

Incentives to Fear God and Give Him Glory - Part 1

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Revelation 14:6-11

This morning we have come to Revelation chapter 14, so will you take your Bibles and turn there with me?

We have now arrived at verse six and this morning we will examine verses six through 11. And I have entitled my discourse to you this morning "Incentives to Fear God and Give him Glory."

Let me read the text to you, Revelation chapter 14 beginning in verse six.

And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."¹

Beginning in Revelation 14:6 through verse 13 the Lord reveals to us four announcements that will be made during the last half of the tribulation and each of these four proclamations provide incentives to believers to stay the course, to remain faithful to the Lamb that they excitedly await. But these announcements also give warning to unbelievers who reject the Lamb and who worship the beast.

I find it fascinating to see how clearly the Lord makes these distinctions. There is no ambiguity. People either worship the Lamb or the beast. They either worship the one true creator God who gave his life to save sinners or the satanically empowered usurper, the great deceiver who destroys.

The same is true today. There are only two religions in the world, the religion of human achievement or the religion of divine accomplishment. We either depend upon our works or his grace. People either worship Satan or the Lamb. Jesus made this clear when he was here on earth in John eight beginning in verse 42. Jesus said of the self righteous Jewish leaders and ultimately to all believers, "If God were your Father, you would love

¹ Revelation 14:6-11.

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Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.”² And he went on to say, “[But] you are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father.”³ And in verse 47 he concludes saying, “He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”⁴

The beast worshippers in our text this morning will refuse to hear the words of God despite his repeated efforts to proclaim them. And, frankly, the vast majority of the world today are in this category, many of which may well be alive during this time, therefore, the actual people to whom the Lord refers.

As we examine these four announcements we discover four incentives to fear God and give him glory because of, number one, *the eternal gospel*; number two, *the fall of Babylon*; number three, *the torment awaiting beast worshippers* and, finally, *the blessings awaiting Lamb worshippers*. And this morning we will look at the first three.

First of all, the first incentive is because of the announcement of *the eternal gospel* in verse six. “And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.”⁵

This is an amazing scene, dear friends. Keep in mind that by now chaos is reigning on the earth. There is devastation everywhere because of the judgments that God has poured out upon the earth. The world is insane with sin, indulging in all manner of wickedness. By now there will be a maelstrom of debauchery and deception and destruction and the antichrist will now be demanding that the world worship him and certainly that will be the preoccupation of the false prophet. The world will be blaspheming the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. They will be killing Christians.

Yet in the midst of this bedlam, in the midst of all of this blasphemy isn't it amazing to see how the grace of God pierces the darkness once again, constantly pursuing, constantly warning, constantly pleading for men to repent, to fear God and to give him glory? Keep in mind that by now he has dispatched the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, the greatest missionary force in the history of the world. He has also by now deployed his two witnesses along with a host of other believers during this time that have come to Christ and they are all proclaiming the gospel.

And now the Lord sends this series of angels to call men to repentance.

Notice the first angel that John sees is “another angel.” “Angel” literally means messenger. This is probably another besides Michael and his angels that he saw waging war with the dragon in chapter 12 and verse seven. And notice this angel is “flying in

² John 8:42.

³ John 8:44.

⁴ John 8:47.

⁵ Revelation 14:6.

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midheaven.” This is a reference to that place in the sky where the sun will reach its apex at high noon. So he will be visible to all. No one will be able to miss this.

And notice what he proclaims in verse six, “Having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth,”⁶ a phrase referring specifically to unbelievers. “And to every nation and tribe and tongue and people,”⁷ underscoring the global, worldwide scope of his message. My friends, the good news of the gospel begins with the bad news that all men are sinners and stand condemned by a holy God, that the wrath of God abides upon those who have never placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The bad news is that there is nothing that man can do to save himself, that he is utterly dependent upon a merciful God and unless God does something and unless he responds in repentant faith he will endure the torments of hell forever and ever.

