

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 3RD, 2024 // REVELATION

THE CONTRAST (REVELATION 14:1-5) TWO OPPOSING SIDES

Ch. 13 showed the influence and plan of Satan to deceive humanity and attack Christianity via two "beasts," or antichrists. Ch. 14 will show the plan and power of God.

- Ch. 14 pulls back the curtain to reveal the true victor of the epic drama we've been studying. The only advice given in this chapter is to **be patient**.

144,000 AGAIN?

The difficult-to-interpret number from Chapter 7 appears again. This could be the same group as before (the promised Jewish remnant), or it may be people killed during the 7 years of the Great Tribulation.

- Whoever they are, they appear to be in a glorified state with God in heaven. They also appear to be ready for battle.

MORE THAN LIKELY A SYMBOLIC NUMBER

The 144,000 is more than likely a round number that is not precise but symbolizes all who have chosen to follow Jesus.

THEY STOOD ON MOUNT ZION

Zion is an ancient name for heaven (Heb. 12:22). The image of God and His followers on an immovable mountain directly contrasts Satan on his movable sand (Ch. 13).

AGAIN, WE FEEL THE VOLUME OF REVELATION

As John saw Jesus (the Lamb) standing on Mount Zion with the 144,000, he said it sounded like "cascading waters," "loud thunder," and "harpists playing on their harps."

- These sounds come from the **redeemed people of God who sing and praise because of the salvation they've found in Christ**.

"THEY SANG A NEW SONG"

The redeemed people sing a song about redemption that only they will know. Some believe this is a song specifically for the martyrs from the Great Tribulation.

- The song is sung before God's throne and the 24 elders mentioned in Chapter 4.

THEY ARE NOT DEFILED?

V. 4 is odd in how it uses gender. The first part, "not defiled themselves with women," refers to men, but the second part of the statement, "since they remained virgins," refers to women.

- This can mean sexual purity, but it's probably a metaphor for following other gods (**spiritual adultery**).

NO ONE IS "BLAMELESS"

When John tells us these people are "blameless," he is not implying that they have never sinned.

Redeemed means **bought back from captivity** (Micah 7:19).

- **They were slaves to sin, but by repenting and choosing to "follow the Lamb wherever he goes," they've become recipients of God's grace.**

MESSENGERS (REVELATION 14:6-13)

ANGELS DELIVERING A MESSAGE IS NOTHING NEW

Though we have seen God use angels several times in Revelation, these three offer more direct and unique messages.

- These three angels' proclamation is not specifically for John but for all humanity. They warn the Earth that the end is near, similar to the "woe" angel in Chapter 8.

THE FIRST ANGEL (VS. 6-7)

The first angel delivers the "eternal gospel... to the inhabitants of the earth." The message is urgent and spoken with a "loud voice." The people are called to "fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come."

- God is pulling out all the stops to get people to repent.

THE SECOND ANGEL (V. 8)

This angel continues the same proclamation but mentions that "Babylon the Great" (city/culture mentioned in Chapter 11) has fallen.

- We see imagery the opposite of the "virgins" in v. 4. **The evil people of "Babylon" are drunk on "her sexual immorality."** Again, this is probably both literal and metaphorical.

THE THIRD ANGEL (VS. 9-12)

The last angel pronounces eternal doom to anyone who receives the mark of the beast. If they choose to get "drunk" off the beast's immoral ways, they will also "drink the wine of God's wrath, which is poured full strength into the cup of his anger."

- **Modern Christianity often shies away from the topic of God's wrath.**

IT GETS WORSE

Not only will evil people experience God's anger, they will also be eternally separated from God and "tormented with fire and sulfur in the sight of the holy angels and... the Lamb... forever and ever."

- **Hell is real. It is a place of mental and physical anguish with eternal unrest and separation from God.**

WE DON'T HAVE TO BE SEPARATED FROM GOD

John says if we have "endurance" and "keep God's commands," we will avoid hell and be rewarded with heaven.

- Look at the contrast in v. 13. Those who deny Christ suffer, but **those "who die in the Lord from now on" will "rest from their labors, since their works follow them."**

SOME THINGS DO CARRY OVER

We often say, "You can't take it with you." This is true with material things, but our **good and righteous works and acts do transcend into the next life** (v. 13).

