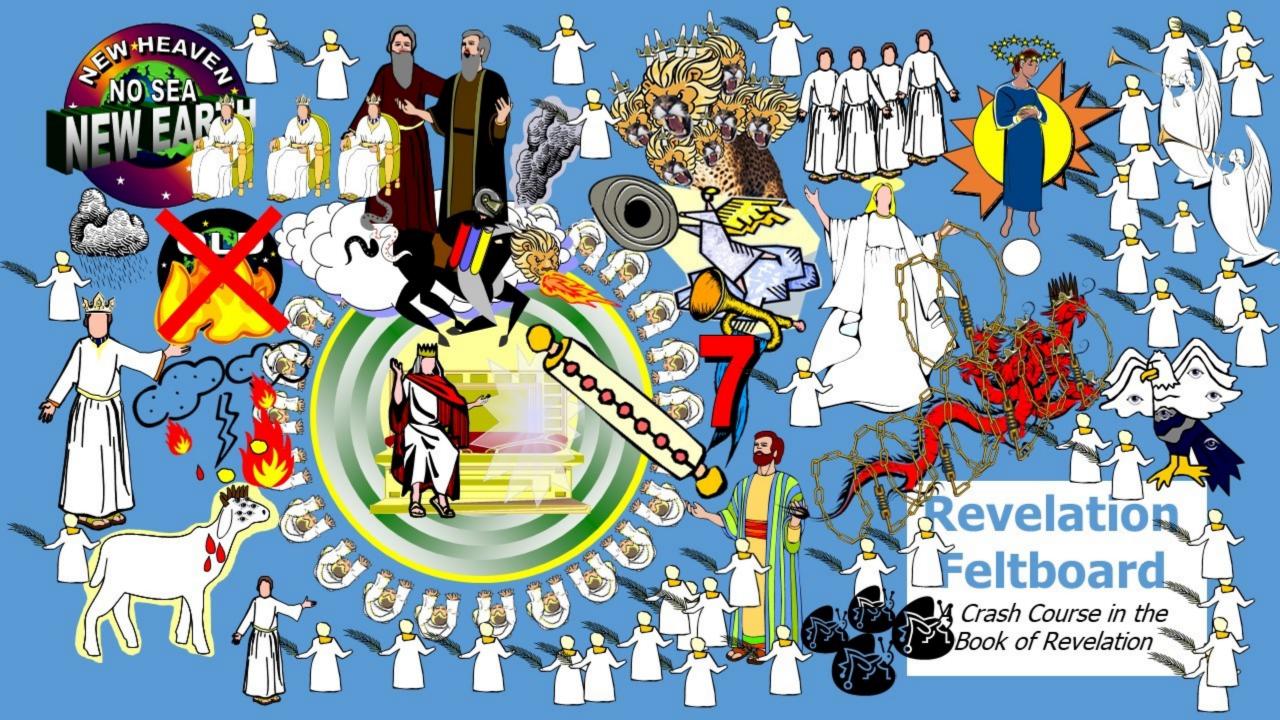


"that they may rest from their labors..."

Revelation 14:13

Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad Baruch Shem k'vod malchutto, I'olam va'ed

Hear, O Israel: the LORD is our God The LORD is One. Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.



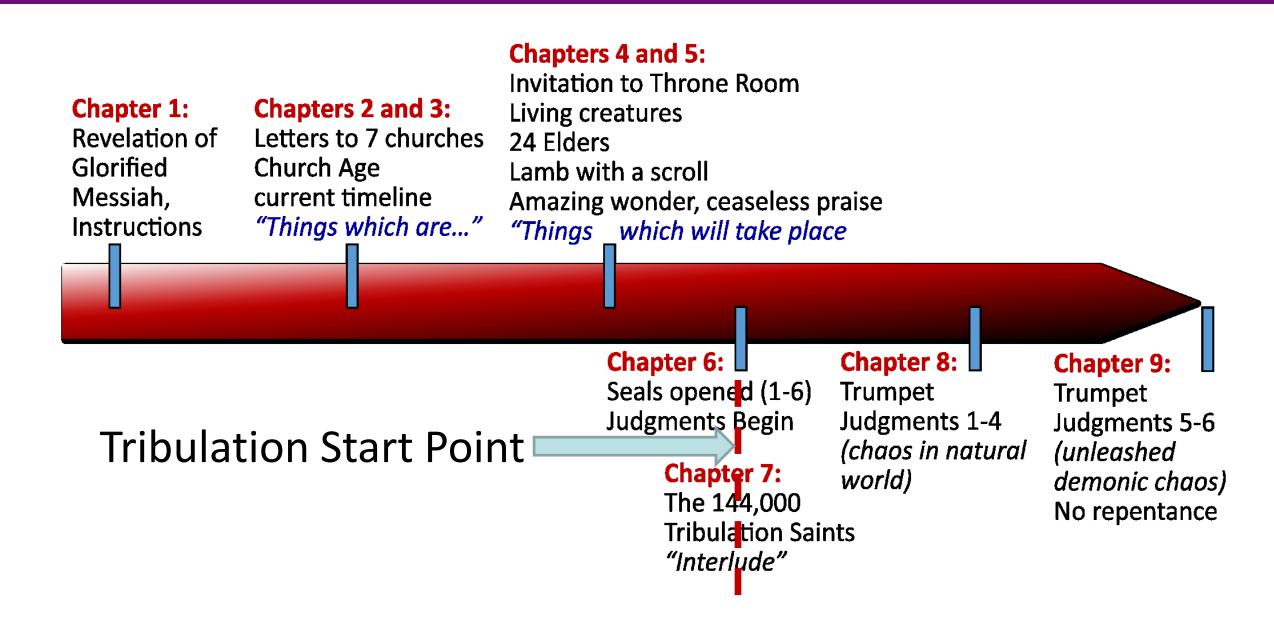
3 Distinct "Scenes:" • Lamb + 144,000 on Zion

