

# God's Hour Comes Near

Long Beach Alliance Church • June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013 • Pastor Chris Lankford

***Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she  
who made all nations drink the wine of  
the passion of her sexual immorality.***

***~Revelation 14:8b (ESV)***

## **1) Keeping Heaven In View**

- A) In contrast to the 666 “mark of the beast” (Revelation 13:18), the 144,000 (14:1, also 7:4-8) are presented again in Heaven (future scene) having been purchased and marked by the Lamb (14:2-4).
- B) Like all followers of Christ, the characteristics of those who are marked by the Lamb are distinguished by life in Christ. Faithfulness, purity, and perseverance are all representative of the “mark of the Lamb” (14:1-5).

## **2) The Three Angels Of The Gospel Of Judgment & Grace**

- A) The next section describes the Gospel message which brings judgment to those marked by the lifestyle of the beast (14:6-11), but grace to those who endure in their commitment to a lifestyle of the Lamb (14:12-13).
- B) The first angel proclaims an “eternal gospel” to all living people, warning of God’s “hour” of wrath (14:6-7).
- C) The second angel, continuing the Gospel message, proclaims the fall of “Babylon” (14:8; cf. Isaiah 21:9bc, Daniel 4:30) -- a biblical symbol of wickedness and ungodly power, here of drunken passionate immorality.

- D) The third angel, continuing the Gospel message, proclaims the destruction of the beast and his followers (14:9-11). This is condemnation to the Lake of Fire (Hell, cf. 20:14-15) “in the presence” of Jesus and the angels (14:14-20).
- E) While the Gospel produces judgment for many (the three angels, 14:6-11), it also brings some to faith in Jesus (14:12-13, also 13:10 & 12:11). The concept of “rest from labors” is a reward for earthly “deeds” of perseverance and faith.

### **3) The Heavenly Reaping Of Grace & Judgment**

- A) The judgments of the three angels are immediately fulfilled (14:10) as Jesus Christ (14:14, cf. 1:13ff) oversees two “reapings,” one of grace (the wheat of reward, 14:14-16) and one of judgment (the grapes of wrath, 14:17-20).
- B) The first reaping (gathering of the crop) is actually fulfilled by Christ Himself (14:14-16), indicating the gathering of faithful believers into Heaven (cf 14:12-13).
- C) The second reaping, is accomplished by “another angel” who is called to reap by the “angel” having “power over fire” (14:17-19), indicating the gathering of the unfaithful for the purpose of righteous judgment (cf. 14:6-11).
- D) The tone of crushing judgment (14:19) is vividly fulfilled through the smashing of those inhabiting “fallen Babylon” (cf. 14:8). This crushing produces the “wine of the wrath of God” (cf. 14:10), presented in the overwhelming flow of their blood (the lives & livelihood) of unbelievers (14:20).

### **4) The Smoldering Bowls Of God’s Coming Wrath**

- A) A “sign in Heaven” of God’s judgment (15:1, crushing of grapes) appears. Seven majestic angels ‘clothed in Christ,’ come out of God’s temple (15:1, 5-7) with bowls of wrath.
- B) The bowls of wrath are fueled by the prayers and songs of the “victorious” saints through all of history (15:2-4). The wrath of God smolders with thick smoke, symbols anticipating the ferocious events about to occur (15:8).



**“God’s Hour Comes Near” (Revelation 14-15)**  
**Week of June 9<sup>th</sup> – June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

## **Growth Group Homework**



### **Powering Up**

1. What observations from this weekend’s message, “God’s Hour Comes Near,” did you find the most interesting or challenging? Do you have any questions? Share with your group.
2. **Give me that Old Time Rock and Roll.** What is one of your favorite songs? Why? Share with your group.



### **Digging In**

3. Considering Rev 14-15 as one thematic unit, what similarities do you notice at its beginning (14:1-5) and end (15:1-8)? How are they different from the middle theme of this passage (14:6-20)? The Apostle John arranged the first theme (14:1-5, 15:1-8) like brackets on each end of the second theme (14:6-20) to contrast the two ideas. Now read Revelation 12:11 and 13:10. Think back to our discussions in prior weeks: why are these two concepts located in the center of each of their respective chapters? Now read Revelation 14:12. Notice anything similar? What is God communicating to His people by placing this verse in the *middle* of chapter 14?



4. As we get a glimpse into Heaven, notice how saints sing the “song of Moses” (Revelation 15:3). This song is originally in Exodus 15:1-19. What had just happened to God’s people in Exodus chapter 14 that caused the Israelites to respond with this song? Why would Christians be singing this same song in Heaven in the End Times (Revelation 15:3-4)? What’s the connection here?



## **Connecting To Life**

5. **Sealed or Marked?** The beast’s “mark” initiative (13:16-17) and God sealing His saints (14:1) will make identifying those allied to God simple. However, it’s still possible to “hide” God’s people among others today. Are there other reasons why Christians stand out amidst others today? What about your relationship with Jesus and heavenly mindset makes you stand out in the places you often go? If you don’t seem different, why is that? How can your growth group encourage you to stand out boldly for Jesus?
  
6. **Nothing to Fear But Fear Itself.** The Dragon, Antichrist, and False Prophet are all specifically targeting Christians by this point in the book of Revelation. Persecuted under that immense power, we can imagine great reasons for them to be afraid! Yet, Christ calls them to perseverance (14:12), to endurance and faithfulness (13:10), and all these built upon overcoming by “the blood of the Lamb” (12:11). What do you fear? What truly, deeply scares you? How can our heavenly trajectory (due to being saved by and living according to the Gospel) help you overcome your fears?