

## Eternal Gospel - Conclusion

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### A Gospel with No Beginning and No End - Conclusion

"A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: 'If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.' " -Revelation 14:9

After reading the third angel's message above, I have three questions for you to consider. First, the Bible indicates that certain people will be tormented at the Second Coming with burning sulfur in the presence of Jesus and His angels. Why does a God of love do this? Second, why would anyone obey the beast and receive his mark? Last, who is the beast that will impose his mark upon human beings so that no one may buy or sell unless he wears the mark?

We will start with the last question. The Bible teaches who the beast that will gain control of the whole world is the fallen angel, Lucifer. The devil himself is the beast that will rise "out of the Earth" in Revelation 13:11. How do we know this? Because Lucifer is the *angel* king who is released from the Abyss in Revelation 9:11. In other words, Lucifer and his angels will be released from the spirit realm and they will be given physical bodies. They will take control of Earth and destroy a third of mankind. (Revelation 9:15)

God sends a "destroyer" when people become hopelessly decadent. For example, when the Amorites filled up their cup of iniquity, God destroyed them with the sword of Israel. (Amos 2:10) When the Amalekites filled up their cup, God destroyed them with the sword of Israel. (1 Samuel 15) When the Israelites filled their cup, God sent King Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem. (Jeremiah 25:9)

When Babylon filled its cup, God sent the Medes and Persians to destroy Babylon. (Jeremiah 25:12; Daniel 5) Later on, when Israel filled its cup a second time, God sent the Roman general, Titus, to destroy Jerusalem in A.D. 70. (Daniel 9:26) During the fifth trumpet, the devil and his angels will be released from the abyss and during the sixth trumpet, they will kill a third of mankind!

Mankind will be powerless. God will permit the devil to destroy a third of mankind so that two distinct groups of people will be left. One group will be worshiping (obeying) the *Lamb* beast (Revelation 5:6; Jesus) and the other group will be worshiping (obeying) the *lamb-like* beast (Revelation 13:11; Lucifer). Lucifer is described in different ways in the Bible.

He is represented as a dragon in Revelation 12. He is represented as the lamb-like beast in Revelation 13:11 and he is described as "the man of sin" in 2 Thessalonians 2. (See Isaiah

14:12-16 and notice how Lucifer is called "a man.") Lucifer is also represented as the King of the North in Daniel 8 and 11:36-45 because divine judgments come from the North. (Jeremiah 1:14; 25:9; 51:48)

The devil is the angel king from the abyss (Revelation 9:11) who rules over a host of demons (represented as a swarm of locusts) and he is the Antichrist that will take control of Earth. (Revelation 17:8) The seriousness of the mark of the beast is found in the identity of the beast who imposes his mark on human beings!

Consider the second question. "Why would anyone worship Lucifer and receive his mark?" In a word, *survival*. No one will be able to buy or sell (survive) unless they submit to Lucifer's authority and receive his mark. The Bible indicates the mark (Greek: *charagma* – means an etching) of the beast is either the number 666 tattooed (etched) on the right hand or it will be Lucifer's assumed name tattooed (etched) on the forehead of his human leaders. (Revelation 13:16-18)

God permits the devil to take over the food supply of Earth for a simple reason: ". . . . **The righteous will live by faith.**" (Romans 1:17) Because salvation comes through faith in Christ, the faith of the living must be tested to see who will live by faith in Christ! (Revelation 3:10)

Now, we come to the first question. "Why will Jesus torture people who have the mark of the beast with burning sulfur?" Here are three reasons: First, those receiving the mark of the beast will refuse to submit to God and His law. Second, those receiving the mark of the beast will demonstrate they have no morals or conscience.

They will willingly accept the mark, knowing that it is evil, in order to save themselves. Third, those who will accept the mark of the beast will stand in direct and open opposition to the authority of the Sovereign God. In short, everyone receiving the mark of the beast will be a mirror of Lucifer and if they had the powers of Lucifer, they would do the same things that he will do.

God will torture the wicked with burning sulfur because they tortured His saints. God's wrath against violence is called restitution. "**Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**" (Romans 12:19, KJV)

Now that we have briefly examined the three angel's messages in Revelation 14, I would like to close this five-part study on "the everlasting gospel" with five salient points: First, the universe is governed by a God of love. Second, God uses His magnificent powers to ensure the principles of love are exalted and honored. Third, because He is a God of love, God gives His children the power of choice. We are free to rebel or submit to His rule of love. Fourth, God has allowed sin to flourish for a period of time so that the consequences of rebellion against the principle of love can be seen. Last, God will destroy all traces of rebellion at an appointed time and His universe will be free from the cancer of sin. I am really excited about that coming day!