Messages from 3 Angels

Divine Harvests

A few things before we get started...

 "Then I looked and behold...." something new. • "Behold" = John startled, reader to pay attention. **ABOUT CHRONOLOGY...Where and When are We?** Chapter 10 +, chronology difficult to understand. Through chapter 9 fairly obvious chronology, church age winds down, tribulation begins, first two sets of judgments (seals/trumpets) happen, through 6th trumpet.



- Chapter 9 not only result of God's wrath, but also greater "incentive" to turn to Him. Still in God's "grace" period.
- But chapter 9 ends this way: ²⁰ But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹ <u>And they did</u> <u>not repent</u> of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Mankind does NOT repent

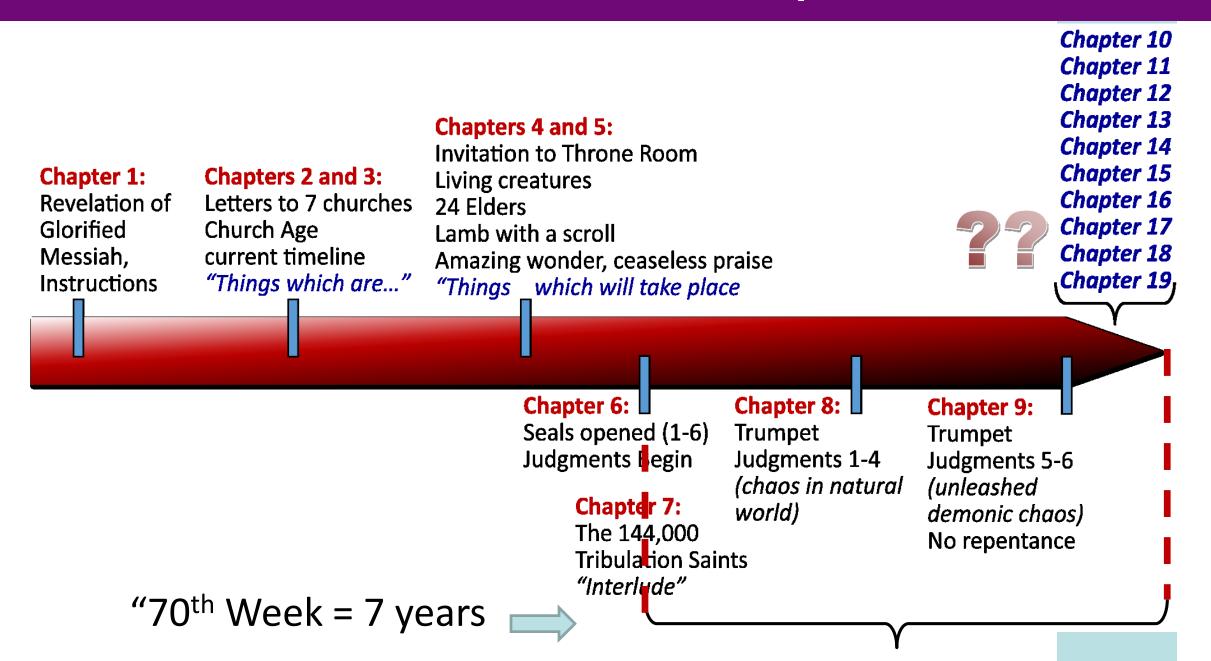
- Man still unrepentant.
- For this and other reasons, many believe at end of chapter 9 have reached end of Daniel's 70th Week," coinciding with END, or <u>near end</u>, of 7-year tribulation.
- Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 <u>informational</u> <u>visions only</u>, not "events" in certain time period, or advancing a timeline.

- Chapter 10 = timeout for John, new instructions. More to prophesy, won't be pleasant. Seems grace period up, final judgment soon. <u>No more delay</u>.
- Chapter 11 = spiritual condition of worshippers; two witnesses have a 3½ year ministry (conviction and conversion), ends in this chapter.
- Chapter 12 = history of Israel and Messiah, war in heaven, persecuting "woman" (Israel) and her "offspring." Focuses on last 3½ years.

