

Revelation
Ch 14:6-13

Eternal Gospel Proclamation and Warning

Intro: movie preview of coming attraction

Brief recap:

Chapter 14 completes the interlude between the sounding of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the seven bowls of God's wrath.

We have in this book three sets of seven in the middle of the book: seven seals, trumpets, and bowls.

This chapter gives a sneak preview of how it all turns out in the end: the triumph of Christ and his followers in heaven and the judgement of the unbelievers on the last day and the punishment of the world to come.

Vision of the Angel with the Gospel

6 And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; 7 and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

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

Doom for Worshipers of the Beast

9 Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone 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; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

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

THREE ANGELS – v. 6-13

Gospel angel – v-6-7 literal or symbolic of those who proclaim the news to "earth dwellers" – unbelievers.

We CANNOT hold fast and do missions in our lives by playing according to the mindset of the beast. We are to live God's way even as we engage in spiritual warfare. God's way is through proclaiming the GOSPEL. The commentaries that I trust most indicate that this 'angel' is symbolic of the church. As believers we are called to be the angels that go about preaching the good news. There is no indication in scripture that God will use any method other than Gospel witness from faithful followers to bring the message of salvation.

Could God just send out angels to preach? YES. But is there any indication that He has or will do so? NO.

Our calling as the church is to preach a message of salvation. Outside of the CHURCH and para-church groups, no other organization has the call and mission of preaching the gospel.

This past week I attended two civic functions – Board of Ed mtg and Chamber of Commerce. Neither was focused on the proclamation of the Gospel. Both opened with an invocation, but that is not their primary function.

As we see the world of Babylon unravel, we are to preach the eternal gospel message of Jesus Christ who lived a perfect life, died for sinners, rose again, and ascended to the right hand of the Father.

We preach The Eternal gospel, which is not God's plan B, but it is in the mind of God from eternity past.

One might ask, "How is this good news when it includes a message of judgement and doom?" In Rev 10:7 we saw the verb form of "good news" used to describe the preaching of the mystery to God's servants and prophets.

The mystery of salvation has always been good news and it remains so up until the final day of judgement. The good news is that salvation has been accomplished by Christ and all who repent and believe will be saved. It is gracious good news in that the world is given another chance and call to embrace the Son.

It is also good news that God will bring judgement on those who revile Him, His Son, His people, and His kingdom. The Judicial aspect of the gospel is not hidden in scripture and the biblical authors don't apologize for it. We want a universe that is ultimately governed by the standards of righteousness. **The point of the portrayal of judgment in vv. 6-11 is to motivate believers to persevere in spite of suffering. Yet they are to rejoice NOT in the punishment of their enemies but in the ultimate vindication of God and His character.** Beale, G. K.; Campbell, David. Revelation: A Shorter Commentary (p. 309).

We like the expression, "Everyone deserves a second chance." In the world of God's grace all are given a second, third, fourth, etc chance.

A message of repentance and faith with a sense of urgency – the last call.

"The hour of judgement has come."

Don't delay; Don't put it off to another day.

Do you know your standing before God?

v. 7 What is the message or FRAME that is preached (good news proclaiming): It is a God centered message, NOT 10 steps to having your best life now.

Fear God

Give Him glory

Worship Him who is the Creator

This gospel transcends all of our human categories. We tend to settle for cut rate versions of the gospel – social gospel, liberation gospel, American gospel, prosperity gospel, European, Latino, African, Asian gospel, seeker friendly gospel, post-modern gospel, etc, etc.

It is the eternal Gospel of God in Christ that is the power of God for salvation.

As we proclaim the Good News, there is a contrast with the bad news...

The Warning Angel v 8 –The first mention of Babylon in this book but not the last.

NOTE that Babylon is introduced as already fallen even though the final demise has not yet happened. The chap is a sneak preview of the judgement on Babylon to come in ch 17-19

Babylon is symbolic of a world organized against the kingdom of God – Ps 2.

Beware of putting your faith in Babylon, the system of this world will deceive and disappoint – FALLEN, FALLEN is Babylon the great. Babylon represents the economic pressure of the marketplace and the seductive appeal of affluence.

<https://wineskins.org/2016/03/29/francis-schaeffer-on-the-politics-and-peace-and-affluence/>

The preaching of the eternal Gospel will also include the warning of judgment on Babylon, whether we like it or not.

"Can't we just talk about the love of Jesus without talking about judgement?"

Not if we're preaching the same eternal gospel that Jesus, Paul, and the authors of scripture preached.

If we're honest, it is hard to preach the warnings to Babylon because there are things about Babylon that attract us. That is why God says in Revelation 18:8, "Come out of her". As individuals and as the organized

church we are tempted to see how cozy we can get with Babylon without being tainted. That mindset itself tells us that we've already lost the gospel thread of Fear God, Glorify Him and Worship the Creator.

The anti-gospel of Babylon is:

- **Fear Man (the measure of all things)** Matt 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell
- **Give glory to yourself- John 5:44 Rev 18 :7** To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning;
- **Worship the creature, not the creator (Rom 1:25)**

Those things are NOT good news. They are the servants of a treadmill religion where we are always trying to prove ourselves and hide our failures. In Matthew 9 Jesus saw this among the people and felt compassion for them because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd.

Love for Mt. Zion and love for Babylon don't go together.

