

GRAPES OF WRATH – Revelation 14

In **chapter 13** we have the ungodly trinity: the **devil** (dragon), **anti-Christ** (beast), and the **false prophet** (the lamb with two horns). This demonic trinity will torment those who are followers of Christ. In **chapter 14**, *despite the darkness of chapter 13*, we find the light of God's righteous judgement prevailing over satan's ungodly trinity!

(Read: v.1-5) Jesus is standing on **Mt. Zion**, on the mount where He purchased, *fortified*, our salvation. **Zion – means: fortification, sunny mountain.** (Nelson/Fausset Dictionary). He stands as our *everlasting* victory, as the light of the world!

The 144,000 appear to be the same 144,000 Jews sealed by God in chapter 7. Rather than the mark of the beast, they bear the mark (Name) of their God, **Yahweh!** *During the reign of the anti-Christ, these redeemed Jews will be God's witnesses proclaiming the gospel and warning others of the coming King!* The **voice (v.2b)** John hears is the voice of God. **(v.2b, 3) Harps** in scripture are *often* associated with **joy!** The new song, which **only** they can sing, is a song of joy! John further describes the 144,000 in **(v.4, 5)**. They are the **first fruits** of an earthly people, of those who will inherit the earth **(Matthew 5:5)**, especially as it relates to the Jewish remnant in Christ!

As we consider the 144,000 here, we are reminded that God calls every believer to be *separated, sanctified (set apart)* for His *divine* purpose! We are set apart by **truth!** **(John 17:17) Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.** *Thus, the reputation of these 144,000 will be, "they followed the Lamb wherever He goes!"* **(John 16:13a) However, when He, the Spirit of**

truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. God's truth is the path to ongoing sanctification and true liberation in Christ!

They are virgins both physically (*not defiled by women*) and spiritually (*no deceit, without fault, v.5*). Many of us *may not* qualify physically as virgins, but God calls *all* of us to be "spiritual virgins," in the sense that we guard our spirits (*attitudes*) from worldly contamination! **(2 Corinthians 11:2, 3) For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.**

In (v.6-18) we find several proclamations. There are six angels participating in these proclamations. The first proclamation concerns the gospel (v.6, 7). This is *sort* of a "last call" to the earth's inhabitants! It is also a fulfillment of Christ's prophecy **(Matthew 24:14) And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.** The church has been commissioned to take the gospel to the world, but here we see God's mercy *once again* being *displayed* toward mankind. **(2 Peter 3:9b) "...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."**

(v.7) This is a call to worship the creator, rather than the creation! **(Romans 1:25) "...who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."** **Notice:** the gospel gives an accurate diagnosis of mankind's situation: **"...the hour of judgement has come"** – but it also provides a clear prognosis – **"worship Him!"** This *last call* is given by this angel, but *possibly* carried out

by the 144,000 commissioned Jewish believers. The fact is, *even today*, God is constantly issuing “**last calls.**” That close call may well have been the last call, for many people!

(v.8) Many times we find in the **Book of Revelation**, that the Holy Spirit will give a panoramic view of things to come and then, later in the book, reveal the details. For instance, here in **(v.8)**, we see a brief announcement regarding the judgement of Babylon; but her actual *doom* is described under the **seventh vial (bowl) judgement** in **chapter 16:17-21**. The first Babylon mentioned in scripture was founded by a *God-defying* rebel by the name of **Nimrod (Babylon - Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9)**. Ancient Babylon grew into a great Gentile world power – the Babylonian Empire, *a stronghold of pride and idolatry*.

“**Babylon**” is *also* representative of God’s name for the world system under the anti-Christ. Jeremiah’s prophecy against the kingdom of Babylon in his day. The reason for Babylon’s fall then is the same we find here during the Great Tribulation: she “made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” **(Jeremiah 51:7) Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, That made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged.** We’ll discuss Babylon further when we get to chapter 16.

