

## Revelation Lesson 14

Revelation Chapter 14

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**Introduction:** We continue in our study of the book of the Revelation this week. The fourteenth chapter of Revelation is the last in this parenthetical section. John sees the 144,000 standing on Mount Zion with Jesus Christ. He sees and hears six angels make profound announcements. He is given the vision of the battle of Armageddon.

### I. John Sees a Lamb Standing on Mount Zion

*(Rev 14:1) And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

The parenthetic section begun in chapter 11 (though briefly interrupted by the seventh trumpet judgment) is concluded here. It would appear the events revealed in this chapter are an overview of events taking place in the final days of the Tribulation. John continues, And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

There is no question the Lamb is none other than Jesus Christ. He is portrayed as standing on Mount Zion. Though the earthly Mount Zion is located at Jerusalem, the text will make clear in this case it is allegorical of heaven. Verse 3 will make show that they are before the throne of God in heaven and were redeemed from the earth. They have written on their foreheads the Lamb's "Father's name" (i.e., the name of God). This is evidently the seal mentioned in 7:3-4.

Apparently, after having fulfilled their ministry of preaching the gospel across the earth; they, like the two witnesses, may be allowed by God to be slain by the antichrist. An alternate thought is that they in some fashion are taken directly to heaven. John now sees them in heaven with the Lamb.

*(Rev 14:2) And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:*

*(Rev 14:3) And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

John heard a great voice from heaven. It is described “as the voice of many waters” which is descriptive of perhaps a great waterfall or maybe ocean surf. The point is the voice he heard was overwhelming in its power. He further describes this voice as “the voice of a great thunder.” Strong thunder, especially when in close proximity is a mighty powerful sound. The great voice he heard apparently are the combined voices of the 144,000 singing praise to God.

John then heard “the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” The word translated as voice (fwnh phone) can also have the sense of ‘sound’ and that likely is the case here. There is no direct statement placing the harps in the hands of the 144,000 though that is possible. Perhaps what John heard was a great heavenly orchestra accompanying the 144,000 as they sang praise to God and the Lamb. These vast 144,000-voices sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders.

The audience of this vast choir will be the throne of God and He who sits thereon, the four angelic creatures about the throne, and the twenty-four elders round about the throne. However, they sing “as it were a new song.” It is such, as no man could learn that song except the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. The thought literally is no one could “learn that song.” The word translated as learn (manyanw manthano) can also have the sense to ‘understand.’ It may be, no one could appreciate what was sung save the 144,000.

Their experience will be unique. They, as Jews converted to Christ during the Tribulation and having experienced the wrath of the antichrist first hand, can sing praise to God in a way none others can. Of further note is the comment that they “were redeemed from the earth.” Without a question, the 144,000 were redeemed altogether by the blood of the Lamb. They also were redeemed from the earth to heaven. The word translated as from here (apo apo) literally has the sense of ‘out of.’ The 144,000 are redeemed at some point out of the earth by the Lamb. Conceivably implied may be a special Rapture just for them. The completion of their ministry and precisely how they depart the earth to heaven is not mentioned.

*(Rev 14:4) These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

The moral and spiritual character of these 144,000 Jewish converts is noted. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. The word translated as defiled (molunw moluno) refers to moral impurity. It bespeaks those who have soiled themselves by fornication and adultery. The 144,000 Jewish men are they who have committed neither. They are apparently young men, for they have never married and are virgins. The greater and simple point is that the 144,000 will be morally pure men. Moreover, these are they which

follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

The analogy of Jesus' original disciples comes into view. They followed Him wherever He went in His earthly ministry. The 144,000, in ways not defined, will apparently do the same. This may be a hint of the continuing ministry of the 144,000 in the soon-to-arrive Millennium. John again records, these were redeemed from among men as mentioned in the preceding verse. He then notes, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. The reference to the 144,000 being firstfruits may have to do with the fact they are the beginning of the conversion of Israel to Christ. They indeed are the firstfruits thereof.