Therefore the gospel is exceedingly good news, that God has made provision for sinners to be reconciled to him through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he sent his Son, the Lamb, to pay the penalty for sin with his very blood for all who will trust in his saving grace, the one who died and rose again and who is coming again in power and great glory.

The Spirit of God uses various phrases in the New Testament to describe the gospel. It is sometimes called the gospel of peace, the gospel of God, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of salvation, the gospel of the glory of Jesus Christ. And notice here it is described as an “eternal gospel.” That is a curious thought, an “eternal gospel.” Eternal because it was decreed in eternity past and for all eternity and because it is the means by which sinners can be forgiven and have eternal life.

This will be the same gospel that was proclaimed to the Old Testament saints, to sinners of that day that became saints I should say. You will recall in Hebrews four and verse two we read, “For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also.”⁸

Keep in mind that prior to the incarnation and the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ the gospel was an offer of forgiveness based upon the provision of Christ’s atoning work that was yet to come historically, but was already efficacious having been decreed in eternity past. In fact, the new covenant that is revealed in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36 delineates the terms of the gospel. Sinners of all times are saved by grace alone through faith alone, never by works. That is the message of the gospel.

It is interesting that even Abraham, who lived 600 years before the old covenant was established through Moses, was saved by grace through faith. You will recall in Genesis chapter 15 verse six we read, “[Abraham] believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Hebrews 4:2.

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him as righteousness.”⁹ (And you will recall that this was at the heart of Paul’s argument in Romans chapter four).

If I can digress for a moment, dear Christian, please hear this. Understand that the gospel is far more than a set of principles that we must believe in order to be saved and then we just set it aside as if it is no longer needed. We must remember that it is the truth of God that is contained in the whole of Scripture. The gospel is what conforms us into the image of Christ. The gospel not only sanctifies us or sets us apart in our justification and, therefore, it sanctifies us positionally, but it also sanctifies us progressively. It is what the Spirit of God uses to make us more like Christ.

Not too long ago I was talking with a man whose life was in shambles. And as is often the case I began by asking a person about their relationship to Christ and I remember asking the man to explain to me the gospel of Christ and what effect it had had on his life. I remember he very angrily looked at me and he said to me—and this is a paraphrase, but it is close—he said, “I need more than the gospel. My life is falling apart,” to which I replied, “And for good reason, because you obviously do not understand the full impact of the gospel. It is the power of God unto salvation, but your salvation has not yet been fully realized, has it?”

Are we not to work out our salvation in fear and in trembling? And is it not the gospel of Christ that the Spirit of God uses to conform us? Did not Jesus pray in John 17 to the Father, “Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth”¹⁰? And, according to 2 Peter 1:3 we know that by that “divine power he has granted to us everything pertaining to life and to godliness through the true knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and excellence.”

Beloved, the gospel encompasses the entirety of the Word of God. It is the instrument that the Spirit of God used in your regeneration to breathe life into that corpse. You will recall that in Titus two and verse 11 the apostle Paul said to Titus, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.”¹¹ Is not that the gospel? Of course it is. But it doesn’t end there. He goes on to say what the gospel does. He says:

Instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us.¹²

So the gospel is what God uses to sanctify us. In fact, Paul went on to say why he did this, “That He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”¹³ This man to which I refer had never

⁹ Genesis 15:6.

¹⁰ John 17:17.

¹¹ Titus 2:11.

¹² Titus 2:11-13.

¹³ Titus 2:14.

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applied the gospel to his life after salvation, and therefore he had banished himself to a life of spiritual infancy.

