

# Revelation 14 Commentary

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## Revelation 14:1

In the previous chapter, the future looked very bleak for the saints. The [Beast](#) arose from the sea, empowered by the dragon, and was given authority over the saints (Rev. 13:5<sup>+</sup>). The False Prophet aided the Beast in his ascendancy and worldwide worship (Rev. 13:11-13<sup>+</sup>). An [image of the Beast](#) was made which required worship of the image and of the Beast at the cost of one's life (Rev. 13:15<sup>+</sup>). Here, the focus moves back from the earth, under the control of the Beast, to the heavenly realm where the justice and sovereignty of God are once again emphasized. All is not as it appears on the earth below. For the ultimate judge is on His throne, redeeming men from the midst of the Tribulation.

The blackest storms often give place to the loveliest sunsets. The winds and thunders exhaust themselves. The clouds empty and break. And from the calm heavens behind them comes a golden light, girthing the remaining fragments of gloom with chains of brightness, and overarching with the bow of promise the path along which the terrible tempest has just passed. Like this evening glory after the summer's gust, is the chapter on which we now enter.<sup>1</sup>

John is shown the firstfruits of the redeemed of Israel, an indication of many more Jews yet to come. He is also shown a threefold angelic witness:

1. The final global presentation of the gospel to all men representing their *last* opportunity to accept salvation before taking the mark of the Beast.
2. The declaration of the certain and [imminent](#) destruction of Babylon.
3. The divine warning concerning the gravity of worshipping the Beast and taking his mark.

John is also shown the incredibly difficult conditions under which the saints of the end must prevail and the final harvest at the end of the age, the subject of so much of Jesus' teaching (e.g., Mat. 13).

a Lamb

The [MT](#) and [NU](#) texts have *the Lamb*. Even though the [TR](#) text lacks the article, there is no question *which* Lamb this is. It cannot be the second beast of the previous chapter which was "like a lamb" (Rev. 13:11<sup>+</sup>). Those who follow *him* will never see Mount Zion as these do. The 144,000 have the name of the Father of this Lamb on their foreheads—a clear reference to God the Father. Hence, this is the "Lamb as though it had been slain" (Rev. 5:6<sup>+</sup>).

Mount Zion

Mount Zion, also known as "the City of David" (2S. 5:7). Within Scripture, the term "Zion" is used in a variety of ways<sup>2</sup> and can refer to as many as three different locations:

*David's City*. In the OT Zion refers to Jerusalem, the city that David conquered and made a capital of the united kingdom of Israel (1Chr. 11:5; Ps. 2:6; Isa. 2:3). *The Millennial City*. In a prophetic sense, Zion has reference to Jerusalem as the future capital city of the nation Israel in the Kingdom age (Isa. 1:27; 2:3; 4:1-6; Joel 3:16; Zec. 1:16-17; 8:3-8; Rom. 11:26). Amillennial theologians spiritualize, rather "mysticalize," the term to mean the Christian church of this age. *The Heavenly City*. The NT also refers to Zion as the New Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22-24), the eternal city into which the church will be received (cf. Rev. 21<sup>+</sup>-22<sup>+</sup>).<sup>3</sup>

We have seen that Psalm 2 is alluded to many different times in the book of Revelation (e.g., Rev. 2:27<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 11:15<sup>+</sup>). And so it is

here. "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: 'Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.' " (Ps. 2:4-6) The psalmist speaks of the *millennial Zion* where the King will initially be enthroned (Isa. 9:7; Mat. 25:31; Luke 1:32-33). God chose Zion as his eternal dwelling place (Ps. 132:13), the site of His [Temple](#). See [The Temple Mount](#). God promised, in the strongest terms, that He would never forget the *earthly Zion*:

But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me." "Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me." (Isa. 49:14-16)

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass *that* whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls. (Joel 2:31-32)