- **And because of our diligence now, we are no longer in "labor" in eternity.** This is not about work but life's "labor" pains.

THE 1ST HARVEST (REVELATION 14:14-16)

REMEMBER THE EPIC DRAMA?

John is still witnessing a drama that is showing him the future. This drama's 6th and 7th visions play out one of Jesus' metaphors.

- Jesus often mentioned parables about harvests, planting seeds, and separating wheat and tares. Here, we see the world is the harvest God will reap.

A WHITE CLOUD AND THE SON OF MAN

Revelation 1:7 says that Jesus will be coming in the clouds. John describes Him as "seated on the cloud, with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand."

- Clouds often represent majesty, and the sharp sickle indicates that God is prepared to harvest. Harvesting is also a time to store things up.

"ANOTHER ANGEL CAME OUT OF THE TEMPLE"

Many have wondered who this angel is and why he told Jesus to "use your sickle and reap."

- The fact that Jesus said He didn't know the time of His return may help us with this (Mark 13:32). But what does this harvest mean?

SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR THE 1ST HARVEST

Some believe this is the rapture, simultaneous to Chapter 11 (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18). Others see this as the completion of all the martyrs being killed during the Great Tribulation.

- **People constantly debate where the 2nd coming of Christ is in the Scripture. The question shouldn't be "When?" but "Are we prepared?"**

HARVESTED CAN SIMPLY MEAN COMPLETION

The 1st harvest can mean that all the people who will give their lives to Christ during the Great Tribulation have done so. Jesus said that when this occurs, He will return (Matthew 24:14).

- So, maybe not a rapture or martyrdom, but a complete harvest of those who are saved.

THE 2ND HARVEST (REVELATION 14:17-20)

THE CURTAIN CALL

The 1st harvest was the saints' exodus, whether by rapture or martyrdom. The 1st harvest was described using grain as the analogy, and the 2nd harvest used grapes that would be harvested after the grain.

- God is about to close the epic drama with a graphic account of His wrath being poured out on an evil society.

ANOTHER ANGEL WITH AUTHORITY OVER FIRE

Another angel comes out from "the temple in heaven" and calls to "one who had the sharp sickle" to "gather the clusters of grapes" because they "have ripened." In other words, evil's time has come.

- This is not Jesus swinging the sickle, but an angel who will gather the "grapes" to be thrown into a winepress.

THE CHRONOLOGY GETS TRICKY

We don't know how much time passes between the 1st and 2nd harvests, nor how long it will take before God pours out His wrath. V. 19 sets up the 7 bowls of wrath, and v. 20 probably sets up the final battle of good and evil, **Armageddon** (Ch. 19).

- We can assume the time between these events is very short.

VIOLENT IMAGERY

John is shown gruesome imagery of people being trampled under the power of God like a winepress crushes grapes.

- These people are the ones who have consciously **denied God, put themselves and their desires first, and participated in evil lifestyles.**

THIS HAPPENS "OUTSIDE THE CITY"

This may just be a reference to rural areas where vineyards were, or it could be specifically referring to an area outside of Jerusalem called Megiddo. We will focus on this more in Chapter 19.

"...BLOOD FLOWED OUT OF THE PRESS"

Again, the imagery is extremely violent. Blood up to a horse's bridle and 180 miles across is probably hyperbole to show how much carnage will take place at the last battle evil mankind has with Jesus.

- **We see in Chapter 14 that unaddressed sin will lead to a destructive end.**

EVERYTHING CATCHES UP

- Every sin has some measure of consequence, and we cannot take for granted **how deep we can sink as a result of sin.**
- The sin that goes unrepented will have an eternal consequence. **God will only allow our selfishness, idolatry, hatred, and immorality for so long.**

WE CAN TAKE SOME THINGS WITH US

- Our dedication and love for God also has effects on us. **The things we do to honor God and help others resonate in this life and for eternity!**
- Everyday we must consciously choose to deny ourselves, to follow Jesus, and to love the people around us.
- **One day there will be a harvest.**