1 Jn 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

A condemnation and demolition notice has been put on Babylon BUT NOTE that God doesn't lead with the message of judgement. He leads with the ETERNAL GOSPEL. God doesn't leave us in Babylon without hope; He sends his Son to bring us to Himself so that we might have living water, soul satisfying bread, and an abundant life in relationship with Him.

The original audience would have thought of Rome but for future readers we see that all ungodly world systems deserve the name Babylon the Great because of their pride and their fate.

1 Pet 5:13 "The church that is in Babylon greets you"

Here in ch 14, the image of spiritual adultery from the OT is likened to sexual immorality.

Does this resonate with anyone in our world today? You don't have to be a gray-haired Sr. citizen to notice that our culture has taken giant steps toward "drinking the wine of Babylon's immorality" - v. 8

In the early shows of the 60's married couples had twin beds. Where are we today?

What is the benign innocent explanation for why we now have a month that is dedicated to celebrating Pride in sexual immorality. And in Canada 1 month isn't enough. They want a season to run through September.

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/canadian-government-extends-pride-month-to-a-whole-season-because-one-month-isnt-enough/>

*What is the benign innocent explanation for why we now have private and state universities that have a Sex Week on campus. Started in Ivy League 2002 at Yale Ohio State, Yale, Harvard, Tulane, UNCC,

**What is the benign innocent explanation for why we now have Drag Queen performers and sexually explicit materials being pushed in public schools?

The alternative to Babylon's wine of immorality is the eternal Gospel which brings true freedom, true joy, and a true understanding of this world and eternity.

v. 9-11 THE ANGEL of DOOM

IF YOU WANT to drink the wine of Babylon then God will give you over and you will also drink the wine of the cup of wrath.

Be careful what you ask for.

In ancient days, wine was often mixed with water or spices to make it easier to drink (and last longer). In the cup of wrath, God will give undiluted wine – not just drunk, BUT DEAD DRUNK. No one sobers up from drinking this wine.

John mixes the images moving from the cup of wrath to the fire and brimstone. This is a common image in the OT mindset following the episode of Sodom and Gomorrah. Burning sulfur is hot and it produces a horrid smell.

This torment will take place in “the presence of the Lamb”, so those who denied Him and rejected His salvation are now faced with the reality that the Lamb rules overall.

This is a reminder of 6:16

Rev 6:16 and they *said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne,(rf 20:11) and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

Those who seek the approval of Babylon now will be cut off forever. Those who DON'T have the mark of the beast can't buy or sell (13:15-17) and they suffer the wrath of the beast.

The Divine counterpoint is this: those who DO have the mark of the Beast will suffer the eternal wrath of God.

Here's the Mystery of the GOOD NEWS...

Jesus drank the cup for us and delivers us from the wrath of God if we trust in Him for salvation. That's the good news

Jesus knew what he was getting in to. He came knowing His purpose was to drink the cup for us.

FRIENDS, why endure that cup if you don't have to?

Fear God, give Him glory, worship the Creator

v. 11 The language of torment

the image is of smoke and fire and ETERNAL RESTLESSNESS

Heaven, paradise, Mt. Zion is a place of eternal REST in the presence of God.

The judgement is the opposite, i.e., eternal Restlessness – eternal insomnia of the soul.

EX: Jacob Marley – in chains, restless, roaming the nether world

If we're honest, we can admit that our society gives little thought to the question of eternal accountability. Pundits and blue-checkmark Twitterites will opine on all sorts of topics, rumor, and inuendo but the idea of having to answer to an all-knowing, all holy Judge who can read our hearts and knows if we have the mark of Christ or the mark of the Beast is not on their radar. Babylon believes that it is dangerous religious freedom to believe in a God would use a standard other than the current value system of the enlightened elites.

v. 12-13 A CALL FOR ENDURANCE

“For all the Saints, who from their labors rest”

John brings us back to reality for right now. We are to be persevering because of the beauty, hope, and glory of Jesus, not because of what Babylon offers.

Here's a heart test for us:

Are you more repulsed by the Democrats or the Republicans than you are IMPRESSED by and attracted to the glory of Christ?

Are you more despairing about what you don't have in Babylon than you are thrilled with what you do have in Christ?

If so, that is a pagan way of thinking. It is rooted in reverence of man, glory of man, and worship of man.

Our call to endurance is based on knowing that we are the biggest sinners we know who have been saved by grace. It is that grace that enable us to persevere and keep the commandments.

In that grace we are blessed in life and death. Our deeds don't follow us to haunt us. Jesus rewards us because we are in Christ. In crowning his people, Christ is crowning His own work in our lives. We can rest from our labors because we know that they don't gain God's approval. They flow from knowing that we already have God's approval in Jesus.

But if you have the mark of the beast then you are always on the treadmill of performance. It's NEVER ENOUGH. The Beast of Babylon is a cruel taskmaster.

The Lamb is a gracious Savior and when we rest in him, our labor is not in vain.

Come to the TABLE

*Sex Week

<https://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/doinglifetogether/2022/02/sex-week-at-universities-does-your-child-go-there.html>

<https://www.foxnews.com/us/ohio-state-university-sex-week-event-encourages-students-to-thank-abortion-providers>

**<https://americansforfairtreatment.org/2022/06/23/pa-teachers-union-opposes-bill-on-sexual-materials-in-school/>

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