

Revelation Chapter 14

Revelation chapter 14 begins with the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with Him 144,000 having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

According to Tim LaHaye in his book “Revelation unveiled”, anyone who would accurately interpret the book of Revelation must locate the scene of the activity before he or she begins interpretation. Chapter 14 is a good illustration of that fact. Many bible scholars consider this to be a scene in heaven, while others regard it as a scene taking place on earth. The difference in viewpoint will seriously affect one's interpretation.

Another rule to be kept in mind is that the time should be pin pointed. This passage, which falls within the "great parenthesis" that covers (Revelation 11:16; and running to 15:4), takes place in heaven at the middle of the Tribulation period. An examination shows that the seventh seal judgment at the end of the first quarter of the Tribulation opens up into the seven trumpet judgment in chapters 8 and 9. Chapters 12 and 13 describe events that culminate in the middle of the Tribulation. Now, before we begin the vial or bowl judgments that come out of the seventh trumpet, covering the last half of the Great Tribulation, we are about to look on the upheaval that will take place at the end of the first three and one half year period, or that which is the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 14:1 "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty [and] four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

“The “Lamb” is Christ (see note on 5:6). And “mount Zion” is the location of Jerusalem. It may refer either to the New Jerusalem (compare Heb. 12:22-24), or to the earthly Jerusalem during the Millennium. Chapter 14 is designed to give encouragement concerning the certainty of Christ’s victory over the Beast.

“Mount Zion”: The city of Jerusalem, where Messiah will return and plant His feet (compare Psalms 2; 48:1-2; Isa. 24:23).

“Hundred forty and four thousand” (see note on 7:4).

“Name”: The counterpart to the mark of the beast. It is the stamp that will identify the 144,000 as belonging to God (see note on 13:6).

The identity of this group of 144,000 subjects has for some reason eluded many outstanding Bible scholars. Most commentators have a tendency to assume that they are identical with the 144,000 described in chapter 7. Therefore, we must examine them in detail.

The Similarities of the Two Groups: Two basic reasons are usually advanced for considering the two groups similar:

1. Both groups total 144,000, and

2. Both groups have something written on their foreheads.

The Differences of the Two Groups: Far more important, however, are the differences between the two groups:

1. The Revelation 7 group is specifically Jewish, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes. The Revelation 14 group comes "from the earth" or "from among men."
2. The Revelation 7 group is sealed with the Father's seal. The Revelation 14 group has the name of both the Father and the Son. Note: The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, "having his name, (the Lamb's,) and his Father's name written in their foreheads"; and the Ethiopic version adds, "and of his Holy Spirit". As the KJV doesn't read "with His name", go to <http://biblehub.com/revelation/14-1.htm> and check out over 21 bible versions on this verse.
3. The scene of chapter 7 occurs on the earth. Chapter 14 takes place in heaven, but only halfway through the Tribulation. This can be explained in that the 144,000 witnesses of Revelation 7, like their converts (of verse 9), are slain and under the altar by the middle of the Tribulation. Thus they are described (in chapter 14), as before the throne, in their spirit or "soul" state, "away from the body and at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8).
4. The additional qualifications for being a member of this group (see verses 4 and 5), are not recorded in chapter 7. The 144,000 of chapter 7 are "servants of our God"; the 144,000 of chapter 14 are people "purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb." This indicates that their selection was not for the propagation of the gospel on the earth during the Great Tribulation, but for a special position at the throne of God before Him and the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. Verse 4 tells us that "they follow the Lamb wherever he goes", which may well indicate that as a select group, they have been faithful in completely abandoning their will to the will of Christ during their lifetimes.

Not Jews, But Christians. Since only two similarities and several differences exist between these two groups, we can safely conclude that they are not the same. The fact that the numbers are the same 144,000, is not so overpowering when one bears in mind a statement by Dr. William R. Newill in his book on Revelation: "The repetition of the number 144,000, one of governmental completeness and fullness, is not necessarily conclusive proof that the two companies are one and the same." This suggests that for God's perfect governmental operation, He has selected multiples of twelve to be His special servants in the Tribulation, and another group to enjoy a relationship with Him in heaven. The difference between them being that those in chapter 14 have earned their position because of their faithfulness in doing whatever the Lord commissioned them to do.

