



Revelation 14

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Tape 8253
By Chuck Smith

I received a letter this week from some of the senators in the state capitol, namely Bill Morrow, state senator of the 38th district; Steve Baldwin from the 77th district; and Tim Lesley from the 1st district; and Raymond Hayes from the 36th district. It said Dear Pastor, most Christian leaders are aware that last month the leadership of the state assembly pushed through all but one of their homosexual agenda bills. These include teaching school children to approve of homosexuality under the guise of civil rights. Another measure would create a homosexual domestic partners registry this that would subsidize and codify homosexual partnerships. Particularly worrisome are provisions that would elevate sexual orientation to the same level as race and ethnicity while permitting tax funded state investigations of those that are suspected of discriminating against this new protected class. Under the proposed legislation, fines between 50 thousand and 150 thousand dollars could be leveled against the boy scouts and small businesses, Christian bookstores, radio stations, which disagree with homosexuality. By only vote were we able to defeat the worst of these bills, AB222, which would have promoted sexual orientation in our public schools. Many of us believe that our state and possibly our nation is in danger of its greatest moral degradation in recent history. Should our California state legislature pass these laws, other states as well as the U.S. Congress will surely follow our lead and pass similar laws. How our state legislators vote on the upcoming weeks will determine to a great extent what our children and grandchildren will experience in the new millennium. We are grateful that God has enabled us to defeat AB222. By faith we believe that it is possible to defeat these remaining bills when the senate and the assembly vote on them, but it will require the Hand of God. And we know that without God's intervention, we will not succeed. As elected officials of your state, we respectfully ask you to be as the prophets of old. Please familiarize yourself with the impending danger of these bills and then quickly call for a day of prayer and fasting in your church and community. We need a multitude to ask our great God to intercede on behalf of His people in this most important of battles.

I think that when some of the state senators call on us to call for a day of fasting and prayer that we should respond. And I would like this Wednesday to become a day of fasting and prayer as we seek the Lord to get hold of the hearts and the minds of those who are in the legislative powers in our state and that these bills that could endanger the church tremendously will be defeated by the assembly. And so we would like to respond to the request of these senators by calling the church to fasting and prayer this Wednesday. And let's pray that God will allow righteousness to come to the floor and that these evil bills that are being pushed by the gay and homosexual agendas will be defeated and will not become the law of the state of California. So Wednesday join with us in fasting and in prayer that God will defeat these godless bills.

Let's turn to the book of Revelation, and of course, we're getting close. John is as a spectator and he said,

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

Now, back in Chapter 7 before the four winds of judgment were released upon the earth, those angels that were ready to release them, were ordered not to release those devastating winds until the servants of God could be sealed in their foreheads. And John said he counted the number and there were a hundred and forty four thousand of all of the tribes of Israel. And then he named the various tribes, 12 thousand from each tribe. And they were sealed with the seal of God in their foreheads. Here we are told what that seal is. It is the name of God that is written in the foreheads. Now, we know that the name of God is Jehovah or Yahweh, we don't know what is the correct pronunciation. But God will inscribe His name in their foreheads. It is interesting that when the Antichrist comes, he will cause everyone to receive a mark in their foreheads and it is the mark of his name, the name of the Antichrist in their foreheads. The number of his

name will be marked in their foreheads, and that is probably sort of as a countering of the fact that God has put the name of His servants on their foreheads. So the one hundred forty-four thousand that we saw there in chapter 7 appear here again in chapter 14.

John then heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, as the voice of great thunder:
(14:2a)

Back in chapter 1 as John is describing Jesus in His glorified state said, “and His voice was as the sound of many waters.” And so the voice of Jesus is what John hears at this point as the voice of thunder,

and he heard the voice of harpers as they were harping with their harps: And they sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four cherubim, or living creatures, and the elders: [that is the 24] and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. (14:2b-3)

Now it seems like every group has a song that is endemic to that particular group. In the Old Testament we have the song of Moses, and then we have the song of Deborah, the victory over the enemies. In the fifth chapter of the Book of Revelation we have the song of the redeemed church. The lyrics of the song indicate that only the church can sing that song. Now, the one hundred forty-four thousand have a special song that no one can sing except them. Each of us have related to the Lord in a unique and special way. God has related to His church in a unique and special way. We have the song of redemption. We have the song of victory, praise to our Lord, that only we the church can sing. Now the one hundred forty-four thousand, they have a special relationship with the Lord. Theirs is that of preservation through the great tribulation. The church is that of deliverance from the great tribulation. But theirs is deliverance through the great tribulation. In the Old Testament you find that Enoch, a type of the church, was translated or raptured before God’s judgment of the flood. However, Noah was sealed in the ark by God and he was able to survive this judgment of God. God preserved him through the flood.

