

THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF SIDNEY EDWARD COX

Revelation – Chapter 14

Review of the 2nd half of Chapter 13 – The False Prophet. A Depressing Scene.

Chapter 14 – Renewed Hope, God is Still on the throne. The Harvest and the Vintage.

Editorial Note: This is a lecture by Sidney Cox that was part of a series of lectures on the Book of the Revelation that he taught while on the theological teaching faculty at the Toccoa Falls Bible Institute during the early part of 1962. He was 75 years of age at the time.

During the latter part of his life, Sidney Cox had developed a close relationship with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (“CMA”). CMA operates as a vast network of churches, similar to a “denomination.” Toccoa Falls Bible Institute was closely affiliated with the CMA, provided support to the Institute and the Institute sent many of its graduates into ministry within CMA churches. CMA and The Salvation Army, in which Sidney Cox served as an officer for 30 years previously in his life, share a similar theology and emphasis in Christian outreach.

From 1956 – 1960, Sidney and Violet Cox lived in Miami, Florida where Sidney was on the theological teaching faculty of the Miami Bible Institute, another CMA supported institution. They moved to Toccoa Falls, Georgia in 1960, where he served on the staff at the Toccoa Falls Bible Institute from 1960 – 1962.

As a lecture, he was obviously assuming that his students had prepared for class by reading and studying the pertinent scripture and other class material. Thus, his comments were not like a sermon, but lectures to enhance the students’ theological understanding. He emphasized a detailed study of the scripture and incorporated analysis that he gained from his study of Bible commentaries and books on the related subject matter. These lectures are remarkably free of any personal opinions, personal illustrations or “sermonizing” of any kind. While at other times in his career he was very much the preacher and evangelist, in these late-in-life roles of Bible Professor, he was very much the educator.

Lastly, it might be helpful to at least comment on the historical context in which these lectures were delivered. Many biblical scholars of that day associated some of what is found in the Book of Revelation with the Catholic Church – symbols of paganism, the movement of Satan/antichrist to establish one world church, etc. Many people viewed the Catholic Church with much skepticism and fear. Further, John F. Kennedy had just been elected the first Catholic president of the United States in 1960. His election was quite controversial and many non-Catholics were concerned about Kennedy’s catholic background. Elements of these concerns and mindset are found in these lectures. In 2008, many of these fears have been discredited and some would find them to be offensive and intolerant, but they were quite prevalent and not at all unusual in 1962.

John Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. December 29, 2008.

...of this very interesting book.

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Now, we've been passing through deep waters when we get into Chapter 13 and we find ourselves with the beast out of the sea before our eyes, and the equally objectionable character, the false prophet, or the beast out of the earth. And we have been watching what has been happening in here. We have been looking particularly, in the last class, we were looking at the false prophet and what he was doing.¹

Reminding ourselves that in this particular section, you find the Satanic trinity appearing, perhaps more clearly than we have seen them heretofore. We have seen each one of them. We didn't see Satan himself as the great dragon, until we got to Chapter 12. Now, we've had a brief look at him. And then we find the one to whom he gives his power and authority, the false Christ, and then the imitation Holy Spirit. And so you've got anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Holy Spirit. And all three of them appear in this particular section.

And in our last lesson, we were noticing that the anti-Holy Spirit, known as the false prophet, and remember he is not so stated in Chapter 13, but he is so stated in Chapter 16, in Chapter 19 and in Chapter 20. He is named in that way in these chapters; that he is doing in his realm exactly what the Holy Spirit does in the other realm. He is making real the things of anti-Christ. And he does it by sight and force, rather than faith. Now, the Holy Spirit makes real the things of Christ to us by the channel, the doorway, the pathway of faith and love. But here in this other realm, you find it entirely different. Here it is by sight and force.

Now, the sight is the image of the beast that is erected in the temple. And the force is the seal upon them, and it's either or else. Now, it's either or else - sometimes a physical death and sometimes it's a long, lingering thing that accomplishes the same purpose, by the controlling and then depriving those who do not bear the mark of the beast, of the means of livelihood.