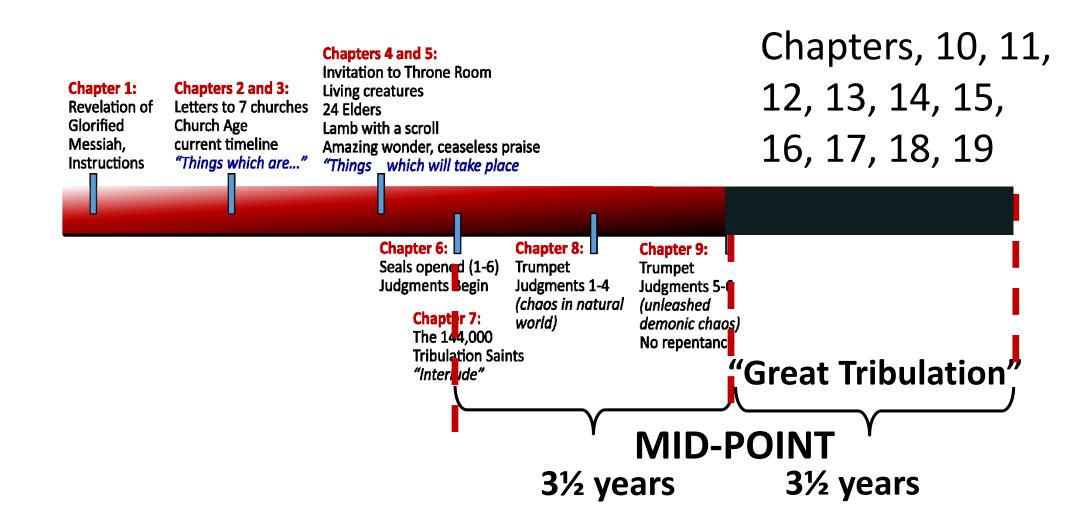
- Chapter 13 = two beasts, final world rulers (AC + FP), along with dragon (Satan) will persecute saints, kill those who do not worship 1st beast, control entire world economy. Happening also last 3½ year period.
- And now chapter 14. <u>three distinct</u> <u>parts</u>: revisit of 144,000 Jews, some great news and some dire warnings from angels, and divine harvests.



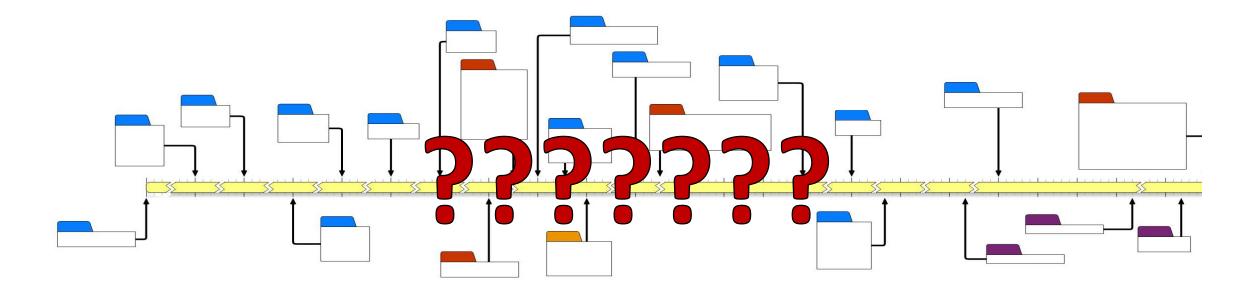
- All seem to be those that will *happen at end of tribulation*.
- Makes sense then, 70th week, 7-year tribulation, may be "up" at end of chapter 9.
- Only thing left is 7th Trumpet and final bowl judgments (includes Armageddon).



• Others say end of chapter 9 mid-point of Tribulation.



- Although chronology in Revelation, often difficult to tell precisely WHERE we are on 7-year timeline.
- 3rd set of judgments ("bowls" ch 16) poured out in very rapid succession. No clues how much time.



Scene 1: The 144,000 and the Lamb on Zion

v. 1-5

Scene 1: The Lamb and the 144,000

¹ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

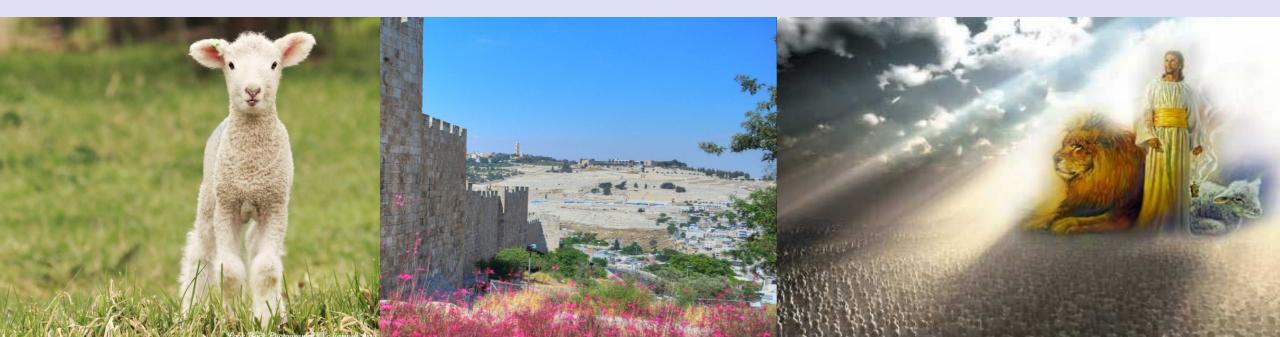


³ They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and fortyfour thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴ These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵ And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

¹ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

Just in verse 1 a few issues to solve:

- The Lamb obvious!!!
- Mt. Zion earthly and heavenly?
- The 144,000 ?