Daniel escaped the fiery furnace. God delivered Daniel that he did not have to go into the fiery furnace by no doubt removing Daniel away from the capital when this order to worship the image was given. However, God delivered the three Hebrew children through the tribulation of the fiery furnace.

So you have those who are singing a song of deliverance from while others sing a song of deliverance through. And the song of the one hundred forty-four thousand is that song of how the Lord preserved them and kept them through this great time of judgment when God is judging the earth because of its rebellion against Him. Surely with the things that are happening in our world today, man’s rebellion against God is coming to an apex.

This week when the supreme court of the state of New Jersey has ruled against the Boy Scouts, ordering them to have homosexuals as scout leaders, we are in serious trouble. Now, these laws that are being proposed in the state of California will be similar to the laws of New Jersey and those same kinds of orders can come from the supreme court here. That’s why we need to fast and pray and seek God to bring about changes.

I am thrilled that these men wrote for prayer. They didn’t send us the numbers of the various senators and so forth and say, you know, get up and get your placards and let’s go demonstrate. But they’re calling for prayer. In reality, that’s the greatest weapon that we have. It’s a spiritual battle and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of the enemy. And we are wise if we will use the spiritual weapons that God has given us and the greatest of these is prayer. So we call upon you to fast and to pray with us on this issue. But it is only a sign of the times as the world is ripening and as the United States is ripening for the judgment of God.

So they sing this song before the throne, it sounds like they’re in heaven, before the cherubim and the elders. And only they can sing the song. It’s unique unto them. Now in describing the one hundred forty-four thousand, it says,

These are they, which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they, which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. (14:4)

Now they are a firstfruit of a special order of those who were preserved and those who survive the Great

Tribulation, they become the firstfruits of that group.

And in their mouth is found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. (14:5)

That's quite a statement, "without fault before the throne of God." But you know, that's exactly how you and I who are in Christ will stand! Jude at the close of his little epistle said, "Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 1:24) Oh, the wonderful work of Jesus Christ in our hearts and lives! You know, there is an interesting passage of scripture where God said concerning Jacob, "I find no fault in him." Oh glory! Jacob was a man that was full of faults. You read his story and this guy was a conniver and everything else, but as God sees him He sees no fault in him. And that's the way God sees you tonight, who are in Christ Jesus! Faultless! Isn't that glorious? What can you say? That's wonderful.

Now, John said,

I saw another angel [this means an angel that wasn't of that seven angels that were blowing their trumpets] another angel who was flying in the midst of heaven, and he has the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. (14:6)

A marvelous thing! An angel flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting gospel to proclaim to all the world! You know, it's interesting to read some of the commentaries of fifty years ago on the Book of Revelation as they tried to imagine just how this could be. An angel flying through the midst of heaven declaring the everlasting gospel to the world. But now with satellite technology, we can understand just how this can be accomplished.

And he says with a loud voice, Fear God, give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water. (14:7)

Calling upon the people to fear God. You know, the problem with many today is there is no fear of God in their hearts. The fear of the Lord, the Bible tells us, is the beginning of wisdom. And the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. And so the angel in proclaiming the everlasting gospel; Paul said I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It's the power of God to salvation! The everlasting gospel, which is able to save people from their sins. It tells the story of God's sending His Son to die for us and He rose again for our justification. And this everlasting gospel will be proclaimed to every ethnic group. You know, you often times hear, people ask the question, but what about that native in Africa or in Borneo who has never heard of the name of Jesus Christ? Will God judge them the same? And, of course, the scripture is very clear that they will be judged by a different standard from those who have heard and rejected. But here the angel will carry the gospel to all the world, to every tribe, tongue, and people. Jesus said the gospel will be preached as a witness to the whole world and then shall the end come. And here is where the gospel is being preached to the whole world. You know, we have often taken that as a challenge for our missions. But in reality the church has pretty much failed. Most of the churches are pulling back their mission programs. They're cutting back the mission programs. But God will see that every man has the opportunity to hear the gospel during this great period. They are told to fear God, give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment is come. Worship Him.

