

A large crowd of people in white robes, with a central figure in the distance, set against a bright, colorful background. The scene is filled with a sense of awe and grandeur, with the crowd extending far into the distance. The central figure is standing on a raised platform, gesturing towards the crowd. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored sky with streaks of light, suggesting a divine or heavenly setting.

THE CONQUERING LAMB

&

THE VICTORY SONG OF THE SAINTS

REVELATION 14:1-20

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE
HORRIFIC VISION OF THE DRAGON
AND TWO BEASTS WHO ROAR
ABOUT SEEKING TO DEVOUR GOD'S
CHILDREN, ST. JOHN IS GIVEN
VISIONS FULL OF COMFORT,
STRENGTH AND CONSOLATION FOR
ALL BELIEVERS.**

The Lamb, Mt. Zion, and the 144,000

THE LAMB STANDS ATOP MT. ZION AND WITH HIM THE 144,000 WHO HAD HIS NAME AND HIS FATHER'S NAME WRITTEN ON THEIR FOREHEADS.

THESE ARE THEY WHO OVERCAME (CONQUERED) SATAN BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB AND WORD OF HIS TESTIMONY. THESE ARE BELIEVERS WHO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE END - ALL BELIEVERS OF ALL TIME.

THEY STAND WITH THE LAMB (JESUS) UPON MT. ZION (IN THE HOLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH) WHERE SATAN CANNOT HARM THEM.

WHILE ON EARTH, THEY BELONGED TO THE CHURCH MILITANT. THEY THWARTED SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS AND REMAINED FAITHFUL TO CHRIST. THEY WERE WILLING TO SUFFER ALL, EVEN DEATH, RATHER THAN DENY THEIR REDEEMER. THESE SAINTS BELONG TO THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT, JOINING JESUS IN THE HEAVENLY MT. ZION (HIS ETERNAL KINGDOM).



REVELATION 14:1-5

THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: THOUGH SATAN MANIFESTS HIMSELF IN MANY AND VARIOUS WAYS IN THIS WORLD FOR THE PURPOSE OF DECEIVING GOD'S CHILDREN SO THAT THEY FORSAKE THE FAITH, THOSE WHO REMAIN FAITHFUL (THOSE WHO LIVE LIVES OF DAILY REPENTANCE, TRUSTING IN CHRIST AS SAVIOR) ARE ASSURED OF VICTORY AND LIFE IN CHRIST'S ETERNAL KINGDOM.



REVELATION 14:1-5

“A NEW SONG BEFORE THE THRONE”

We see again the Divine liturgy and hymnody which belongs to heaven. We cannot possibly even imagine the beauty of this heavenly worship, although we get a glimpse, ever so dim, in our Divine Service.



REVELATION 14:1-5

**“NO ONE COULD LEARN THAT SONG
EXCEPT THE 144,000”**

**The Divine liturgy/hymnody is
for believers - only believers
can learn, understand, and
appreciate it.**

Question:

**Is worship for the believer...or
unbeliever?**



WORSHIP IS FOR BELIEVERS, NOT UNBELIEVERS!

Contrary to “popular” belief, Divine Service is NOT the time for evangelism. Divine Service is the time when believers gather together in the Holy of Holies where God’s presence dwells to confess their sins and receive forgiveness, life, and salvation through God’s means of grace, His Holy Word and Sacraments.

“ . . . WHO HAVE NOT DEFILED THEMSELVES WITH WOMEN, FOR THEY ARE VIRGINS ”

This refers to the purity which exists in all believers. The reference here is to sexual immorality (cf. v. 8).

Believers are clothed in the robe of Christ’s holiness and righteousness. They are pure, seen by God as “virgins.”



**“ . . . FOLLOW THE LAMB . . . FIRSTFRUITS . . .
NO LIE WAS FOUND, FOR THEY ARE BLAMELESS ”**

More language describing the purity of all believers, which is theirs through faith in Christ. The point being made here is that the 144,000 (all believers of all time, including you and me) are perfectly holy and righteous through faith in Christ, for His perfect holiness and righteousness covers our imperfections and sinfulness.



REVELATION 14:1-5

“ . . . FOLLOW THE LAMB . . . FIRSTFRUITS . . .
NO LIE WAS FOUND, FOR THEY ARE BLAMELESS”

On the Great Last Day, believers will be seen for who they truly are and then will dwell in perfect bliss forever!



