

"THE BOOK OF REVELATION"

Chapter Fourteen

Following the troubling description of the beasts in the previous chapter, this chapter provides scenes which appear designed to reassure the saints to remain faithful to God.

First there is **the Lamb and 144,000** having the Father's name written on their foreheads, standing on Mount Zion. Singing a new song before the throne, the four living creatures, and the elders, the great company is described as male virgins, redeemed from the earth as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes, and are without fault before the throne of God (1-5). I suggest this is a picture of the saints triumphant in heaven (perhaps the blessedness of faithful Jewish Christians first depicted in [Re 7:1-8](#); cf. also [He 12:22-24](#)). Both the number and descriptive terms are symbolic, illustrating the blessedness promised for those who will persevere in their faithfulness to God.

Next comes **three angels and their proclamations**. The first angel and his proclamation may indicate that the gospel will continue to be spread (despite the efforts of the dragon and the beasts). People should therefore, fear God and worship Him (not Caesar), for the hour of God's judgment has come (6-7). The proclamation of the second angel announces the fall of Babylon, described later in great detail (8). The third angel proclaims the terrible judgment and eternal torment to befall those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (9-11). The three proclamations are then followed by an explanation that the patience of the saints consist of keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, with a voice from heaven telling John to write of the blessedness of those who die in the Lord (12-13).

The chapter concludes with a depiction of **two harvests**. The first shows the Son of Man on a white cloud reaping the harvest of the earth (14-16). The second depicts an angel reaping the grapes of the vine of the earth, which are then thrown into the great winepress of the wrath of God, producing a river of blood almost two hundred miles long (17-20). These two harvests may be different ways of describing the same judgment about to come upon those who follow the beast, or the first may depict that Jesus will safely harvest His own while God's wrath is being poured out on His enemies. I do not believe either represents that which will occur when Jesus comes at the end of time (though they may certainly foreshadow that great event). Instead, like the angelic proclamations they reassured the Christians of John's day that God's hour of judgment was soon to come upon their enemies (e.g., the Roman empire).

POINTS TO PONDER

- * The series of scenes depicted in this chapter
- * How they may have provided comfort to the Christians of John's day

OUTLINE

I. THE 144,000 ON MOUNT ZION (1-5)

A. STANDING WITH THE LAMB (1)

1. 144,000 together with the Lamb on Mount Zion
2. With the Father's name written on their foreheads

B. SINGING A NEW SONG (2-3)

1. John heard a voice from heaven
 - a. Like the voice of many waters
 - b. Like the voice of loud thunder
2. John heard the sound of harpists playing their harps
3. The 144,000 sang a new song
 - a. Before the throne, the four living creatures and the elders
 - b. Which none could learn except the 144,000 redeemed from the earth

C. DESCRIBED MORE FULLY (4-5)

1. They are virgins, who had not defiled themselves with women
2. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes
3. They were redeemed from among men, the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb
4. They are without fault before the throne of God, with no guile in their mouths

II. THREE ANGELIC PROCLAMATIONS (6-13)

A. THE FIRST PROCLAMATION (6-7)

1. By an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel
 - a. To preach to those who dwell on the earth
 - b. To every nation, tribe, tongue, and people
2. Saying with a loud voice...
 - a. "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come"
 - b. "Worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water"

B. THE SECOND PROCLAMATION (8)

1. By another angel which followed the first
2. Saying...
 - a. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city"
 - b. "Because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication"

C. THE THIRD PROCLAMATION (9-11)

1. By a third angel which followed the first two
2. Saying with a loud voice...
 - a. "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand..."
 - b. "He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation"
 - c. "He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone..."
 - 1) "In the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb"
 - 2) "The smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever"
 - 3) "They have no rest day or night"
- "Who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name"

D. A WORD OF WISDOM AND A BEATITUDE (12-13)

1. Here is the patience of the saints: those who keep...
 - a. The commandments of God
 - b. The faith of Jesus
2. A voice from heaven saying...
 - a. "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'"
 - b. "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

III. THE TWO HARVESTS (14-20)

A. REAPING THE EARTH'S HARVEST (14-16)

1. The Son of Man sitting on a white cloud
 - a. With a golden crown on His head
 - b. With a sharp sickle in His hand
2. An angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice...
 - a. "Thrust in Your sickle and reap"
 - b. "For the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe"
3. He who sat on a cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and it was reaped

B. REAPING THE GRAPES OF WRATH (17-20)

1. An angel came out of the temple in heaven, also having a sharp sickle
2. Another angel, having power over fire, cried with a loud voice to the angel with the sickle...
 - a. "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth"
 - b. "For her grapes are fully ripe"
3. So the angel...
 - a. Thrust his sickle into the earth
 - b. Gathered the vine of the earth
 - c. Threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God
4. The winepress was trampled outside the city
 - a. Blood came out of the winepress
 - b. Up to the horses' bridles, for 1600 furlongs

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1) What are the main points of this chapter?

- The 144,000 on Mount Zion (1-5)
- Three angelic proclamations (6-13)
- The two harvests (14-20)

2) What does John see standing on Mount Zion? (1)

- The Lamb and 144,000 with His Father's name on their foreheads

3) What does John hear? (2)

- A voice from heaven, like that of many waters and loud thunder
- The sound of harpists playing their harps

4) What were the 144,000 singing, and where? (3)

- A new song; before the throne, the four living creatures and the elders

5) Who could learn the song? (3)

- Only the 144,000 who were redeemed from the earth

6) How are the 144,000 described? (4-5)

- They were not defiled with women, i.e., they were virgins
- They follow the Lamb wherever He goes
- Redeemed from among men, they were the first fruits to God and to the Lamb
- In their mouth was no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God

7) What did the first of three angels have? What did it say? (6-7)

- The everlasting gospel to preach to those on the earth
- Fear God and give Him glory, for the time of His judgment has come; worship Him

8) What did the second angel say? (8)

- Babylon is fallen, because she made nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication

9) What did the third angel say? (9-11)

- Those who worship the beast and his image, and receives the mark, shall drink of the wrath of God and be tormented with fire and brimstone forever

10) What does John say is the patience of the saints? (12)

- Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus

11) What did a voice from heaven say? What did the Spirit say? (13)

- "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now.'"
- "Yes, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

12) In the first of two harvests, who did the harvesting and what was reaped? (14-16)

- One like the Son of Man sitting on a white cloud, with a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand; the earth

13) In the second harvest, who did the harvesting and what was reaped? (17-18)

- An angel which came out of the temple which is heaven; the vine grapes of the earth

14) What was done with the grapes? What was produced? (19-20)

- They were thrown into the great winepress of the wrath of God and trampled
- Blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles for 1600 furlongs (184 miles)