Beloved, we never outgrow our need for the gospel. It is perfectly suited for every trial. At times when life seems to be at its lowest ebb, is it not a wonderful thing to be able to reflect upon the truth that would cause us to say, “Oh, God, thank you that you have saved me by your grace. Thank you, God, that you are in control. Thank you that you have saved me unto eternal life. Thank you that I know that even in the midst of my suffering right now I can trust in you completely and I can have the hope of glory. So, Lord, with these great truths resonating in my heart I can endure. I will persevere by your grace.” The gospel, indeed, is everlasting as we read in 1 Peter 1:25 where he said, “But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”¹⁴

Now, come back to our text. Notice more of the details of this angelic sermon in midheaven. In verse seven we read that he speaks with “a loud voice.” This emphasizes the urgency of his message. Remember, now, the seventh trumpet has sounded and the final bowl judgments are about to be poured out upon the earth which will lead up to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the return of the Lamb. And we all know that when we go anyplace, whoever controls the volume controls the crowd, right? And so the Lord controls the volume here and through this angel with the sheer power of sound, everyone will be forced to listen to him. And the point that we must glean from this text is that during that day neither man nor devil will be able to obstruct either the vision or the volume of God’s messenger.

Now notice the theme of his sermon in verse seven. “Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come.”¹⁵ The grammar would help us to understand that literally he is saying, “the fixed moment in time that God has decreed to judge the world is on the verge of being realized, so listen up. Time is almost up. The wrath of God is about to be poured out upon you and consume you forever. Therefore, fear God and give him glory.”

People in our country fear many things. People fear losing their job. They fear losing their freedom. Today people are afraid of losing their health care. They are afraid of health care rationing. They are afraid of losing their life’s saving. They are afraid of swine flu. They are afraid of Islam and terrorists. People all around the world are afraid of disease and famine and war and pestilence. And, of course, politicians say that they have the answer and yet things just keep getting worse. In fact, they gain momentum. The vast majority of the world’s population fear their governments. This is what is happening even in our country. People are filled with fear today.

¹⁴ 1 Peter 1:25

¹⁵ Revelation 14:7.

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But one thing they don't fear. They don't fear God. In Psalm 36 and verse one the psalmist tells us, "Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes."¹⁶

Jesus said in Luke 12 verse four:

I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!¹⁷

Beloved, this sobering warning from the Son of God should strike terror in every heart, every heart that refuses to place its trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I ask you this morning: Do you fear God? Do you have a reverential awe of him? Do you come into his presence privately and tremble with reverence as well as with joy? Do you tremble at his Word? Is the fear of God the center of gravity around which your life orbits, even in your private life? Do you worship him in humility? Are you surrendered completely to his will? You see, dear friends, this is the stuff of fearing God. Do you love the Lord your God with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength? Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you longing for his return? Are you living in the light of his glory?

The Old Testament meaning of fearing God centered around the humble recognition that God alone is judge and deliverer. And anyone that put their hope and trust in anything apart from him is not only a fool, but a person that was damned. To hope in anything else is the height of stubborn pride and, frankly, stupidity. Yet this is the attitude of so many today.

Think of the things people hope in. They hope in their government. They hope in politicians. And some get more "spiritual" and they hope of some false god like Allah or they hope in their own good works. They hope in some religious denominations that they belong to or, unfortunately—and I think this is the most dangerous of all—they hope in some newly invented smiley face Jesus that has no resemblance to the Lord of glory described in Scripture.

Beloved, to deliberately reject God's provision of forgiveness of sin through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is an eternal death sentence for sinners, which should be sobering for all of us as we endeavor to give them the gospel. Indeed, the writer of Hebrews warns—chapter 10 and verse 31—"It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."¹⁸

Not only will this angel call men to fear God, but notice, also, "to give him glory."

¹⁶ Psalm 36:1.

¹⁷ Luke 12:4-5.

¹⁸ Hebrews 10:31.

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Now this includes acknowledging his sovereign presence in our lives as well as in the world and giving praise to him for all that he has done in both our life and in the world. On the one hand we know that he has redeemed us by the blood of the Lamb. He has made us new creatures in Christ. And for that reason we give him glory because now God resides in every believer. We have an opportunity to put his glory on display in all that we do.

