



– an uncluttered approach –

SIMPLIFYING

REVELATION

- There have been some stark contrasts in Revelation.
 - Chapters 4-5 presented the glory of heaven, then chapter 6 returned to the grim reality of earth;
 - Chapter 11 saw the Lord's witnesses put to death for their message, but 3.5 days later, they were raised because of their message;
- A new and equally intriguing contrast exists in chapters 13 & 14.
 - Chapter 13 displayed the authority and power of the beasts who serve the dragon, even to the apparent destruction of God's people.
 - Chapter 14 looks again into the heavenly realm and to the Lamb of God who gives victory.
- In chapter 13, Satan mocked God and His people (with the mark, name, number, signs, etc.). It was all a counterfeit.
 - Now, in chapter 14, the true mark, name, number, signs, etc. are presented.

144,000

THE FATHER'S NAME

the lamb
OF GOD

“...no one could learn that song except the 144,000...”

FIRSTFRUITS

the best portion

- 14:1 – John saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion.
 - This is the true lamb, not the beast that looked like a Lamb.
 - With Him were **144,000** with the Father's name written on their foreheads.
 - Recall the significance of 144,000.
 - Rev 6:17, “Who is able to stand?”
 - The answer, 7:4, the 144,000, who are sealed as God's people.
 - 12 is the number of God's people (12x12x1000).
 - The 144,000 are those who in ch. 10, 11 & 12 were blessed with God's protection, despite relentless attacks by the dragon.
- 14:2 – he heard a mighty voice from heaven.
 - In response, the people gave praise to the Lamb (14:2b-

3).

- They sing an **EXCLUSIVE SONG**.
- Not that others could not know the words, but a song of thanksgiving for redemption and the heavenly hope can only be sung with meaning by the 144,000.
- Consider – how many people know the lyrics to Amazing Grace, but do not know the grace of God?
- 14:4 describes the 144,000.
 - Not defiled – not literally virgins. It is an image of purity (ie. 10 virgins of Matthew 25).
 - Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (the Good Shepherd, John 10)
 - Redeemed from among men – bought by the blood of Christ.
 - What about this term “**FIRSTFRUITS**”?
 - It can refer to the “beginning portion” (Ro 8:23; 16:5; 1 Cor 15:20, 23; 16:15; etc.), however such an application here would negate the image of the 144,000 being the total sum of God’s people.
 - Rather, firstfruits here is used in the same manner as it is in the Old Testament regarding sacrifices. Not necessarily the

beginning portion, but **THE BEST PORTION**. The idea is that which is devoted to God. God's people are devoted or set apart to Him.

- This is a great image of hope and comfort for those who are suffering at the hand of the dragon and his beasts described in ch. 13.



- 14:6-13 introduces **3 ANGELS**, each with a message for the inhabitants of the earth.
- The first angel (v 6-7) brings **A MESSAGE OF HOPE**.
 - This would be the gospel.
 - To every nation, tribe, tongue & people – it is a universal message.
 - The angel himself doesn't proclaim the gospel – men do. Paul speaks about it being in "earthen vessels" (2 Cor 4:7).
 - There are 3 portions to the angel's proclamation:
 - *"Fear God and give glory to Him."* Don't fear the dragon or his beasts. Don't look upon what they have done and give glory to them.
 - *"the hour of His judgment has come."* We don't know when, but we know judgment is imminent.

We need to be ready!

- *“worship Him who made heaven and earth.”* God is the Creator. He is above all. He is worthy of worship. The dragon & beasts may deceive and cause awe by mocking the work of God (ch. 13), but they are no match for the Godhead.
- The second angel (v 8) brings a **MESSAGE OF DEFEAT.**
 - *“Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city...”*
 - This is the first mention of Babylon in the book – it will certainly not be the last (16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21).
 - Babylon was referenced in 11:8, *“...that great city...,”* pictured among the evil cities of the past.
 - Though it seems that evil prevails and God’s people were overcome (consider chapters 11 & 13), it is Babylon that was fallen.
 - God’s people are seen standing victorious in the heavenly city (14:1-5) while their enemies fell.
- The third angel (v 9-11) brings a **MESSAGE OF JUDGMENT.**
 - The judgment is a reality, there are real and

eternal consequences for sin.

- All those who associated with the beast *“...shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God...”* (v 9). Those who refuse the Lord and side with the dragon choose for themselves the penalty that goes with the dragon and his beasts – God’s wrath.
- There will be fire, brimstone, smoke, torment, and no rest for them for eternity.
- These messages give hope and assurance for the people of God.
 - They heeded the gospel associated with the first angel.
 - They endured trials at the hand of the wicked who will be defeated according to the second angel.
 - They will stand in the judgment spoken of by the third angel (6:17-7:17).
- V 12-13 – the death of the child of God brings victory, not defeat (2 Cor 5:1ff).
 - They have rest from their labours and join those who wait on the Lord to bring judgment upon the wicked (Rev 6:9-11).

