

Revelation Series-“Voices of Victory”

9.5.18

There is an old song called the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which was written by **Julia Ward Howe** in 1861 and published in 1862. It was during a terrible time in this country. Does anyone know what happened from 1861-1865? The Civil War. Julia was deeply anguished at the growing conflict and she wrote this song. It’s considered a national hymn today and the entire nation has been inspired through the years and has become united in singing this old song.

Battle Hymn of the Republic

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on*

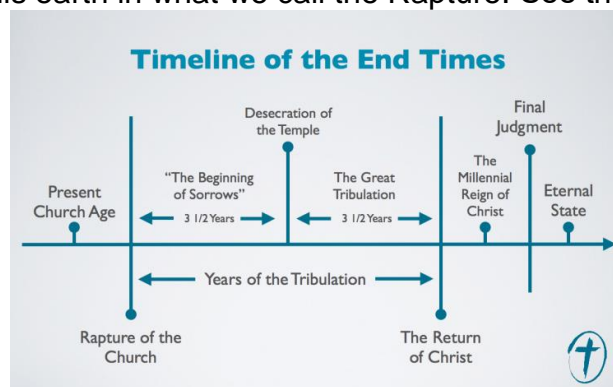
Now, the idea of this song and the lyrics “God is trampling out wrath,” is not a popular one today. The same is true of the recent 2002 song, “In Christ Alone.” It was found offensive by some because of the line, “**When on the cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied.**” Do you know what I’ve learned? There will always be lines or lyrics in songs that won’t please everyone. That’s the thing about music. And the same is true with these two songs about God’s wrath. In fact, one group proposed changing the lyrics to “In Christ Alone” to: “**the love of God was magnified,**” from “the wrath of God satisfied.” Certainly the idea of wrath offends many today. However, without question, the wrath of God is a theological reality in Scripture and we ignore it to our own detriment!

Tonight we’re going to see the unquestioned wrath of God and yet at the same time, we’re going to see the victory of those who have placed their trust in Jesus, who took God’s wrath for sin, so that we wouldn’t have to bear the weight of the wrath of sin: Eternal Separation from God. What we’re going to see is truly a juxtaposition...a paradox...a comparison between God’s people and Satan’s people. Let’s read the first three verses.

Revelation 14:1-3

¹Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, ³and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

Now remember we are at the middle point of this 7 year period called the Tribulation, the church has been snatched off of this earth in what we call the Rapture. See the chart...



Now think back with me... After the Church was Raptured, all the believers in Christ have risen to meet the Lord Jesus in the air and remember, this could happen at any moment, in the twinkling of an eye. During the Tribulation, at the beginning of the 7 years, there will be no believers left on the earth. Yet there will be people saved in the Tribulation period. In fact, there will be an enormous harvest of souls. You ask...how do these people get saved? Remember in Rev. 11, we learned it will be through the preaching and teaching of two witnesses, whom I believe are Moses and Elijah.



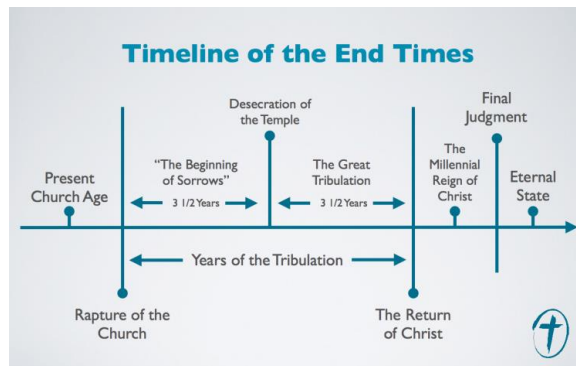
These men will preach for the first 3 ½ years and they'll be on TV and all forms of media every day. This is how the Gospel will be spread. It's also from their preaching I believe the 144,000 will be saved. These 144,000 young men (Rev 7) will be sealed by an Angel of God, who will supernaturally protect them from death by the Antichrist. For these 144,000, and all the inhabitants on the earth, the world is going crazy and the Antichrist is on the loose...yet, he won't be able to lay a finger on them.

Might I say this about serving the Lord: I believe in the sovereignty of God. Nothing will happen to me unless He okays it. We see this throughout scripture. This is why I've never been afraid to go on Mission Trips. Some of you have said to me in the past: "Aren't you scared to go and take Katy or Kandace or Clara or Andrew with you to Ethiopia or the Philippines or into Mexico? This is Ethiopia 7 years ago.



Aren't you afraid something may happen to you?" Absolutely not! Why? Because God has told us to go. I'd rather be in the will of God in Ethiopia than in the will of man in Wilkes County. I believe I'm under God's protection and I won't die until He's ready for me or my family to die. That's comforting to me! DO HARD THINGS!

I want you to **think about the condition of the world** during the Tribulation when the 144,000 will be preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, tongue and tribe. This will happen during the last 3 ½ years, when things are the worst...



