

WORSHIP SERVICE - 1.30.2022

THE WORSHIPING ARMY

I. INTRODUCTION

MAIN POINT: The Lamb stands victorious with his worshiping army, comprised of those who bear his name, and they follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Revelation 14:1-5

Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, 3 and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. 4 It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, 5 and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

II. THE LAMB AND HIS ARMY

- Chapters 13 and 14 are being juxtaposed.
- Things look rather bleak at the end of ch 13.
- The people of God are having a tough time. Will they make it?
- Our passage in chapter 14 is the answer to that question.

1. THE LAMB

v1a Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb,

- The perspective shifts from the chaotic earthly scene to the heavenly.
- The scene goes from the natural to the spiritual.
- He sees the Lamb standing on Mount Zion.
- The beasts and the dragon are raging on the earth, with war and chaos in their wake.
- Where is the Lamb? He's standing.
- The beast and the false prophet are said to rise up out of the sea and land, but not the Lamb, he's just there, standing.
- He is standing on Mount Zion. That's a codeword in the Bible for heaven.
- **Psalm 2:1-6** Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?
2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. 5 Then he

will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 6 “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

- How will the people of God survive, how will they make it when they are not allowed to buy and sell because they don't have the mark or the name of the beast?
- The answer—the Lamb standing on Mount Zion!

- These two beasts are symbolic of the dragon institutionalized in the idolatrous political, cultural, and religious systems by which the devil relentlessly attacks and persecutes the church.
- In the natural, it looks like everyone is worshiping the beast, everyone is deceived by the false prophet into following the beast and taking the mark of the beast.
- Doesn't it feel like that in the world today?
- But the spiritual reality is that the Lamb is standing on Mount Zion.
- He is reigning from heaven. The Lamb stands victorious! That's what we need to remember.

2. THE 144,000

V1b and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

- Who is with the Lamb? A specific number who bear his name and his Father's name.
- Here we have again this symbolic number of the people of God—144,000.
- We first encountered this at the beginning of ch 7.
- In response to the question at the end of *the opening of the sixth seal*, “*Who can stand in the day of the great wrath of the Lamb?*” (6:16-17), we were introduced to those who can stand on that day—the 144,000 sealed servants of God.
- 144,000 is a **symbolic number**, a **multiple of 12**, that represents **completeness—12x12x1000**.
- 12,000 from the 12 Tribes to represent the complete people of God.
- The number represents the whole people of God 12 Patriarchs of Israel x 12 Apostles who are the foundation of the church x 1000, also a number of fullness and completeness.
- The sealed comprise a vast number of those who have been saved by Jesus Christ. It is the complete church. The symbolic number of the elect, who were redeemed by Christ.
- John hears the number of those who have been sealed as 144,000, but in the very next scene he sees a great multitude in heaven that no one can count. It's the same group.
- God has saved, is saving, and will save, more people than you and I can even imagine.
- Those two scenes in ch 7 represent the church militant on earth, the 144,000 and the church triumphant in heaven, the great multitude.

- “*They have his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.*”
- Just like in ch 7, the seal is symbolic. The mark symbolizes the spiritual protection of God's people throughout the period of the tribulation. (42 months, 1260 days, time, times and half a time)
- The followers of the beast have their mark, the followers of the Lamb have their mark. God knows all that belong to Him and he will preserve them spiritually in the time of testing, trial, and tribulation.
- This all reminds us that the vast multitude of people He has saved for His own glory, though it is a specific number known only to God, is beyond our ability to even fathom or comprehend.

- All those appointed to eternal life (Acts 13:48), chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4), are kept spiritually safe, even as the dragon wages his war on the Church.
 - God will not lose any of those he has sealed.
 - The Lamb is standing on Mount Zion with his army—the militant and triumphant Church.
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- 2 Kings 6 - Elisha and his servants see the spiritual reality.
 - In the natural, it feels like we are surrounded by the beast and his army, set to conquer us.
 - But we need to see through the eyes of faith, the vast army that is the people of God, the army of the Lamb, standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, in heavenly places, an innumerable multitude whom the Lord has redeemed from out of the earth.
 - Christ has won! We have won!

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAMB'S ARMY

1. UNDEFILED

V4a It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins.