That both have understanding on their foreheads is certainly not conclusive evidence one way or the other. The chapter 7 group is "sealed unto God"; the chapter 14 group have the name of Christ and the Father written on their foreheads. This could be a spiritual thing, exemplified by people of the stripe of the Apostle Paul, whose mind (behind the forehead), was filled with a desire to serve Jesus Christ and God the Father all the days of his life. If anyone is permitted into

that group, certainly the Apostle Paul would be qualified. The differences between the two groups limit any assuming that they are the same, particularly when one bears in mind that the scene in chapter 14 is in heaven and that these are taken "from among men" (verse 4), indicating they come from all nations rather than just from among the Jews. Dr. Newell identifies the two as Israel, but he also makes the following statement:

For, although we have thus spoken of them, we cannot but leave the question open for further light. Because in all other Scripture we can recall Israel's victors are always named as belonging to that elect nation, and the favor of God is seen as arising from that national election. Whereas, these of Revelation 14 do not have that mark, but rather seem to be from a larger circle than Israel, even "from among men"; and their peculiar distinction appears to be a reward for their utter self-abnegation. As Dean Alford says, "We are perhaps more like that which the Lord intended us to be; but they are more like the Lord Himself."

Considering the above statements carefully, I present the following possibility, not dogmatically, but with a sincere conviction that this is a more accurate interpretation than those I have come upon so far. The 144,000 found in chapter 14 are probably the most outstanding 144,000 saints of the Church from the early days of the spread of the gospel to the Rapture of the Church. For this consecrated and devoted service to our Master, they will enjoy a special position before the throne of God from death until the Glorious Appearing of Christ, at which time all saints will come with Him. This position doubtless signifies that they will have great responsibility while reigning with Him during the Millennial Kingdom.

Verses 2-5: The 144,000 sing a "new Song" of worship and redemption. The "four beasts" and "elders" are the same as in chapter 4. That the 144,000 were "virgins" and "not defiled with women" may indicate either "literally), celibacy and sexual purity (compare 1 Cor. 7:25-38), or (figuratively), moral and religious purity (refusal to submit to the false religious system of the False Prophet). They "follow the Lamb" and reign with Him. As the "first fruits" of the "redeemed", they are the first to be saved during the Tribulation period (following the Rapture of the church (compare 7:1-4). A characteristic of the redeemed is that they are without "guile" or falsehood (compare 21:27; 22:15; Zeph. 3:13; John 1:47). This may refer to their rejection of the false claims of the Antichrist concerning himself (compare Rom. 1:25; 2 Thess. 2:4, 11). That they are "without fault" or blemish means that they are ethically blameless (compare Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Phil. 2:15; Col. 1:22; 1 Peter 1:19; Jude 24).

Revelation 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"

The same with the voices heard in heaven upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15).

"As the voice of many waters": Very loud, and uttered by a great multitude of people, signified by waters in this book (Rev. 17:15). The same with those that praise the Lord for the destruction of antichrist, and for the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:1).

"And as the voice of a great thunder": To which the Gospel may be compared for its open, loud publication, being heard far and near, as thunder is.

"And I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps": That is, singing the praises of God, for the fall of Babylon, the happy state and condition of the church, and the blessings of grace. The harp being a musical instrument, used under the Old Testament in singing praise. "Harps" (see note on 5:8).

Revelation 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."

"New song": The song of redemption, which is being sung by all the redeemed saints in one gigantic choir. They are rejoicing over the accomplishment of God's entire redemptive work before Christ's return (compare Psalms 33:1-3; 40:3; 96:1; 144:9-10; 149; Luke 15:10; see note on 5:9).

They will sing a new song which no one can learn save the 144,000. These two rewards suggest that they will enjoy a special relationship with God the Son and God the Father from the time of their death after a life of faithful, holy service until they come with Christ to the earth. The 144,000 will learn this song and join in thanks for their redemption from the earth. The earthly, who have rejected the Lord, will not be able to sing this song. It is a song of the redeemed.

Let's begin by looking at the qualifications of this elite group.

