

Come Follow Me  
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Week 51  
Revelation 6-14

Starting with chapter 6 we see a lot of terrible things that are going to take place. As we study these things this week it is important to understand the timeline of events. I don't want to focus too much on this because there is a very important principle that I would like to discuss. But it is easy to get confused and caught up in the doom and gloom that we forget the grace and mercy of God in all of this. Let me just recap so you can see what we are dealing with.

In chapters 1-3 of Revelation, John is telling us about what is known as the "Church age" that is the time we are living in right now. Following the end of the church age is what most Christians refer to as the Rapture of the church. This is where the righteous are taken up either by translation or by martyrdom. The chosen will be lifted up, and then comes the 7 years of tribulation. This is what is explained in Revelation 6-18. Chapter 20 is the 1000 year millennial reign and then 21 and 22 is the new heaven and the new earth.

So, as we study this week's terrors please know that those that are chosen will not be on earth during this time. Now, another important note is that in our Bibles chapter 13 precedes chapter 14 but that is not the chronological order. Chapter 14 is what is known as a parenthetical chapter. Parenthetical means related or inserted as a parenthesis. It is believed that John put in chapter 14 as a message of hope and faith as we read about all this destruction. Teaching us that no matter what is going on in our lives that we can always find hope in Christ and faith in His mercy.

In chapter 13 we read about the anti-Christ that will be the leader of the one world government and there will also be a false prophet, we read about the mark of the beast. And in the midst of that awful scene John says:

"And I looked, and, lo, a **Lamb** stood on the mount **Sion**, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's **name** written in their foreheads."  
(Revelation 14:1)

I love this. I love the reality of this and also the parallel we see in our own lives. We may feel like we are totally and completely alone. In the bottom of the lowest pit in the universe, with no hope for relief, with no light. Then, if we choose we can be snatched from that darkness, if we look we will be able to see the Lamb. the hope and only way out of the force which held us bound. And even though Jesus doesn't come until chapter 19 this is a preview of what is to come. A glimmer of hope in dark times.

Now there is some controversy about the 144 thousand. There are many different beliefs about who they are and what it means. This is what the bible says and what we know about them:

“These are they which were not defiled with **women**; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were **redeemed** from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

**5** And in their mouth was found no **guile**: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” (Rev 14:4-5)

We also know from Chapter 7 where these 144 thousand are first mentioned that they have a seal on their foreheads, chapter 14 says they have God's name written on their foreheads. That they were servants of God and they were from “all the tribes of Israel” (rev 7:4) That would be 12 thousand from each of the 12 tribes.

Also, they are males, virgins, redeemed from among men, and no guile and without fault. Many believe them being virgins is literal meaning young men not married, never married. and many conversely believe this is figurative. I tend to believe that this is more figurative and I'll show you why.

In Isaiah 37 verse 22 it refers to Israel as the “virgin daughter of Zion”. Then in second Corinthians chapter 11 verse 2 Paul talks about how he longs to present the church to Christ as a virgin daughter. These are both evidence of the figurative use referring to virginity as the purity of these people. That they are going to be pure in heart and mind as they stand with Christ to declare His gospel at the end of times.

Also, touching on the statement that they had no guile or deceit in their mouth and they were without fault. This doesn't mean that they were perfect or sinless, but that they had applied the atonement blood of the Lamb of God and were repentant, thus making them clean before the throne of God.

And this is what I really wanted to get to in this Chapter. Chapter 14 verses 6-10:

“**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 in the presence of the Lamb:”

In these verses we see three angels. The first gives the invitation to accept Christ. And this is what I find wonderful. During this seven years of tribulation every single one of God's chosen children will be taken up, off the earth. None will be left that are faithful to God and His word. The adversary's power will be unleashed and he will basically be ruling the earth through his anti-Christ and false prophets. The only people left are those that are willing to serve these satanic figures. If you can imagine this, it sounds awful. Now, if you were God and this was going on. Only evil on the earth and all the good are with you in heaven, what do you do? Well, if you're anything like me you send forth fire from heaven and destroy the earth and everything that is on it. To us, or at least to me that sounds like the most logical thing to do.

But, that is not what He does. Instead of condemning and destroying all the evil that remains He sends an angel. He sends this angel to fly in the midst of heaven. That is a small h meaning that he was flying in the sky above the ground on earth, preaching the everlasting gospel to everyone that was on earth, everyone, every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Every last living soul will have the chance to hear and accept or reject that gospel of Jesus Christ before the earth is destroyed. Is it just me or do you find that interesting as well.

It reminds me of the parable of the olive grove in the book of Mormon. Where the Master tries so hard to grow a wonderful vineyard and the trees keep turning wild and producing bitter fruit. So He goes out again to dig and prune and fertilize. And over and over the natural branches turn wild and only produce bitter fruit. He even at one point, He throws down his pruning shears and weeps, crying out to any who would listen. “what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it, and I have digged about it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned.?” (Jacob 5:47)

Now if that is not patience, mercy, love and long suffering, I don't know what is. That is the character of God. When all of us would have thrown up our hands and walked away as the city burned. God in one last attempt sends an angel to preach the word of the Gospel. Why an angel? Since the beginning of time it has been the job of mankind to preach the gospel. But there is none left on the earth that is good, no not one. So God sends an angel. And in His last effort to save His children... This angel visits every single person left on earth and gives them the chance to turn from their devilish ways, repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

So if God is so willing to go through all that effort. To extend such mercy, then why shouldn't we? When we are offended, or hurt, or if someone doesn't do something in a way that we would like, do you think maybe, just maybe we could give it another try. We could forgive and forget.

In the days of Jesus's mortal ministry as he was walking with His disciples Peter asks Him "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" (Matt 18:21)

That was the law of Moses they all upheld in that day. If someone were to offend you, you were to forgive them 3 times. After that it was not required, and you could retaliate as you saw fit. So Peter was being a bit facetious when he suggested that someone might be so bold as to forgive seven times. That's more than double what the law required of any man in that day. Three, maybe four I could imagine forgiving someone if I was a good person that was loyal to the law of Moses. I couldn't imagine being able or even willing to forgive someone seven times. That's the attitude Peter had as he presents this question to the Master. Then the Lord of the vineyard, the Savior of the world turns to this prideful servant and blows his mind with the idea that you may begin to see as God sees if you are able to forgive 70 times 7. Four hundred and ninety times says the master. That is how many times I want you to forgive.

Perhaps we are falling back into our old ways when we get offended, or hurt, or even at times annoyed with other imperfect human beings. We may even think that to forgive someone three times is too much for us to bear. After two or even one time offenses are willing to exile them from our lives and condemn them to the endless tormenting fires of Hell. In those times it would be well with us to remember how merciful God has been with us. And how merciful He is going to be with those who are the worst of the worst in this world. So forgiving that He is willing to send an angel at the last moment to try and reach any of His wayward children. If He is willing to do that for them, then He is certainly willing to do it for you. So as John did, I encourage you to look and behold the Lamb of God who is standing with open arms to welcome you into His loving embrace.

In the sacred name of Him who is standing on mount Zion. even Jesus Christ, amen.