

A SERIES THROUGH THE REVELATION

Revelation 14 PT. 1 —CHRIST'S VICTORY, AND ANGELIC PROCLAMATIONS / 9.15.22

I. INTRODUCTION (Revelation 14:1-11)

- A. Although **Revelation 12-13** present two very dark chapters in The Revelation, here in **Revelation 14**, an angelic explanation chapter, God encourages His family by His commitment to keep them through the darkest hour of human history, as well as the execution of His slow building retribution of the wicked, those that have resisted His benevolent leadership.
- B. Here in **Revelation 14** there are a total of three scenes. The first scene (**Revelation 14:1-5**) is that of the Lamb standing on Mount Zion with 144,000 saints who have followed Him. The second scene (**Revelation 14:6-13**) is that of 3 angels proclaiming messages that include the Gospel, the fall of Babylon, and the fate of those that worship the beast and His image. And the third scene (**Revelation 14:14-20**) is that of two harvests, one of righteousness with the saints of God, and one of wickedness, with those who are unrighteous or un-repentant.

II. CHRIST AND THE CHURCH'S VICTORY (Revelation 14:1-5)

- A. **Revelation 14:1-5** *"Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. Then I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from the from among men, being first fruits to God and to the Lamb."*
 - 1. These opening five verses are the opposite of what we encountered in **Revelation 13**. Here we see the Lamb standing in replacement of the beast. The followers of the Lamb are also standing with the seal of God on their foreheads, in replacement to those that took the mark of the beast on their foreheads. And they are in Mount Zion, as stable place, as opposed to the fleeting Babylon, and the temporary system the beast set up.
 - a. A Lamb Standing—It's not too often that Christ is pictured standing in the scriptures, but when He is, it's sending a message of strength, and victory and resurrection life (**Acts 8:54-55; Rev. 5:6**).
 - b. On Mount Zion—Throughout the Bible in the 162 uses of Zion, nearly all of them speak to the city of Jerusalem as the old creation (Earthly), not the New Jerusalem (Heavenly). I believe that Christ is standing on the earth, in His resurrection, in the city of Jerusalem/Israel (**Ps. 2:6**).
 - 1. If you remember, the beast arose from the sand, (**Rev. 13:1**), but here Christ is pictured as standing on a rock, on Mount Zion, on a solid foundation (**Zech. 14:3-4; Matt. 7:24-29**).
 - c. 144,000—It seems best to see these 144,000 as the same 144,000 that appeared back in **Revelation 7:2-8**. I believe that they are a group of Jewish men who were most likely martyred their resistance to the beast empire, and their allegiance to Jesus (*this is a prophetic vision of the future*).
 - 1. *"The 144,000 are a distinctive group with a physical connection to the Jewish nation and the throne of David that requires an earthly location (Mt. Zion)."* —Robert Thomas, The Revelation Vol. 2, Pg. 190
 - d. They Sang A New Song—Well, here we are again, back in the concentric circles of worship that we've seen throughout the Revelation with the *throne, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders* (**Rev. 4, 5, 7**). And here they are singing a new song, because God Himself is doing a new thing, something that was prophesied of old. It's a deafening song, like the crashing of the waves on the shore.

