

OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES

REVELATION

THREE MESSAGES

14:6-13

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The Three Messages

Angels are about to give us an overview of the events that will take place in the seventh trumpet—in other words, sit down and get ready to view a trailer for the upcoming events...

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... Revelation 14:6

Chapter 14 contains three scenes which are part of the overall interlude we have been in since chapter 10 (after the sixth trumpet judgments and before the seventh trumpet actually releases its judgments). We just observed the scene of 144,000 Jews singing a song to the Lamb that no one else can learn. In the next two scenes we are going to see two sets of angels. These angels will give us an overview of the events that are going to take place in the seventh trumpet judgment (the seven bowls), sort of like a commercial trailer for a movie when the producers put out information ahead of its release. The second set of angels take part in the reaping of the earth, while the first set (the ones we are about to observe) deliver messages to the world.

John sees another angel. Why does John call this first angel (of the ones he is about to reveal to us) *another* angel? He is simply contrasting this angel (and the others who follow him in this chapter) with the seven angels who hold the seven trumpets. In other words, these angels are not the same as the ones who hold the seven trumpets.

Okay, what is this other angel doing? He is flying in midheaven preaching an eternal gospel to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. The Greek word for “angel” is *angelos* and means someone who is sent or a messenger—perhaps we are seeing this angel do what angels do best.

How is he delivering his message? He is flying in the mid-sky above the earth, where everyone can see and, evidently, where everyone can hear. What is his message?

It is the glorious eternal gospel! Have you ever heard that everybody on the earth has to hear the gospel before Jesus can come? It’s a common belief. But why do people think that? Because when “they” (the people we always believe, like anyone and everyone else other than the Bible, itself) say it, we believe it. The problem is (with our preconceived belief, that is) when will the entire world hear the gospel? Not until this angel flies in midheaven and preaches it with a loud voice. And that won’t happen until the Great Tribulation, which is still many years away...

The other place in the Bible where it tells us that everyone is going to hear the gospel is Matthew 24:14, which is a perfect cross-reference to our present text, Revelation 14:6-7. Matthew tells us that the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come. According to Matthew 24:9-14, it will be after the beginning of birth pangs, but before the end. And, according to Matthew 24:15-26, the beginning of the Great Tribulation (seventh trumpet) follows immediately. Matthew's chronology lines up perfectly with John's. According to Revelation 14:6-7, this will take place immediately before the seventh trumpet which ushers in the Great Tribulation.

I think most people assume that Matthew's gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed by men and accomplished by men, but that is not the case. Men will not be able to accomplish preaching the gospel to the entire earth, but God is not dependent upon men. He will take care of it Himself through the use of an angel, one solitary angel, who will fly through the air loudly preaching the message of the gospel. (I know this is not what will happen, but I sort of imagine the angel pulling a large banner with strobe lights going on and off drawing attention to his message on the banner. Sorry... I just wanted to point out that no one is going to miss it when it happens...) However he does it, the angel will effectively preach the gospel to every single person living on the face of the earth.

...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." Revelation 14:7

What is the gospel according to this passage? Is it, "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life"? Nope. Rather, it is "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come".

That is the gospel, or at least the first part of it. Fear God and give Him glory because you will be judged. If you do not, His wrath will come upon you! It's exactly the same as the gospel given in Romans 1:16-19. *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'but the righteous man shall live by faith'. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them."*

The hour of God's judgment is the same "hour" referred to in Revelation 11:15-17 and Revelation 12:10. (Remember our great big intersection of events?) In other words, this is the time when every last bit of God's wrath will be poured out—when He is done, there will be none left.

Notice the next line in the message, "Worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." How clear and reasonable. The only rational response

to fearing God is to worship Him—worship begins with bowing the knee in submission, repenting of independent rebellion against Him, and giving Him the honor and thanks He deserves. God is described as the One Who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of waters—He is the Creator and He is the One Who has the right (and will definitely use His right) to judge.

So many people want to see God as a warm-fuzzy figure. And although God is loving (He is more than loving—He is love, itself) and gracious and kind, He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.

“Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.’ Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship.” Exodus 34:6–8

God informs Moses that while He is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, abounding in truth, and forgiving (all the things most people want God to be like), He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished (the thing people want to deny God does). Notice what Moses does when faced with the unabridged picture of Who God really is. He makes haste (hurried) and bows low to the ground and worships God. That is exactly the response the angel calls for in his proclamation! Those who realize the position of the all-powerful Creator will come to fear Him and worship Him—one way or another (either willingly now, or in forced compliance later).