Micah describes a coming time of global peace: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore" (Mic. 4:3). He then describes the gathering of the outcasts of Israel and the establishment of His millennial reign in Zion. "So the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion. From now on, even forever" (Mic. 4:8). It is from Zion that the Deliverer will come when He turns ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:25). In many of the redemptive passages concerning Zion, Jerusalem is in view. Jerusalem is referred to as the *daughter of Zion* (Mat. 21:5; John 12:15). Isaiah also speaks of the millennial Zion:

Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. **He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people;** they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. (Isa. 2:3-4) [emphasis added]

We know these passages speak of an *earthly* scene because they speak of a need for righteous judgment and people being rebuked. Neither of these activities will take place in the eternal state where sin has been vanquished. It need hardly be said that there is no need for deliverance for the *heavenly Zion* because it has never been forsaken, forgotten, or come under attack like its earthly counterpart. Thus, God's promises to redeem and protect Zion relate to the *earth* and not *heaven*.<sup>4</sup> Although the vast majority of passages concern the earthly Zion, there are some notable exceptions. The author of Hebrews mentions a heavenly scene wherein *Mount Zion* is equated with the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem:

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. (Heb. 12:22-24)

This heavenly Mount Zion is probably in view in other passages which refer to a mountain which is in heaven and is associated with the rule of God (Eze. 28:13-15) and the heavenly Jerusalem and the eternal order (Rev. 21:10<sup>+</sup>). Since there is both an earthly and a heavenly Zion, which is in view here? The answer to this question carries with it considerable significance. If it is the earthly Zion, then the 144,000 have been protected by their seal throughout the horrors of the Tribulation. If it is the heavenly Zion, after having served out their intended ministry, the 144,000 were removed from the earth, probably through martyrdom.<sup>5</sup>

### 3.14.1.1 - A Heavenly Scene?

Evidence in favor of the heavenly Zion is as follows:<sup>6</sup>

1. If the 144,000 are the ones singing the new song (Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>), they are said to be "before the four living creatures, and the elders" (Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>). In every other mention of the living creatures and elders within the book of Revelation, they are in heaven (Rev. 5:6, 8, 11, 14<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 7:11<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 19:4<sup>+</sup>).
2. It appears that the scene takes place "before the throne of God" (Rev. 14:3, 5<sup>+</sup>). The natural conclusion is that this is the throne of the Father in heaven (Rev. 4:2-3<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 5:1, 7<sup>+</sup>, Rev. 19:4<sup>+</sup>).<sup>7</sup>
3. The Lamb is *standing*, as it was previously seen in heaven in the midst of the throne (Rev. 5:6<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 7:17<sup>+</sup>), but in the Millennium the Lamb would more likely be seated on His throne, the throne of David (Rev. 3:21<sup>+</sup>).
4. The 144,000 are said to be redeemed *from the earth* (Rev. 4:3<sup>+</sup>). They were redeemed *from among men* (Rev. 4:4<sup>+</sup>). The implication is that they are no longer on the earth among men.

The problem with taking this as a heavenly scene (the heavenly Mount Zion) is how to explain the failure of the sealing of the

144,000 for protection (Rev. 7:1-3+) which has now apparently resulted in their death? Perhaps this is not as large of a problem as it first appears. A close study of Revelation 12+ suggests that the faithful remnant which shall be protected throughout the Tribulation and find entry into the Millennial Kingdom are those who flee to the wilderness—the woman who has a place prepared for her by God (Rev. 12:6+). We saw that the 144,000 of Israel, who appear to have an evangelistic role, could not be a part of those kept in the wilderness. Because of their evangelistic mission, they will not be in Judea when the signal comes to flee to the mountains and subsequently the wilderness. Furthermore, if they did participate in the flight and subsequent hiding, how could they perform their evangelistic task among the Gentiles and Jews of the Diaspora? Nowhere is it said that these receive a seal which is to protect them against death throughout the Tribulation and from all causes. Scripture only tells us they are to be protected from the direct effects of God's judgments poured upon the earth. This is why the four winds of the earth are held back until they are sealed (Rev. 7:1-3+). Judgments upon *the earth, the sea, and the trees* may not proceed until they are protected. Moreover, they are said to be protected from the demonic locust judgment (Rev. 9:4+). All of these dangers come directly from God and represent His wrath upon the [earth dwellers](#). They are to be protected from this “friendly fire” during their evangelistic mission. Does this necessarily mean that they are completely invincible for the entire duration of the Tribulation? If the example of the two powerful witnesses of God is any example, then perhaps not.<sup>8</sup>

