

Revelation: Lesson #104 – The Lamb Order Seven Bowls of Wrath

Notes for Parents to Study With Their Children

For Wednesday, June 10th

Read Revelation 14:1 – 16:21 (a simplified explanation of the text will be supplied at the end of these notes.)

Memory Verse: Rev. 14:12 “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

God’s People Follow the Lamb

- This week’s lesson starts with a picture of those 144,000 of God’s people. They worship God and follow the Lamb wherever He goes (they obey Him). They live righteously and don’t pollute their lives with sin.
- These were called the “first-fruits” of the redeemed. That means they were some of those first people who became Christians. People like we read about in the book of Acts who went into all the world preaching God’s word, living God’s way, and were often persecuted because of it.
- We have studied before about how these had already given their lives for the cause of Christ. We need to remember how many people have lived before our time serving Jesus faithfully.

The Gospel is Announced to All Men

- Jesus wanted the gospel to go into all the world, and that’s what the apostles and other faithful Christians did. They spread God’s Word so that people could obey it and be saved. The Gospel was preached to “turn people to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (I Thess. 1:9).
- In Revelation, an angel flies through heaven telling all people everywhere about the gospel. The angel tells people to “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made heaven, earth, sea and the springs of water.”
- The Roman empire was filled with idols. The Roman emperor wanted people to worship him, too.
- God was giving the people of Rome an opportunity to repent and be saved. Some would, but the empire as a whole would not. Christians were being persecuted because they would not fall down and worship idols. God would send His judgments to punish those who did not repent.



An Angel Announces the Fall of Babylon

- An angel is sent to tell the doom of Rome. The angel says, “Babylon is fallen, that great city who made all the nations drink and be intoxicated by the wine of her

immorality.” Babylon as a city was no longer of any great importance in New Testament times. So why did the angel call it Babylon?

- In the Old Testament, Babylon was an enemy of God’s people that had conquered them and taking them away into captivity. Babylon was the most powerful empire of its time. But God conquered Babylon and rescued His people. Here are some things said about this in the Old Testament:
 - Isa. 13:19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - Isaiah 21:9 Then he answered and said, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground."
 - Jeremiah 50:2 "Declare among the nations, Proclaim, and set up a standard; Proclaim -- do not conceal it -- Say, 'Babylon is taken...'"
 - Jeremiah 51:7,8 “Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged. Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed.”
 - All these things were said before Babylon was destroyed, but in time God did bring them down as a nation.
- In the New Testament, Babylon was a way of describing the city of Rome and the Roman empire (I Peter 5:13).
- By talking about Babylon, God would be assuring Christians that He would deal with Rome, just as He had dealt with Babylon.

All Who Worshipped the Beast Are Warned

- Another angel cries out, “If anyone worships the beast and His image, and receives his mark on their forehead or hand, they will drink of the wine of God’s wrath.”
- Remember the beast represents the power of the Roman empire, the emperors who sat on the throne. These emperors wanted to be worshipped. They had statues made of themselves that were put in Temples across the empire and everyone was expected to worship these images.
- Everyone who worshipped the beast would be condemned before God. Their punishment would be that they would be tormented forever and ever in fire and brimstone.
- The New Testament repeated warns that those who worship idols cannot go to heaven, but will be lost in Hell (I Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:20; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8).

All Who Stayed Faithful to God Would Be Saved

- Faithful Christians would not worship any idol, including the images of the emperor. Some Christians became unfaithful. They were afraid they might be put to death, so they worshipped the images.
- This would really show the saints who were remaining steadfast. These were the ones who truly kept God’s commandments and kept their faith in Jesus.
- What about Christians who had died for Christ? Heaven announced that all who died in Christ would find rest from all the hardships they had been through. Death would not be the end. They would live on and reign with Christ waiting for the day of resurrection. God would not forget the works they had done.

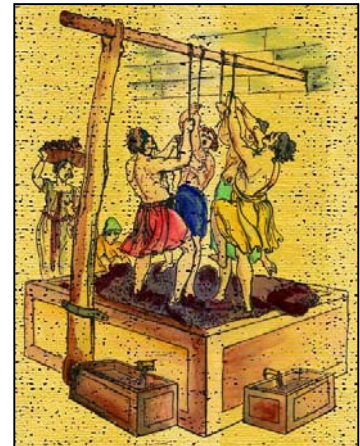
The Son of Man's Sickle

- A sickle was a tool used to harvest crops. It was sharp like a knife, but curved.
- It is announced by angels that the time was right to harvest the earth. It was time to swing the sickle. The Son of Man (Jesus) would swing His



sickle. Some believe that this is the harvest of those who are good. In Mark 4:26-29 Jesus told a parable, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

- Next an angel is seen with a sickle. The angel is told that it is time to swing his sickle to begin a harvest.
- But what is this harvest? This is a harvest of grapes that are thrown into the winepress of God's wrath. As the picture on the right shows, in a wine press the grapes were trampled on until the juice ran out. Revelation tells us that as the winepress was trampled blood started coming out of it, so much that it flowed as high as a horse's bridle over the space of about two hundred miles. That's a lot of blood.
- Jesus would be harvesting His people from the earth. But others who rebelled against Him would be harvested to face God's wrath.