1. They are redeemed from the earth by faith in Christ, "who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads" (14:14b). "They had been redeemed from the earth" (14:3b). And "were purchased from among men" (14:4c). Obviously, these men were first born again by receiving Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.
2. They are morally pure. "These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure" (14:4). Much as been written about this qualification, suggesting that only unmarried men would qualify. There is no scriptural certainty to indicate that Paul was ever married, so he easily fits the pattern here, and to my knowledge we have no record of John's having been married, though it is possible it is just not mentioned. In any case, there may well have been 144,000 in the last 1900 plus years of the Christian Church who have remained single for the Lord's sake. Having met the other qualifications, they will share in that elite position with Paul, possibly John and others.
3. They are obedient and available, for "they follow the Lamb wherever he goes" (14:4b). It is obvious that all of God's children, in fact, all of His servants, are not completely yielded to His will. Some have known years of yieldedness and faithful service, only to go back and "walk no more with him", whereas others have had on again off again periods of obedience. This elite group of 144,000 is unusually marked by obedience. Their attitude is epitomized by the statement of the Apostle Paul immediately after recognizing Jesus, when he said, "What shall I do, Lord?" (Acts 22:10).

4. They tell the truth, for "no lie was found in their mouths" (14:5). These men are characterized by a contrast to Satan. They are faithful witnesses, always telling the truth. Lying is a part of a person's nature when one follows Satan, "the father of all lies." One prime characteristic of obedient Christians by contrast, is that they tell the truth.
5. They live "blameless" lives (14:5b). This does not indicate that they are perfect, for these people too had to be redeemed "from among men"; they were lost sinners and had to be born again. Nor does it mean that they live in sinless perfection since their salvation, but reasserts what the Apostle Paul meant (in 1 Thess. 2:10), when he said, "You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed." These are men who, in their desire to serve Jesus Christ and walk with Him, leaned on His power to live holy, consecrated lives. They are men who can say with Paul; Gal. 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me".

"Before the four beasts, and the elders" (see notes on 4:4, 6).

Revelation 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."

"These are they which were not defiled with women": With the whore of Rome, and her harlots, she is the mother of; while the kings and inhabitants of the earth were drunk with the wine of their fornication, or committed idolatry with them, which is spiritual fornication, and is here meant by being defiled with them, these were free from such pollutions, or idolatrous practices:

"For they are virgins: For their beauty and comeliness in Christ, chastity, sincerity of their love, uncorruptness in doctrine and worship, and for the uprightness of conversation (see Matt. 25:1).

"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth": As the sheep follow the shepherd of the flock, and which is a character of Christ's sheep (John 10:4). These follow Christ in the exercise of the graces of humility, patience, and love; and in the performance of the several duties of religion, and subjection to ordinances, and in the path of sufferings. And in every way in which Christ the Lamb has gone before them, or in his word and providence leads and directs them to. Whether it be grateful to the flesh or not; particularly they follow where he is preached, and his Word and ordinances are faithfully administered. And they follow him to heaven, where he is.

"These were redeemed from among men": "By Jesus", as the Syriac and Arabic versions add and so the Greek New Testament; by the blood of Christ (for many men are not redeemed by it). And in consequence of this they were called, and delivered from this present evil world, and the men of it, and from a vain, wicked, and idolatrous conversation with it.

“Being the firstfruits unto God, and to the Lamb”: In allusion to the firstfruits under the law, which represented and sanctified the lump, and showed that harvest was coming. So these persons are called the firstfruits to God, and to the Lamb, being called by grace, and consecrated to their worship and service. Regarding the harvest of souls, or that large number of them which will be gathered in during the spiritual reign of Christ. Which these persons will be at the beginning of. And as those who are first called and converted in a country or nation are said to be the firstfruits of it, (Rom. 16:5). So, these being the first, in the period of time to which respect is had, bear this name.

And as the converted Jews received the firstfruits of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, and at other times. So, these will receive the firstfruits of the far greater pouring forth of the Spirit in the latter day, which will begin, and usher in the kingdom of Christ (Romans 8:23).

Verse 4 states, "being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb", perhaps indicating that in addition to being in a privileged position before the resurrection, they will always be in a special position of service for Christ after the resurrection.

“Follow the Lamb”: This indicates partisanship for Jesus Christ. The victorious 144,000 are unwaveringly loyal to Him, whatever the cost (compare Matt. 16:24; Mark 10:21; Luke 9:23; John 10:27; 12:26; 14:15).