THE LAMB

- *"...behold, a Lamb..."* Lamb in <u>direct contrast to</u> <u>beasts</u> of previous chapter. same Lamb in chapter 5, and chapter 7. Yeshua HaMashiach.
- *"behold"* emphasizes importance.
 Commands reader to <u>pay attention</u>, something important here.



MOUNT ZION

- *"…Mount Zion…"* traditional on earth, *namely Jerusalem*, OR in heaven?? (Hebrews 12:18-24) Could be either, or partly both (144,000 on earth, harpists in heaven, etc.)
- May be reference to earthly Zion, *Jerusalem*, maybe even Messiah returning, joining sealed 144,000.
- If in heaven, obviously would be heavenly Zion. (John may be seeing both heaven and earth in this vision.)

THE 144,000

- all kinds of suggestions and speculations for identity of this 144,000, including:
 - Original 144,000 Jews selected from each of 12 tribes of Jacob, and sealed from harm in chapter 7

NO Everal fite group of believers (Gentiles?) other than 144,000 in chapter 7

NO EVADENCE: all redeemed NO EVADENCE:

- Logical, same 144,000 sealed chapter 7. Some say others. <u>We really don't know</u>.
- 666 mark of beast. Here reminded those who love God also sealed, mark of God. Contrast to mark of doom.
- Chapter 14 chapter of obvious contrasts to chapter 13.
- Safest (at least for now) interpretation = these same 144,000, shown here perhaps to indicate God faithful in bringing them safely through Tribulation.
- Some allegorize as Zion and 144,000 representing "Church." *No! Based on replacement theology, a LIE.*

- If mid-point here instead, can assume these still being kept safe, and appearance here is reminder of this.
- Others say 144,000 are same as chapter 7, but here are with Lamb, so possibly martyred?
- Questions still remain:
 - Same 144,000 as chapter 7?
 - Still on earth ? (Alive in physical body?)
 - Redeemed already, returning with Yeshua?

WE DO NOT KNOW!!



² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

- "voice" = phone also translated "sound." Perhaps not a voice, but loud noise of harps. If harps, sound made by MANY, thunderous.
- Seen harpists before, Chapter 5 = saints in heaven.
- Chapter 15 = tribulation saints, redeemed (out of this terrible time.
- Together, represent <u>all redeemed</u> of God.

They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

- new song = New act of divine deliverance/blessing deliverance of 144,000 through tribulation?
- Proclaims "Look what new thing God is doing!"
- Church already redeemed, resides in heaven (ch 5).
 Now Jewish 144,000 also redeemed (ch 14).
- MAY INDICATE 144,000 NO LONGER ON EARTH, BUT IN HEAVEN WITH OTHER REDEEMED?
- God doing *new thing* (redeeming Israel?)

- No one else could learn song except 144,000, being sung in heaven. Exclusive to 144,000.
- Not given lyrics of this new song only song in Revelation where this is true.
- <u>Very loud noise</u>! Salvation for Israel BIG DEAL, hence loud noise.
- Must resort to speculation. Don't have all the answers.

⁴ These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.⁵ And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

- Verse 4 where **most of controversy and differing opinions** come in regarding *this* group of 144,000.
- <u>Not given this info in chapter 7</u> of 144,000, so sometimes thought to be different group, with different set of characteristics. <u>Cannot assume that</u>.
- Fact they come out of Tribulation and follow Lamb indication of their faithfulness and redemption, and now "virgin" status spiritually (as well as physically, if we understand correct meaning of the Greek).

- Literal, or symbolic? Could be both.
- One key may be Greek word for "defiled." Moluno = "soiled" or defiled, used to indicate sexual relations outside of marriage, and resulting physical defilement ("uncleanness," according to God's Laws). <u>Never applied to marriage union</u>.
- Does not necessarily mean they were not married (celibate, set aside for God like eunuchs). Could be married, but keeping vows of marriage covenant.

- Commentators warn this passage should <u>never be used to</u> justify celibacy ("monkery" as sometimes called). Refers to relations OUTSIDE marriage, repeatedly condemned throughout scripture.
- Sexual sin one of humankind's biggest downfalls. Tribulation will be <u>known for rampant sexual sin</u>, thought to be part of end times one world false religion, just as it was (and is) with paganism. Already well on its way.
- Greek "women" = *gune*, "women" but <u>specifically WIVES</u>.
 Both spiritual and physical adultery (sin) intended here.