## **II. No Guile Found in these Disciples**

*(Rev 14:5) And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

More of the character of the 144,000 is noted. Though they, as all other men, are sinners; these are especially righteous in their living. Not only are they morally pure, in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. The word translated as guile (dolov dolos) refers to deceit. These young men are singularly honest. The word translated as without fault (amwmov amomos) also has the sense of 'without blame.'

Some have sought to spiritualize these descriptions to refer to the righteousness of God imputed to those in Christ. However, that is true of all believers. Here, John appears to be describing the moral and personal character of those who were chosen to be a part of the 144,000 witnesses. Upon the completion of their ministry on earth, they are taken to heaven to serve Jesus Christ.

*(Rev 14:6) And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*

On two other occasions thus far, John has referred to seeing "another angel" (7:2, 8:3). The first mention hearkens back to the sealing of the 144,000. The last pertained to the introduction of the trumpet judgments. John will record the same four more times in this chapter. Nothing more is known of their identities. In this case, John indicated seeing this angel "fly in the midst of heaven."

The word translated as midst of heaven (mesouranhma mesouranema) literally means 'the mid heaven.' It refers to the atmospheric heavens above the earth. There, this angel will have "the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The everlasting gospel (literally, the eternal gospel) undoubtedly refers to the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It indeed is everlasting and

eternal. The purpose of this angel is literally 'to evangelize those dwelling on the earth.' It will include every nationality.

Throughout the church age, the gospel has been committed to the church to testify and proclaim. In the initial stages of the Tribulation, the message of salvation is continued through the two witness and then the 144,000 Jewish preachers. In the final stages of the Tribulation, in spite of the massive delusion and deception propagated by the devil through the antichrist, God in mercy to lost mankind will offer a final opportunity to hear the gospel.

For those scattered away from the seat of the antichrist's power, God sends an angel flying through the heavens proclaiming the everlasting gospel to them. The great mercy and grace of our God is evident. As the final hour of the Tribulation nears, he offers to mankind one more opportunity to hear the gospel and turn to Christ. What the response to the effort is, we are not told. However, what is clear is that God is giving one last opportunity to the four corners of the earth by means of this angel (messenger) to be saved.

*(Rev 14:7) Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

Mankind is directed to fear the God of heaven, giving glory to Him. The time of His judgment had arrived. The world will be in the midst of the great Tribulation and its final terrible conclusion is at hand. The world is enjoined to worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Not only is the world commanded to worship God, but to acknowledge Him as their Creator. In short, they must drop the lie of evolution.

They are called to repentance. To fear God, To glorify Him, To worship Him, To acknowledge Him as Creator. These all are implicit in turning to Christ. In the waning days of the Tribulation, God sends an angel to circle the globe in the skies above, audible to all, preaching salvation through Christ. No man in that day will ever be able to say he did not hear. God will give opportunity to the very end to repent. How many respond thereto is not recorded.

### **III. Another Angel Speaks**

*(Rev 14:8) And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

Once again, it is helpful to recall that this chapter is parenthetical and somewhat independent of the greater chronological flow of the book. Having said that, it is

evident that the announcement made by this angel looks to the closing days of the Tribulation. The repetition “is fallen, is fallen” embodies the certainty and finality of the fall of Babylon. Precisely what the final, eschatological form of Babylon is has been the source of much speculation.

Babylon certainly was a historic city and the source of all false religion. It historically typifies the propagation of the world system since the flood. It, in many ways is the spiritual antithesis of the city of God. However, exactly what the final manifestation of Babylon will be is not clear. In modern Iraq, the Iraqis are in the process of restoring the archeological site of ancient Babylon to what it was at some point in the past. However, at least at this point, this is only a historical and archeological restoration as a monument to the past.

Revelation chapters 17 and 18 will describe, respectively, a religious/political Babylon and a commercial/cultural version thereof. These seem to indicate that the final form of Babylon is not literal but rather symbolic of all that Babylon has been in relation to God. Revelation 17 seems to point to the apostasy of Rome and the false religion seated there. Revelation 18 seems to point to a great worldly city corrupting the rest of the earth through its financial power and insidious influence. More will be detailed in this regard in comments on chapters 17-18.