“Firstfruits”: Like the Old Testament first fruit offerings, these men will be set apart for special service to God (compare Deut. 26:1-11). Some see firstfruits as the first large group of redeemed Israel (see note on 11:13), saved much earlier, and representative of more converts to follow (compare Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:15), the firstfruits of a redeemed Israel (Rom. 11:1-5, 11-15; 25-27).

"They are offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb" (14:4b). This suggests that these 144,000 are the outstanding believers of the Lamb and have been given a special position, as indicated (in verse 1), in standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. Among that throng of recipients in heaven of special rewards or commendations for a lifetime of faithful service or even martyrdom, there will, of course, be many familiar names. I often think of men like John Wycliffe, "the morning star of the Reformation," Jon Huss, William Tyndale, and many others who were burned at the stake for translating the Bible into the language of the people.

It will also include those who gave or spent their lives in taking the Word of God to forgotten or lost tribes. Because our God is a just God, we can expect to see many heroes of the faith who were totally unknown during their lifetime. They may have missed rewards of this earth, but this and other passages of the Word indicate they will receive just reward in the next life, and that will last for eternity.

Admittedly states Tim LaHaye, this interpretation places me in the minority among commentators of the book of Revelation. With due respect to faithful interpreters of God who have sought the Holy Spirit for their interpretation, the above is not presently dogmatically, but prayerfully, with the desire that it be given consideration.

Revelation 14:5 "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."

“No guile”: The 144,000 speak God’s truth accurately and precisely, with no exaggeration or understatement (compare Zeph. 3:13).

“Without fault”: Not sinless, but sanctified (see Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Col. 1:22).

This verse says it plainly. They spoke the truth, not watered down. They did not waver in their decision to follow Jesus. Their face was set toward heaven and they did not look back.

Verses 6-8: The “everlasting gospel” is the “Good News” that Christ will win and the Beast will be judged. Positively, it focuses on the redemption through Christ and the coming of His kingdom. Negatively, it has three parts:

1. “The hour of His judgment is come” (verse 7);
2. “Babylon is fallen” (verse 8); and
3. Those who “worship the beast” will be punished “for ever” (verses 9-11).

The whole world is commanded to “fear” and “worship” God, and to “give glory to him”. The identity and destruction of “Babylon” is described (in chapters 17 and 18). The announcement here anticipates later events.

Revelation 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,"

Verse 6 introduces the first of five angels who convey a special message concerning the middle of the end time, that is, in the Great Tribulation period. It is astounding that an angel is commissioned to go forth preaching the everlasting gospel, for the preaching of the gospel has not been committed to angels but to human beings. This astounding state of affairs can only be an indication of the severity of the circumstances. If we keep in view the setting of this passage, we will be able to understand readily why this will be necessary. Prior to the Tribulation, the Church will have been Raptured.

“Another angel”: This angel will warn the people to fear God instead of Antichrist, and to give glory to God instead of Antichrist, and he will instruct them how to do it.

Otherwise, he would be proclaiming a message of doom instead of good news. The Greek word translated "gospel" (euangelion) literally means "good news," and the only way we can offer people eternal good news is to show them how to receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. A message concerning the judgment of God is only a partial presentation of the gospel of Christ. The complete story of the gospel not only clarifies that all human beings are sinners, but also includes God's remedy for sin through Christ, who "died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried and was raised on the third day."

“Midst of heaven”: From a Greek term denoting the point in the noonday sky where the sun reaches its zenith. This is the highest and brightest point, where all can see and hear.

“The everlasting gospel”: The angel is preaching the good news concerning eternal life and entrance into the kingdom of God (compare Matt. 24:14; 1 Cor. 15:1-10). He is urging the people of the world to change their allegiance from the beast to the Lamb. It is also called in the New Testament the gospel of God, the gospel of grace, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of peace, the glorious gospel, and the gospel of the kingdom. It is good news that God saves by the forgiveness of sin and opens His kingdom to all who will repent and believe. The whole world will hear this preaching by the angel as God graciously calls all to salvation.

The Everlasting Gospel. Is this a different gospel from that preached today? On the basis of the Word of God, absolutely not! This is the same gospel as we preach, the same message that was "once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 3).

Revelation 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."

“Fear God”: Not Satan, nor Antichrist. This is the theme of Scripture, calling people to give honor, glory, worship, and reverence to God (compare Prov. 23:17; 1 Peter 2:17; see notes on Rom. 1:18-21).