- May chose celibacy, like Jeremiah, forbidden to marry (Jeremiah 16:1-4).
- Others say "The 144,000 virgins are undefiled in the sense that they have refused to defile themselves by participating in the fornication of worshipping the beast." (Ladd)
- May also be <u>symbolic</u> that 144,000 are Jews of ch 7, and **God likened unfaithfulness of Israel to adultery.**

- Israel "wife of God," committed adultery by "fornicating" with other gods. Adultery = metaphor for infidelity to Israel's real husband... Elohim.
- When Israel faithful, called "virgin." When unfaithful, called "harlot." (See 2 Kings 19:21, Isaiah 54:5, Hosea 2:5, Ezekiel 16, 23)
- NT, after birth of Church, believers called virgin bride of Christ. "...I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:2a)

- These are <u>faithful believers</u>, hence "virgin" status.
- In a nutshell, 144,000 **probably both physically chaste** ("virgins") whether married or not, having not defiled themselves with sexual relations <u>outside of marriage</u> (will be common in that time) ...
- AND spiritually faithful to the Lamb, as spotless bride (not worshipping Beast). Would be true even if consecrated and "set aside" and do not marry.

COMMENTARY: During the Great Tribulation there will be an exaggerated emphasis upon sex, and obviously immorality will prevail. The 144,000 will have kept themselves aloof from the sins of the Great Tribulation. Now, considering adultery in the spiritual sense, in the Old Testament idolatry was classified as spiritual fornication. The classic example is in Ezekiel 16 where we find God's severe indictment against Israel for fornication and adultery—which was idolatry. The 144,000 will also have kept themselves from the worship of the Beast and his image during the Great Tribulation. Therefore, the comment, "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins," is probably referring to chastity in both the literal sense and the spiritual sense. (McGee)

- Follow Lamb everywhere. Where He leads, they follow. *DO WE*? Personal will, desires, lusts, goals all submitted to Him. *ARE OURS*?!!
- Another contrast to "inhabitants of the earth" who follow unholy trinity (dragon, 2 beasts).
- Notice also a believer <u>follows</u> Lamb. Too often we head out in front of Him!
- Being "firstfruits" may indicate <u>first of many to come</u>, representative perhaps of all Israel redeemed.

- "And in their mouth was found no <u>deceit</u>,..." Deceit = dolos, craftiness, guile, deception.
- Some say "deceit" here = "the Lie" of the enemy.
 Original lie = we can be like God, or gods ourselves, do not need God or His gift.
- *"…for they are without fault before the throne of God."* <u>ONLY</u> way to be without fault before God: receive gift of life from Him, blood of Jesus that covers our sins. By not believing the LIE.

Scene 2: Angelic Proclamations

(v. 6-13)

Scene 2: Three Angelic Proclamations

First Angel...

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people – ⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

"Fear God and give glory to Him..."



Scene 2: Three Angelic Proclamations

Second Angel...

⁸ And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." 2

"Babylon is fallen..."



Scene 2: Three Angelic Proclamations

Third Angel...

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ...



¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." ¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. ¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

ANOTHER VOICE

"...that they may rest..."

First Angel

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to to preach to those who dwell on the earth-to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people-

- *"another angel..."* "angel" found 72 X in Revelation!
 John sees <u>many</u> "angels," = aggelos, messenger.
 Angels <u>facilitate</u> much of this vision.
- *"in the midst of heaven"* interesting single word in Greek (*mesouranēma*). 2nd time used (ch 8). Literally = "mid heaven," mostly understood as *"in the middle of the sky (or heavens)"* but some speculate other meanings.

- "Heavens" composed of various parts, including layers of atmosphere + "outer space."
- Some speculate could = <u>TV satellite</u> bringing gospel around world (in the "mid heaven")
- Others say merely means angel seen when sun in "middle of the heavens" meaning midday.
- NOT what words say. Can't imagine form or appearance on earth. But we continue to Mesosphere Stratosphere Stratosphere Troposphere
- When it happens, clear what it means.

International Space Station

Contrails

Nacreous cloud

Cirrus clouds

Auroræ

Mesopause 80 km Stratopause 50 km Ozone layer Tropopause 12 km

Kármán line 100 km

Cumulonimbus clouds

Weather balloon 40 km

OBJECTS WITHIN LAYERS NOT DRAWN TO SCAL

Meteors

- Is this *familiar* "gospel" (good news)?
- If so, still time for salvation.
- Message is a "perpetual good message" (literal translation) but perhaps not about available salvation, but about <u>righteousness of God and</u> coming judgment for those who do NOT fear Him.
- All truths about God proclaim a "good message," even judgment.

⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

- "Fear God and give glory to Him..." "Fear" here not word meaning to be impressed, inspired or awed by God. Word phobeo, = to be terrified!
- Means to be *terrified, afraid* so one is <u>startled into</u> respect and reverence out of fearful realization.
- "...for the hour of His judgment has come." Good news to believers struggling. Deliverance is near.
- **BAD news to unbelievers who don't heed it**.

"Better wake up to the fact that you didn't just evolve. This earth did not just happen. You aren't just an animal. You and all creation were crafted by an awesome God for His purpose and His glory.