The greater point here, however, is the announcement of the fall of the world’s system, typified in the final form of Babylon. The angel notes that this wicked city has “made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” This world’s system has from the beginning been an ongoing proponent of immorality both physically as well as spiritually. All nations have willingly drunk of that intoxicating wine and, therefore, will be subject to God’s wrath against the same.

As the final form of Babylon falls, the world as a system falls with it. The angel makes the announcement thereof.

*(Rev 14:9) And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,*

John records the message of a third angel whose announcement is proclaimed with a loud voice saying: ‘If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.’ In his announcement, two actions are warned against as unforgivable. (1) worshiping the beast and his image (2) receiving his mark in the forehead or hand.

#### IV. Wrath from God

*(Rev 14:10) The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*

*(Rev 14:11) And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

A terrible fourfold condemnation is promised to those who worship the beast or cooperate with his program. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation. In foreboding eloquence, the angel describes God's wrath as wine being poured into cup without any dilution. The thought is that these will face the undiluted wrath of God. The wrath of God withheld for ages will in that day be poured out upon those who join with the antichrist.

And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. The thought literally is, 'He shall be tortured by fire and brimstone in sight of the holy angels and in sight of the Lamb.' Further solemnity of the dire straits these are in is evidenced by the fact their initial judgment will be executed before Jesus Christ, whom they rejected. ) There will be no question as to who is Judge. Their rejection of Christ will seal their doom.

The smoke of their torment will ascend up for ever and ever. The reference clearly is to hell though unstated. These who cooperate with the antichrist will be tortured forever in hell as evidenced by their smoke ascending up forever. For those who ignore God's message of redemption and join themselves to the beast, there will be no rest for them for all eternity. They will be utterly and hopelessly damned forever.

*(Rev 14:12) Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

This verse is a conjunction between a vastly divergent contrast. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. On the one hand is the awesome judgment fallen upon those who throw their lot with the devil and his crowd. In realizing that damnation, there is patience inherent for God's people. His saints are those who observe His commandments and have trusted Jesus. In other words, there will be cause for patient endurance by God's people as they realize the fate of the world's crowd.

That is true today. It certainly will be true in that day.

*(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.*

The contrast noted in verse 12 continues. John records hearing a voice from heaven instructing him to 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. Whereas the wicked face the wrath of God described above, God's people can look forward to great blessing, even in death. The time noted henceforth likely refers to the time of John's writing and thereafter.

The Holy Spirit added His confirmation to the record. To die in Christ, is to rest from one's labor. Moreover, the service done for Jesus Christ in this life will not be forgotten in the next. Works following undoubtedly refers to the rewards awaiting for service done for Jesus Christ. To die, whether by natural circumstances, or by way of persecution is a blessed event for those in Christ. No longer will there be the weariness of toil and the prospect of reward awaits us in heaven.

*(Rev 14:14) And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

The final vision of the chapter clearly points to the end of the Tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, and Christ's return in great power. (See II Thessalonians 1:7-10).

*(2Th 1:6) Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;*

*(2Th 1:7) And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,*

*(2Th 1:8) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

*(2Th 1:9) Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;*

*(2Th 1:10) When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*



John eloquently describes that fateful day. "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." b. Jesus foretold in Matthew 24:30 of Himself returning in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. There, He referred to Himself as the Son of man. (This is one of the few places outside of the gospels wherein Jesus is so referred to.) He is further described as wearing a "golden crown." The word translated as crown (stefanov stephanos) refers to a victor's crown. When Jesus returns, it will be victoriously.

Revelation 19:12 also notes Him wearing many crowns though there the word is diadema. The analogy of Him reaping the vineyard of the earth by casting the grapes into the winepress of God's wrath, is begun. He here is noted as having in his hand "a sharp sickle." The word translated as sickle (drepanon drepanon) also has the sense of a pruning hook for harvesting grapes.

