

## Blessed Are the Dead

Revelation 14:13

The End Times

In my last post, we examined a **Revelation 14:9-12** to consider **Fire and Brimstone for the Beast's Worshippers**. In this post, we move on the **Revelation 14:13** to explore **Blessed Are the Dead**. Now, that is a can be a real depressing title.

**"Next I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write: 'How blessed are the dead who die united with the Lord, from now on!' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'now they may rest from their efforts, for the things they have accomplished follow along with them.'" ~ Revelation 14:13 (CJB)**

Well, maybe it's not so depressing after all; since the voice is apparently referring to Believers. This is in contrast to the torment of the wicked mentioned in Revelation 14:11. The suffering of the martyrs, at long last, is over. Their prayer for vengeance in Revelation 6:9-11 is answered.

The identity of the speaker is not clear at this time. Perhaps, it is angel number four in this series of seven angels who speak in this chapter. However, the message, not the speaker is the focus of these verses. This passage has particular application to those who die in the Lord during the **Tribulation**. The words **from now on** mean from that point forward. It would be better to die and get out of the world than to remain in it during those final months (42 months) of the Antichrist.

**Yochanan** was commanded to **write**, emphasizing its importance to the readers. The voice pronounced the second of seven beatitudes in Revelation: **How blessed are the dead who die united with the Lord, from now on!** (The first beatitude is in Revelation 1:3.) Believers would face persecution and death at the hands of the Antichrist and his global power and influence. The phrase probably means that they are blessed from the moment of their death because they immediately go to be with **Yeshua**. As persecution increases, such blessing is just as sure for those who remain faithful.

To **die united with the Lord** does not necessarily refer to martyrdom; all believers die **"in the Lord"** and go to heaven to be with Yeshua. Believers who go to be with Yeshua will have **rest**. This **rest** does not mean that heaven will be one big comfortable chair. **Their efforts** refer to the difficulties of remaining steadfast in the faith in the evil world. Their **rest** is the cessation of persecution. The unbelievers may have done some "good deeds" during their time on earth, but those deeds will not save them. In the end, those good deeds will be destroyed. But God remembers Believers' good deeds; indeed, they are the basis for the rewards he will give (see 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; Ephesians 6:8).

Yochanan's Jewish audience would have understood the meaning of the phrase: **For the things they have accomplished follows along with them.** The Mishna puts it this way:

"In the hour of a person's departure, neither silver nor gold nor precious stones nor pearls accompany him, only **Torah** and good works." (Avot 6:9 ~ emphasis added) <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jewish New Testament Commentary by David Stern.

## Special Comparative Note on Chapter 14:13 <sup>2</sup>

### Historicist Approach:

**Historicists** rightly point out that all Believers throughout the ages will be blessed upon their death, not just these **Tribulation** saints. Perhaps unknowingly, they also agree with the Mishna.

### Preterist Approach:

**Preterists** seem to have a difficult time understanding the phrase **from now on** given their belief that all this occurred during the Jewish War.

### Futurist Approach:

**Futurists** take the literal view of this passage as they do most of the **Revelation** as reiterated above.

### Idealist Approach:

**Idealists** believe that those who die faithful to Yeshua, especially in martyrdom, are "overcomers" or "conquerors" commented at the end of each of the seven letters in Chapters 2 & 3.

In my next post, we will explore a **Revelation 14:14-20** to examine **The Harvest of the Earth**.

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<sup>2</sup> Material in this post is taken from "Revelation: Four Views, Revised & Updated" by Steve Gregg. Notations in brackets, if any, are my comments.