The sealing they received protects them only from the wrath of God, not from the wrath of the dragon and the beast (cf. Rev. 12:12+). These are the same 144,000 as in Revelation 7+, but they are also the same as the rest of the woman's seed in Revelation 12:17+, the witnesses to whom the dragon has access because of their refusal to worship the beast (Rev. 13:15+). . . . They are the vanguard who bear the brunt of the struggle against the beast and pay the price of their own lives.<sup>9</sup>

In the same way that the two witnesses are invincible *for the duration of their ministry* (Rev. 11:5+), so too might these be. Like the two witnesses “when they finish their testimony” (Rev. 11:7+), it may suit God's purpose that their ultimate witness to Him finds its expression in their bold martyrdom (Rev. 12:11+). On the other hand, the two witnesses are never said to be sealed for protection whereas these are. And why are these individuals singled out for special sealing if their ultimate fate is no different than the unsealed martyrs mentioned elsewhere (Rev. 6:9-11+; Rev. 7:14+; Rev. 11:7+; Rev. 12:11+; Rev. 15:2+; Rev. 20:4+)?

### 3.14.1.2 - A Scene Spanning both Heaven and Earth?

The scene before us can also be interpreted in a different way which splits the participants between both a heavenly and an earthly location. Such an interpretation understands the 144,000 to be upon the earth having survived the Tribulation due to God's special protection (Rev. 7:1-3+). John is given a preview of the Lamb and the 144,000 on the earthly Mount Zion at the introduction of the Millennial Kingdom to come. They are accompanied by thunderous praise from heaven. This interpretation understands the *singers* to be the *harpists* in heaven, rather than the 144,000 on the earth. *They* who sing a new song before the throne, the four living creatures, and the elders (Rev. 14:3+), refers to the nearest antecedent, the *harpists*, not the 144,000 who stand with the Lamb. (However, there is a significant textual variation at this verse which [see](#).) “The text does not say that the 144,000 are in the same place as the singers, only that they hear the singers.”<sup>10</sup> It is the heavenly chorus playing harps which sing the song in heaven commemorating God's special preservation of the 144,000 throughout the entire Tribulation and the accomplishment of their unique evangelistic task (see commentary on [Revelation 7:3](#)). The heavenly harpists sing the new song and the 144,000 are the only ones who can *learn* the song from among those on earth.

Some want to identify the singers as the redeemed ones themselves. The reasons for assigning this identity are the inability of anyone else to learn the song (Rev. 14:3+) (Kiddle) and the analogy of Rev. 15:2+ where the overcomers have harps (Beasley-Murray). This cannot be, however, because the song is sung in heaven and the 144,000 redeemed ones are on the earthly Mount Zion (Alford, Beckwith). The song is intelligible to the 144,000, but they are not the singers (Moffatt).<sup>11</sup>

The association of the song with the harpists has the advantage of coupling the pronoun (*they*) more closely to the antecedent (*harpists*). It also associates the singing with those who initiate the music and play the harps. It also explains who the 144,000 would *learn* the song from. “Who then are the harpers? They are the martyred company seen in connection with the fifth seal and they also include now their brethren which were slain during the great tribulation.”<sup>12</sup> If John sees a preview of the 144,000 standing on Mount Zion at the *end* of the Tribulation, then their appearance follows upon the events of the Tribulation. Interestingly, a group of singing harpists in heaven is mentioned in the very next chapter, although they sing a different song (the song of Moses and of the Lamb). They are those who “have victory over the [Beast](#), over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name” (Rev. 15:2+). The harpists here, although singing a different song, are probably also from among the redeemed.<sup>13</sup> The weaknesses of this view include:

1. The new song originates in the mouths of the harpists, who lack the firsthand experience of the redemption and preservation of the 144,000. In other passages, those who initiate songs are the ones who experienced redemption (Rev. 5:9-10+; Rev. 15:2+).