You are accountable to Him!"

- Gospel preached to entire earth. Everyone will hear.
- Even now, <u>God's grace may still be available</u>, but not for long, according to angels.
- "Loud" voice insures all will hear. Worship God, not beast (don't take beast's mark!).
- Severe warning to world not willing to listen. God's grace even here. Will be no valid excuses.
- Reference to "sea and springs of water" interesting, considering what is coming in last 7 plague judgments.
- 2nd and 3rd plagues turn waters into blood (all of them). Life cannot continue like this.

- Entering warning stage, previews judgment. Time running out. "Do this...or else," message.
- No one able to stand at Great White Throne judgment (chapter 20) and say "I never heard..."
- Seems still some chance people will receive good news and believe, be saved from coming judgment.

THIS message is an ultimatum. Fear God or die, forever.

Second Angel

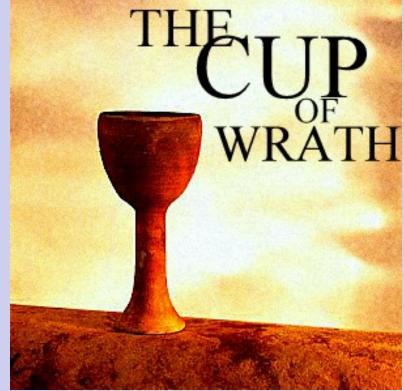
⁸ And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fa alen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of fornication."

- <u>First mention of Babylon in Revelation</u>, two entire chapters dedicated to her fall later (chapters 17 and 18).
- Don't "see" fall of Babylon until chapters 17 and 18. Here <u>angel announcing its destiny</u>, before the fact. In God's plan, already done. Remember, *He inhabits eternity* and sees the end from the beginning (Isaiah 57:15, 46:10)!
- Babylon has been enemy's headquarters from beginning of time (Genesis 11, Nimrod, Tower of Babel, etc.)
 Origin of all false religions, and false or pagan rituals.
 <u>All comes from Babylon</u>.

- All nations will experience judgment of Babylon. <u>She is</u> <u>Harlot of chapter 17</u>, who has enticed entire world with her seductive, violent and anti-God ways.
- All nations will be judged, and experience "the wrath of her fornication." (God's anger over her sin.)
- Reference to Jeremiah 51:7, one of 6 classic chapters in scripture that deal with destruction, ultimate judgment judgment of Babylon. (Isaiah 13 and 14, Jeremiah 50 and 51, and Revelation 17 and 18).

"...all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication..."

 God's wrath seen as a "cup" and "cup of wine" in Psalm 75:8: *"For in the hand of the* LORD there is a cup, And the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out; Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down."



 Babylon still exists physically, has never been completely destroyed. Has undergone extensive rebuilding by various people, notably Saddam Hussein.

 Occupied by US Coalition forces during Iraq war, now of interest to world community to rebuild as tourist attraction. (including Tower of Babel)

3 Third Angel

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

- Message plain, blunt, chilling: Don't worship the beast, and don't take the beast's mark, or you will die and be tormented forever in place of eternal horror.
- All judgments, as well as eternal separation from God, given to anyone who does not worship and fear God Almighty. *Anyone who takes mark of the beast.*
- "…poured out full strength…" This is last call, so to speak. After this warning, <u>no more mercy</u>.
- Today, God's wrath diluted with mercy and grace. Not here. <u>Will be poured out full strength</u>.

Only two kinds of people, especially at this point (actually, anytime!).

1) Those who **believe and love God and receive His gift of salvation and eternal life** with Him (SAVED, believers). AND...

2) those who **do not believe**, **love the beast**, **have rejected God's gift**, and will therefore spend eternal existence apart from God in torment (UNSAVED, unbelievers).

- "...in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." We don't like this part. Hate to hear of suffering "in the presence" whether ours or God's.
- <u>Refutes false teaching that wicked will merely be</u> <u>destroyed</u>, with no future existence. **Not true.** They *do have a future*, an eternal existence. Will live in torment forever with no rest.
- Many people think nothing beyond physical death. Will be <u>terribly surprised</u>.
- Fire and smoke here **relate to Lake of Fire** referenced first in Revelation 19.

Scene 2: REVELATION FELTBOARD: Chapter 14

Another voice...

¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. ¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

- Message here from <u>unidentified</u> voice in heaven, and from the Spirit.
- Followers of beast, followers of Lamb, <u>two different</u> groups, headed to two <u>different destinations</u>.
- Previous verses, warning to those who follow beast, tells of ultimate destination. Here, word to saints, those who follow the Lamb, meant to encourage to stay true to end.
- And if they do, <u>even in death are blessed because</u> ultimate destination with God, and eternal rest.

- Addressed to tribulation saints, not Church.
- Another warning: choose temporary death <u>by the</u> beast rather than eternal death <u>with the beast.</u>
- Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on....Can also be translated "Blessed from the moment of their death are those who die in the Lord." Immediately in presence of Lamb.
- Also shows only two ways to die: <u>IN the Lord</u>, or <u>NOT</u>
 <u>IN the Lord</u>. "Way" you die determines where you go.
 IN and WITH Him, or OUT and APART from Him.

