



Sermon Series Notes

“Last Call” (Revelation 14)

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Intro: Summary review; Chapter 14 is a snapshot, the details of which we will cover in chapters 15-19.

v.1 These Jews we saw sealed in the first part of chapter seven. There they were on the earth, here they are in heaven. They were sealed to protect them from the wrath of God about to be poured out. While the sealing protected them from the wrath of God, it did not protect them from the wrath of the dragon. It appears they become martyrs for their faith in Christ, and now they stand with their Savior (the Lamb) on heavenly Mt. Zion. The earthly Zion was the mount in Jerusalem upon which the temple was built. Of course that earthly temple was but a shadow of the real temple in heaven.

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven...

Some see this group as representing the entire nation of Israel that is saved during the tribulation period, but there is no reason to take these as anything but 144,000 literal Jews saved during this time.

v.2 This is a loud sound like thunder, yet it is a melodious sound. It is very loud singing. Verse 3.

v.3 There is something very unique about this group of Jews. Based on verse 13 of this chapter, I believe they are a special group of martyrs for Christ. Read verse 13.

But even if they are martyrs, there is more to their unique privileges than a willingness to die for their faith in Christ. And that is exactly what the next two verses confirm.

vv.4-5 Notice it does not say they are sinless. They have been purchased by the blood of the Lamb, saved the same way you and I are, yet there is something about their commitment to Christ that is special. There is no major blight on their record as believers. Abraham lied (twice); Moses was a murderer; David was a murderer & a liar & an adulterer; Samson; Peter.

II Cor.5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

See I Cor.3:10-15

Some believers will receive great commendation and reward for their faith, having built upon the foundation of Christ using gold, silver, and precious stones. These represent cost, great sacrifice, diligent searching. Proverbs 2 talks about seeking wisdom, insight & understanding as if you were looking for silver, searching for them as for hidden treasure.

Others will have their works burned up, having used wood, hay and stubble as building materials. These materials are of course the opposite of gold, silver, and precious stones. No great cost, no real sacrifice, no diligent searching, etc. These believers are saved, but receive no commendation or reward for their service to Christ.

vv.6-7 I do not know why I never really saw this verse for many years of my Christian life, even as a pastor. And I do not know why no Bible preacher, teacher, or commentator ever pointed it out to me. I used to

believe that the church would have to carry the gospel to every people group before the second coming of Christ. But based on this verse, linked with what Jesus said in Matthew 24, I no longer believe that. See Matthew 24:14, noting the context.

Note: I still believe in The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15), but I don't believe we have to fulfill this commission before the second coming of Christ.

This is the eternal gospel because God promised it before the beginning of time (Titus 1:2).

Sending this angel to every nation, tribe, language and people at this last hour shows how much God loves the world and does not want anyone to perish (II Peter 3:9). The Bible tells us that hell was not created for man, but for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).

Mankind's response to God's final offer of salvation shows the potential depth of man's depravity and rebellion against the very God who created him (Rev.16:8-11; Rom.1; Amos 4:1-12); Pharaoh & the Egyptians, how God proved himself, even giving the Egyptians an opportunity to apply the blood of the Passover Lamb, yet they repeatedly hardened their hearts.

v. 8 What exactly is "Babylon the Great?"