2. The statement mentioning the faultlessness of the 144,000 *before the throne of God* (Rev. 14:5<sup>+</sup>) must be understood to describe their salvific position rather than their physical location in heaven. (However, this phrase does not even appear in the [NU](#) or [MT](#) texts, but only the [TR](#) text. See commentary on [Revelation 14:5](#).)
3. The need to make a distinction between *singing* the song and *learning* the song. If the 144,000 are said to be the only ones who can *learn* the song, how do we account for the harpists who initially learn in order to *sing*? A possible solution is that the 144,000 are the only ones *from among those on the earth* who can learn it because the song, originated by the harpists in heaven, commemorates their personal experience. It is uniquely their special privilege to sing it. See commentary on [Revelation 14:3](#).
4. The emphasis placed on the uniqueness of the song and its association with redemption (Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>) argues against its origin with any but the 144,000 themselves.
5. The majority of manuscripts (NU and MT texts) indicate that the voice or sound was *like* harpists playing on their harps. If this describes a *voice* (rather than the sound of a multitude), then *they* which sing in Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup> cannot refer to the voice. See commentary on [Revelation 14:2](#).

A variation of this view understands the harpists playing their harps from heaven and the 144,000 singing the new song in response from the earth. This view takes *they* (singers) of verse 3, *these* (virgins) of verse 4, and *their* (faultless ones) of verse 5 as all referring to the 144,000 of verse 1. The main weakness of this view is accounting for how the new song they sing can be said to be “before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders” (Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>) when the singers are themselves on earth. Mills suggests another variation: that the 144,000 are seen first on earth (Rev. 14:1<sup>+</sup>),<sup>14</sup> but then raptured to heaven to sing before the throne thereafter (Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>).<sup>14</sup> While such an event is *possible*, there is little within the context of the passage itself to support such a notion. The main advantage all of these variations have over a completely heavenly scene is that they interpret God’s seal of the 144,000 to have provided for their full safety for the duration of the Tribulation so that they are not only spiritual firstfruits, but also among the first Jews which enter the [Millennial Kingdom](#) to form its initial population. If John is shown a prophetic scene with the 144,000 and the Lamb on the earthly Mount Zion in the Millennial Kingdom and the rest of the scene is the heavenly reaction above, then the sealed of Israel would have avoided death to enter the kingdom and now stand as evidence of God’s promise to protect a faithful remnant:

The first verse presents what appears to be a millennial scene, . . . with the 144,000 Jews standing on Mount Zion with the protective seal on their foreheads prominently displayed. This shows that Satan’s attempt at total Jewish destruction will fail.<sup>15</sup>

They are the “firstfruits” of the millennial reign. They connect the dispensations—somewhat as Noah did, who passed through the judgment of the flood into a new order of things.<sup>16</sup>

In chapter fourteen the same group [the 144,000 from Revelation 7<sup>+</sup>] is pictured at the termination of the tribulation, when the kingdom is established. The returning King is on Mount Zion, as was predicted of Him (Zec. 14:4. At His return the faithful witnesses gather to Him, having been redeemed (Rev. 14:4<sup>+</sup>) and having faithfully witnessed in the midst of apostasy (Rev. 14:4-5<sup>+</sup>).<sup>17</sup>

one hundred *and* forty-four thousand

These are the twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of Israel who received the “seal of the living God” (Rev. 7:2-8<sup>+</sup>). Some suggest this group to be a different group of Jews than those who were sealed in chapter seven.<sup>18</sup> This is highly improbable: the same number are involved; they are said to be marked on their foreheads; and, with the exception of Dan, they include representatives of both Judah (the southern kingdom) and Israel (the northern kingdom).

