

Those Who Die in The Lord

Rev. 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

This verse is one verse between two major events. The first, the three angels messages in verses 6-12, then after verse 13 the two harvests of the earth, one for the righteous and the other of the unrighteous, are foretold. Many interpretations hold verse 13 separate, stand-alone from the two narratives.

Let us briefly consider the interpretation of this verse in the context of Chapter 14, and in the totality of the book of revelation. In order to do this, we must briefly discuss the context in Chapters 1-13 that lead into Chapter 14.

Revelation 1:1-3 identify the book's purpose:

Rev. 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

In chapter 1 verses 4, 11 and 20 in the book of Revelation, introduce the seven churches. Chapters 2 and 3 provide a further description of the seven churches. Five of the seven churches are introduced with flaws that need correcting. Two, Smyrna and Philadelphia are described without flaw. Without going into a

detail chronicling of the churches, we will postulate that the churches are a chronological history of God's professed true church. Regarding the church of Philadelphia is written:

“3:7...he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth...8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name...10 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name...11 hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

Chapter 6 introduces the seven seals, and ends with the six seal, Chapter 7 begins with the introduction of the 144,000. Chapter 8 continues with the seventh seal. Chapter 8 also presents the first four of seven trumpets. Chapter 9 speaks of the fifth and sixth trumpet.

Chapter 10 foretells of the great disappointment of October 22, 1844 (Daniel 8:14, the cleansing of the sanctuary and the beginning of the investigative judgment). Chapter 11 speaks of the events associated with and leading up to October 22, 1844, which end with the sounding of the seventh trumpet in verses 15-19. Chapter 12 is a summary, a reiterating of the history of the church from Jesus' High Priestly ministry which began on the day of Pentecost, shortly after his resurrection into heaven to the opening of the seventh seal, October 22, 1844. In this summary is the recounting of the 1260 days of Papal Rome. Chapter 12 ends with: the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the

commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 13:1-10 repeats and enlarges the 1260 years history of Papal Rome, which period ends with the beast (Papal Rome) in verse 3 receiving a wound that would be healed (1798). Revelation 13:11-18 continues the narrative after 1798, foretelling the existence of a second beast having two horns (The United States) which makes an image to the first beast (includes the death decree for those who will not worship the image to the beast).

This is a brief summary of the chapters leading up to chapter 14. Chapter 14 begins with a description of the 144,000. This is extremely important. This description changes the subject, the narrative, the focus of the book of revelation to the 144,000. Verses 6-12, reference three angels messages concerning the events which the 144,000, aka the remnant, the end time church are about to pass through.

Now we have verse 13, immediately before verses 14-15, the reaping of the harvest of the earth (the righteous). Verse 13 defines several blessings “to those who die in the Lord from henceforth.” What does it mean *to die in the Lord*? Especially in the light of the two harvests that are described in verses 14-20. Many believe that this is a reference to one's physical death, that when one actually died, the person died in the faith, their name written in the Lamb's book of life at the time of their death.

Does this position harmonize with. Chapter 15:1-5 which are seen the 144,000, those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name. The rest of chapter 15 and all of chapter 16 reference the seven last plagues,

which is consistent with Rev. 14:16-20, the second harvest. Chapter 17 further describes those who receive the seven last plagues.

If verse 13 referenced a literal death, this would not be consistent with the 144,000 obtaining the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, the 144,000. Further chapter 18:1-8, specifically reference the 144,000, a repeat and enlarging of the three angels messages. If Rev. 14:13 reference a physical death, this would be inconsistent with the 144,000 who actually are alive and victoriously pass through the events/perils described above.

So we are lead to seek a different answer, approach to the question what does it mean *to die in the Lord*? Consider the sanctuary. The sanctuary defines the pathway, the steps back to the throne of God. In the outer court, there is the brazen altar, and the laver, which represent the born again experience. Part of the born again experience is a death to self, a spiritual death. Consider the following verses:

Col. 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us...contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross...20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

Col 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on

things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. 5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness...

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: (Col. 3:9-10)

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Rom. 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Rom. 6:8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ...See also 1 Cor. 15, Phil. 3:10, Luke 15:24

2 Cor. 5: 14 For the love of Christ constraineth us;

because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Eph. 4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The verses above reference the born again experience, a spiritual death to sin, the old life. If we apply this meaning to the phrase "to die in the Lord in Rev. 14:13, this harmonizes with the rest of the book of Revelation. The spiritual death, *dying to the Lord*, is the means which the 144,000 (and all before) are able to pass through the perils of the end time referenced in Revelation Chapter 13 and 14, *to keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus*, to gain the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name. This approach harmonizes with the experience of the Philadelphia Church, the earth populated and subdued with the character of Jesus fully reproduced in his people (Gen. 1; Isa. 60; Rev. 18), the sanctuary, Rev. 12:11, and God is not a respecter of persons, nor circumstances. Why should one receive a greater blessing for dying after 1844, than before. Why should James White who died in a non-violent manner receiver a greater blessing than someone who was burned at the stake (such as Huss), or endured a dark papal dungeon?

This treatise is only a premise. God be with you as you further ponder these things during the time of the investigative judgment.