REVELATION 14:1-5

After seeing the blessed reality of the saints on the Last Day in vv. 1-5, St. John is given a vision of three angels and the harvest of the earth. The focus here is on God's judgment as it is pronounced and delivered upon unbelievers, with the exception of vv. 12 and 13, which focuses on how the saints become numbered with the 144,000, namely by enduring to the end.



Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.

REVELATION 14:6

Many Lutheran commentators throughout history have interpreted this to be referring to Martin Luther and the Reformation: “[Dr. Luther] brought back and preached the eternal Gospel of the justification of a poor sinner through the merits of Jesus Christ alone, by faith. In the very midst of the kingdom of Antichrist he preached this Gospel, and with such divine zeal and power that many thousands of captives were filled with joy over the deliverance here proclaimed” (Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann, *The Popular Commentary of the Bible*).

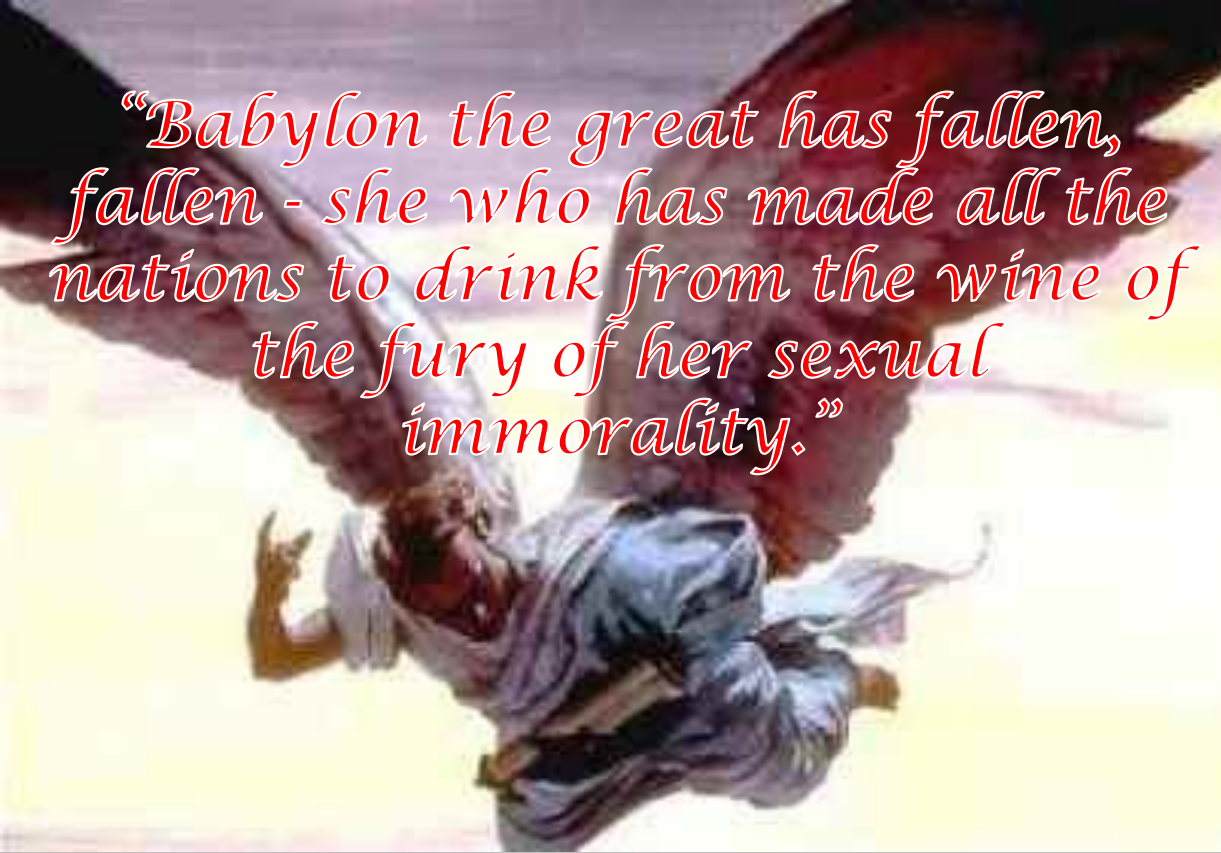


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REVELATION 14:6

Certainly, one would not deny the fact that Luther proclaimed the eternal Gospel in the midst of the Antichrist and reclaimed the central article of the Christian faith, i.e. we are justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Yet, the context suggests that this angel brings forth the eternal Gospel throughout history (*“to every nation and tribe and language and people”*).