- Reinforces fact that many, <u>if not most</u>, martyred for "patience" and steadfastness with Master Yeshua.
- Seems more time left in Tribulation.
- Perhaps not much, but will be horror-filled, and what comes next will either be blessings, or "cursings" forever.



- *"…voice from heaven…"* Interesting, 7 such voices from heaven (*unidentified*) <u>also seven blessings</u>.
 Heptadic (7's) structure remarkable.
- *"...rest from their labors..."* Death brings rest to those who know the source of their salvation. Don't have to work at life any longer, work done for us. Rest Rest awaits.
- *"...their works follow them."* NOT salvation *by works*. Works, or lives, of these saints evidence of their faith.

Either at <u>end</u> of Tribulation (or very near it), OR at <u>midpoint</u>. Either way, very clear final judgment lies just ahead.

Things get <u>very ugly</u> for everyone, including believers, for whatever time is left. Faith will be tested to the max. They will receive wonderful reward if they stay true to the Messiah.

Scene 3: Divine Harvests (v. 14-20)

Part 3: Divine Harvests

¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like 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 who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." ¹⁶ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.



Part 3: Another Harvest

¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." ¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

- **Complete scene change**, different action, different characters.
- <u>Preview of final judgment</u>
- Chapter 14 like overview of what is still to come.
- Chapter 6 like <u>outline of conditions</u> present during tribulation - a synopsis of entire plan of God to end of time of judgment.
- Timeline of tribulation advanced to end here. Detail in coming chapters, this chapter serves as high overview.

- "One like the Son of Man,..." Know who this is. Comes from Daniel 7:13: "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him." No one but Jesus!
- "Son of Man," Jesus' favorite title for Himself.
- Sitting on a white cloud. When Jesus ascended, he disappeared into clouds. He will return same way.
- Luke 21:27 states: *"Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."*

- "...a golden crown..." not expected diadema, crown of kingly authority. Instead, "stephanos" crown, victor's crown.
- Jesus King of Kings, wears many crowns, including crown of victory. "His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns... (19:12a)
- This crown <u>golden</u>, not normal crown of laurel leaves for athletic victor. **Permanent crown of victory.**
- We will wear this crown, too.



est

¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." ¹⁶ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

- Next verse another angel with another sickle also harvesting. Most think <u>different harvests</u>.
- Differences lead us to believe this harvest, by One like Son of Man, (obviously Jesus) = <u>harvest of believers</u>.
- Some think may reference "catching up," others believe final harvest of believers (Tribulation Saints) before Millennium.
- Since chapter may be larger overview to show disposition of <u>all</u> people (*believers and unbelievers*) timing of first harvest before next *could* indeed indicate "catching up" (even prior to Tribulation).

- Harvest of believers will ALWAYS happen before harvest of unbelievers (no matter when it occurs on a timeline regarding Tribulation Pre-Mid-Post).
- Because of timing here (after assumed mid-point of tribulation) some point to mid-tribulation rapture.
- Important: <u>angel not giving Jesus command</u>. Angels do not command God. Proclaiming: "now is the time!"
- No other details regarding <u>how</u> accomplished, or what kind of harvest.
- May be related to story of wheat and tares and final harvests of righteous and wicked. (Matthew 13:39-43)

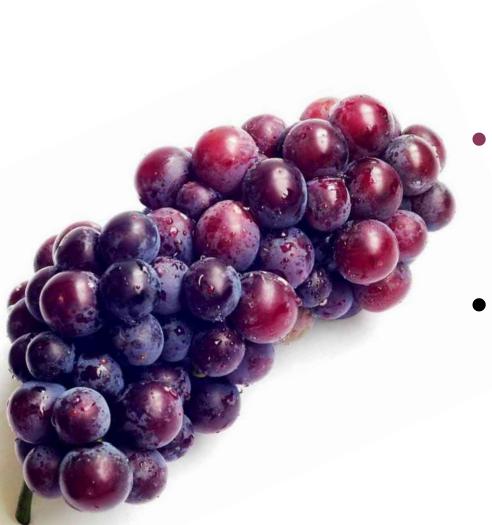
nd

Vest

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¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe."

- Note differences between harvests.
- Repeatedly told "sharp" sickle. Will not fail intended task. Prepared, sharpened, for this harvest.
- <u>No one will escape this harvest</u>, who does not follow the Lamb. A **certain "violence"** here, unlike previous harvest.
- Gathering "clusters of the vine of the earth," or grapes.
 Some speculate "the vine" often = Israel, so this harvest only directed at Israel's unbelieving Jews.
- <u>However</u>, more likely representing filling of God's cup of wrath, complete to overflowing, <u>for all wicked</u>.



- "Ripe" here different than ripe in v. 15 (previous harvest). This implies "fully mature."
- Evil of unbelievers fully mature now, ready to be cut off.
- Concept in scripture where God waits for "fullness of evil" before acting in judgment.



¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

- Obvious allusion to final battle, Armageddon, when remaining unbelievers will be "harvested."
- Prophet Joel warned of this: "Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD. Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. **Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe**. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow— For their wickedness is great." (Joel 3:11-13)
- Word used here for "great" (wickedness) also implies "full."

- *"...the winepress of the wrath of God."* Welldeveloped symbol in scripture of wrath of God at end.
- Referenced in Revelation 14, Joel 3 and Isaiah 63.
- *"…trampled outside the city…"* Most believe battle of Armageddon will rage outside city of Jerusalem, Valley of Jehoshaphat, also called Valley of Megiddo (Har Megiddo in Hebrew, Armageddon in Greek).
- Jesus crucified <u>outside city</u>, and battle for ultimate control and authority waged outside city, won by the One wearing victor's crown.

- *"...blood...up to the horses' bridles..."* Horrible sight, difficult to take literally.
- Speaks of destruction, slaughter of those opposed to God, will be literal battle. Picture may be literal, may be figurative. May be both.
- <u>Does not have to mean blood will literally be 4-5 feet</u> <u>deep</u>. Means battle will result in much blood spilling and spattering, as high as horses' bridles.
- Though we dislike these images, sin must be removed before Yeshua takes His throne on earth.

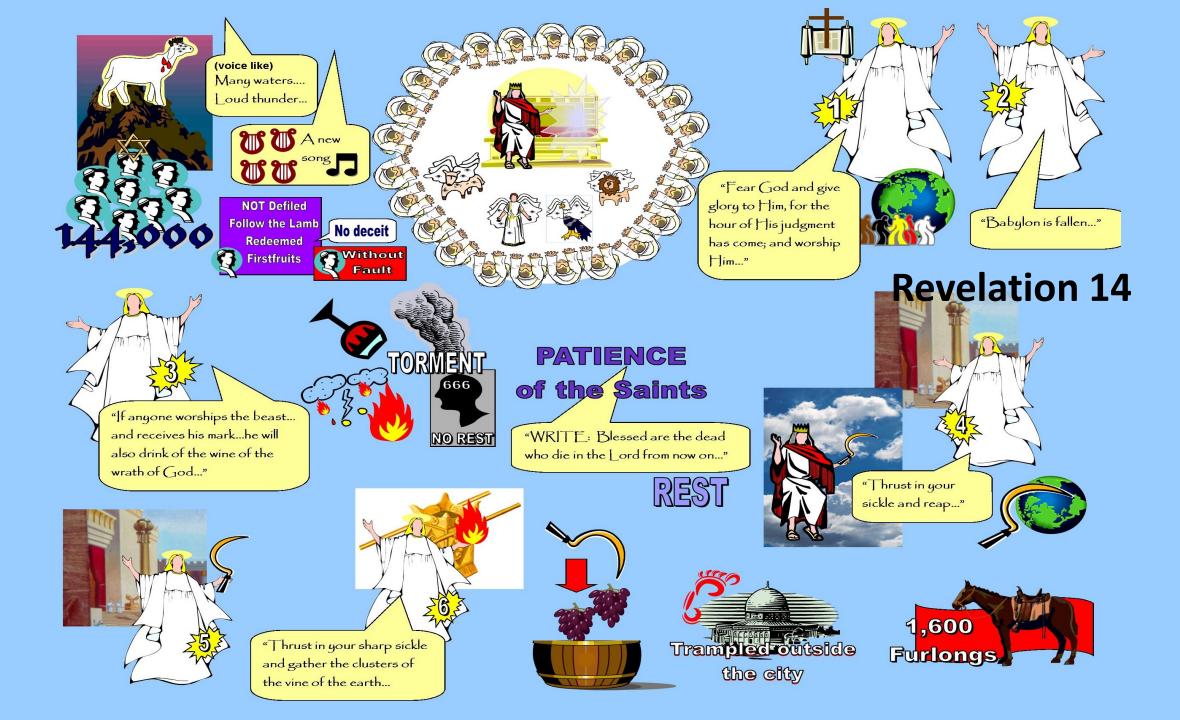
"…one thousand six hundred furlongs." Precise measurement, <u>most likely literal</u>.
~180 miles, about length of Valley of Megiddo, scene of many Biblical battles, of final world battle.
Verses clearly show this particular harvest most definitely NOT harvest of believers.

Likely <u>outline summary</u> (overview) of events yet to happen in Tribulation.

7 events listed here:

- 1. Presentation of believing remnant of Israel (144,000 Godly Jews, perhaps preserved thru Trib)
- 2. Preaching of Gospel and accompanying warning of soon to come judgment
- 3. Advance notice of ultimate destruction of Babylon, *literally*, and all in opposition to God

- 4. Warning, fate of those who take mark of the beast
- 5. Blessing of martyred saints
- 6. Harvest of believers by King of Kings
- 7. Harvest of unbelievers, and their destruction at battle of Armageddon



Yevarekh-kha Adonai veyishmerekha May the LORD bless you and keep you

Ya'er Adonai panav elekha vihunneka May the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you

Yissa Adonai panav elekha viyasem lekha shalom.

May the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.