- Joel Rosenberg believes it is literal Babylon (Read excerpt from his book?)
- Ed Hindson's book, pp.156-57
- I talked to my scholarly wife about this on our drive from Sedona AZ to the Phoenix airport, and she still believes this refers to literal Babylon. I said that would rule out an imminent return of Christ, and she said why? (several times). She mentioned how rapidly Dubai has appeared on the scene and how prominent it is. She then mentioned the OT prophecies about the destruction of Babylon, as well as Damascus. When the conversation was over, I felt that CCSP should change affiliation to the Assemblies of God, and that Wendy Hodges should become the Rev. Wendy Hodges, lead pastor of CCSP. What do you think? At the airport, I asked Wendy to write down the prophecies she had referred to regarding Babylon. She did.
- Jer.50:26, 39-40...completely destroy her and leave her no remnant...it will never again be inhabited or lived in...As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah...so no one will live there...51:26...you will be desolate forever, declares the LORD...37 Babylon will be a heap of ruins...a place where no one lives...Isa.13:19 Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms...will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah...
- See Rev.17:3-6; Is verse 18 of this chapter Rome? Whatever city this is, its literal destruction is prophesied in Rev.18. While it is not clear to me what the exact city is here, it is clear that "Babylon the Great" represents the world system that antichrist rules over in a soon coming day. Note the blasphemous names the woman is covered with, and the blasphemous names on each head of the revived Roman Empire that antichrist rules over (Rev.13:1-2). And let's not forget that ancient Rome's territory extended all the way to ancient Babylon (present day Iraq).
- One more point of interest: The first organized human system (government) that left God out of its equation originated in Babylon (see Gen.11:1-9). The bricks represent what man can build without God's help. **All** false religion originated in Babylon, and all the things that God calls an abomination originated in Babylon.

The call to come out of Babylon

- See Rev.18:1-8
- Isa.48:20 Leave Babylon, flee from the Babylonians!

- Jer.50:8 Flee out of Babylon; leave the land of the Babylonians...51:6 Flee from Babylon! Run for your lives!
- Zech.2:7 Come, O Zion! Escape, you who live in the daughter of Babylon!
- Jer.29:7...seek the peace and prosperity of the city...Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.
- God on the one hand tells His people to flee Babylon, and on the other to submit to Babylon's king, seek the peace & prosperity of Babylon, and even pray for Babylon. How do these two things go together?
- I John 2:15-17; I Cor.7:31...those who use the things of this world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.
- I Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings...
- II Cor.6:17 Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord...

vv.9-11 There will be eternal punishment for all who worship the beast and receive the mark of the beast.

- When we covered Rev.13 I noted that it is not the physical "mark of the beast" that seals people's eternal fate, but rather that they had embraced and bought into this present world; See I John 2:15-17. It ultimately comes down to who and what man worships; Note 14:9-11. Follow the trail of your time, energy, affections, and money, and there you find a throne, and whatever or whoever is on that throne is the object of your worship.

vv.12-13 The cost of remaining committed to Christ in this coming day will be great, but will be worth it. Psalm 116:15 Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his *faithful* servants.

Cost of commitment to Christ is variable (John 21:22; Heb.11:32-38). These end time saints will pay the ultimate price for their faith in Christ.

v.14 This is Christ, and here the second coming is imminent.

Daniel 7:13-14 in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Note context of above verses.

vv.15-20 This is the battle called Armageddon; See Rev.16:16; Joel 3:12-16 Zech.14:2-5; Rev.19:11-16.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Prior to Jesus' second coming, the eternal gospel will be proclaimed one last time. It's God's last call to drink of salvation (see Rev.22:17). Could this be your last call today?

This present world is not going to last. And anyone who lives for this present world will one day face an eternal destiny of damnation that is not worth anything this world has to offer.

Matthew 16:26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?

- Me & Wendy hiking the Grand Canyon, my fear of heights, telling Wendy repeatedly, "Don't go near the edge." One place is called "The Abyss." Wendy of course wanted a pic right near the edge!

Ultimate examples of patient endurance – The 144,000

- They did not get caught up in sexual sin
- No lie in their mouths

- Blameless
- Their commitment to Christ was as a virgin who kept herself for her husband.
- II Cor.11:2-3 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may be somehow led astray from your pure devotion to Christ.

CONCLUSION

- Two part invitation:
 1. A call to be saved; Could this be your last call?
 2. A call to be fully committed to Jesus Christ; What would that mean for you Christian? Repent of sexual sin? Stop lying? Stop living a lie? For some it simply means patient endurance. Hang on, don't give up, and don't give in. We're going to see Jesus soon. And when we do it will be worth it all.