthew into Revelation. And no one place explains it all; and if you are not careful and you come down hard on one place and say, Ok, that's it. That's the *sine qua non* right there, you can frame just about any one of these positions. You know, and Brian Myers who Phil knew and – Brian Myers taught through Revelation verse by verse. Did a masterful job of it here when he was pastor here. He taught through that. Phil's got the tapes on it, and he was kind enough to let me have them. And Brian is a mid-tribulation Rapture. He believes the mid-tribulation period is the right one; that the Church is going to go through the first half of it, or so, and then is going to be taken out before God pours His wrath out on the work of man. And so those tapes are available and are around; and if you have an interest in doing that, I recommend them highly. Phil gave them to me and I studied them before we started this, because Phil had high hopes that I would come up with something rock solid that would change his mind. It hadn't happened ...

Phil Richman. If we had Joe Walls teaching today, and Joe Walls used to say, well, I'm pre-tribulation Rapture until it doesn't happen. [Laughter]. So this is an uncertain area, but you can look at it from a certain point of view.

Conrad Bowman. It is.

Phil Richman. It's not going to be totally dogmatic.

Conrad Bowman. So that's exactly where we are; and that's to say that I haven't convinced him yet.

Phil Richman. But he's working on it.

Conrad Bowman. Chip by chip.

Ed Welbourn. I think it all references a certain Scripture that reads that the Church will not experience the wrath of God; and the question is, when is the wrath of God foretold.

Conrad Bowman. That's part of it. That's part of it, see because – because the pre-rap Rapture of the Church – The book. *The Pre-Rap Rapture of the Church* – depends right there on that verse. And so he says the wrath of God is poured out at the end of the Tribulation Period just before Christ comes and saves His remnant. And so the wrath of God is that last little part of the Tribulation Period, and the Church is taken out way down there. You know. So the Church would end up going through, in his schematic, three quarters to ninety percent of it; and just be taken out just before the real bad things that are coming up are going to happen. John?

John Young. Can you comment just real quick on the salvation issue and how that relates to when this Rapture occurs, because to me that's pretty important?

Conrad Bowman. Well the – the problem I see – and you're hitting right at it – the problem I see with making these decisions is, if you push the Church into the Tribulation Period at all, now you've got people being saved by faith in Christ, and saved into the Church. Ok. Now the rule of the Rapture – the rule of the Tribulation then is changed; because that means Law is not the rule; it's not the seventieth week of Daniel in that case; because if it's the seventieth week of Daniel, that has to do with Jewish prophecy, which is why we're looking at Daniel. And if you push the Church across the line into the Tribulation Period and have the Church in there, you still have a continuation of the Age of Grace. And Israel is going to be real busy rebuilding the Temple and reestablishing the Temple worship. We know that that's going to take place in the first three and a half years of the Tribulation. Well if they're doing that, they're working counter to the Gospel of Grace. So you have that mixed message to deal with, with regard

to the Gospel. I don't believe that's true. I believe the Gospel is always clear-cut and crisp; and when the Church is taken out, salvation changes. The Gospel then is, if you're saved, you're saved based on your perseverance, and you're holding on to that Gospel at the face of death; and if you fall away, your salvation is lost, because it's only the man who perseveres to the end that'll be saved – is what those verses tell us. So, you know, that mixed message pushes me away from that. Until I can resolve those issues, I can't bring the Church forward into the Tribulation Period at all. Phil?

Phil Richman. I think the basics, and Conrad's really helped me in this area, is this whole issue of differentiation. I use that word – the difference between Israel and the Gentiles in pre-Pentecost people, and the Church, which is post-Pentecost up until the Lord comes. Right. Or Raptures the Church. That differentiation is destination – what is the destination of the Church verses what is the destination of the Old Testament saints and Israel. And they could be included in that Old Testament saints. Once you feel there is differentiation – that it's not all put together, but not all "mushed" together as I would say, the Church and Israel, and of course the Old Testament Gentiles like Job – and there are many. Once you see this differentiation, well then that adds validity to what Conrad is saying about the seventieth week. And the seventieth week is Israel. So that – you know – that weights in that direction. Now, you mentioned about mid-trib, and when you find something like Revelation – I think it was Rev. 11 – it's Rev. 11, Brian Myers felt that's where the Rapture of the Church takes place. And he also felt that was where the remnant of Israel is switched-on, if you will. But here again, he didn't differentiate – he didn't use this differentiation which Conrad I think has point out, which I think is very, very valid. So, a point of view – and don't be offended if it goes against – I was reading Henry Morris last night, and he's all "mushed." He's got 144,000 in the Church – reading Rev. 14, and he's got it all together and it's very confusing when you do that, because you don't know where you're going. Who are you? Are you going to be in the Millennial Kingdom? Or are you going to be in Christ? Yeah. All of us would say in Christ. You're not of earth. You're of heaven. You're heavenly. You're the Bride.