John Sees God's People Singing

- John was now shown a picture of those who had won their victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark. He could see them standing on a sea of glass having harps of God.
- These faithful Christians were singing the song of Moses. Moses had led Israel in a song after God had given them victory over the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Exodus 15). That song begins, "I will sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously!" It goes on to praise God for the victory and remind Israel that He is the only true God, no one else is like Him.
- God's people were also singing the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God Almighty. Your ways are righteous and true, King of the saints. Who would not fear your, Lord, and glorify your name for you alone are holy? All nations of the earth shall come worship before you because you have shown you judge righteously."

The Seven Bowls of Wrath

- At last, one of the four living creatures handed out the bowls of wrath to seven angels. Each bowl of wrath had plagues that could be poured out on those who worshipped the beast.

- These seven plagues brought by the pouring out of the bowls of wrath are meant to remind us of the plagues God sent when He was breaking the power of Egypt and freeing His people. Six of the plagues are similar (though they don't happen in the same order): Terrible sores develop on people, Water turns to blood killing everything in the water, Darkness falls over the land, and Hail falls from heaven.
- There is another reminder of the Egyptian plagues. When Moses sent frogs over the land, Pharaoh watched as his own sorcerers could seem to produce frogs. This made Pharaoh believe that his magicians were as great as Moses and Aaron's miracles. In Revelation, the Dragon, the Beast, and the False prophet send out "frogs" that do miracles. These were meant to deceive other kings into following them.
- We also notice that some of the plagues in Revelation are even bigger – all the oceans and rivers are turned to blood, the hailstones weigh 100 pounds each. That probably means that God's judgment on Rome would be much bigger than the judgment on Egypt.
- These plagues describe in Revelation helped Christians to remember that God had delivered His people before, and He could send plagues to do it again. God might not literally turn all the seas to blood or drop 100 pound hailstones, but He would send plagues on Rome. Some of the plagues that did come on Rome were
 - Famine – poor crops that meant food was scarce and expensive.
 - Money problems – things became very expensive and everyone became poorer.
 - Invading armies – Nations kept attacking Rome. Most didn't conquer Rome, but it took a lot of armies and money and time to try to win their battles.
 - Disease – terrible diseases hit Rome killing off large parts of their population.
 - When the angel poured out darkness, it didn't really make the sun go out, but everything became unhappy.
- The sad fact is that even as these bowls of wrath were poured out, instead of waking up and repenting of their sins, the people cursed God.



Simplified Explanation of the Text

The 144,000 Redeemed

14:1 I looked and I saw the Lamb standing on Mt. Zion. With Him were the 144,000 who had His Father's name written on their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice coming out of heaven, loud like a rushing river or a big clap of thunder, and I heard the sound of harpers strumming on harps.

3 And these were standing before the throne with the four beasts and the elders, singing a new song. No one could learn the song except for the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

4 Those making up the 144,000 had never polluted their lives in sinful relationships with women. They were virgins. These follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They are those who were redeemed from mankind, the first-fruits to God and the Lamb.

5 They would never be found speaking deceitful words. No one could find any reason to blame them before God's throne.

A Call For All Men to Worship the God that Created Them

6 And I saw another angel flying up in the heavens having the everlasting gospel to preach to those of every nation, tribe, language and people who live on the earth.

7 Now this angel said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made heaven, earth, sea and the springs of water."

God's Judgment is that "Babylon" Would Fall

8 And after that came another angel who announced, "Babylon is fallen, that great city, who made all the nations drink and be intoxicated by the wine of her immorality."

Those Who Worship the Beast Will Be Condemned

9-11 Then a third angel followed saying loudly, "If anyone worships the beast and His image, and receives his mark on their forehead or hand, they will drink of the wine of God's wrath. His wine will be poured out, and it will not be watered down in the cup of His anger. These will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Lamb and His holy angels and the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. All these who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark will never be allowed to rest at night or in the daytime.