But notice what else is included in this angelic warning. He says, “Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.”¹⁹ And here he exposes the antichrist and all who will believe in him. It is as if he is saying, “You think he is worthy of worship because of what you have seen him do? Hah. Worship him who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and the springs of waters.”

Here we see that not only does God put his glory on display in the saints, but also through his creation. You see, the very nature of God is glorious beyond imagination. And the glorious display of his nature can be seen in his actions in the material universe. As we read the Word of God we learn very quickly that he is the creator. He is the sustainer and he is the consummator of all things. And we see this even in what he has made.

Every true worshipper of Christ understands this, proven by the praise of the 24 elders, you will recall, in chapter four and verse 11 who said, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”²⁰

One of the most magnificent passages in all of Scripture is Psalm 19 where David depicts the glory of God revealed through his works and through his Word. The first six verses testify to God’s very existence, proven by his works in creation. There we read:

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices as a strong man to run his course. Its rising is from one end of the heavens, And its circuit to the other end of them; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.²¹

You see, dear friends, those who refuse to acknowledge him as the Creator and as the sustainer and as the consummator of all things commit high treason against the most high God.

¹⁹ Revelation 14:7.

²⁰ Revelation 4:11.

²¹ Psalm 19:1-6.

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We see this all the time in our culture, do we not, as we look at those who would have us believe that we are the products of random chance, as they teach in evolutionary theory. What a blasphemy to basically say to Creator God, “We don’t believe that you had anything to do with this. Instead we are merely sophisticated germs.”

Because of this foolishness Paul writes in Romans one and verse 18:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.²²

During the coming tribulation there will be no Atheists. But they will refuse to fear the one true, triune God. In fact, we know that they will blaspheme him and instead they will bow before the beast and give him glory and, therefore, ultimately worship their father the devil.

So the first messenger sounds the warning preaching the message of *the eternal gospel*, the first incentive to fear God and give him glory.

But, as might be expected, the announcement falls on deaf ears. So a second angel comes forward to pronounce judgment, providing a second incentive to fear God and give him glory. And the theme of his message, number two, is *the fall of Babylon*.

Verse eight. “And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.’”²³

Now the drama intensifies as the second angel states the consequences for rejecting the eternal gospel. And here, again, we see his announcement is proleptic, meaning that future events are so certain that they can be described in the past tense as if they had already happened. He says, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great.”²⁴ And, of course, this anticipates the plagues of the bowl judgments that are about to come. The Lord will reveal much more about this city and all that it represents in chapter 16 beginning in verse 17 through chapter 18 and verse 24, but let me give you a bit of an understanding of what is meant here regarding this place Babylon the Great.

²² Romans 1:18-21.

²³ Revelation 14:8.

²⁴ Ibid.

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When considering the Old Testament prophecies and history and the descriptions of this place in Scripture, we learn that this will probably be an actual city that will be the capital of the antichrist's global, political, economic and religious empire. The name Babylon is a fitting name given its vile and blasphemous history.

Let me give you a snapshot of this now and we will look at it in more detail when we come to chapter 17. 1,656 years after God created Adam he destroyed the entire world. The conservative estimate is that he killed about seven billion people. That is about how many were on earth at the time of the flood. He killed all except eight people who found favor in the eyes of the Lord, Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives. And we see that Adam sees the world into its ninth generation and he dies one generation before the flood. And we know that he longed for righteousness to reign, for Satan to be defeated.

But 100 years after the flood Satan tried to establish an earthly kingdom through Nimrod who was Noah's great grandson. We read about this Genesis chapter 10. But, of course, Nimrod is the foreshadow of the antichrist. And this occurred in the land of Shinar which today is the region of Iraq, the same region of the Garden of Eden and the land of Mesopotamia. It was in this Tigris and Euphrates River area that the first battles on earth were fought between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. And, beloved, the last battles will be fought there as well.