Conrad Bowman. The practical thing – the whole *Left Behind* series, is written with the Church in the Tribulation. The entire *Left Behind* series. I love the series, as far as the story line goes. The story line was very interesting. But it has nothing to do with Biblical accuracy in terms of pointing it out. So we've got how many millions of sets of that stuff that's out there. People are devouring it, and it wanders all over the place. Now, there are two excellent papers. One is a compilation – I'll bring them. You don't need to write them down. I'll make

copies, and we'll get those done. And one is on differentiation, and it's 28 pages. It comes out of Miles Stanford's series on the Tri-S, and it's an exceptionally well done thing. He compiles comments and sections from a number of different authors and presents it. And that's on differentiation. The other one is a paper called, "The Grand Difference" by W.J. Hocking; and it just runs like 3 pages long – 4 pages long; and I'll make you copies of that one. "The Grand Difference," and it's talking about the difference between Israel and the Church, and why we see those differences. And those two papers right there are very key papers, and now is the time to get them together. If I had planned for this particular discussion to come up, I'd had them today. But I'll get them together and we'll have them for you for next week. There're easy to copy, and you ought to have copies in your own papers and your own library.

Beth Davis. What is Tri-S?

Conrad Bowman. Ma'am?

Beth Davis. You said the word Tri-S. What is that?

Conrad Bowman. Tri-S?

Beth Davis. Yes. What does that mean?

Conrad Bowman. Oh. Miles Stanford had a writing ministry back and forth for about forty years after he developed congestive heart failure. He used to do seminars and things; and people would write and ask him questions. If you wrote to Miles and asked him a question on anything, what you got back in the mail was about – was an envelope and it had four or five different papers that might be 1, 2, 3 or 4 pages long. Rarely did he send things that he wrote. He compiled things that the Brethren wrote. Now, Miles was a very bright guy, and he would send those to you. He developed a ministry through the mail called "Spiritual Sharing Service." You write to him; every time you'd write, you'd get an answer back, and it would include three or four papers. He had about nine hundred of those individual growth papers, he called them; and he finally organized them into categories and put them in a large binder called, "The Tri-S Series." "Spiritual Sharing Service" series; and you can get it on his web site – the MJS web site, which is operated now – he died about four or five years ago; and his web site and his materials are still available under his name on the internet. And that's what the "Tri-S" is all about. It's a binder about this thick, and it's got these papers organized – and it's organized into subject matters, and it's an

invaluable thing to have. So I highly recommend that, and I'll bring you a copy of the differentiation papers – one chapter out of that series – and I'll bring it next week and that'll give you a taste of what it is. It will also tell you how to order his stuff on line. You can also get everything he ever wrote on one CD. Boom. It's about thirty bucks and it's an incredible resource.

Ok. But – well – she's here. We can start. [Evelyn Wamble walked in].

Chapter 14 [Laughter]. We were circling the field until you got here. Chapter 14.

1. I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
2. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.

So you've got – you've got water and harpists and thunder all developing this sound.

3. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders;

Remember there are twenty-four elders; there're four living creatures, and they are before the throne of God continually. Now, they sang a new song. This is chapter 14 – Revelation 14, in verse 3, and the twenty-four elders.

3. ... and nobody – no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.
4. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they are celibate. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and first fruits to the Lamb.
5. And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

Boy, it sets the bar up there, doesn't it?

6. And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people;

7. and he is saying with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

So he's still pointing to the worship of God as the creator.

8. And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

9. And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand,

Remember last week, we talked about the mark on his forehead or on his hand, being the number of a man – 666.

10. he will also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and [burning sulfur] brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

That corresponds right there to Matthew 25, [verses] 42 through 46.

11. "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Forever and ever, and they have no rest day and night.

12. Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

And we read that before in chapter 12, the last verse.

The dragon was enraged with the woman, went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Now, this is a unique group. This is that 144,000. "Those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" – that references two things. One, those who keep the commandments of God recalls to mind the Law. The Mosaic Law. The testimony of Jesus calls to mind the announcement of Christ as the victor over sin and death in the grave. So these are people – and the 144,000 fit that category – these are people who understand the Old Testament Law, and the requirements of the Law, but who also understand that Christ Himself through His death satisfied the Law; met all its requirements; and have annulled the Law's claims on us. There are no claims that the Law can make on us because Christ has satisfied those claims. So those two terms are very important. Keep the commandments and they're faith in Christ. Keep their faith in Christ active. And here it is in verse 12 of chapter 14, and it's in the final verse of chapter 12.

Ok. Now, that takes us down to verse 12 of [chapter] 14.

13. Then he hears a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'"

And that's talking about the martyrs who are going to die during the Tribulation Period. Now, this section begins to carry us into the area of differentiation very definitely. So let's go back to chapter 14, verse 1, and I want you just to make a note of some things.

1. I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him the hundred and forty-four thousand ...

Who were sealed in their forehead, and the mark of that sealing is they have the name of Christ and the name of God written on their foreheads. And when they appear with Him,

2. ... a voice is heard from heaven [it's a huge voice], like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.

So it's a soothing – it's a loud but soothing sound that envelopes. That's the image that verse 2 conveys. And they're singing a new song. They're singing

3. ... a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders;

And you remember the elders – the twenty-four elders – before God forever and ever are declaring, worthy is the Lamb; worthy is the Lamb. And we pick that up way early in Revelation through the first quarter. So the twenty-four elders around the throne represent all of the redeemed of mankind, and they are declaring the worthiness of God Himself; and they never stop. It says that sound coming from them, that message, continues for all eternity. Now can you imagine that? Ok. It takes God's enablement to be able to imagine that. That you have a message, and the message is to sing to the glory of God, and you declare that in a booming thundering voice across all creation forever; and you're never bored with it; and you never back off in your enthusiasm for making that declaration. Everything else has passed away. Now I want you to think of what that would require in your life, to be able to join that crowd. Everything that concerns you today has to be – it's gone. Everything. The food you eat. Where you're going to have lunch. Who you're going to have lunch with. Isn't this important? It consumes us. Right? These are the things that occupy our thoughts. So when our minds come to rest, they don't come to rest on the work of the Son, the person of the Son, the person of the Father. Far be it. We never think – our minds never come down to rest and focus on the Father on His throne. They just don't do it. If, the closest we can get to that is to have our minds come down to focus on something that the Son did on His way to the cross that impressed us. That's what our minds naturally focus on. Why? Because that's food for the soul, not for the spirit. If the spirit came to focus on anything, it would be at the direction of the Holy Spirit whose sole job it is, to point to the Son who points to the Father. So if our minds came to rest based on spiritual input, it would naturally gravitate toward the Father. How much of your day, how much of your time in your life do you spend focused on the Father, on His throne, in heaven, reigning over all creation. There're rare moments. Those are rare moments in our life. And yet, that's what those twenty-four elders are doing, twenty-four hours a day, forever. Worthy, worthy, worthy; holy, holy, holy is their message. It's simple. It's not complex. It's a very simple message. It declares the holiness of God and the worthiness of the Son. That's what they're doing, you see. And that's who we should be emulating because they are typical of those that God loves and whom He has saved out of this whole mess.

2. I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.

3. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.

Now I want you to pay attention to that, because here's this new song that comes up that's being sung by this group – this heavenly host. And nobody can learn that song but the 144,000 who were saved out of the earth; not by their own work; but as Phil says, they were switched on by the Spirit. Their eyes of understanding were opened and they saw what was happening.

John Young. After the Rapture?