And I think I read to you something that came out of the Readers' Digest showing the way in which even modern dictators have used this process of elimination of slow starvation, and the thousands that have been dealt with and removed out of the way.

I want you to notice one thing, if you please, and remember it: that this false prophet has the appearance of a lamb, but he speaks with the voice of the dragon. Now that's the way in which we saw him there. Even to the appearance of a lamb, he is the imitation one. But the moment that his voice is heard, then you can detect who it is that is really speaking. We could apply to this one the old word that was said to Peter. "Thy speech betrayeth thee."² And so it does. And we can see him there.

Now, for just a moment, I'll remind you of what he does, and this will be just a series of the briefest statements. First, he comes out of the earth. Two, he has two horns like a lamb. Three, he speaks as a dragon. Four, he exercises the power of the first beast, anti-Christ. Five, he causeth the earth to worship the beast. And the word 'causeth' appears eight times. He has power to perform miracles, but all those miracles are performed with the purpose of deceiving. He does as Elijah did, hence the fire. He makes an image of the beast. He makes this image appear to live. He kills those who refuse to worship. The mark of the beast on hand and forehead controls activity and thought. It is either worship

1 See CD 103-1, the class on Chapter 13.

2 Matthew 26:73

or starve. And his number is 666. He exalts the beast, causes the earth to worship, deprives folks of the right to buy or sell unless they belong in that circle. And his number is 666.³

I was very interested last night as I was reading late last night, what Leon Tucker says about the 666, and I'm only going to mention it to you. Because Leon Tucker's book on the Revelation is in our library, and sometime you take it down, perhaps if you've got a couple of minutes there, and read what he says on this matter of 666. It's a very fine summary of it. He follows practically the same line that we suggested there, that it is a number that indicates a falling short, and it is the number of the concentration of man all the way through. And anything that has been man personified and anti-God has somehow or other had these marks about it - like Goliath in the first place, and the image of Nebuchadnezzar and so on. And you can see this sort of thing all the way through. A very interesting thing.⁴

Now, when we get into Chapter 14, we find again one of the these strange parentheses, and I think it is deliberate and it seems almost as if the Holy Spirit, understanding us as he does, is saying to John, "Now, I'm going to show you something else, so that you can take a good look at this, and then, when you write, you tell these folks down there." Now, he says, "In their minds will be this thought as they have been looking at anti-Christ and the false prophet and still see in the background the sign of the great red dragon, and see what is going on, there may be in the minds of folks the thought, Satan has now gained control. There is no cure for this situation. Where you can see powers like this, where you can see accomplishments like this, there is no answer to it."

And there may come over the hearts of those who are seeking to understand it, the sense of hopelessness. Now, you watch and see what happens. And I don't think it's stretching things beyond what we ought to do when we say, the Holy Spirit in great love and great wisdom would sense that. You can't read and seek to understand the thirteenth chapter of Revelation without getting a feeling of the utmost depression.

What is the answer to this? If we didn't know what was around the corner, what would be our conclusion? What? When we watch this one who is having the power of the great red dragon given to him. This one who is taking control. This one with the spirit of anti-Christ, the false prophet, doing all that he does - powers, and miracles, and murders, and eliminations and all the rest of the stuff. And you get to the end of it all and you see a world being gradually slaughtered or starved to death and upon those who are living, the mark of the beast on hand and forehead. And you say, "Oh God, is there any help in this case?"

Now, that's what we would say if we didn't know what was in Chapter 14, and Chapter 14, my dear, and particularly the beginning of it, because the beginning is a parentheses, well that chapter has been given to lift the gloom from our hearts and turn our eyes off the things that are happening on earth and turning us once more to heaven, as if the Holy Spirit is saying, "I want you to show those folks down there that God is still on the throne." Now, you see how this happens.

For the very first thing we see when we get into Chapter 14 is this: "And I looked, (now here's the

³ A recap of Revelation 13:11-18.