There is another reason the angel mentions the heaven, earth, sea, and springs of waters. Remember, this is a preview of what will take place during the seven bowls so these elements will be dealt with in the upcoming vials of wrath. As the judgments concerning the heaven, earth, sea, and springs of waters happen, mankind will have an opportunity to respond rightly to the God Who made them, and will eventually destroy them. What is the right response to the hour of His judgment? Fear Him, give Him glory, worship Him...

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.” Revelation 14:8

A second angel brings a second message. He informs the world that Babylon has fallen. Again, this is part of the preview into the seven bowls. Babylon will be dealt with in full during the seventh bowl.

Here we are told she will be great at the time of her fall. At the present time, Babylon is not a great city in the world, but she will be! How do I know? Because God’s Word tells us so! *(I don’t usually recommend books, but “Rise of Babylon” by Charles Dyer is absolutely fascinating and will help you to imagine how the future of Babylon will end up*

being exactly as God has determined. However, I would suggest you wait to read it until you have finished observing the book of Revelation for yourself!)

Before Babylon falls, she will have reached the pinnacle of the world's power and all the nations of the world will be under her influence. The idea is that drinking wine puts you "under its influence" so if the nations drink of the wine of the passion of Babylon's immorality, they will be under the influence of Babylon's immorality. We will see in Revelation 17 and 18 that her power will be economical but will include heinous immorality.

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, 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."
Revelation 14:9-10

A third angel brings a third message. The angel warns that if anyone worships the beast and his image and receive a mark on his forehead or on his hand—he will also drink of the wine of the wrath of God and be tormented with fire and brimstone. Drinking the wrath of God will be no light matter—it will be mixed in full strength (think of it being a liquid) and placed in a cup (which is His anger).

His torment will take place in the very presence of God's holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb, Himself. Why will the holy angels and the Lamb be present? This is not an easy thing for many people to understand. Part of God's Glory is derived from His just and perfect and most excellent judgments—including His wrath and punishment and destruction. God's wrath is perfect, like everything else about Him, and the torment of those who worship the beast will actually bring glory to the only One Who is worthy to be worshiped. The holy angels will be worshiping and glorifying the Lamb and His Father, and those in torment will be forced to acknowledge that God, and God alone, is worthy of worship. Perfect justice will bring Glory to the One who, at length, will administer it.

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. Revelation 14:11

Their torment will never end, it will last forever and ever. Because it will take place in the lake of fire (we will learn more about the lake later) their torment causes eternal smoke to rise. They will never ever receive any rest from their torment—it will go on both day and night for all of eternity— not even a pause.

We are reminded who these people are—they are the ones who will worship the beast and his image and will receive the mark of his name. God has allowed men to figure out

the identity of the beast and his mark. And remember, no one needs to take the mark, nor will it be accidental—those who take the mark will do so purposefully.

Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. Revelation 14:12

In the day of the beast people might take the mark for different reasons, which might be to eat, or to protect themselves from persecution (even though the alternative is way worse—eternal torment with fire and brimstone). However, those who know the Word of God (and believe it) will persevere—they will keep the commandments of God and they will keep their faith in Jesus.

When the mark is being offered so they can eat, or so their children can eat, the saints (holy ones set aside for God) will persevere. They will not take the mark. They will not deny Jesus' Name. They will hold fast the truth. They will keep their faith in Jesus. They will believe that Jesus is coming back to deliver them. They will remind themselves that Jesus said He would keep them for all of eternity if they keep His Name unto death. *That* is the perseverance of the saints...

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." Revelation 14:13

John heard a voice from heaven which told him to write the words, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!" The Spirit, in agreement, said, "Yes, so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

How terrible will it be to live on the earth at that time? It will be a blessing (for those who are in the Lord) to die in those days... They will be able to finally rest from their labors. The Greek word for "labors" is *kopos* and refers to the travail and troubles, weariness and pain they endure on earth. Their deeds will follow them in death into the presence of the Lord. This is in direct contrast to those who follow the beast who will have no rest from their torment day or night for all of eternity.

I am reminded of the souls under the altar who were told to rest awhile longer until the remainder of God's servants (the ones destined to be martyred) were killed. Their long wait is about to end. It appears that the final martyrs are in the wings ready to take their position on stage in God's unalterable drama as the seventh trumpet of judgment readies to release the seven bowls of the wrath of God...