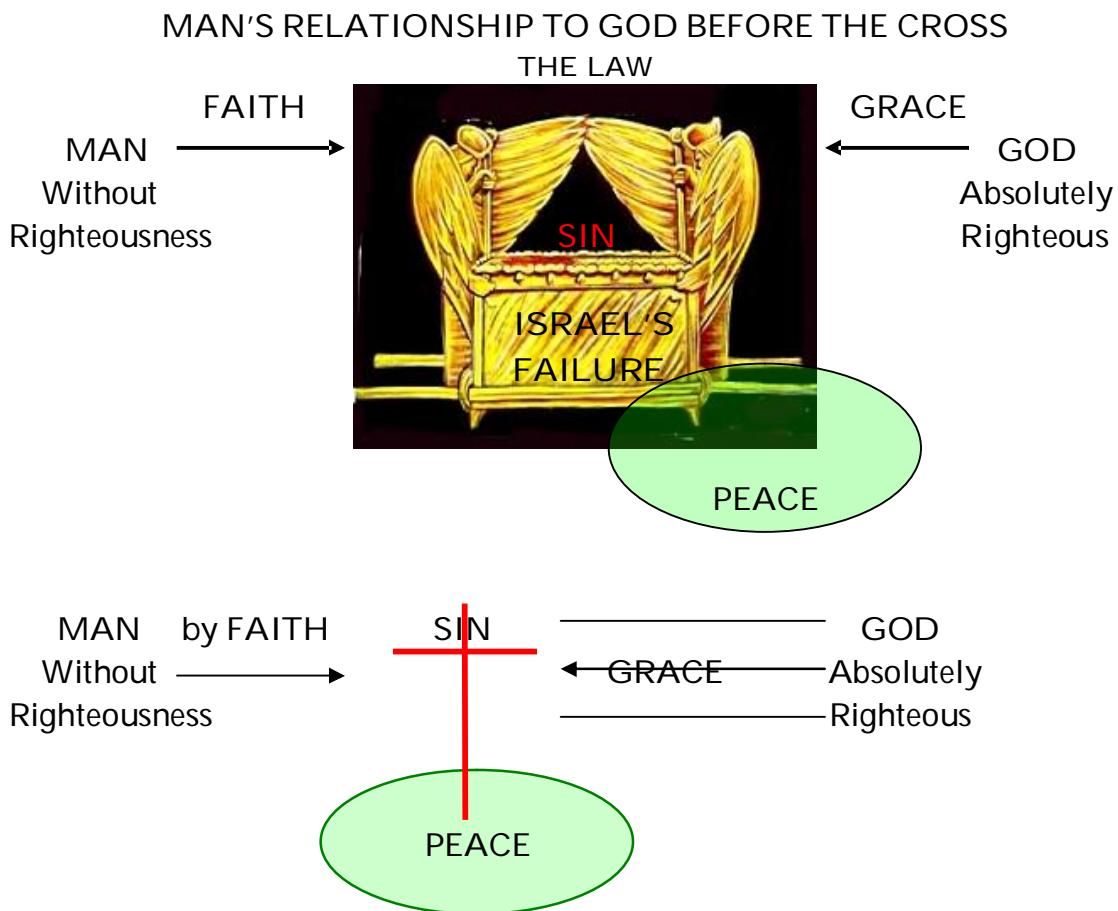
Conrad Bowman. After the Rapture. When the Rapture occurred, these 144,000 were turned on to the truth by God Himself and they understood that truth; and it was God's enablement.

Now, that can be disturbing. Some people say – Adam sent me a web site. You sent me a web site yesterday or day before. Remember that guy, you sent it and said his writing was interesting; and I went to that web site and I read through it; and his writing is interesting. It's fascinating – his take on some things. But buried in it is an extreme disappointment he has in God; because he's got this conundrum. He reads his Bible, and he reads the writing of a lot of different people, and they are talking about men and women who are lost forever and are in torment and are in pain and agony forever because of their unbelief; and their rejection. Ok. And to him, that is incredibly – extremely unfair; because God made them that way. He knew. See, he accepts the premise that if you believe, you believe only because God made you believe. You didn't have any choice in the matter. God made you believe. Not that God opened your eyes and showed you the Gospel, and you either accepted it or rejected it; but God made that determination ahead of time; which makes God extremely unfair. Because here He made creatures that had no opportunity whatsoever to be saved when they were made. They were made in order to be objects of His wrath, and that's unfair. He just can't bring himself to justify that; and that's the position of, as you read the responses on his web site – that's an enormous number of people out there who have rejected their churches, rejected their faith, rejected the whole idea of a God who can judge and who metes out punishment because He is

unfair. They believe in a God of love who will save ultimately all people. That there are no lost, and anybody who fights against that, at the worst, will be annihilated but they won't be punished or tormented forever. So, as we start looking at some of these verses, that issue is going to come back up.