⁴ W. Leon Tucker (1871 – 1934) was a Biblical author. His book, *Studies in Revelation* was first published in 1935.

direction of the eyes) “And I looked, and lo, a Lamb (and remember, it is spelled with a capital L) stood on Mount Zion.”⁵ Now, that's an interesting particular there. First of all, the real Lamb now appears. We saw an imitation one in 13, didn't we? We took a look at one who appeared like a lamb. Now, we take a look at the one who is the Lamb, and there he is in the midst of the throne on Mount Zion - for Zion is always the name for the place where the government of God is to be centered.

Now, this is interesting, at least it was to me, this is the only time you will find Zion mentioned in the Book of the Revelation. It appears 110 times in scripture, but only once in Revelation. Now, it may have, and probably does, a double reference. What I mean by that is, it may point us and doubtless does, both to the center of God's government in heaven and also to the center of God's government on earth.

Because, don't forget that Zion was a real place. The first time you meet the word Zion in the scripture, it has to do with the capture of a certain city that became the center of Israel's national life, but it belonged to the Jebusites. And now it is captured and it becomes the center of Israelitish life. It's the city of Jerusalem and Zion is the name given to the central hill in the city of Jerusalem.

Now, you will never find the word Zion applied to the church, never. It's always the center of the government of God. What the person had in mind who sang or wrote, “O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling” I don't know.⁶ I haven't the slightest idea of what he means by that, not at all, because the government of God isn't on any mission. The government of God is an established thing. It isn't the church at all, never is. You can't find anyplace where Zion is ever spoken of as the church. Now, I don't want to spoil anything for you, because the next time we sing, “O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling” when we march in somewhere or other, probably at our graduation exercises, I shall sing it as loud as any one of you. I sure will. But I shan't be so silly as to think that it means the church, because it doesn't.

It means the government of God. It's the central government of God. Now don't forget that we're looking at a place and a time when God's government is going to be centered on earth as well as in heaven. And where there will not only be a heavenly Zion, there will be an earthly Zion as well. For there upon this earth, God is going to establish his government and it will be in exactly the same place that it used to be and it will be Zion here and Zion there. But for the moment, we are looking at Zion there and then the reflection of it comes into our faces, as we notice, we can see Zion down here as well. For just around the corner, there's going to be a Zion down here as well as a Zion up there. The place is not important; the person is. Now, that's the big thing, isn't it?

And we look through the mists and the clouds and the darkness and the doubts, almost, that gather around us as we look at Chapter 13, and we turn our eyes and we say, “Oh, thank God, He's still there.” Now, that's exactly what the Holy Spirit intended us to say. And we look and we say, “He is still there. The Lamb is still in the midst of the throne. Hallelujah!” Now, that's what He intended us to say - the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Look at Him and you will find His hands are wounded. There's the mark of scars upon His side and brow. You will find Him there, the Lamb of God. And there He is, and He's still there.

⁵ Revelation 14:1

⁶ A hymn by Mary Ann Faulkner Thomson written in 1870.

When I was looking through that little book that I was telling you about, Dr. Leon Tucker's book, last night, I found something. I hadn't seen it for a long time. It was a Christmas card, and I'd like to read it to you, and then I'll tell you who sent it. And you know him quite well. This is what it says. It is headed, "God's Lamb." Now, this is what it says:

*"Born to die was He, born to die that we through His precious blood might be brought to God.
Lamb of God was He, dying on the tree, dying for our sin, life for us to win.
Raised from death was He, His the victory, now He lives on high, that we may not die.
Waiting now is He, coming soon is He, coming to the air, we shall meet him there.
King of Kings is He by divine decree, one day He will reign when he comes again."*

Did you like that? Now, on the bottom it says William L. and Phoebe D. Pettingill. And that was sent to us by Dr. Pettingill in 1938.⁷ And you get his books out of the library; we've got lots of them in the library, just lots of them. His little book on Revelation is a classic. In fact, his books on anything are just marvelous. Dr. William L. Pettingill. He was the man who said, "When the rapture comes, I hope I'll go up beside some old post-millennialist so I can say, I told you so. I told you so. I told you." Now, I thought, well that's nice, I'd like to read it to one of the nicest classes I know anything about. And I thought I'd like to read it to you.