“Hour of his judgment is come”: The last moment arrives to repent and believe before God’s wrath is poured out. This is the book’s first use of the word judgment, a term that has the same meaning as wrath (see 6:17; 12:12).

“Him that made heaven, and earth”: Creation is the great proof of God, which preachers will appeal to as the ground for all people to believe in Him and worship Him (compare 4:11; 10:6; John 1:9; Acts 14:15-17; 17:23-28).

This message that is brought will be final in its nature. It will be good news (gospel), but it will also be a last warning. This is a final warning to turn from the world to the Creator of it all. "The Lord is coming", will be the cry. This message will be worldwide. Remember an angel is a ministering spirit. These will be evangelists. One more time I say this is the final warning that judgement is about to fall. Jesus is Creator God.

The 144,000 Israelite witnesses from all over the world will be converted through the printed page left behind by the departing church. These witnesses will harvest a multitude that no one can number (Rev. 7:9). This indicates that the early days of the Tribulation will experience the greatest revival in world history.

Remember when we first discussed the 144,000 in chapter seven; they first had to be sealed. Why and how did they get sealed? The same way we are sealed, by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

The extent of this gospel should be noted, for it will be preached "to those who live on the earth, to every nation, tribe, language and people".

One of the signs of the last days is quoted "that the gospel is to be preached to everyone". Here is what is said about that in;

Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

This is why I don't believe that this must be done before the rapture, but before the second coming.

This seems to be God's last offer to humankind to flee the wrath to come before they accept Antichrist. We have already seen that Antichrist and the False Prophet will mount a great campaign, after having killed the prostitute, the ecumenical Babylonian church and will seek to get everyone to worship Antichrist. This blasphemous idolatry will forfeit anyone's claim to eternal life; thus all will be eternally lost. But as a prelude to that decision, the angel (of Rev. 14:6), will make known the gospel to all the world so that no one can stand before God at the judgment and maintain that he or she accepted the Antichrist without due warning from God.

Again, Revelation is not written in consecutive order. I do believe there will be a voice going throughout the land proclaiming the second coming of Christ, just as there was a voice (John the Baptist), proclaiming His first arrival as Christ. The people will be warned. They will be without excuse. God will have a herald going forth proclaiming truth. Everyone will have their opportunity to accept Jesus as Lord.

Revelation 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."

The Second Angel. The Fall of Religious Babylon.

This "Babylon" that "is fallen" here is not a literal city. This is the world system that opposed the church and the Christians. This evil world system did all in her power to stop Christianity. This power and the one causing small and great to receive the mark could be one and the same. At any rate, it has fallen here. "Babylon" is symbolic of the world and its evil system. Babylon, in the physical is in Iraq.

"Babylon is fallen": Lack of response to the first angel's message causes a second angel to pronounce this judgment. Babylon refers to the entire worldwide political, economic, and religious kingdom of Antichrist (compare 16:17-19 for details of this fall). The original city of Babylon was the birthplace of idolatry where the residents built the Tower of Babel, a monument to rebelliousness and false religion. Such idolatry was subsequently spread when God confounded man's language and scattered them around the world (compare Gen. 11:1-9).

Note again here, that just before this world system folds, the gospel will be preached unto all nations, as we read above and in Matthew:

Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Here in this, God has said this is enough, and the World and its evil followers fall. This fornication is spiritual adultery, not physical.

“Wine of the wrath of her fornication”: This pictures Babylon causing the world to become intoxicated with her pleasures and enter an orgy of rebellion, hatred, and idolatry toward God. Fornication is spiritual prostitution to Antichrist’s false system, which will fall for such iniquity.

Bible students are well aware of the fact that Revelation refers to 2 Babylons, both termed "Babylon the Great".

Destruction is predicted for both because they will cause people to drink of the wine of the wrath of their fornication. We may understand that this fore glimpse refers to religious Babylon because it takes place in the Great Tribulation. The destruction of the literal city of Babylon is found (in Rev. 16:18-19).

That the city of Babylon will be rebuilt and become the commercial center of the world is seen from such passages (in Isaiah chapters 13 and 14; Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51). As the city of Babylon has never been destroyed according to the Old Testament predictions; thus, we can only conclude that it will be rebuilt and become the commercial center of Antichrist's kingdom; then it will be destroyed at the end of the Great Tribulation. This again points to the fact that Babylon will become the center of the world.

