

“Book of Revelation—Part 6”

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a nine-part series about the book of Revelation. Part 6 was about the “The First Angel of Revelation 14.”

Before launching into a discussion about the first angel of Revelation 14, I briefly mentioned the six angels listed in that chapter.

- Revelation 14:6-7—The first angel preaches the gospel to everyone who dwells on the earth.
- Revelation 14:8—The second angel announces the fall of Babylon.
- Revelation 14:9-11—The third angel warns about the beast and the mark of the beast.
- Revelation 14:15-16—Another angel called out to Him who sat on the cloud to use His sickle to reap a harvest on the earth.
- Revelation 14:17—Another angel also had a sharp sickle.
- Revelation 14:18-20—Another angel came out to him who had the sharp sickle to thrust it into the earth.

After pointing out those scriptures, I focused on the first angel.

To the whole world

- Revelation 14:6—This angel preaches the gospel to all those who dwell on the earth.

To every nation.

To every tribe.

To every language.

To all people.

Misapplying Matthew 24:14

Many religious organizations misapply Matthew 24:14.

- Matthew 24:14—“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

What a beautiful verse. The gospel will be preached in all the world.

But be careful about individuals who boast that they personally will fulfill that verse. (Doesn't such boasting by a human leader strike you as misguided and rather pompous? Please don't allow human leaders to divert you from the Father and the Son.)

Someone could ask me: Are you against individuals and religious groups seeking to preach the gospel?

My answer: Absolutely not. But I am concerned about people who make pompous claims about themselves that should embarrass them and can actually hinder the wonderful gospel message of the Bible.

The gospel message is about the Father, the Son and the Kingdom.

- The gospel message is not centered around famous people.
- And the gospel message is not restricted to be given by famous people—not even famous people like the Pope, Billy Graham, James Dobson, Jonathan Cahn and others.

Actually, you can preach the gospel by your words—and more importantly by your actions.

I encourage you to preach the gospel—as a witness.

What is a witness?

The Greek word *witness* in Matthew 24:14 comes from the Greek word *martyrion*—which is a noun, meaning “testimony” and “proof.” It is translated as “testimony” 15 times and “witness” four times in the King James Version of the Bible.

(For the record, there are several other variations of that Greek word—two other variations that are also nouns and two variations that are verbs.)

Let's look at a few scriptures when those Greek words are used about someone being a witness.

- Acts 1:22—The replacement of Judas was expected to be a witness of the resurrection of the Son of God.
- Acts 4:33—The apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.
- 1 Peter 5:1—Peter acknowledged that he was a witness of the sufferings of Christ.

Let's consider how disciples gave a testimony.

- Acts 23:11—Paul was given the opportunity to bear witness in Rome.
- Romans 10:15—Every disciple has the opportunity to verbally share the gospel of peace and glad tidings of good things.

- 1 Peter 2:11-12—More importantly, every disciple has the opportunity to reflect honorable conduct—which can glorify God now and during the day of visitation.
- Revelation 6:9—Some people will be slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.
- Revelation 12:11—People will overcome the accuser of the brethren by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.
- Revelation 11:3-11—After the “two witnesses” give their testimony, they will be killed.

Let's have a little fun

Although I regularly spend my teaching time focusing upon principles of Christian living, let's waste a little time speculating about the identity of the two witnesses.

(For the record, I don't care who the “two witnesses” are.)

Theory No. 1 is Enoch and Elijah—because their deaths were not recorded.

- Enoch—Genesis 5:24 and Hebrews 11:5
- Elijah—2 Kings 2:11 and Malachi 4:5-6

Theory No. 2 is Moses and Elijah—because they were both associated with fire from heaven and with stopping the water—which is mentioned in association with the two witnesses (Revelation 14:5-6).

- Moses—Exodus 9:23-24; Exodus 7:20-21 and Exodus 14:21-26
- Elijah—2 Kings 1:10-14 and 1 Kings 17:1

Message to whole world

Let's go back to Revelation 14 and conclude with the actual message that the first angel will successfully present to the whole world.

I recommend that you analyze the message in the following ways.

Is Revelation 14:7 the message that motivates your daily behavior?

Is Revelation 14:7 the message that your words and actions reflect to other people? We can certainly do our little part.

But the Father and Son have a very effective way to preach the gospel to the entire world.

- Revelation 14:7—“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”