

God's Revelation of the Future

Community Baptist Church
Lesson 9

Adult Bible Fellowship
Fall, 2024

The Three Messages – 14:6-13

This vision describes three angels, who, one after the other, proclaim a message to the those living during the 70th week. These messages are followed by words of encouragement and blessing to the saints.

- John sees a first angel "flying directly overhead," so his perspective is earthly. (14:6)
- This angel has a good news message to proclaim, "an eternal gospel." (14:6)
 - The content of the gospel message is recorded in 14:7.
 - In some sense, this could be seen as a final call from God for repentance.
 - The proclamation, directed to unbelievers, will be worldwide.
- This gospel message contains three commands. "Fear God and give him glory ... and worship him." (14:7)
 - This is fear in the sense of Matthew 10:28, "fear him who can destroy both body and soul in hell."
 - The very act of genuinely fearing God, even by unbelievers, gives him glory.
 - But this is especially the case for those who repent and come to salvation.
- Those hearing this message are to act now, for the time of God's judgment is imminent. (14:7)
- Those who heed the call to fear and give God glory will be able to worship him, the creator God. (14:7)
- John sees a second angel following the first one proclaiming another message. (14:8)
- This message is an announcement regarding the fall of "Babylon the great." (14:8)
 - Revelation 17-18 provides details about Babylon and its fall.
 - Here, pictured as a prostitute, Babylon has global influence.

- John sees a third angel following the first two with a third message, a message of warning. (14:9)
- For those who worship the beast (1st beast of chapter 13, the Antichrist) and its image and receive his mark, their doom is sealed. (14:9-10)
 - These people will "drink the wine" of the wrath of God.
 - It will be "full strength." There will no longer be mixed in any grace or mercy.
 - This judgment is seen in that they "will be tormented with fire and sulfur."
 - This involves a suffering that never ends ("forever and ever") and from which there is never a break ("no rest, day or night"). (14:11)
- Next John hears messages of encouragement and blessing addressed to the saints. (14:12-13)
 - First, a call for endurance. (14:12)
 - The message is to encourage saints to "hang in there" during this period of difficult circumstances.
 - Their endurance is demonstrated through their obedience and their faith.
 - Second, a blessing is pronounced for those who do "die in the Lord" during this period. (14:13)
 - They are resting from their difficult, exhausting toil.
 - They will be rewarded for their deeds, which will "follow them."

The Harvests – 14:14-20

This vision provides a graphic picture of God's judgment of man as the 70th week (and beyond) unfolds. In it we see God's judgment being executed as pictured in two harvests, a grain harvest and a grape harvest. As a result of these two harvests vast numbers of human beings are killed.

- John sees someone seated on a "white cloud." (14:14)
 - There is an ongoing question as to the identity of the one "seated on the cloud."
 - Some suggest it is the Son.
 - Some suggest it is an angel.
 - The one seated has a "sharp sickle."
- An angel emerges from the heavenly temple issuing a command to the one seated on the cloud. (14:15)
 - The one holding the sickle is to use it and reap.

- The time for God's judgment has come.
 - The harvest "is fully ripe" or "has become dry."
- As commanded, the one seated on the cloud "swung his sickle" and "the earth was reaped." (14:16)
 - No details are provided here regarding what happens, only that judgment takes place.
 - MacArthur suggests this judgment unfolds as the bowl judgments are poured out (recorded in the following two chapters).
 - If this is the case, this reaping occurs during the 70th week.
- John then sees another angel emerge from the heavenly temple, this one, like the one "who sat on the cloud," also carrying a "sharp sickle." (14:17)
 - Immediately, John sees an angel "come out from the altar," an angel that will issue a command. (14:18)
 - Evidently this angel has some responsibility for tending the fire burning on the heavenly altar.
- The angel with the sickle is commanded to use it and "gather the clusters from the vine of the earth." (14:18)
 - These grapes represent those who will be killed in this judgment.
 - These grapes "are ripe," meaning mature or at their peak.
- The angel did as commanded and gathered the grape harvest. (14:19)
 - The grapes that were harvested were thrown "into the great winepress of the wrath of God."
 - The image is fitting, for, as seen in the following description, it symbolizes the shedding of the blood of a great number of individuals.
 - Is this excessive? No! God has NEVER been unjust!
- This pressing of the grapes takes place "outside the city." (14:20)
 - This is in the locale of Jerusalem.
 - This harvest seems to be related to events that occur at Armageddon when Christ returns.
 - If this is the case, it occurs post-70th week.
 - The number of individuals involved is indicated by the description of the volume of blood that results.
 - Blood flowed "as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia."

- This is an indication of the massive amount of blood shed as a result of this judgment.
- "As high as" indicates that this was the situation in some places.
- Depending on the understanding of "stadia," 1,600 stadia would be from 156 to 207 miles.

Note: All references are to the book of Revelation unless otherwise specified.