But here it is. Now, you've got this picture, there he is, still on the throne. How wonderful it is, the Lamb on Mount Zion. Now, in this we find, when we have caught our breath from the wonder of this thing, and the assurance has come seeping into our hearts, as I hope it does, when we remember, He's still on the throne. The Lamb is still on the throne. But there are things to be done yet. And while it is true that the actual judgments that bring to a conclusion this strange working of God that we see in the Book of Revelation, that righteous judgments that are to fall upon an earth that has lost itself and a people who are lost, this judgment that must come; in the midst of it all, we see the picture of the Lamb and as you look at Him, it sort of quiets your heart because just around the corner you're going to see seven more judgments. Now, here's a strange chapter of introduction, leading to the point where we find the final judgments appearing and then, glory be to God, He's coming again. And we're getting right close to Chapter 19. Now, you watch and see what happens.

There are two words that are mentioned in this chapter and we need to understand them. As a matter of fact, it will take us right back to the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, for these two words are linked up with the teaching of what we call the 'parables of the kingdom' in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. You'll remember that one of those had to do with the sowing of seed. And then we were told, an enemy went out into the field and sowed tares among the wheat. And those who discovered it said to the owner of the field, "What shall we do?" And he said, "Leave them alone until the harvest, because they will look so much alike until that time, that if you try to eliminate the tares, you may do damage to the wheat."⁸ Because wheat and tares look exactly alike until they head out in an ear and the tares stick straight up in the air because there's no grain in there. But the wheat bend over with the

⁷ Dr. William L. Pettingill was a Bible college professor and an editor of the Scofield Reference Bible. He served as the first president of the Jewish Evangelization Society of Philadelphia which was formed in 1911. In 1938, Major Sidney Cox was serving as the Principal of the Salvation Army College for Officers' Training in Atlanta, Georgia.

⁸ Matthew 13:25-30

weight of the grain in the ear. Now, when this harvest time comes, anybody can then go through a wheat field and with his sickle take off the heads of these things that are sticking up without doing any damage at all to the wheat that is growing there. And bind them into bundles and cast them where they belong, into the fire. Now, that's the picture that is there.

And you wait a long time to find the answer to the question, if you'd asked the question, well when will that harvest be? When? Now the harvest, my dear, is in two parts. Part of it is seen when the wheat is taken out of this old world at the moment that we call 'the rapture.' Now, the rapture of the saints is the separation of the wheat from the tares, because those that are left behind when the rapture takes place can be classified under that word. Now, you can use other words more theological, if you want. You can call them apostates; you can call them anything you please. But if you stay with that picture, the wheat is gone; the tares remain behind.

Now, we have noticed this, that during that time when the world is now without the wheat and without the Holy Spirit in the way He was here when He was gathering out the wheat for the heavenly harvest, we notice that something else has been going on - that out of the midst of this seemingly impossible position, by a miracle of God's grace, some are being gathered out. And we have watched Jews being gathered out. We have watched Gentiles being gathered out. And we look a little further in the distance and we see, that's the reason for it. Somebody is going into the kingdom on the other side. Somebody is going into this millennial kingdom and these are the ones that are being selected for that.

The others have gone. They are the body of Christ. They will have something to do with this but they will not be the inhabitants, but these folks will. And we have been watching this miracle of grace that we call the process of salvation during the tribulation. There will be a salvation during the tribulation. And we have watched God's process of gathering out a Jewish remnant, to use the word, and a Gentile remnant, to use the other word, and we have been watching this going on.

Now, this is now approaching the time when the harvest of the tribulation will be gathered. Don't forget, there's the harvest of the day of grace, and that is gathered when the rapture takes place. There is a harvest of the tribulation. What's going to take place with those who are now brought out of the midst of this? - the Gentile remnant, the Jewish remnant brought out of the midst of this. When are they going to be separated from the rest of the people that are on the earth, the hopeless apostates for whom there is no ray of light? Now, you've got that phase of the harvest to look at as well.