(v.9-11) Here we find a third angel. This angel delivers a warning to those who take the mark of the beast. **To take the mark is to defy God and reject His Christ! Notice: (v.10b)** For those liberal theologians and skeptics who denounce any *notion* of hell’s existence, here we clearly see it is a real place! **British theologian Robert Govett writes: “After the resurrection, sleep**

belongs neither to the lost nor to the saved. The saved will not need it; for the body of weakness is shaken off. The lost may not enjoy it. How strange the sinner's infatuation, that after all this solemn warning of the eternity of hell-torments, he will still go on coolly provoking God to cut him down and cast him into the fire!" Robert Govett

In (v.12, 13) we find two reasons for the patience of the saints: 1) Death is defeated (v.15a). **(Philippians 1:21) For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.** 2) Everlasting rest and reward (v.13b). **(1 Corinthians 15:58) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**

(v.14-20) This is not the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 21, but the premillennial judgement of Christ. Here, judgement is now fully ripened! Jesus is coming to *reap, to clean house!* (Read: v.14-16) This is not the good wheat, but the tares He is reaping. **(ttt) Matthew 13:36-43.** (v.17-20) This judgement will be *world-wide* in scale, and thorough! **Notice: nothing is overlooked; every budding "cluster" of satan's "vineyard" is gathered (v.18).**

(v.19, 20) This is the inspiration behind the words of our nation's "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."* This is the end of man's glory and satan's rule on the earth! It will be the worst slaughter in human history! Ezekiel describes the scene in **Ezekiel 39:8-16**, where he states it will take seven years to rid the earth of the weapons used in this conflict. It will also take seven months to bury the

dead. So great will be the slaughter that in some places the blood will be more than **two feet deep** (*up to a horse's bridle*), for **1,600 furlongs** (180 miles) – (Bible Knowledge Commentary). The exact site of this last great conflict will be the **Valley of Jehoshaphat: Jehoshaphat - "Yahweh Judges" (Joel 3:10-14; Zechariah 14: 1-4)** – a.k.a. **Plain of Meggido** (Zechariah 12:11); a.k.a. **"Armageddon,"** (Revelation 16:16).

CONCLUSION: Two thoughts: First – Let us consider the testimony of the 144,000 (v.4). *The problem with following Christ is He often takes us where our flesh doesn't want to go! To follow the Lamb is costly.* Today it seems many want to *follow Christ, embrace His grace*, but without any **cost!** *I want to **love Him**, and yet remain selective about who I love; but cost says love your enemies! I want to **sing to Him**; but cost says, worship Him! I want to **serve Him**; but cost says obey Him! **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**, who was executed by the Nazi's during WWII, because he knew there was a cost associated with following Christ, once said:*

"Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: 'Ye were bought at a price', and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

As we follow of the Lamb, we become the incarnation of Christ to the world (*“you are the light of the world”*). To follow Him is to be fruitful and to have life to its fullest! But the cost is high; it requires our death – the essence, the intrinsic nature, of discipleship! **“When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”** — **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** It’s only at the end of oneself where life truly begins! **(Matthew 10:39) He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.**

Secondly: Don’t wait until the “Last Call” - According to an old fable, a man made an unusual agreement with Death. He told the grim reaper that he would willingly accompany him when it came time to die, but only on one condition – that Death would send a messenger well in advance to warn him. The agreement was made. Weeks turned into months, and months into years. Then one bitter winter evening, as the man sat alone thinking about all his material possessions, Death suddenly entered the room and tapped him on the shoulder. The man was startled and cried out in despair, "You're here so soon and without warning! I thought we had an agreement." Death replied, "I've more than kept my part. I've sent you many messengers. Look at yourself in the mirror and you'll see some of them." As the man complied, Death whispered, "Notice your hair! Once it was full and black, now it is thin and white. Look at the way you tilt your head to listen to my voice because you can't hear very well. Observe how close you must get to the mirror in order to see yourself clearly. Yes, I've sent many messengers through the years. I've kept my part. It's too bad you didn't keep yours. Sorry you're not ready, but the time has come to leave."

Don’t wait until the “last call!” **(2 Corinthians 6:2) Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**