And there followed another angel, and he is saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all of the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. (14:8)

Babylon stands in the Bible for the false religious systems. There it seems is where the false religious systems were born, you might say. There is the story of Semiramis and her son Tammuz, who then became her husband. And the worship of the woman, Semiramis, the mother with her child. And that seems to be the heart of rebellion against God and of a false religious system. And it is now coming up for judgment. When we get to chapters 17, and 18, we will read the judgment upon Babylon, the religious Babylon. We will read the judgment upon commercial Babylon in chapter 18. And wherever the false religious system or the commercial systems are centered, will come into judgment in chapters 17 and 18. But here is the pronouncement. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." It was the heart. It was the source of all of the spiritual, as Scripture calls it, fornication. Now, in a spiritual sense fornication is bowing to or worshipping something

other than the true and the living God. The gospel is proclaimed by the angel and he says fear God. Worship him that made the heavens and the earth and the sea and the things that are in them. To God should our worship be directed. But there are people who are directing their worship to other things, other gods. And Babylon is the source of all of the false systems of worship. The goddess Ashtoreth, a Babylonian goddess, was the worship of sex. If a person worships sex, he is guilty of spiritual fornication.

Our worship should be to God. As the children of God we are to more or less be married to God. And to give our love, to give our worship to anything other than God, is considered scripturally as spiritual fornication. And so the pronouncement of the fall of this false religious system who caused the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

Now the third angel followed, [so we have a group of angels here, not the seven angels that had the seven trumpets.] the third angel followed them and said with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, (14:9a)

So the command, worship God. People worshipping sex, worshipping their intellect, worshipping money, these other false gods. But then the worship of the beast, and in chapter 13 we are told that the false prophet leads the world to worship the beast. That they caused to be made an image of the beast, they give power to it to speak, they put it in the temple and they cause everyone to worship the image and the beast. But here is a warning. God is going to warn the people of the earth. They're not going to do this ignorantly. The worship of the beast will be a deliberate rebellion against God. Even as today men are deliberately rebelling against the commands of God. This legislature that is being proposed is a deliberate rebellion against God. And those that are pushing it are in deliberate rebellion against God. The Scriptures warn, the Scriptures declare, these things to be sinful, these things to be evil, these things to be the height of rebellion against God. And it is unthinkable that it would actually be something that would even be considered and proposed by those in the legislature in Sacramento! I can't imagine even the proposing of this type of legislation! It shows us just however we've gone down the road to destruction.

If any man worships the beast [God is going to warn them now] or his image, or if they receive his mark in their forehead, or in their hand, [here's the warning] The same will 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: (14:9b-10)

That is God's warning. There is no hope of redemption, no hope for salvation for those that worship the beast or his image or receive his mark. You have signed your own eternal death certificate if you are here at that time and you enter into that system. It is interesting that they are tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. There is no mention of our being conscious of their torment.

There's an interesting passage of Scripture found in Isaiah chapter 65, beginning with verse 17, "God said behold I create new heavens and a new earth and the former will not be remembered or brought into mind." A lot of people are concerned for members of their family or loved ones who have died without Jesus Christ. And it is a torturing thought to think of them being forever separated from God. And often times you wonder how could I ever enjoy heaven with the knowledge that someone I loved so much is not there. But there is a part that God will excise from the memory bank. The former things will not be remembered or brought into mind. Any thing that would bring pain or suffering torture to your mind, will be excised by God and it will not be remembered or brought into mind. "So be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in My people and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her nor the voice of crying. There will be no more from thence and infant of days nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days for a child will die at a hundred years old, but the sinner being a hundred years old will be accursed. And they shall build the houses and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and eat of the fruit of them." And it tells of the conditions then in the kingdom age, how that they will not build and another inhabit. They will not plant and another eat. "For as in the days of the tree are the days of My people and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain nor bring forth for trouble for they are the seed of

the blessed of the Lord and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass that before they call I'll answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear. And the wolf and the lamb will feed together and the lion shall eat straw like the bull and the dust shall be as the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain saith the Lord." Glorious days for the children of God, but, for those that are in rebellion against God serious days of judgment. And we read in verse 11,

The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: [In the Greek there is no stronger term for eternity. It is in the Greek from the ages through the ages.] and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name. (14:11)

You say, Chuck, do you really believe that God is going to torment forever those who have rebelled against him? Do you believe in eternal punishment? Don't ask me to take away from what God has said. I won't do it. You get to the end of this Book of Revelation, and it says if anyone adds to this book unto him will be added the plagues that are in the book and anyone who takes away from him his name will be taken away from the Book of Life. You don't want that to happen to me, do you? I'm going to leave it as it says. I'm not going to mess with it. Jesus speaking of Gehenna said, "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. (14:12,13)

Now, that is a passage of Scripture that deals with this particular time of the great tribulation when people are forced to take the mark of the beast and forced to worship him or be put to death. And they cause whoever is not taking the mark to be put to death, we are told in chapter 13. And here is the patience of the saints, those that keep the commandments of God and have faith in Jesus Christ. The voice says, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." That is the blessedness of those who at this time become martyrs rather than worship the beast or take his mark. Often times in funerals we quote this passage, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, they've ceased from their labor.

