

God's Last Warning Message

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REVELATION 14

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud Voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and ill the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me. Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yes said the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

14 And I looked and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

The threefold message of Revelation 14 is the lost word God has for Earth. Following its proclamation comes the Second Advent of Christ and the end of the world.

"There will be only two classes in the final crisis-the worshipers of the beast, and the worshipers of God."

"THE most awful threatening the Bible contains," wrote the eighteenth century German theologian Johann Bengel of Revelation 14:9-12. Regardless of what one thinks the beast, the image, or the mark to be, he will concur that the message of this third angel in the Book of Revelation contains the most serious pronouncement of coming judgment to be found in Scripture.

But will a mighty angel actually wing his flight over the cities of earth to pronounce such woe? A glance at the context of Revelation 14:6-14 discloses the setting. Three angels are depicted as flying through the sky proclaiming certain messages to mankind. The first is said to have "the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth" (verse 6). He summons earth's millions to fear God and to worship the Creator of heaven and earth, because "the hour of his judgement has come!" (Verse 7, NEB). The second messenger announces the moral fall of mystical Babylon (verse 8), and the third declares the awesome judgments that will befall the worshiper of the beast and his image and whoever is a recipient of its mark (verses 9-11).

It is evident from the Scriptures that angels have never been commissioned to preach the gospel or to announce Heaven's warnings to men. The task of evangelizing the world has been committed to the followers of God (Matthew 23:18-20), and from age to age these same preachers of righteousness have been commissioned to declare His warnings. Thus these three symbolic angels represent witnessing Christians. Following one after the other-with each adding his particular emphasis as he joins the preceding angel-the three "messengers" represent ultimately a religious movement of Christians with a specific threefold message.

This threefold message in the context of the "everlasting gospel" is the last word God has for the multitudes of earth. Following its promulgation, the prophet witnessed the second advent of Christ and the end of the age. He exclaimed, "Then as I looked there appeared a white cloud, and on the cloud sat one like a son of man. He had on his head a crown of gold and in his hand a sharp sickle. Another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud: 'Stretch out your sickle and reap; for harvest-time has come'" (Revelation 14:14, 15, NEB). Obviously, this timely warning is due to be heard now.

The Issues

"God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). What was true of Jesus is also true of Heaven's messages of warning and judgment. When Noah preached the Flood, it was not simply to condemn, but to arouse sinful men to the true issues and to stab them awake to the seriousness of their spiritual plight. Not only did Noah offer his generation deliverance from physical destruction, but, even more vital, he offered them spiritual redemption from their sins through the merits of the coming Savior, for he was a preacher of righteousness by faith (2 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 11:7). "Have I any desire, says the Lord God, for the death of a wicked man? Would I not rather that he should mend his ways and live?" (Ezekiel 18:23, NEB).

The third angel discloses Heaven's final countdown on the basic issues in the long controversy between God and Satan. Two classes of people will be distinguished in the final crisis: (1) those who "worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark" and (2) God's people-the true followers of Jesus Christ.

The demarcation between these two final groups will be sharp and distinct. God's people will be characterized by two attributes-obedience and loyalty for they are described as "keeping God's commands," or commandments and as "remaining loyal to Jesus." In a faithless generation which denies the authority of God, forsakes the revelation of His will in Scriptures, and rejects the deity and atoning sacrifice of the world's Redeemer-in such a generation God's "own elect" will remain loyal to Jesus as Lord and Savior (Luke 18:8). And their steadfast trust in the all-sufficient merits of Christ will result in their willing obedience to all the commandments of God. They will rather die than to disobey the expressed will of their Lord. Like the early Christian martyrs, they will not "hold their lives too dear to lay them down" for His sake (Revelation 12:11, NEB).

By contrast it is implied that the worshipers of the beast have chosen to live in disobedience to the known commands of God, giving evidence of disloyalty to Christ and the throne of Heaven in spite of their loyal profession. "Not everyone who calls me Lord, Lord" said Jesus, "will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my heavenly Father." (Matthew 7:21, NEB).

In this climactic confrontation the age long controversy regarding the authority of God and His law must be squarely faced. Who will have first allegiance, God or the state? The vital question, however, will not be so much a matter of deciding for a day of worship-Sabbath or Sunday-but, rather, it will be: What shall I do with Jesus Christ? The matter of unswerving obedience to God's law will be decided in the love-light that streams from Calvary. The matchless Savior will be uplifted to earth's perishing millions for the last time.

Understanding as never before the radiant facets of the gospel of salvation provided at such infinite cost to bring a revolted world back into harmony with the Creator's will, the last generation will make its final choice. What will you choose? "This is where the fortitude of God's people has its place-in keeping God's commands and remaining loyal to Jesus" (Revelation 14:12, NEB).

It is the last message, for it is immediately followed by the Second Advent of Christ, Revelation 14:14, and the harvest of the earth, Revelation 14:15, 16. Jesus said the "harvest is the end of the world." Matthew 13:39.

This Message is the Everlasting Gospel. It is therefore God's complete truth for today. It announces "The Hour of God's Judgment is come."

It warns against Modern Babylon and calls "Come out of her My People." Revelation 18:4. It exposes the Beast and its Mark. To get the Mark of the Beast is to lose Heaven.

It calls out a people to "Keep the Commandments of God" which, like their Author are "despised and rejected by men."

It is God's last warning Message. Hence it will never be eclipsed or superseded. It is the most important thing in the world today.

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-17

1

You shall have no other gods before me.

2

You shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3

You shall not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain.

4

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God. In it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

5

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God gives thee.

6

Thou shall not kill.

7

Thou shall not commit adultery.

8

You shall not steal.

9

You shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

10

You shall not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

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