So, they sang a new song – only the 144,000 could hear that song who have been purchased out of the earth. Now, the only way they could have been purchased from the earth is to have the blood of Christ applied to them because that's the purchase price. So, they are saved exactly like Israel was saved, because Israel in the Old Testament was saved based on the blood of Christ being shed yet to come. With Israel, they're looking forward to the cross and the price that's going to be paid, and they accepted that. And the typology of Israel supports that. And you understand what I'm saying when I'm talking about typology? Or do you? No? Ok.

See. That's a fault of my. You use the terms and you assume everybody knows what you mean when you say that. A type is this. It's more than just a picture. A type is an exact duplication, but with other materials. Here is the – [looking for Board marker]



Ok. There it is. Alright. Here's the cross. Remember when we took verses that said everything on earth is just a pattern of things that are in heaven. Ok. In heaven there's a Tabernacle. The Tabernacle on earth that God had Moses build was patterned after the Tabernacle in heaven. There's a place where God existed, where nobody else could go. That was the throne of God, and that was up here. Separated. Here's the Tabernacle in heaven. And that throne of God – the seat where He reigns is right there. In the Tabernacle on earth, they build the same thing; but on earth, the Tabernacle – I'll put it over here – and this is the Holy of Holies. And on earth, we put a seat right here. And underneath that seat, we put three objects that represented the gross failures of Israel. We put them in a box, just like God instructed Moses to have made. Ok. And the three objects in that box were: (i) the bowl of manna – golden bowl of manna, (ii) Aaron's rod that budded, and the third thing (iii) Moses' Tablets of Law. Those three went in the box. On the lid of the box – the box was closed. On the lid of the box was a raised place that represented in type – it was a type of God's throne. It was called the Mercy Seat. The *Hilasterion* in the Greek. It's the place where the blood of Christ – the sacrifice – was placed. So, here's the box. In it are the Tables of Law, the bowl of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. Ok. Up here is the Mercy Seat – a raised place. And over here is a cherub with wings that are folded across. And over here is a cherub with wings that are folded across. So this is hovered over by God Himself. Remember when it says in Genesis, and darkness was on the face of the earth and the Spirit of God brooded over the waters. Hovered over the waters – that's what's happening here. Now, this angel represents justice. Now this angel represents righteousness. Because together the justice of God and the righteousness of God make up His holiness; or that which sets Him apart. Since He's the judge of all things, and is absolutely righteous, He is set apart from all of His creation. He's different. And because of that being set apart, that's His holiness. Ok. Now, when the justice of God – which is perfect – and the righteousness of God look down on the sins of Israel, which is what these three items represented; instead of seeing them on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, the priest of Israel walks behind the curtain here; goes up to the Ark and he sprinkles the blood of the sacrifice right here on the Mercy Seat. The *Hilasterion*, and Christ is called our Mercy Seat. Our propitiation. It is both the means of our sacrifice and the place of our sacrifice. Now, that's going on up here. They don't see the sins of Israel, or that which represents the sins – in type. What they see is the blood of the sacrifice. So, God is satisfied in terms of His character. His character is satisfied. He is completely happy with the work of the Son. So, instead of punishing Israel for the sins that they have committed, He extends to them mercy until the next Day of Atonement next year. *Yom Kippur*, when the high priest of Israel goes through this again. Now the great veil that separates