We read of the land of Shinar in Genesis 10, that place where Nimrod founded "Babel." The Hebrew form of the name is "Babylon." And in Genesis 11 we read about the tower of Babel. It was a Ziggurat or a stage tower that was erected to facilitate idolatry. And on top of this tower, we know from others that were built like it, was the sign of the zodiac where the priests would chart the stars and supposedly receive spiritual insight and prophesy.

History reveals that Nimrod had a wife name Semiramis. She was a wife and a priestess. Stories are told about how a sunbeam came through a window and impregnated her and she conceived and bore a son named Tammuz, the counterfeit of the virgin birth of Christ. In fact, later Israel was rebuked for worshipping this person called "the queen of heaven." She was the pagan goddess Ishtar. We read about that in Jeremiah 44. They also worshipped her son Tammuz we read about in Ezekiel 8:14.

And this worship in those days included all manner of the most abominable forms of immorality, things not fitting to even speak of. We can see, by the way, this mother son fertility cult goddess worship in Roman Catholicism today and many other religions. There are undeniable parallels in Roman Catholicism. They worship Mary who is called "the queen of heaven."

It should be no surprise—if I can digress for a moment—that the Roman Catholic Church is positioning itself to be at the center of the current move toward globalization in our world today and the emerging world government that so many are talking about, and certainly that the Scriptures predict.

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In a recent papal treatise entitled *Charity in Truth* given by Pope Benedict XVI just prior to the meeting of the G-8 nations in Italy this July he stated that there is an urgent need for a, quote, “True world political authority,” end quote, to manage world affairs.

But the *New York Times* noted on July seven that the pope’s controversial statement clearly endorsed a new world economic order. The pope did warn, however, that such a order would, quote, “produce a dangerous universal power of a tyrannical nature, therefore,” and end quote, therefore he warned about that.

Isn’t it interesting how the events of Bible prophecy always cast their shadows forward.

As another footnote, Russian president Medvedev shocked the world at that G-8 summer in July—maybe you saw this—by showing reporters a coin that he said represents a future world currency. I have seen pictures of it. It is a beautiful coin and on it it says, “Unity in diversity.”

Well, because of Satan’s original attempt to establish himself an earthly kingdom at Babel, and because of the exceedingly vile nature of the idolatry that took place during that time you will recall in Genesis 11 that God confounded the languages of these worshippers and scattered them to the ends of the earth.

And so out of the tower of Babel, the complex of all pagan religions were spawned. And like a virulent virus they spread these blasphemous idolatries all across the globe. And later, of course, the great empire of Babylon was built there with Nebuchadnezzar. And, again, today it is the land of Iraq. And we know that just before the Lord returns history is going to basically come full circle and all these false religions, all these false religious systems are going to come home to mamma, as it were. In Revelation chapter 17 and verse five we read, ““BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.””²⁵ All of these false systems will eventually be rolled into one, into the worship of the beast that is personified by the harlot.

So the celestial preacher now pronounces judgment on all who worship this world dominating counterfeit kingdom of antichrist that God calls “Babylon the great.” It is reminiscent of King Nebuchadnezzar in ancient Babylon. You will remember his arrogant statement in Daniel chapter four and verse 29 where we read:

He was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. The king reflected and said, ‘Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?’”²⁶

Dear friends, even as God defeated that ancient puppet of Satan, Nebuchadnezzar, so, too, will he defeat Satan’s puppet, the antichrist. And notice the reason God gives for

²⁵ Revelation 17:5.

²⁶ Daniel 4:29-30.

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this coming fall of Babylon in verse eight, “She who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.”²⁷

What he is saying here is that this Babylonian harlot will intoxicate the world with her wine. And this is emblematic of both her sexual licentiousness as well as many other ways that she will manifest blasphemy towards the living God. He speaks of the passion of her immorality. This speaks of the burning desire that this system will have to seduce people to commit spiritual fornication. And sadly, as they drink of her wine we see that they will eventually, according to verse 10, “drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger.”²⁸

And this is the message of the third angel. Yet, another incentive to fear God and give him glory. Not only because of *the eternal gospel* and *the coming fall of Babylon*, but, thirdly, *the torment awaiting beast worshippers*.