Now, two things are mentioned in this chapter. One is the harvest and the other is the vintage. Now, the harvest in this chapter has to do with the gathering out, the final separation, of those who have received the Word of God, preached by the 144,000 and maybe by other means, and have believed it and because of that have placed themselves into a position where God can do something for them and with them, and they are to be separated. Now, when will that take place and what will happen to those who have not received the Word of God and have not given their testimony for regarding it, who have again refused God's Word that came to them?

And remember, that whenever God gives a word that results in blessing on the one side and judgment on the other, it is always called 'the gospel.' It's good news. God sent 144,000 carefully selected protected ones to preach the gospel of the kingdom. And many will receive it. They will go into the

kingdom on the other side. Now, what's going to happen to the others?

Now, two words are applied or used to show this process. The harvest shows the process of taking out the saved saints from the tribulation. The vintage is the word that is used to show God's judgment falling upon those who deserve this judgment and can look for nothing else. Now, these two words then: judgment or harvest, or vintage. The two of them. Get the two thoughts there.

The harvest now, has to do with this gathering of the remnants from the tribulation and placing them where God wants them to be. The vintage is the word that is used for the judgments of God to fall upon this earth.

Now, the final thing is just around the corner. The seven judgments that we call the Vial Judgments, VIAL, these judgments are just around the corner. And in this strange chapter with its mixture of uplift and, again, depression, for it isn't a pleasant thing is it, to think of a world that is to be judged like this, because in this chapter you've got a picture of the judgment that is yet to be. It is just around the corner, that's true. But in this chapter, we see a picture of the result of it.

When you get to the end of the chapter, you will see this dreadful, indescribable thing - a river of blood, two hundred miles long, and as deep or so deep that horses can scarcely wade through it.⁹ Now, don't ask me to explain it. I can't. All I know is, that's what the Word says. Now two hundred miles is the length of Israel, the country. And here is a river of blood, and you can only come to this conclusion, that this vast slaughter of those who are unchangeable enemies of God can only take place at that spot and in that land when the armies of anti-Christ and of Satan have gathered themselves together as they will into this place that we call the Valley of Megiddo.¹⁰ And this is a preview of what will happen when judgment falls at the Battle of Armageddon.

Now, you look at it and see. And you say, "Well, if that's the case, is there any advance notice that's given? Is there any warning that's given?" Oh, yes. Yes, there is, and now, in the midst of this chapter, you see the very interesting scene where warning is given. And the strange thing about it is, that even in this last moment, when the earth looks hopeless apart from the little sealed remnants that you see, it looks hopeless and yet even in the midst of it you will find there is a ray of hope and one last cry from heaven to shock these people into believing the Word that has been proclaimed for them by the 144,000 and probably by the two witnesses. To shake them into the realization – this the last time you'll ever get a chance.

Now it's strange to watch this because the picture before us is this, there are six angels who are sent on a mission. Each one, with one exception, is called 'another angel.' But the third one is numbered, and he is the third angel. Now, you notice if you please, you've got three angels, then there's the final

9 Revelation 14:20.

10 The Valley of Megiddo is also known as the Jezreel Valley. Megiddo was a site of great importance in the ancient world, as it guarded the western branch of a narrow pass and an ancient trade route which connected the lands of Egypt and Assyria. Because of its strategic location at the crossroads of several major routes, Megiddo and its environs have witnessed several major battles throughout history. The word Armageddon, which means "Mount of Megiddo" occurs only once in the Bible. In the sixteenth chapter of Revelation this word is used to designate the place of the final conflict between Jesus Christ and the Antichrist.

appearance of the Son of Man himself in the center.¹¹ And then you get three other angels.

Now, let me remind you that in this chapter you find the words 'the Son of Man' for the last time in the Bible. You will not see those words again. He appears in the midst of this last effort, I almost said a frantic effort, to warn people of an inevitable judgment.

