

Lent, Day 25  
Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Revelation 14:6–13

N. T. Wright in his book, *Revelation for Everyone*, explains the background to this section comes from two biblical books: Jeremiah and Isaiah. Both those books centre around Israel in exile. Jeremiah describes Babylon as the epitome of an evil, oppressive regime under which people suffer greatly. Isaiah describes YHWH's, Israel's God, deliverance of Israel from exile through the suffering servant. In John's day Babylon was a symbol for Rome.

With these things understood then, John is assuring the church that while it may appear that Rome is all-powerful, in truth God has overcome Rome through the lamb who was slain. Attendant to this good news is that through that same lamb God's people are rescued. But, Wright goes on to conclude that this is not simply assurance. In addition, this is a promise and reminder that we do not need to become wrathful. We do not need to become a people who curse the world. Instead, because God is responsible for judging and setting all right, we can be a people who bless the world.

This is a key to the church's disposition in the world. We are to work for God's justice without taking up the weapons vengeance. Perhaps this is another element of lent. We give things up. Perhaps we put down the weapons of war so we might take up the tools of peace. Maybe we still ourselves so that God may act.

Prayer

Lord, we can see the corruption of the systems of power and we see your people suffering under those systems. Help us to make peace without getting caught up in the act of revenge. Amen.