Blessings For Those Who Remain Steadfast

12 This will truly show the saints that are remaining steadfast. Here are the ones who truly keep God's commandments and have kept their faith in Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice speaking to me from heaven, saying, "Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from now on. Truly, the Spirit says, they can rest from the troubles they have gone through and know that the works they have done will follow them."

The Son of Man's Sickle

14 Then I looked and could see a white cloud, and the One sitting on it looked like a Son of Man. He had a gold crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.

15 Then another angel came out of the Temple and shouted to the One sitting on the cloud, "Send your sickle down and reap because the time has come for you to reap since the earth's harvest is ripe."

16 So the One sitting on the cloud swung the sickle on the earth, and began harvesting the earth.

17 Now another angel came out of the Temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle.

18 Then another angel came out from the altar. This angel had the power over fire, and he shouted to the angel with the sharp sickle, "Swing your sickle and gather up earth's clusters of grapes because they are ripe."

19 So that angel swung his sickle into the earth, and gathered its vines of grapes and through them into the great winepress of God's wrath.

20 Outside the city, the grapes in the winepress were being trampled and blood started coming out of the winepress. Blood flowed as high as a horse's bridle over the space of about two hundred miles.

Heaven Celebrates As the Angels Prepare the Bowls of Wrath

15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven which was great and marvelous. Seven angels had the last seven plagues for they contain the full wrath of God.

2 I could see something that looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire. Those who had won their victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, were standing on this sea of glass having harps of God.

3-4 And they were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and they were also singing the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God Almighty. Your ways are righteous and true, King of the saints. Who would not fear your, Lord, and glorify your name for you alone are holy? All nations of the earth shall come worship before you because you have shown you judge righteously."

5 After that, I looked and the inner part of the Tabernacle in heaven was opened. This is the place where God's 10 Commandments (His testimony) was kept.

6 And seven angels came out of that Temple having the seven plagues. These angels were clothed in clean white linen and had golden belts across their chests.

7 And one of the four beasts gave the seven angels seven bowls full of the wrath of the God who lives for ever and ever.

8 The Temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power. No one was able to go back into the Temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

16:1 Then I heard a great voice coming from the Temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of God's wrath on the earth.

The First Bowl of Wrath

2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth. And on those who had the mark of the beast and had worshipped his image, terrible, painful sores developed on them.

The Second Bowl of Wrath

3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became like the blood of a dead person, and everything in the sea died.

The Third Bowl of Wrath

4 The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of waters, and they also became like blood.

5-6 And I heard the angel of the waters say, "O, Lord, who exists now, who has always existed and who always will exist, You are righteous to have judged these things because they have shed the blood of the saints and prophets. Now you have given them blood to drink."

7 Then I heard another voice speak from the altar, “It is so, Lord God Almighty, you have judged in a way that is true and righteous.”

The Fourth Bowl of Wrath

8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun. He had been given the authority to scorch people with fire.

9 And people were scorched with great heat, but instead of changing their evil ways, they would not repent and give God the glory. Instead they blasphemed God’s name – the very God that had the power over these plagues.

The Fifth Bowl of Wrath

10-11 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast and his kingdom was darkened. And people chewed their own tongues because of the pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and their sores. And they did not repent of the things they had done.

The Sixth Bowl of Wrath

12 And the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great Euphrates River causing its waters to be dried up. This opened up a way for the Kings coming from the east to invade.

The Dragon Tries to Fight Back

13 And I saw three unclean spirits that resembled frogs. One came from the mouth of the dragon, one from the mouth of the beast, and one from the mouth of the false prophet.

14 These were demon spirits who could work signs. They were sent out to the kings of the earth through the world to gather them to battle for that great day of God Almighty.

15 (“Watch, for I come as a thief. You will be blessed if you watch and take care of your spiritual garments. Otherwise you will be spiritually naked and your shame will be seen.”)

16 So these were gathered together in a place called in the Hebrew language “Mount Meddigo.”

The Seventh Bowl of Wrath

17 So when the seventh angel poured his vial upon the air, a great voice could be heard speaking from the throne in the heavenly Temple, “It is done.”

18 And there were voices and thunders and lightnings, and a great earthquake like had never been since men were on the earth.

19 The great city was split into three parts. The cities of the nations fell. And it was remembered before God to give Babylon the great the cup of wine of His fierce wrath.

20 All the islands fled away and the mountains could not be found.

21 Huge hailstones started falling on people out of heaven, each piece of hail weighing about 100 pounds. Because this plague was so great, people blasphemed God.