This "Babylon" that "is fallen" here is not a literal city. This is the world system that opposed the church and the Christians. This evil world system did all in her power to stop Christianity. This power and the one causing small and great to receive the mark could be one and the same. At any rate, it has fallen here. "Babylon" is symbolic of the world and its evil system.

This message that is brought will be final in its nature. It will be good news (gospel), but it will also be a last warning. This is a final warning to turn from the world to the Creator of it all. "The Lord is coming", will be the cry. This message will be worldwide. Remember an angel is a ministering spirit. These will be evangelists. One more time I say this is the final warning that judgment is about to fall.

Verses 9-11: Unbelievers during the Great Tribulation will receive the “mark” of the “beast” and “worship” him. They will all receive God’s eternal punishment in the lake of “fire” (compare Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:15). The “wine of the wrath of God” is God’s righteous anger (compare Job 21:20; Psalm 75:8; Isa. 51:17; Jer. 25:15-38), “poured out” in full strength (“without mixture” or undiluted), on those who reject Him. The “cup of his indignation” symbolizes the place of God’s punishment of sinners. The fact that this “torment” will take place “in the presence of” Christ and His “angels”, makes the punishment even more intense and shameful. They will pay the eternal price of having chosen Satan and evil over God and righteousness.

Revelation 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,"

The third angel, will pronounce doom on the worshipers of Antichrist during the Great Tribulation period. It may be, since he follows them, that this angel will come to the earth, and like the angel who preached the eternal gospel, warn human beings of the consequences of accepting the mark of the Antichrist and becoming his worshiper.

We studied before about the mark of the beast. The number put in your forehead or right hand seals the person receiving it as belonging to the beast. Just as God the Father's name is on the 144,000 and Jesus Christ's name is on the Christians, these who take the mark of the beast are sealed with the devil's number which is 666. The antichrist system is a counterfeit of the trinity of God. It consists of the beast, antichrist, and false prophet. All are a personification of Satan himself.

“Worship the beast” (see notes on 13:14-15; compare 13:8).

Revelation 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:"

“Cup of his indignation”: Anyone loyal to the Antichrist and his kingdom will suffer the outpouring of God’s collected wrath, done with the full force of His divine anger and unmitigated vengeance (compare Psalm 75:8; Isa. 51:17; Jer. 25:15-16). Divine wrath is not an impulsive outburst of anger aimed capriciously at people God does not like. It is the settled, steady, merciless, graceless, and compassionless response of a righteous God against sin.

“Fire and brimstone”: These are two elements that are often associated in Scripture with the torment of divine punishment (Gen. 19:24-25; Isa. 34:8-10). Here the reference is to hell, the lake of fire (compare 19:20; 20:10; 21:8). Brimstone is a fiery sulfur (see note on 9:17).

The "fire and brimstone" here is the very same as that which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Just as the angels saw Sodom burn, they are a witness to this as well. The Lamb (Jesus), is the Judge who speaks judgment. It not only will be in His presence, but He will order this punishment as well.

Revelation 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."

This "smoke" that comes up rises from the bottomless pit. You see this "torment" is not just for a short time and is over. This is FOREVER, just as heaven is forever for the believers. "Ascendeth" means continually ascends.

“Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever”: A reference to the eternality of hell (compare Matt. 3:12; 13:41-42; 25:41; Mark 9:48). Torment is the ceaseless infliction of unbearable pain (compare Luke 16:23-24), here prescribed for all who are loyal to Satan’s leader.

This lack of "rest day nor night" is in total contrast to the peace forever the Christians possess. This is very explicit again about who will spend this time in hell. Those who receive the mark of the beast have sealed their doom.

Verses 12-13: “Patience” here is perseverance or endurance. The assurance of the judgment of God’s enemies is a basis for the perseverance of the Tribulation believers to continue following Christ. The perseverance of genuine believers in the “faith” and in the “commandments of God” is assumed and guaranteed. “The dead which die in the Lord from henceforth” are Tribulation martyrs; they will be “blessed” through rest, resurrection, and reigning with Christ during the Millennium (compare 20:4-6). They will receive a reward for their “works” of obedience.