*(Rev 14:15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.*

*(Rev 14:16) And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.*

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. The word translated as thrust (pempw pempo) literally has the sense to 'send.'

Here, the sense is to send and cut with His sickle. The time for the harvest of the earth had arrived. See corollary thoughts in Mark 4:29 and Joel 3:13.

*Joel 3:13 Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.*

The word translated as ripe (xhrainw xeraino) literally means to be 'dried or withered.' Implied is that the harvest was overdue. Thus, the Son of man was urged by an angel in heaven to commence the harvest of the earth. The time had more than arrived. The word translated as reaped (yerizw therizo) is of interest. It literally means 'harvested.' However, it also has the sense to 'cut down' or 'destroy' even as a crop is cut down in harvest. That latter sense likely is in view.

*(Rev 14:17) And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

*(Rev 14:18) And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over*



*fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.*

Record is made of still another angel. This fifth angel will be charged to make harvest of the earth in verses 18-20. A sixth angel came "out from the altar." His apparent duty was to tend the fire of the altar of heaven, And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire. He therefore cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

He uttered a great cry to the fifth angel holding the sharp sickle, "Thrust in thy sharp sickle." The angel was charged to cut off the clusters of grapes of the vine of the earth. They were altogether ready.

*(Rev 14:19) And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.*

As instructed, this angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. The allegory comes to its climax. The vine of the earth, the devil's crowd from the antichrist on down, is cast into "the great winepress of the wrath of God." A winepress was a device used to squeeze out the juices of the grape harvest. The metaphor of shedding the very blood of the enemies of God will be more fully demonstrated in the next verse.

The greater analogy is of the wrath of God finally being poured out upon the earth. In mercy and grace, He has withheld it down through the ages. However, in that fateful day, there will be no mercy or grace. His wrath will press down upon wicked mankind as a great winepress.

*(Rev 14:20) And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

The final details of the allegory are made clear. And the winepress was trodden without the city. The city in question without doubt is Jerusalem. The combined armies of the world under the leadership of the antichrist are assembled in the region. (The prophecy of Zechariah 14:2-3 is about to be fulfilled.

*(Zec 14:2) For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women*

*ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*

*(Zec 14:3) Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.*

The culminating climax of the Tribulation, known as the Battle of Armageddon, is a military confrontation stretching from Mount Megiddo (harmageddon) and the adjacent plains of Esdraelon on the north and then southward, through Jerusalem, and on to Bozrah in modern-day Jordan (Isaiah 63:1-6).

*(Isa 63:1) Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*

*(Isa 63:2) Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?*

*(Isa 63:3) I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*

*(Isa 63:4) For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.*

*(Isa 63:5) And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.*

*(Isa 63:6) And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.*

In that day, Jesus Christ “shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked” (Isaiah 11:4). Adjacent to Jerusalem will fall the greatest slaughter of a single military action in world history. And blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. The allegory is over. The literal has arrived. In the one-sided battle of Armageddon, the blood of the destroyed armies of the antichrist will be bridle-deep over a distance of 1,600 furlongs.

The word translated as furlongs (stadion stadion) was a Greek measure of distance. Some define it as 582 feet, others as 600 feet. That distance translates from 176 miles to 181 miles, respectively. That is the approximate distance from Mount Megiddo along a line to Jerusalem and thence southeastward to Bozrah. It should not be inferred that blood will flow all along that distance bridle deep, but

rather be that deep in places there along. The winepress of the wrath of is accomplished as Jesus Christ returns. See corollary passages in Revelation 16:13-16 and 19:11-21.

*(Rev 19:11) And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

*(Rev 19:12) His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

*(Rev 19:13) And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

*(Rev 19:14) And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

*(Rev 19:15) And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

*(Rev 19:16) And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

*(Rev 19:17) And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;*

*(Rev 19:18) That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

*(Rev 19:19) And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*

*(Rev 19:20) And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

*(Rev 19:21) And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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