**EDITORIAL ADDITION: Here are some other examples of non-literal interpretation of 144,000.**

## EXAMPLES OF NON-LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF 144,000

"**Twelve** is the number of God's people, which is squared to indicate **completeness** and multiplied by one thousand to connote **vastness**." - **Gregory Beale**

"Many reformed & evangelical scholars argue that **Beale** has written the best available contemporary commentary on Revelation!" - **Keith Matheson** (Compiles "Best" Commentaries on Ligonier Ministries)

**ESV Study Bible** "The selection and order of the 12 tribes suggest that the 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel have **symbolic significance, representing the church**."

**NLT Study Bible** - "Probably represents **all faithful Christians**"

**Robert Mounce** - "The number is **obviously symbolic**."

**A T Robertson** (Word Pictures in NT) - "**Symbolical, of course**"

**Ladd** - "true Israel is not literal Israel, but **the Church**" (Aka, Replacement Theology)

**EDITORIAL COMMENT:** Note that most of these examples are from well known sources that many believers consult to aid their interpretation of the Revelation. For example, the ESV Study Bible is one of the most popular study Bibles in the world. Here's the point -- The serious Bible student must be careful to make their own unbiased observations before looking at any commentaries (including the one you are viewing now!). The more time you spend in [observation](#) under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit, the more likely you will be to comment on the "expert" commentaries! How sad it is to see so many otherwise conservative writers jettison literal interpretation in prophetic passages with the result that their comments are not only inaccurate but at times even ludicrous! One good rule of thumb to apply in reading any Scripture is if the plain sense of the text makes good sense in context, then seek to make no other sense out of it, lest you end up with nonsense. To call Israel the church in a passage with absolutely no contextual support is nonsense and gives rise to the nefarious teaching of replacement theology. If you have been taught that Israel is now replaced by the church in God's plan, you owe it to yourself to watch the following videos which document the rotten fruit of replacement theology over the past 2000 years. It is a sad legacy for the Christian church!

- [Replacement Theology - What we should know - part 1](#) - Gabe Morris (recommended)
- [Replacement Theology - What we should know-part 2](#) - Gabe Morris (recommended)
- [Replacement Theology - The Evils of](#) - Dr David Reagan (recommended)
- [What is replacement theology / supersessionism?](#)

his father's name

The MT and NU texts have, *the name of him [the Lamb] and the name of the Father of him* Elsewhere, the TR text indicates that *both* the name of the Father and the Son will be written on the overcomer (Rev. 3:12<sup>+</sup>). The name indicates their adoption into the family of God (John 1:12) as well as their identity with the Father (Rev. 22:4<sup>+</sup>). Those who follow after unrighteousness deny their sonship by their perverse actions (Deu. 32:5-9). See commentary on [Revelation 3:12](#).

written on their foreheads

*Written* is [γεγραμμένον](#) [gegrammenon], a perfect tense passive participle, *having been written upon*. The name was written on their foreheads in the past and now they stand so named. The time of the writing was undoubtedly when the 144,000 of Israel were sealed (Rev. 7:3<sup>+</sup>). The name of God on their forehead is to be contrasted with those who received the mark of the Beast "on their right hand or on their foreheads" (Rev. 13:16<sup>+</sup>). See commentary on [Revelation 7:3](#).

## Revelation 14:2

a voice from heaven like the voice of many waters

A singular voice, not the seven thunders (Rev. 10:4<sup>+</sup>), although elsewhere a (singular) voice describes a great multitude speaking in unison "as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 19:1<sup>+</sup>). This voice could be that of such a multitude contributing to the scene of worship. Or it could be the same voice which called the two witnesses up to heaven after their resurrection (Rev. 11:12<sup>+</sup>). Christ's voice which John heard was also as "the sound, [φων](#) [phōnē], 'voice' here] of many waters" (Rev. 1:15<sup>+</sup> cf. Eze. 1:24; 43:2). Here it is probably the voice of the Father since the Lamb is said to be on Mount Zion. In some cases, the *voice from heaven* speaks down to earthly recipients (Rev. 11:12<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 18:4<sup>+</sup>) which would favor the view of the Lamb and the 144,000 being on the earthly Mount Zion. In



other cases, the phrase merely indicates its originating authority as heard by John during the vision (Rev. 10:4<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 14:13<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 21:3<sup>+</sup>).

like the voice of loud thunder

The sound John hears is *like* thunder, not actual thunder. Mighty angels have great voices which sound like that of a multitude (Dan. 10:6 cf. Rev. 19:6<sup>+</sup>) or the roar of a lion (Rev. 10:3<sup>+</sup>). A mighty voice, like that of the four living creatures (Rev. 6:1<sup>+</sup>). The participation of the voice from heaven indicates the significance of the scene.