- This is an allusion to the aspect of Christians engaged in holy war.
- OT - the men who were called to war by Yahweh needed to be ceremonially clean, they were not to engage in sexual relations during the time of battle.
- 2 Samuel 11 - Elisha and his servant.
- Because we are at war, we are to keep ourselves unstained by this world.
- We are to be spiritually pure and keep ourselves from idolatry.
- Rev. 17 we will see another picture where Babylon is symbolized as a prostitute, a whore. 17:2 says this harlot is “whom the kings of earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”
- Sexual immorality is always tied closed to idolatry.
- Joel Beeke, *“There is a virgin-like quality to this body of Christ in her undivided devotion to her Lord.”*
- Ch 13 is all about idolatry - false worship of the beast. The whole world is seduced into idolatry by the antichrist. They are whoring with the beast.
- Ch 14 the 144,000, the army of the Lamb, are spiritually pure, they keep themselves for the Lamb. They don't cave under the pressure to compromise with the world.
- 1 Cor 10:4 *“flee from idolatry.”*
- 1 John 5:21 *“keep yourselves from idols.”*
- Are we keeping ourselves undefiled and spiritually pure?
- Do other things compete for our devotion and have ultimate place in our hearts?

2. FOLLOWERS

v4b It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes

- The Lamb is our King, our General, and we are His faithful people, His soldiers.
- This is the mark of loyalty and obedience.
- They follow the Lamb who was slain, they recognize that they too will follow the path of suffering then glorification, just like the Lamb.
- They conquer by being conquered.
- They trust the Lamb, they obey him.

- What a contrast to 13:3 “and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.”
- Following is obedience. Following is complete trust, devotion, and commitment.
- Obedience is always a manifestation of a life of authentic worship.
- **John 10:2-5** But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”
- Are we true followers of the Lamb?
- Do we trust Him to follow Jesus wherever he leads us?”

3. FIRST FRUITS

V4c These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb,

- These are just a representative number of an even greater number of those God will save from all of mankind.
- In the OT, during the feast at the beginning of the grain harvest, they were to present the firstfruits of the harvest. (Lev. 23; Deut 16 and 23)
- The first portion of the larger harvest was offered to the Lord in thanksgiving and gratitude.
- 1 Cor. 15:20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
- Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection that will be for all of the saints of God.
- The NT uses the term symbolically of those who are being saved as representative of the larger harvest of people God will save.
- We are suffering here on earth under the fury of the dragon and the beast, and there are those who are presently standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, and worshiping with the heavenly host.

4. BLAMELESS

V5 and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

- The 144,000 followers of the Lamb are contrasted with the beast.
- **Rev.13:5,6** And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.
- The beast blasphemes God. He speaks falsehoods about God. He lies about God. He doesn't speak the truth about God.
- The people of God, the 144,000, they speak the truth about God. They are faithful witnesses. They testify truthfully about the Lamb.
- The bible speaks of blameless in the context of sacrifice.
- Like Christ portrayed in Isaiah 53 who was the blameless, spotless lamb led to the slaughter, 53:9 says, “there was no deceit in his mouth.”
- Those who follow the Lamb resemble the Lamb.

5. WORSHIPERS

2 And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, 3 and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the

four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

- Ch 13 is all about worship — the false worship of the beast by the people of earth.
- Now we have the contrast with the presentation of the true worship of the Lamb by the redeemed.
- The beast's worship originates from the earth, but the Lamb's worship originates in heaven.
- John is hearing this thunderous voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters...
- We saw that first in John's description of Christ in Rev. 1:14, "and his voice was like the roar of many waters."
- So the singing of the saints is referenced in a similar voice to our Lord's.
- Worship in heaven is LOUD!!!
- The voice John hears is like the sweet sound of harpists playing on their harps.
- God's people singing is the most important instrument that we need to hear.

- **They are singing a New Song.**
- That terminology in the OT of a new song being sung is usually in light of God's triumph over his enemies.
- **Isaiah 42:10,13** Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth, 13 The Lord goes out like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his zeal; he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes.
- God's people are always singing in response to God's salvation and rescue.
- That's why only the redeemed can learn that song.
- Our Bible is filled with songs.

- It's why we sing on the Lord's Day!
- Who else has a greater reason to sing than those who have been ransomed from their sin, rescued from the wrath of God, saved by the blood of the Lamb, and who stand victorious with the Lamb on Mount Zion.
- But now our singing is just a foretaste of that perfect heavenly worship.
- Our worship is tainted by sin and selfishness.
- In that sense, the worship of heaven is physically and emotionally and mentally unattainable to us.
- We await our resurrected, glorified bodies to be able to enter fully in the chorus of the redeemed in heaven.

CONCLUSION

- No matter how dark and evil the world gets, all we need to do saints is look to Mount Zion--there stands the victorious Lamb!
- And the Lamb is not standing alone. All of those he has redeemed, all those who bear his name and the Father's name stand in victory alongside him.

- Do we bear the characteristic marks of those who bear the name of the Lamb and the Father?
- Could we properly be characterized as someone who follows the Lamb wherever he goes or do I just claim the name in principle but not in practice?
- May we all be numbered among the 144,000 and learn the song of the redeemed who stand on Mount Zion with the conquering Lamb of God!