AND THE EARTH WAS **REAPED**

The **LORD** takes His own from the earth.

...the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and **gathered the vine of the earth**, and threw it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. (REV 14:19)



- 14:14-20 – the judgment scene.
- John saw one like the Son of God coming on the clouds.
 - When He ascended into heaven, it was on the clouds (Ac 1:9).
 - The angels who appeared to the apostles said He would return in like manner (Ac 1:11).
- The Lord comes in victory to reap the earth (v 14), but He does not act immediately. Essentially He is pictured sitting on a cloud waiting.
 - Only the Father knows when the time of judgment comes (Mk 13:32).
 - The Father sent an angel to the Son (14:15) telling Him it was time to reap the earth.
 - The earth was reaped (v 16); the LORD took His own from the earth.
- The chapter closes out with 2 more angels, one with a sharp sickle and the other with power over fire.

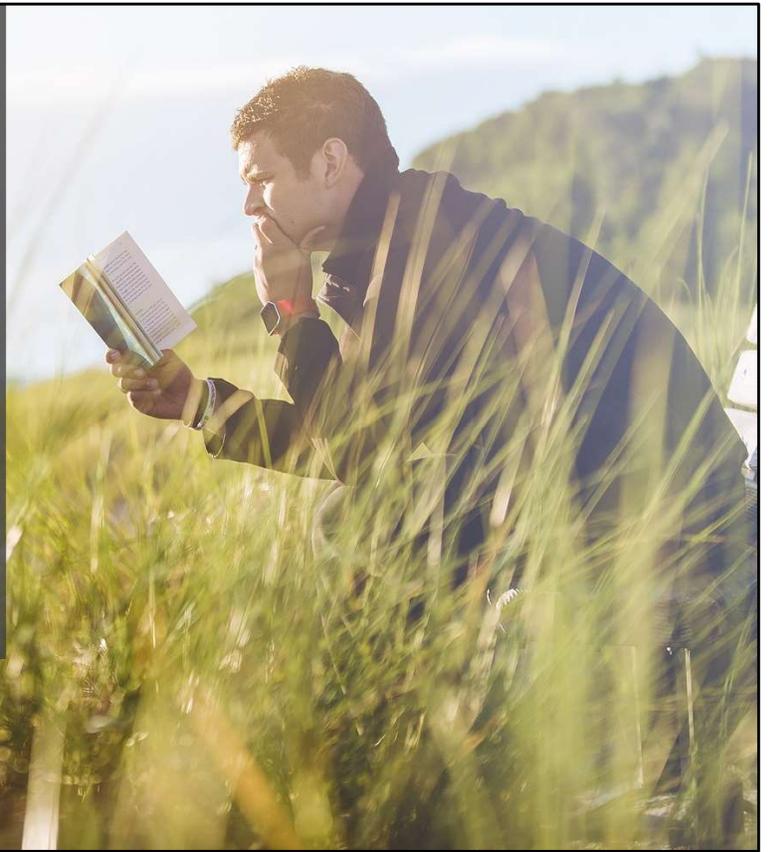
- If God's people have been harvested, then it is just the wicked who remain.
- The wicked are then harvested from the earth (v 18-19).
- They are objects of God's wrath, for they opposed Him & His people. They followed the dragon.
- V 20 – a vivid picture of their judgment...
 - Trampled outside the city (the city has God's protection, outside is where the Gentiles are).
 - Blood came out of the winepress – we're not pressing grapes here! They had shed the blood of the saints; God returns their deeds upon them.
 - Even to the horses' bridles – this wasn't something small. Imagine a field of battle where the blood shed rose up to the bridles on the horses. It was a huge slaughter!!
 - How big? "For one thousand six hundred furlongs."
 - What is the significance of the number??
 - It may simply be used to convey the enormity of this slaughter.
 - Some commentators have explained the 1600 furlongs as 4x4x10x10.
 - The number of the world multiplied by itself
 - A number of completeness multiplied by itself.
 - Thus, the completeness of God's judgment upon the wicked.

- 1600 furlongs (Gr. Stadia) is 200 miles. That's a long distance.
- Imagine 200 miles of blood rising to the height of a horse's bridle!!!
- It is a gory depiction of the destruction of the wicked.

Next week...

- ❖ The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath
- ❖ The Victory of God's People

REVELATION 15-16



New images in ch. 15-16