God from all creation is right here. The priest had to go behind it. Right here in front of that veil is another altar, and this is the Altar of Incense. The Altar of Incense is fired by ashes from outside at the Brazen Altar. The Brazen Altar's there; the water, or laver, is here; the door into the Tabernacle is way down here. Ok. So ashes from here, where the offer was burned – the offering was burned – are taken to the Altar of Incense, and they fire the Altar of Incense. Now, the Altar of Incense represents the prayers of the faithful that have been accepted by God; and the smoke fills that Tabernacle as it rises, and it carries the prayers. Now we've learned already, previously, that there are angels that take those prayers and carry those prayers to just before the throne of God. That's what this is a type of. This is a type of the actual prayers of the saints that are being taken and carried to God. This is the place where they're carried. This is a type of God's dealing with the sins of Israel. So you see the typology has to do with a picture of things as they actually are. Ok. It's more than just – but it's more than that, because it includes an illustration in practical terms of God's reaction to things. So when I talk about something being a type, that's what I'm talking about. Christ was a type of things in heaven. He was all we could understand of the Trinity. He is a type of that. Israel was a type of the Son being obedient. That's why they had the sacrifice for Israel. Israel was a type of Jesus the Messiah come. So when Israel was disobedient and failed, they broke the type, because they should have obeyed God at every point. Moses was a type of God's provided leadership for His chosen nation. So when God told Moses, I want you to speak to the rock, and out of the rock will come the water that the people need. And this is the second time – Moses already has gone through this exercise once; and instead of speaking to the rock, he goes and gets the staff of Aaron; and he brings it back, and he rails at the people of Israel and tells the children of Israel, is it necessary that we're going to have to bring water out of this rock again to you? And he assumed that they understood that it was his power and his word that was bringing the water out of the rock. Then he took the staff and he whacked that rock, and water gushed forth; because God told you to speak to the rock. But He didn't tell him to whack it. And because he was disobedient and didn't do it like he said, Moses never entered the Promised Land. You see he broke the type. He should have been obedient just like Christ, who in Hebrews 5 it says, though he were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and became, by means of that obedience, the author of our salvation and the finisher of our faith. That was the real; and Moses was the type, and he broke the type. And because he broke the type, he was punished. Now, here we have twenty-four elders in heaven and they represent all of the redeemed of mankind. And we have 144,000 in heaven, and they're still learning, because only they can hear the song that's being sung. There's this song of many waters and this

booming thundering song being sung, and only the 144,000 can understand that song. Now, does this bring questions to your mind?

Evelyn Wamble. Aren't they singing it?

Conrad Bowman. Nope.

Evelyn Wamble. Singing the song?

Conrad Bowman. No. No. Heaven is filled with the song, but it doesn't say they're singing it. It says, only they can understand the song. Ok. So they're still learning. Ok. A hundred and forty-four thousand. There are still humans involved with the display that's going on, on earth. And they're hearing this song that's coming out of heaven, and they're the only ones who understand it, because they've been purchased from the earth. Now,

Norma Bowman. Conrad?

Conrad Bowman. Yes?

Norma Bowman. In verse 3 when it says, they sang a song, it's not talking about the 144,000; it's talking about the voices?

Conrad Bowman. Right. Right. It's a heavenly song that's being sung by the throngs.

Mary Ann Jacobsen. The 144,000. Are they Jewish or Gentiles?

Conrad Bowman. Are they Jewish or Gentiles? The 144,000 are 12,000 from every tribe of Israel. So they are ...

Mary Ann Jacobsen. Jewish.

Conrad Bowman. Entirely Jewish. Ok. Any other questions?

Evelyn Wamble. These are the same 144,000 that was introduced as witnesses during the Tribulation?

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Evelyn Wamble. There're not another 144,000?

Conrad Bowman. No ma'am. This is the same one ...

Evelyn Wamble. Did anybody ever think they were?

Conrad Bowman. Ma'am?

Evelyn Wamble. Has anyone ever thought that they were another 144,000?

Conrad Bowman. No. No, except Jehovah's Witnesses who believe only 144,000 are going to be saved anyway. Jehovah's Witnesses treat it differently. But, no. See, what this is doing is giving us details as to what happens with the 144,000 when their eyes are open, and this is giving us details about what they're going to be doing about it. Ok. Now,

4. These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they are celibates...

This has nothing to do with women today. Does it, Norma? No. For they are celibates. These are ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Now you remember when Paul said, I would that you were all like me. But, I understand that you have families and you're normal people. So Paul says, even though I would have you be like me – why did he say that? Because the New Testament instruction is this? If you take a wife, you take on a primary responsibility. Your responsibility, ahead of ministry, ahead of witness, is to her. You're life is to be dedicated to providing her happiness – that's a big stick. Man that's a huge stick. You know. It comes down like this. If she stays aggravated with me for more than two days, it's because I – it's my fault. And the reason it's my fault, I know what it takes to make her happy. And if she stays aggravated for any length of time at all – and I can shorten that up to two hours – it doesn't matter. But if she stays aggravated, it's because I have decided I am not willing to do whatever it takes to make her happy. So I'm deliberately keeping her mad. [Laughter]. And you know exactly what I'm talking about. You know ...