But in reality this is talking about a certain group in the great tribulation. Better to die, Better to be martyred than to take the mark of the beast or to worship the beast or his image. Better to die than to do that because to do that is to seal your own fate. "And so they've ceased from their labors but their works do follow them." Now, John gets a vision of this final Battle of Armageddon. We'll come back to that in a later passage. We've had some hints of it up to this point, but John again gives us a preview of the Battle of Armageddon. We read of the three spirits that went into the kings of the earth to gather them together into the Valley of Megiddo for that great battle.

And John said,

I looked, and behold there was a white cloud, and on the cloud there was one who sat like the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. (14:14)

Of course, it is Jesus Christ. Behold, He comes with the clouds to bring judgment upon the earth.

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. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in the sickle and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple, which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had the power over fire; and he cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, he gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even to the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand six hundred furlongs. (14:17-20)

This is, of course, a description of the great Battle of Armageddon and the bloodshed that will be there. There's an interesting passage that sort of corresponds with this. It's in Isaiah: 63. Isaiah writes "Who is this that comes from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah. This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling

in greatness of His strength.” And the answer is, “I that speak in righteousness mighty to save.” The question, why is it that you are red in your apparel and your garments are like those who have been treading in the winepress? And the answer, “I have trodden the winepress alone and of the people there was none with Me for I will tread them in Mine anger and trample them in My fury and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in My heart and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked and there was none to help and I wondered that there was none to help to uphold, therefore My own arm brought salvation unto me and my fury it upheld Me and I will tread down the people in Mine anger and make them drunk in My fury and I will bring down their strength to the earth.” Isaiah is speaking of this very same period of this very same time.

Graphic descriptions that parallel the description we have here in Revelation 14 of the winepress, the sickle, the casting of the grapes into the winepress and the blood of this battle to the horse’s bridle, which is about four feet high for the space of a thousand six hundred furlongs, which is about 185 miles, which is about the distance from Dan to Beersheba. The whole nation covered with blood.

However, there is to me a possibility, and to me it is interesting, that we think of this 185 miles as linear but it could be square miles. And the interesting think is that the valley of Megiddo is about 185 square miles. So it could be a reference to the whole valley of Megiddo being filled with blood to the horse bridles. Now, when you read of armies of two hundred million or so, you can imagine what it will be! This will be the Antichrist gathering together the nations and God’s judgment coming upon the rebellion of man, God’s final judgment at the end of the great tribulation period. This battle that will be raging in which men will be destroyed, slaughtered by the millions, hundreds of millions. In this battle that will be raging, Jesus will bring an end to the battle by His second coming. It is during the midst of the battle that Jesus will return in clouds of glory to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

Zechariah tells us in that day He will set His foot upon the Mount of Olives. We are told that He will destroy the Antichrist with the brightness of His coming and by the sword that goes forth out of His mouth. With His word He will destroy him. But we are moving towards this great battle of the Lord, the final battle with evil will muster the forces of the world and there will be judged by God in the great battle of Armageddon. As I said, we will come across this again before we are finished as we get into the some of the further chapters.

These are awesome things that we read about here in the Book of Revelation. Hard to envision or imagine but yet the judgment of God must come and shall come even as God has declared. You want to be ready when the Lord comes for His church because you don’t want to be here after the church is gone and neither do I! Let’s pray.

Father, we thank You that You have promised to us that we have not been appointed unto wrath, and You have asked us to pray always that we will be accounted worthy to escape these things, Lord, and to be standing before the Son of Man. And Lord, we ask that You will count us worthy that we might be standing there before the throne of God, that we might be there to sing the song of the church, the redeemed. To be there in the heavenlies when Your wrath and judgment comes upon the earth. Lord, help us. We thank You, Father, for what You have done for us in and through Jesus Christ for the washing and the cleansing of our sins. And we thank You that through Him one day we will be presented faultless before the presence of Your glory with exceeding joy. We wait for that day Lord. And Father, as we see the conditions of the world and the way things are going, please Lord, come quickly. How we long to see Your kingdom come and Your will done here on the earth, even as it is in heaven. Lord, come quickly for Your people. We feel like Lot, Lord. Our righteous spirit is vexed by the things that are happening in the world today. Come quickly. In Jesus’ name, Father, we ask. Amen.