Revelation 14:12 "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

This is excellent scriptural support for the doctrine of perseverance, which assures all true believers in Christ that they will never lose their faith. The regenerate will continually endure, right to the end, in obedience to the truth, no matter what may come against them (see notes on Rom. 8:31-39; Phil 1:6; compare Jer. 32:40; Matt. 24:13; John 6:35-40; 10:27-30; 1 John 5:4, 11-13, 20).

Revelation 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 labors; and their works do follow them."

Patience here is perseverance or endurance. The assurance of the judgment of God's enemies is a basis for the perseverance of the Great Tribulation believers to continue following Christ. The perseverance of genuine believers in the faith and commandments of God is assumed and guaranteed.

The dead which die in the Lord from henceforth are Great Tribulation martyrs; they will be blessed through rest, resurrection, and reigning with Christ during the Millennium (Rev. 20:4-6). They will receive a reward for their works of obedience.

“Blessed” (see note on 1:3).

These dead in Christ rest in peace until they receive their reward. These are blessed in that they have run the race successfully and are now just waiting peacefully to receive the rewards of their labor.

Verses 14-16: The “Son of man” is Christ, the Messiah (compare 1:13; Dan. 7:13; Matt. 26:63-64). The “cloud” relates to Christ’s second coming (compare Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:9-11). The “crown” pictures Him as the ruler of the earth, and the “sickle” symbolizes judgment as an instrument of the “harvest (compare John 5:27). “The time is come” to finish the judgment of the “earth”. The second coming of Christ includes more judgment. To “reap” and harvest “the earth” is to judge and punish its people (compare Jer. 51:33; Hosea 6:11; Matt. 13:30, 40-42).

Revelation 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."

“Son of man” (see note on 1:13). The imagery of the Lord on a cloud (is from Dan. 7:13-14), and emphasizes magnificent majesty (compare 1:7; Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:9-11).

“Golden crown”: The victor’s crown, a laurel wreath, worn by those who celebrated victory in war or athletic competition. Christ now wears this particular crown, in this case made of gold, as a triumphant conqueror coming out of heaven to prevail over His enemies.

“Sickle”: A harvesting tool with a razor-sharp, curved steel or iron blade and a wooden handle, commonly used by ancient farmers to cut grain. It represents swift and devastating judgment.

Revelation 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."

“Harvest of the earth”: The grain, in this case the ungodly people of the world, is ready to be gathered up and judged.

Revelation 14:16 "And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

This is Christ, the Messiah. The cloud relates to Christ's second coming. Remember when he ascended, the angels told those watching that he would return the same way as he left? He disappeared into a white cloud.

The crown pictures Him as the ruler of the earth, and the sickle symbolizes judgment as an instrument of the harvest. The time has come to finish the judgment of the earth. The second coming of Christ includes more judgment.

To reap and harvest the earth is to judge and punish its people. And so the earth was reaped.

The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 furlongs or 200 miles.

The last 3 verses above show that the time is right and the Judge of all the earth is to harvest both the good and the bad. This will be the judgment of the Goats and Sheep.

Verses 17-20: Where (verses 14 to 16), picture Christ's judgment as a grain harvest (verses 17 to 20), symbolize the wrath of God as a grape harvest with the treading of the grape clusters in an immense winepress. Again the "sickle" depicts judgment. "The clusters of the vine of the earth represent the unbelievers of the earth, those who have followed and worshiped the Beast (verses 8-11). "Her grapes are fully ripe" (Greek *akmazo*, "at the prime"), in that the time for God's judgment of the earth is now! The "great winepress of the wrath of God" pictures the violence and intensity of God's coming judgment on the earth (compare 19:15; Isa. 63:2-6; Lam. 1:15; Joel 3:12-14). The "blood may be either the red juice of the grapes (compare Gen. 49:11; Deut. 32:14), or literal human blood resulting from the final battle. The amount of "blood" that results from the winepress emphasizes the severity of the judgment. "A thousand and six hundred furlongs" are 200 miles, the full length of Palestine. The height of the "horse bridles" may be about four feet. The winepress may be an anticipation of the vial or bowl judgments (of chapter 16).

Revelation 14:17 "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle."

"Temple" (see note on 11:19). This refers to the heavenly dwelling place of God, not the Tribulation temple in Jerusalem (compare 11:1).