Jeff Smith. The women do.

Conrad Bowman. Huh?

Jeff Smith. The women do.

Conrad Bowman. The women do.

Jeff Smith. I don't know about the men. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. That's right. That's right.

John Young. I'll have to object to that Conrad. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. Oh in your case, in your case, I happen to know that – we won't talk about that.

Julie Green. I have a question. Why – what does it mean – defiled? Does that mean have sex?

Conrad Bowman. Well, that's what I'm talking about.

Julie Green. I know. But why would ...

Conrad Bowman. No, no, no, no, no no.

Julie Green. What does that mean?

Conrad Bowman. No, no, no ...

Julie Green. Sure. And then you said "celibate." That has to do with sex, does it not?

Conrad Bowman. Well that has to do with sex. Yeah. They've decided that ...

Julie Green. That's what I'm saying. The context is "defiled."

Conrad Bowman. That's right. It is, which is, which is why we need to cover this particular verse, because otherwise all of us ...

Julie Green. It makes it sound like sex is a bad thing.

Conrad Bowman. No. It's not. It's not. It is a primary thing. Alright. Think of it in terms of a seventeen year old boy.

Julie Green. That would be primary.

Conrad Bowman. It's primary. It's an affliction, [Laughter], is what it is. You know, he's preoccupied with it. Well, Paul recognized that. I mean, in the Pauline epistles it says, listen. If a man can't contain himself with regard to the woman – actually the term used is "virgin," that he has elected – he can't contain himself. Let them marry, for it's better to marry than to burn in your lust. So if you can't – if you don't have the gift of celibacy, go ahead and marry, and get about living; and your primary responsibility then is to her. It's not to God. Now that sounds

tough. You know. And you can get stoned in a lot of places for saying that. But Scripturally, that's what – that's what Scripture teaches. It said ...

Joyce Wood. Where ...

Conrad Bowman. What?

Joyce Wood. In Paul's teaching?

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. Yes ma'am. That's exactly what it says, when it gets to ...

Julie Green. It's all so bizarre, because the whole picture of Christ and the Church – the analogy is always to a wedding.

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Julie Green. Ok. Which would mean – wedding must be – what goes on in the majority of – I mean, it must be a good thing.

Conrad Bowman. That's true, it is a good thing.

Julie Green. ... the majority of ...

Conrad Bowman. It's a good thing.

Julie Green. I don't understand.

Conrad Bowman. And what it's pointing out – what it's pointing out is that this arrangement of 144,000 men who have not married, have not committed themselves to a woman at all. They have not defiled their separation agreement with God. They have been set aside to God. They're holy – set apart. Sanctified to a purpose – to following the Lamb. That's what it says. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. There're first and primary responsibility is following God where He goes. They have reserved themselves to that. To take on a wife, who then becomes your first order of business and responsibility, would be to defile your commitment to the Lamb. So that's where that is. And they're celibates. This is true not just in the election of a wife, but in the election of how you live your life. You have not chosen a woman to whom to commit yourself. Ok. So it's the highest possible rendering of thought processes. And that's what it's talking about. This 144,000 are single minded with regard to their commitment to follow

the Lamb. Norm? [Norma Bowman pointing to the clock]. Oh, the clock. It's time to go, for heaven's sake.

Jeff Smith. Let me say one thing about this though. It almost appears, not that it's the sex or anything, but that a woman is a bad thing to be involved with.

Julie Green. Right.

Jeff Smith. And I know that's not what he's saying at all. He's saying what you're saying. I just want the women here to believe – that is not what he's saying.

Conrad Bowman. No.

Jeff Smith. The fact that you defile yourself with a woman means that a woman must be a bad thing to be involved with. That's not what he's saying at all.

Julie Green. But ...

Jeff Smith. I know. I know. I knew that's where you were going ...

[People talking at once. Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. The bad thing is right here. The bad thing is right here. Can you make a commitment according to God's order of priorities. That's what it's saying. You remember. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? That's what it's talking about. The operation of the male mind. Well we're going to have to pickup on that next week, aren't we? What a place to leave this.

Joyce Wood. It's sort of hanging.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah, let's close.

Father, we thank You for the time You give us today; and just help us to move through this – further in this passage with understanding. And we thank You in Christ's name, because he paid for it. Amen.