1. I believe that this song is being sung in heaven, although it's only understood on earth by the 144,000. This is the antiphonal nature of heaven's song, it's call, and response (**Rev. 5; 19:5-6**).
- e. These Are The Ones Who Aren't Defiled With Women For They Are Virgins—This isn't a statement about marriage defiling men, but about refusing to be defiled by immoral women and a wild increase of sexual immorality upon the earth. The idea is that they haven't participated in either sexual immorality, or spiritual immorality.
 1. This word *DEFILED* speaks of both moral defilement, as well as sexual defilement. God considers the worship of pagan God's spiritual harlotry (**Hosea 4:12; 5:4**).
 2. Most commentators see these as Jewish men, who aren't married but celibate. Paul has much to say about this calling in **1st Corinthians 7:7-8, 25-26, 29-34**. Because of this unique time in history, it's thought that unique response from some will be required as God calls them.
 - i. But celibacy is a calling, something that God Himself gives, and it's not for everyone.
- f. They (144,000) Follow The Lamb Wherever He Goes—These martyrs (*most likely*) will have made the decision, by the power of the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus, even to the point of death, which most likely came from the beast empire.
 1. For us, we want to practice today, following the Lamb wherever He goes. We have to sign up again and again to follow Him wholeheartedly.
- g. These (144,000) Were Redeemed From Among Men, Being First-fruits To God—Two things are clear from this verse: firstly, these 144,000 are redeemed people from the earth, meaning they were like us, in need of Christ and were born again. And secondly, they don't represent the fullness of who God saves and uses at the end of this age, they are only the first fruits (**Lev. 23:9-14**).
 1. "...They have been purchased from among the people of the earth as a special offering to God..."
NLT
- h. There's No Deceit In Their Mouths, and They Are Without Fault Before God—This is why they are special, because they remained faithful witnesses to God under great duress and pressure. They continually agreed with the nature, and personhood of God even unto death. They haven't held back the truth amidst suffering (**Zeph. 3:13; Isa. 53:9**).

III. FOUR HEAVENLY PROCLAMATIONS (Revelation 14:6-13)

- A. **Revelation 14:6-7** "Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."
- B. Well, here we have the first of four heavenly proclamations, three by angels (**Rev. 14:6-12**), and one most likely by God (**Rev. 14:13**). These are what you call a proleptic (pro-lep-tick) message, prophecies about the future (*The representation or assumption of a future act or development as if it presently exists or is accomplished*).

- a. I Saw An Angel Flying In The Midst Of Heaven Having The Everlasting Gospel To Preach—In the same way that beast is being worship by *“...all those who dwell on the earth...”* so also is God’s Gospel, the good news of Jesus going far and wide (*“...to every nation, tribe, tongue and people...”*) *Maybe because of persecution the Church isn’t able in large scale to preach the Gospel, so God’s using angels to announce His message.*

1. It’s also important to note that God’s Gospel is an everlasting Gospel, which is the opposite of the beast’s temporal message. The beast is offering protection here on earth, but God’s Gospel is something eternal.

- b. Saying With A Loud Voice, Fear God, Give Him Glory—Well, some people have a frustration with this verse that the Gospel being declared doesn’t mention repentance, Jesus’ sacrificial death and being born again. I think on the other hand, the conclusion of the Gospel is the Gospel, *“In light of what Christ has done, in light of who Christ is, in light of the Bible’s testimony of God, FEAR HIM AND GIVE HIM GLORY!!”* The only way we give God glory is by repentance (**Rev. 16:9**).

- c. Fear God And Give Him Glory For The Hour Of His Judgment Has Come—This call, this Gospel proclamation is for those that don’t know Jesus to take their eyes off the temporal and set them on the eternal.

1. The voice is loud, communicating urgency, but also that everyone is going to hear this warning. People aren’t walking into a blind future. Are they deceived? Yes. But warned? For sure! God in His mercy is warning every person, telling them to turn away from sin, and turn towards Him.
2. This is what’s being said when it says, *“Fear God...FOR the hour of His judgment has come...”* The paraphrase sounds like this, *“Hey, HEY!!! Fear God, and give Him glory...BECAUSE the hour of His judgement, His eternal judgment is here, it’s in the land, it’s within reach, it’s disrupted your life, it’s displaced you physically, it’s upended you emotionally, so worship Him, because He’s the One who’s created all things...not the beast and his regime...there’s no other opportunity to repent, His patience has come to an end, this is it. REPENT. FEAR HIM! GIVE HIM GLORY!”*