Now, let's see what this first angel does. Let's see, because, or perhaps we'd better say this before we get into it, we may have wondered, what's going to happen to the 144,000? Oh, we know they've been preserved, they have. They have been preserved and they have been protected, because there was danger to them without and danger, much more subtle, than the danger of a sword. And you can see it here. Because Satan, trying to entrap folks, not only uses violent methods, but he uses vile methods as well. Now, one of the things that the 144,000 would have to resist, and for which they would need supernatural protection, would be not only against the power of the sword, but the vile methods that Satan uses to entrap the feet of those against whom he has centered his antagonism. Now, without going into any detail or reading into it something that we shouldn't or probably would prefer not to talk about, and yet here it is, here it is.

Here are the 144,000, now lifted into this position where we can see them safely around the throne of God, where we can hear the voice of somebody talking to them. And when we speak of 'the voice of many waters,' what does that remind us of? (Student answers) Say it out loud, Bob. First chapter, exactly.¹² The moment that you see any sign of that, you can tell whose voice is there.

Now, in addition to his voice, there are the voices of great thunders, those that are engaged and centered and have to do with the judgments.¹³

"And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps."¹⁴ Now, here is a song that is being sung up there and I want you to notice something, because you haven't heard that song before. We've seen a good many songs and heard a good many songs, but here we find a song that is described as a 'new song.'¹⁵ Now, 'new song' is not last year's model. It just means exactly what it says. This is a new song and they sing a new song, and you begin to detect something that's going to be gorgeous when we hear it, and we will. It'll be wonderful when we hear it, because you can hear them singing antiphonally.

You can hear the voices in the sky, in heaven. And you can hear the voices answering down here and they are singing backwards and forwards to each other - the Lamb here, the Lamb there; Zion here, Zion there; the redeemed around Him here, the redeemed around Him there. And backwards and forwards they are singing this song, and the sound of harpers harping with their harps is heard in earth and in heaven. What a scene, isn't it? What a gorgeous thing it is, and to think that someday our cracked old voices will have some part in that.

11 Revelation 14:14

12 See Revelation 14:2 and Revelation 1:15

13 Revelation 14:2

14 Revelation 14:2

15 Revelation 14:3

Brother Barman, whether you can sing much now or not, I don't know, but you sure will be able to then! I wouldn't want to hear you playing the harp now. Spare us that, but I sure would like to hear you play the harp then. Won't that be something? Won't that be something?

Now, here we've got this, this lovely thing, and we say to ourselves, "Now, that's what God's done. There, He's taken care of the 144,000." We began to get anxious about them, and wondered about them. Would they survive? We didn't need to get anxious about them. There they are in the presence and wrapped up in the person of God - the 144,000, which were redeemed from the earth.

Now, remember if you please, and here again I'm just going to touch something lightly, because I daren't do it any other way. But these people faithful to God during the tribulation had been subjected to an enticement that Satan himself uses more vigorously and violently and vilely than anything else in the world. He is destroying the world, or almost, not by violence but by uncontrolled physical appetites. Now, just as the children of Israel in the wilderness were constantly subjected to this, and the story is, down they went and down they went and down they went, time and time and time again. Now, these folks have been subjected to it too. And it says, "By the blessing of God upon them and the protection of God around them, they were not only defended, but they went into the presence of God undefiled." Now, you can put anything you like into that and you can't put anything too bad into it or anything too good when you use the word 'undefiled.'¹⁶

Now here is this very wonderful thing, and the whole hosts of heaven are joining in the "Hallelujahs" of it all, just as they did in what was called in the old days, "The Feast of the First Fruits," for when the first appearance of the harvest came and the golden grain began to manifest itself, before the time for the reaping entirely, there would be those who would go out and gather sheaves of the golden grain that was all ready, and the Feast of the First Fruits would be held and they would wave the sheaf of the first fruits there on that glad day because they knew that just around the corner was the harvest in all of its plenty and loveliness. And here in heaven, in some way, these 144,000, and perhaps others who are redeemed along with them, go as the first fruits of the harvest.

(Bell begins to ring)

That bell!!!!

(audio ends)

¹⁶ Revelation 14:4.