The world will be suffering from plagues and disasters ushered in by the 7 seal judgments and the 7 trumpet judgments. People will be petrified AND open to the gospel. And isn't that the way it is today. It takes turmoil and sickness, financial loss, death and struggle before most people are open to the gospel. When things are good, they don't need Him. It's when it's easy to get along on our own. But, when the rug is pulled out from under us and we hit the ground...the only place to look is up...to the Lord!

So today, might you and be on the lookout for people who are struggling around you, because in their struggles, they usually become open to the gospel. Will you be aware enough to see that need in them and share Jesus? I pray we will.

Well, during the Tribulation period, there will literally be a "world-wide revival" that will take place. You remember one of Jesus' best known promises, which was really a word of prophecy about the end of the age is recorded in Matthew 24:14.

Matthew 24:14

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

So let's turn our attention back to text as we see that the Apostle John...as he saw Jesus (the Lamb of God) standing on Mount Zion. **Look at Revelation 14:1 with me again.**

Revelation 14:1

¹ Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

This is such a wonderful scene that will happen one day. John saw Jesus! He was standing on Mt. Zion alive. It's a reminder that Jesus is not dead...He's alive! You may ask where is this happening? Where is Mount Zion? Well, there are two in Scripture. One is in Jerusalem, known as the Mt. of Olives, where Jesus was the night he was arrested in the Olive grove in the Garden of Gethsemane and where He will return at the end of the Tribulation period after the battle of Armageddon.

The second one is in Heaven. The heavenly city. Hebrews 12:22 tells us, "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God." I believe this scene is happening in heaven (even though not all scholars agree, some say it's here on earth). But, I believe it's a foreshadowing of what will happen in heaven...the anticipation of what will happen just before the Millennial Reign of Jesus on the earth, before He comes back. At this point, I believe, Jesus is NOT on the earth, because it's mid-point of the Tribulation period. **See verses 2-**

3.

Revelation 14:2-3

² And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps,³ and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

They have a new song to sing that only they can sing. It's been said that Christianity is a singing religion! We sing! We are the redeemed. This is the song of the redeemed! Now, I've been thinking this week about this "new song" the 144,000 is going to sing. In fact, when you see singing in the Bible it is always the result of something that God has done for somebody. Look at the words of Psalm 40 for example.

Psalm 40:1-3

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
² He drew me up from the pit of destruction,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the Lord.

Boy that's me tonight! He's lifted me out of the mud and mire many times. And He'll always set my feet on solid ground and given me a firm place to stand. And He'll put a new song in my mouth! Hallelujah! **Think about it:** When something good has happened in your heart and life, don't you want to sing about it! Makes me think about the song we learned Sunday...

Death Was Arrested

*Oh, we're free, free
Forever we're free
Come join the song
Of all the redeemed
Yes, we're free free
Forever amen
When death was arrested and my life began
When death was arrested and my life began*

But, I understand...we don't necessarily think about singing when you think of the book of Revelation do you? We think of tribulation, strife, wrath and judgment, but, here it is! Singing! We see them singing. Now think about this. God is a Holy God, which means according to His own character He must be right and just and judge sin. **But, please, please remember, God is a happy God!** We're going to have a good time in heaven! We are going to celebrate and rejoice in Heaven. Verse 13 in this chapter tells us:

Revelation 14:13

¹³ And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

“Yes,” says the Spirit (the Holy Spirit says this), “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them” What a joy!! No more pain, no more suffering, no more heartache. That makes me happy? How about you! That should make us smile tonight!!! Be happy and joyful! Smile you’ve got something to be happy about!!

Look at verses 4-5 at these 144,000:

Revelation 14:4-5

⁴ It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, ⁵ and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

They have kept themselves pure spiritually...like virgins. Blameless...like Noah. They were right with God. Listen, we are all ambassadors for Christ and people are going to hold us to a higher standard. This group of 144,000 were disciplined and sanctified. They told the truth... There were no lies in their mouths. Can the same be said of us? Are we truth-tellers. (I read a study this week that says people actually have to work their brains harder to tell lies...it’s literally harder work to lie than to just tell the truth. Guess who set it up that way? GOD...we are His image bearers.)

Jump down to verse 6...let’s look at the work of more angels (3 angels) and what will be happening on the earth. Here comes the wrath and judgment, (Rowe’s Song) “***Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord, He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored***”:

Revelation 14:6-7

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷ And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

So, at the midpoint of the Tribulation, this first angel is dispatched to fly around the world preaching the gospel in the tongue and language of every inhabitant of the earth. Remember, we saw earlier from Jesus’ prophecy in Matthew 24, God is going to make sure everyone has a chance to hear the gospel before the end. Why?

2 Peter 3:9

⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Now, I notice there is no reluctance with this angel...the angel just shares. No one giving the angel a pep-talk to go share. Doesn’t that sort of smell for us!! Here we are today...we’ve still got the gospel...we’ve got the good news...and yet, why is it we are so reluctant to share it with those who so desperately need it? What’s even more amazing is that this angel has never been “saved.” Angels don’t get saved. They chose long ago whether to follow Satan or God. Yet, this angel shares the gospel.