I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps

[καὶ φωνὴ κούσῃ κιθάρῳ ὁ ἄγγελος](#) [kai phōnē êkousa kitharōdōn], and [the] sound I heard of harpists. The [MT](#) and [NU](#) texts read somewhat differently: [καὶ φωνὴ ἡ κούσῃ κιθάρῳ ὁ ἄγγελος](#) [kai hē phōnē hēn êkousa hōs kitharōdōn], and the voice which I heard as harpists harping. Does John hear a different sound from the preceding voice—the sound of harpists playing? Or is he merely describing further attributes of the voice—that the voice *sounded like* harpists playing? Adding to this complication is that [φωνή](#) [phōnē] can mean either “voice” or “sound.” Often, such subtle textual differences are of little significance, but here there is great significance to the variations. If John hears harpists playing their harps, then *they* which sing in the following verse could refer to the harpists (and not necessarily the 144,000 with the Lamb). On the other hand, if John is saying that the voice which he previously described sounds *like harpists*, then there may not actually be harpists. If the voice (singular) is in view rather than harpists (plural), then *they* (plural) which sing in the following verse probably refers to the 144,000. Another possibility is that the distinction between “voice” and “sound” in the English text (both translated from [φωνή](#) [phōnē] in the Greek) confuses the matter. Perhaps it is simply a *sound* which John hears. Thus, the MT and NU text could be translated:

*And I heard a sound from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the sound which I heard was like harpists playing on their harps.*

This would possibly describe a heavenly multitude which includes both singers and harps. If so, then *they* who sing in the next verse could refer to this multitude. See commentary on [Revelation 14:1](#).

harp

The four living creatures and twenty-four elders are said to have harps (Rev. 5:8<sup>+</sup>). So do those who have victory over the [Beast](#), his image, and his mark—who are evidently martyred prior to the bowl judgments (Rev. 15:2<sup>+</sup>). Harps were often used in worship in the [OT](#) (2S. 6:5; 1Chr. 25:1-7; Ps. 33:2; 43:4; 57:8-9; 98:5; 147:7; 149:3; 150:3-6). Here, the harps are probably played by a multitude in heaven.

## Revelation 14:3

They sang

[ᾄδουσιν](#) [adousin], present tense, *they are singing*. Isaiah indicated that the ransomed (*redeemed*, below) would return to Zion with singing (Isa. 35:10; 51:11). Those who have been redeemed from amidst great difficulty respond with songs of great praise. “For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of one stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion” (Jer. 31:11-12a). If the harpists are the singers in heaven, then they sing in commemoration of the unique experience of the 144,000 on earth. If the 144,000 are singing in heaven, the song they sing is probably motivated by their similar experience to those who had victory over the [Beast](#) through martyrdom (Rev. 15:3<sup>+</sup>). Or, if this is a millennial scene and they sing from the earth, they sing because they were protected for the entire duration of the Tribulation. God brought them “through the sea” as when Israel was pursued by Pharaoh:

So the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Thus Israel saw the great work which the Lord had done in Egypt; so the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and His servant Moses. Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: “I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!” (Ex. 14:30-15:1)

See commentary on [Revelation 14:1](#).

a new song

The twenty-four elders, probably representatives from among the Church, “sang a new song” (Rev. 5:9<sup>+</sup>). The subject of their song was redemption (Rev. 5:8-10<sup>+</sup>). Here we see one of the purposes of trials and tribulations—to produce in us a *new song* of praise to God (Ps. 40:3; 98:1; 144:9). These new songs often express themes of redemption and salvation. “The song is that of victory after conflict with the dragon, beast, and false prophet: never sung before, for such a conflict had never been fought before; therefore

new.”<sup>19</sup>

as it were

This phrase is missing from the [MT](#) text and about half of the manuscripts which contribute to the [NU](#) text.