C. Revelation 14:8 *“Then another angel followed, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”*

1. The second angel has now sounded, prophesying a future event, something that’s yet to happen, the fall of Babylon. Babylon is humanity’s last great apostate civilization which will unite politically, economically, and religiously against God and His Christ, and it’s all coming down.
2. This anointed proclamation (*it’s coming from an angel*) will give incredible strength and confidence to the saints that though it seems like this night season will never conclude, it is shortly and suddenly coming to an end. This proclamation, repeated by the Church will become the strength she needs to endure.
3. Babylon in the Old Testament was a city/culture that was hostile towards God, rife with sexual immorality, worship of pagan gods, and a deep hate towards God and the people of God. It’s not clear if this means that the city is going re-emerge, or if it’s a culture, or a mixture of both (*my assumption is that it’s both*).
4. The reason judgment is coming is because Babylon has served up an intoxicating wine, causing everyone to be drunk with deception, letting loose of all morals, values, and boundaries, thus participating in fornication.
5. The idea is that Babylon has exerted a demonic influence upon the nations, causing them to do things they would’ve never done without it’s influence.

- a. The wrath of God is pent up towards the fornication of Babylon (*the wrath of her fornication*).

D. Revelation 14:9-11 *“Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”*

1. The first message that’s proclaimed is the Gospel, with a loud voice, presenting urgency and the distance it will cover. Then the message about the fall of this system, it’s coming down, as sure as anything. And lastly, the fate of those that don’t reject that system, and choose to worship the beast.
 2. The underlying question here is, “*what happens to those worship the beast and his image?*” The answer is clear, and decisive, they will receive the full outpouring of God’s wrath upon them.
 3. Once again, this strong, loud proclamation from the angel about the finality of those that partner with this evil system will give the saints confidence to withstand it and resist it, even unto death. This prophecy will give us great courage to try and spare people eternal torment.
- a. He Himself Shall Also Drink Of The Wine Of The Wrath Of God, Which Is Poured Out Full Strength In The Cup Of His Indignation—It was common in John’s day for wine to be cut into halves, and sometimes even more. If they didn’t want to get drunk, they would use one part water, to one part wine, or even two/three parts water, to one part wine. But if they wanted to get drunk, they would drink it straight.
1. God is pouring out an unmixed, spice free, undiluted cup of His wrath on them. This is the same cup that Jesus started to drink in Gethsemane and finished on Calvary (**Matt. 26:39; LK. 22:42**).
 2. Beloved, it’s clear, we either accept Jesus’ sacrificial death on Calvary, absolving the cup of God’s wrath over our lives through Christ’s death, or we reject Christ’s atonement, and we drink the cup of God’s wrath in fullness. Either Christ drinks it for us, or we drink ourselves, but it must be poured out.
- b. He Shall Be Tormented With Fire And Brimstone In The Presence Of God—Brimstone in the Bible, along with sulfur was a type of asphalt found particularly in volcanic deposits and would produce both an intense heat, and a terrible smell. It’s image is often used in the Bible for terrible suffering under God’s judgment (**Gen. 19:24; Deut. 29:23; Job 18:15; Isa. 30:33; Ezek. 38:22**).
4. And The Smoke Of Their Torment Ascends Forever And Ever—It would be nice if we were able to cut from the Bible all the mentions of hell, and the lake of fire, but that is not what the Holy Spirit has inspired His authors to do. This is a reality, not a thought, or an ideal, it’s real.
- a. This image of eternal torment, or the lake of fire is a common theme in the Revelation (**Rev. 16:8; 18:8; 20:13-14**). Eternal punishment is also described by Jesus (**Matt. 25:46; Mk. 9:48**).
 - b. Some today say, “*These examples and illustrations that Jesus and other Biblical authors used for hell were symbolic, or figurative.*” This is true, they are symbols, symbols that speak of a greater, more horrific reality.

- c. This is their eternal destiny, those that have worshiped the beast, and pledged their allegiance to Him. Beloved, this is occasion for great rejoicing. Remember, these are the ones that killed the saints (**Rev. 6:9-11**), worshipped the beast (**Rev. 13:4,8, 12, 15:14:9**), and rejected God's call for them to repent (**Rev. 9:20-21; 14:6-7, 9-10**).
 - d. Here God's judgment isn't only mandated, it's deserved. This is the vindication promised the saints in **Revelation 6:9** and the answer to their prayers in **Revelation 8:3-4**.
- E.** We have to proclaim God's gospel in its entirety, which is a message of both love, and wrath, a message of both mercy, and judgment, a Gospel that both bitter and sweet.