The angel is sharing about something he’s never experienced. Yet, we have and so often we stay quiet...as if our mouths have been sewn shut. How in this world can we stay quiet about being saved...being free...being redeemed...do we really believe it? Listen, Jesus is coming again and then God’s judgment and wrath are going to be poured out on this earth for those who have rejected Jesus! There will be death and destruction, by the last 3 ½ years, the Antichrist will be

beheading people. While there's still time...relative peace...we've got to tell people. God help us to be courageous and bold about His precious plan to save mankind.

Did you see what the angel said? He said, "Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come." Across the world, we don't fear God anymore. People so flippant with Him. In London, they have taken out of many words from a children's dictionary. Which words? Words associated with Christianity because the publisher cited "declining church attendance and multiculturalism." According to the *Daily Telegraph*, a London newspaper, the deleted Christian words include: "altar, bishop, chapel, disciple, minister, parish, pew, psalm, pulpit, saint, sin, and devil."

Turn to Romans chapter 1. The Bible tells us the "fear of God is the beginning of wisdom!" The angel talks about God as the Creator. After all, contrary to the evolutionists, God made the heavens and the earth! I don't care what the colleges and universities and high school textbooks are telling our young people. We didn't come from an explosion in space and crawl out of some primordial soup and my ancestors weren't monkeys swinging from trees. God created man in His own image. God is Creator and mankind is without excuse.

Romans 1:18-20

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Take a look at this image... This is Mars Hill in Athens.



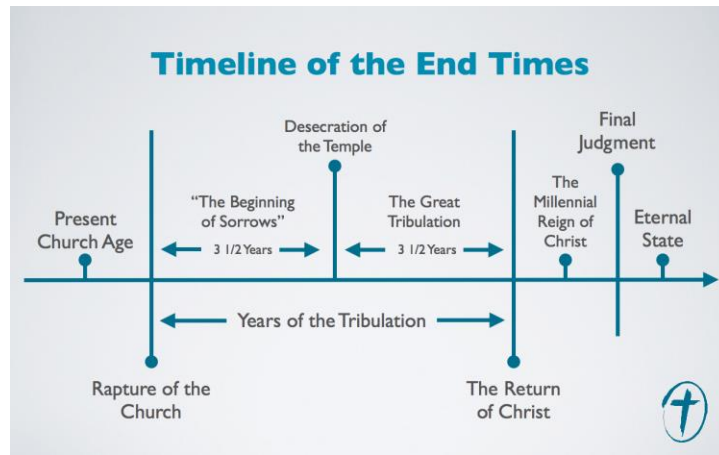
Paul on Mars Hill in Athens in Acts 17, talked to those pagan men about the creation. Dr. Henry Morris said: "If Christ is not the creator, then he can hardly be the Savior or the coming King."

A second angel comes and says, "Fallen is Babylon the Great!"

Revelation 14:8

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

"Babylon" is the Antichrist's system of one-world government, economy and religion. We'll talk about this more when we get to chapter 17 in a couple of weeks, but bottom line, the Antichrist will use the religious system of Islam to help him in his rise to power in the first half of the Tribulation. However, the one-world government that's headed by him will turn on and destroy this world religious system and he'll declare himself to be god.



Then we see a **third angel that proclaims to those** that have taken the mark of the beast that their judgment and punishment is coming with an intensity and severity like never seen before and ultimately they will be destroyed by being thrown into Hell. This is the part people don't like today. They try to make God into two different Gods. The God of the OT and the God of the NT. Well Revelation is in the NT.

Revelation 14:9-12

⁹ And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name." ¹² Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

Rest is coming from our labors folks. That's what John is reminding the people who are living through the Tribulation. **Now watch what happens in verses 14-20 there are TWO HARVESTS.**

Revelation 14:14-20

¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. ¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." ¹⁶ So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. ¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." ¹⁹ So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

Do you know what this is?



It's a sickle. A sickle is used to cut down grass or crops. Did you know Jesus (symbolic) is going to use one of these? The Bible says He will use a sharp sickle not to cut down grass, but to gather His people. Those that are saved will be harvested to heaven...like wheat and grain into the storehouse. Yet, those that have the mark of the beast will suffer God's wrath with seven final judgments that will soon follow and ultimately end in their eternal doom. That sickle will be swung by an angel and the words of Rowe's song rings true yet again:

***He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on***

Yet, look at those who have endured will rejoice AND SING! Rev. 15 tells us that:

Revelation 15:2-4

²And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. ³And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! ⁴Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

And all nations will worship Jesus during the Millennial Reign. He's coming again! But, until then...let's go share the Gospel and sing...because we've been redeemed...

Death Was Arrested

***Oh, we're free, free
Forever we're free
Come join the song
Of all the redeemed
Yes, we're free free
Forever amen
When death was arrested and my life began
When death was arrested and my life began***

Voices of Victory!