before the throne

Which throne is this? The nearest previous mention of a throne related to God is His throne in heaven to which the child was caught up (Rev. 12:5<sup>+</sup> cf. Rev. 1:4<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 3:21<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 4:2-10<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 5:1, 6-7, 11-13<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 6:16<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 7:9-17<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 8:3<sup>+</sup>). Every other mention of a throne in conjunction with the living creatures and elders is the Father’s throne in heaven (Rev. 5:6,11<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 7:11<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 19:4<sup>+</sup>).

before the four living creatures

These are the four ζῶντες [zōōn], “living ones,” who attend the throne in heaven (Rev. 4:6<sup>+</sup>, 8-9<sup>+</sup>; 5:6<sup>+</sup>, 8<sup>+</sup>, 11<sup>+</sup>, 14<sup>+</sup>; 6:1<sup>+</sup>, 6<sup>+</sup>; 7:11<sup>+</sup>; 8:9<sup>+</sup>; 14:3<sup>+</sup>; 15:7<sup>+</sup>; 19:4<sup>+</sup>). See commentary on [Revelation 4:6](#).

and the elders

The twenty-four elders who sit on thrones before the Father’s throne. See commentary on [Revelation 4:4](#).

and no one could learn that song

Why could no one else learn the song?<sup>20</sup> We suggest that the song is highly personal to the experiences of these 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the time of the Tribulation. In the same way that the twenty-four elders could sing the song of redemption: “For you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth,” [emphasis added] only these men could sing about the keeping power of God that these had experienced. “Only those who had gone through that Tribulation could understand the song which celebrated it.”<sup>21</sup> Those who have been forgiven much or have endured intense danger and persecution are best able to appreciate the gifts of God which many others take for granted. Without such experiences, we tend more toward Simon the Pharisee than the woman who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears (Luke 7:36-48). Are you going through immense hardships? Remember that God is sovereign and every tear you shed will surely contribute toward His glory and your subsequent ministry to others (Rom. 8:28).

who were redeemed

[ο ἀγορασμένοι](#) [hoi agorasmēnoi], perfect passive participle, *the ones having been purchased*. Prior to Jeremiah’s presentation of the New Covenant to Israel (Jer. 31:31), he relates a time when God promises to save the remnant of Israel and gather them to Mount Zion. He refers to His gathered flock as the redeemed of Jacob, those who were ransomed (Jer. 31:6-13). Their return will be accompanied by rejoicing and singing. This is not to be spiritualized as applying to the general family of faith, it is *Jacob* who is the object of these promises. Isaiah also indicates the power of redemption as fuel for praise: “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:10 cf. Isa. 51:11).

## Revelation 14:4

not defiled with women

*Defiled* is [μολύνθησαν](#) [Emolynthēsan]: “Causing something to be dirty soil, smear, stain; metaphorically, as keeping the life spotless.”<sup>22</sup> The same word describes those in the church at Sardis who “had not defiled their garments” (Rev. 3:4<sup>+</sup>). Their faithful service of the Lamb was exemplary and motivated by their consuming obedience to His will, because they “follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” This does not indicate that they were sinless, for they are among those needing redemption. This verse does not negate the divine institution and blessing upon married sexual relations for “marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13:4). Perhaps these minister at a time when the institution of marriage has all but fallen by the wayside (not inconceivable if present trends continue) and relations with women are almost exclusively outside of the bounds of marriage in their time? There is a time characterized by fornication (Rev. 9:21<sup>+</sup>), perhaps pagan rites of old are flourishing once again, but on a global basis:

We have more than once, in the Epistles to the Assemblies, and on Revelation 9:20<sup>+</sup>, 21<sup>+</sup>, said that Fornication will be part of the great religious system of Anti-Christ in the coming time of trouble and temptation; as it formed an obligatory part of the great pagan systems of idolatry. Idolatry was not a mere sin into which people gradually sunk; but it was a Satanic device into which people rose in order to gratify the lusts of the flesh under the cloak of religion.<sup>23</sup>