The point here is that the Gospel is proclaimed to every generation and that those who do not repent and believe will be judged by God.



“Babylon the great has fallen, fallen - she who has made all the nations to drink from the wine of the fury of her sexual immorality.”

This is the first time Babylon is used in Revelation; we'll see it again later in 16:19, 17:5, 18:2, 10, 21. Babylon is the symbolic

name for the evil enemies of the Holy Christian Church, those who are influenced by the Dragon and the two beasts to persecute the Church. First century Christians would have applied this to the Roman Empire and some of its emperors that (like Nero - whom we have discussed) brought great persecution upon the Church.


Throughout history, we can see many “Babylons” rising to persecute the Church, and even today there are “Babylons” present among us. But, the point here is that Babylon is fallen, for the Lamb has won the victory. Babylon may seem to be winning the day throughout history, for the devil’s influence is tremendous in this sinful world and the majority of the people in the world fall prey to his temptations and deceptions; the greatest of which involve sexual immorality, but she is fallen nonetheless. The battle is over; Christ has already won - tremendous comfort for Christians of all time who undergo persecution of any sort.

A repeat for emphasis of what we heard in Ch. 13.

There are only two kinds of people – unbelievers (who have the mark of the beast) and believers (who have the Divine Name written upon their foreheads).

The image is especially graphic, urging unbelievers to repent; yet, if they do not, they *“will drink the wine of God’s wrath”* and suffer eternally in Hell. The Lamb and His holy angels will oversee this judgment, ushering in its fullness on the Last Day.





The spirits of those who die without faith in Christ now go to Hell (Hades) and suffer torment. Their suffering will be even more severe when they are reunited with their bodies on the Last Day to be then thrown into the *“lake of fire”* to suffer eternally in body and spirit.

The point: Judgment is coming! Repent!

“Here is the patience of the saints”

Believers are exhorted to keep the faith so that they will escape the judgment awaiting unbelievers. They must be constantly exhorted to repent and trust in Christ alone. Through Him, they keep the commandments of God and remain perfect in God's sight. What is also in view here is consolation for believers, for the Day is coming when their persecutors and enemies will be judged. God will repay them for what they have done to His children. **Justice will be served.** It's a guarantee! So, keep the faith, you, His saints! The victory is yours through the Blood of the Lamb, and He will take vengeance upon all your enemies!

“Write: Blessed are the dead who are dying in the Lord from now on.”

This is the second Beatitude of Revelation: Believers who die are blessed because their spirits are brought to the Paradise of heaven to join in the heavenly choir around the throne where the Lamb sits (cf. Luke 16:19-31). They are released from all the troubles of this earthly life and *“may rest from their labors.”*

***“Their deeds follow them!”* - All the good works done by them are rewarded in heaven. Good works do not get them to heaven, but they are rewarded there. The greatest good work is to live a life of daily repentance, trust in Christ, and to partake of the gifts He serves. The greatest *“deed”* is to believe in Jesus. Works naturally and spontaneously flow from that faith. They will be put on display on the Last Day (cf. Matt. 25).**

The Son of Man and the Harvest at the End



REVELATION 14:14-20

This is another vision of the Last Day. Chapter 14 began with a vision of the 144,000 (Church Triumphant) who stand with Christ on the Last Day. Now, the chapter ends with a vision showing the judgment of unbelievers on the Last Day.





Christ will come on the clouds on the Last Day and His holy angels with Him. The harvest language symbolically indicates that they will gather all unbelievers together and throw them *“into the great winepress of the wrath of God”* (the place of eternal torment).

So extensive and terrifying is the judgment of God upon unbelievers on the Last Day that ***“blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse’s bridle, for 1,600 stadia.”*** The number 1,600 is symbolic for the completeness of God’s final judgment upon unbelievers on the Last Day (***4 x 4 x 100 = 1600; - unbelievers will be gathered from the 4 corners of the earth and the 4 winds of the earth (7:1) ; 100 being the square of 10, God’s number for completeness - this judgment will be final and complete***).

The point: The judgment upon unbelievers on the Last Day will be eternally severe and inescapable...so severe that John could only describe it as a...

bloodbath!!!