Obviously they will not heed the first two angels and so in verse nine we read, “And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand...’”²⁹ which, as you will recall, is the symbol of loyalty to the beast, “he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger.”³⁰

Now unmixed wine was the strongest wine and so God uses this imagery to depict the full strength of divine wrath that will be utterly bereft, utterly unmixed with any mercy when his judgment comes upon the earth. And, again, notice that the angel no longer speaks proleptically in the past tense to emphasize the future certainty of what will transpire, but rather he speaks in the future tense. It says, “He also will drink,”³¹ and “he will be tormented.”³² This underscores the never ending torment. This underscores and highlights the lasting anguish that they will endure unless they fear God and give him glory.

And in verse 10 we read, “And he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”³³ My friends, what a horrific concept. This is reminiscent of the judgment that God poured out upon ancient Sodom and Gomorrha. The eternal fate of these people will not only include the undiluted wrath of God, but they will endure their punishment with the added humiliation of being a public spectacle before the holy angels and the Lamb that they have blasphemed.

Isn’t that an amazing thought? It reminds me of the old saying: “What goes around, comes around.” Think about it. For millennia the world has made a public spectacle of

²⁷ Revelation 14:8.

²⁸ Revelation 14:10.

²⁹ Revelation 14:9.

³⁰ Revelation 14:10.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Revelation 14:10.

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those who love God. But in the end the public tormenters will become the public spectacles themselves, the spectacles of torment. In Luke 12 at verse nine Jesus said, "He who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God."³⁴

Now, bear in mind, although the unrepentant will suffer eternal punishment apart from the presence of God, they will never be able to escape the omnipresent, sovereign rule of God. David affirmed this truth when he said in Psalm 139 verse seven:

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.³⁵

Dear friends, even as Abraham looked across the valley and he saw the smoke of Sodom and Gomorrah fill the sky as a sign of God's judgment upon the wicked, so, too, this will occur prior to the Lord's return. The third angel will one day warn the beast worshippers in verse 11. "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever."³⁶

I might add that here is yet another of many texts in Scripture that affirm the endless duration of divine punishment. "And they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."³⁷

Oh, dear friends, please hear me. The blessings of the eternal gospel should be incentive enough to fear God and give him glory. But to know that all of the world's religious and political and economic systems will one day be merged into this monolithic empire of the antichrist that God calls Babylon and to know that it will fall and that it will fail and that it will be utterly destroyed, this is yet a second reason to fear God and to give God glory.

But oh, dear friend, what greater incentive can there be than to know that unless you fear God and give him glory, your eternal fate will be to endure the undiluted white-hot wrath of God for eternity. There can be no greater incentive. So I plead with you this morning. *Fear God and give him glory.* May this be the passion and the priority of every saint. For we have been bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body.

Let's pray together.

Father, these truths are sobering. In some ways they even offend our sensibilities because we have no understanding of your holiness. What we do understand is overwhelming to us, but it certainly falls fall short of how offensive sin truly is to you. Lord, cause these truths to resonate within our hearts in such a way as to make us bold in proclaiming the gospel to a world that is lost and dying and, Lord, thank you for the power that is inherent in the gospel. Therefore, Lord, may we never be ashamed of it.

³⁴ Luke 12:9.

³⁵ Psalm 139:7-8.

³⁶ Revelation 14:11.

³⁷ Ibid.

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Revelation 14:6-11

And, finally, Lord, I pray as always that you will bring conviction to those who do not know you. Lord, they are in our families. They are in our communities. They are people that we work with. They are people that we know and that we love. Oh, God, use us as instruments of righteousness that they might be saved. I ask this in the precious name of Jesus and for his sake. Amen.

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