Revelation 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."

"Another angel ... which had power over fire": This angel is associated with fire on the altar, which represents the prayers of the saints (6:9-11; 8:3-5). Fire refers to the constantly burning fire on the brass altar of the Jerusalem temple. Twice daily the priest would burn incense with that fire and offer the burning incense in the Holy Place as a symbol of the people's prayers (see notes on 5:8; 6:9; 8:3). This angel is coming from the heavenly altar to ensure that all the prayers of all the saints for judgment and the coming of the kingdom are answered. He calls for judgment to start.

Again, the sickle depicts judgment. The clusters of the vine of the earth represent the unbelievers of the earth, those who have followed and worshipped the Beast. "Sickle" (see note on verse 14).

"Her grapes are fully ripe" or "at the prime", in that the time for God's judgment of the earth is now! The great winepress of the wrath of God pictures the violence and intensity of God's coming judgment on the earth.

The city is probably Jerusalem, and if so, the greatest intensity of the judgment may be centered in Palestine. Perhaps the reference is to the coming Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:14-6).

Revelation 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."

“Winepress”: This vivid imagery signifies a horrendous slaughter or bloodbath (compare Isa. 63:2-3; Lam. 1:15; Joel 3:13). Here it refers to the slaughter of all the enemies of God who are still alive, facing the destruction at Armageddon, the final battle against God’s enemies, staged on the Plain of Esdraelon. The bloody imagery comes from the fresh juice of stomped grapes splattering and running down a trough from the upper vat to the lower vat of a stone winepress.

Revelation 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"

“Without the city”: God will determine that this bloodbath will occur outside Jerusalem, as if God wants to protect the city from the carnage all around. (Zechariah 14:1-5), makes clear that Jerusalem will be attacked, but will not be destroyed in the end, but spared for the glory of the kingdom. And the believing remnant will be saved as the Lord defends them and the city against the nations. They will escape through a newly created valley as the Lord finishes judgment and sets up His kingdom.

“And blood came out of the winepress”: The blood may be either the red juice of the grapes or literal human blood resulting from the final battle. The amount of "blood" that results from the winepress emphasizes the severity of the judgment. A thousand and six hundred furlongs are 200 miles, the full length of Palestine. The average height of a horse's bridle is about four to five feet. The winepress may be an anticipation of the vial or bowl judgments (of chapter 16).

“Even unto the horse bridles”: The severity of the slaughter is indicated in the imagery of the blood of those killed in the Battle of Armageddon splattering as high (about 4 feet), of the bridles of the horses involved. Equally likely, if the battle occurs near the central valley of Israel, the tremendous volume and flow of blood could easily form troughs 4 feet deep in some places. This event clearly is described (in 19:11-21).

(Ezekiel 39:8-16), may be describing the cleanup.

“A thousand and six hundred furlongs”: The approximate distance from Armageddon in the north of Palestine to Edom in the south. The great battle will rage across that entire area and even slightly beyond.

There is only one valley in Israel that fits the mile description. It is the Jordan Valley, which extends from just north of the Sea of Galilee to Eilat at the Red Sea.

This just shows the terribleness of the punishment of the still living unsaved. This could be by a tremendous war or just like Sodom and Gomorrah, as it was directly from God. At any rate, it is terrible.

Revelation Chapter 14 Questions

1. What stood on Mount Sion?
2. Who was with Him?
3. Whose name was on their head?
4. Who are these 144,000?
5. Whose name do the believers bear?
6. What two places were the mark of the beast put?
7. What is mount Zion symbolic of?
8. This voice heard from heaven was like what?
9. They sang before what?
10. Why can the angels not sing this song?
11. Does verse 4 literally mean they never married? Explain.
12. Who were the firstfruits?
13. In verse 6, who had the everlasting gospel?
14. Who was this gospel sent to?
15. Who did this angel say worship?
16. This message that is brought will _____ in it's nature.
17. What is Babylon symbolic of?
18. Where in Matthew are we promised that just before the end comes the gospel will be preached?
19. What kind of fornication is mentioned in verse 8?
20. This torment in verse 10 is in front of whom?
21. Who are the lost sealed by?
22. Who is the Judge of all?
23. Why did He have the sharp sickle?

24. What was harvesting the grapes symbolic of?
25. Give your opinion of Babylon the great.