The worship of Antichrist during the Tribulation will be unspeakably vile and perverse. As it did in the fertility cults of ancient times, sexual sin will apparently run rampant. Even in the current grossly immoral day, we can hardly imagine what the deviant sexual perversion of the Tribulation will be like. With all divine restraint removed (2Th. 2:6-7) and the unbelieving world judgmentally abandoned by God (cf. Rom. 1:24, 26, 28), sin will be released like a flood, inundating the world.<sup>24</sup>

But in the fearful days of abandonment “as in the days of Noah”—when lust and violence will again fill the whole earth (as we see beginning *now!*) how wonderful to behold this company of 144,000 who have chosen to be entirely separated unto the Lamb and unto His Father, and who *are* thus, despite the days!<sup>25</sup>

In their complete dedication to the service of the Lamb, they voluntarily chose to forgo relations with women in order to focus completely on their unique God-given task during the Tribulation.

they are virgins

These are *physical* virgins, for why else would it be said of this particular group of saints that they are virgins? *All the saints* are virgins in the spiritual sense of being set aside and dedicated to God. “I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ” (2Cor. 11:2). Jesus explained, “there are eunuchs who were born thus from *their* mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He who is able to accept *it*, let him accept *it*” (Mat. 19:12) “Not only is there virgin purity of life, but there is also virgin love—undivided heart affection for the Lamb.”<sup>26</sup> These are eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. By both choice and gifting, they were enabled to give their full focus to ministry at the time of the end.

Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. . . . But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. . . . But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. (1Cor. 7:5-7, 17, 32)

who follow the Lamb wherever He goes

This speaks of their complete obedience to do the will of the Lamb. In the same way that the Lamb followed the Father (John 4:34), so these followed the Lamb. Those who fully follow God are blessed. Joshua and Caleb were allowed into the Promised Land because they followed God fully (Num. 14:24). A scribe claimed he would follow Jesus “wherever You go,” but there is always a cost to such discipleship (Mat. 8:19-22; Luke 9:57-62). Those who would know and serve the Master must first of all be *followers*, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). “If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am there My servant will be also” (John 12:26). These are among the rest of the woman’s offspring who kept the commands of God. See commentary on [Revelation 12:17](#). If this scene is in heaven (see commentary on [Revelation 14:1](#)), then their obedience had ultimately cost them their lives. Unlike Peter, they had not denied their Lord, but had followed the Lamb even through the portal of death and into eternal life:

Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.” Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.” Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.” (John 13:36-38)

These were redeemed

[ὑποπόθησαν](#) [ēgorasthēsan]: “Literally *buy, purchase, do business in the marketplace*”<sup>27</sup> (1Cor. 6:20; Eph. 1:14). The purchase price was the Lamb’s blood (Acts 20:28; Rev. 1:5<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 5:9<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 12:11<sup>+</sup>). See commentary on [Revelation 1:5](#).

firstfruits

[πρωτό](#) [Aparchē]: “In Mosaic ceremonial law, a technical term for the first portion of grain and fruit harvests and flocks offered to God . . . figuratively, of persons as the first of a set or category first: as the first converts in an area (Rom. 16:5).”<sup>28</sup> The firstfruits was the first portion of a harvest which was dedicated to God. It demonstrated the priority which was given to God because the first of that which had been long awaited was bypassed by the harvester and given to God (Lev. 23:10-14). By honoring God with one’s firstfruits, the resulting blessing would provide a greater yield. The nation of Israel is said to be the firstfruits of God’s increase which would eventually include multitudes of redeemed Gentiles (Jer. 2:3). James indicated that the early church was “a kind of firstfruits of His creatures” (Jas. 1:18). In the time since, the harvest has spread to multitudes around the world. Here, after the Church Age and



the fullness of the Gentiles has come in (Rom. 11:25), these represent the firstfruits of the spiritual awakening of Israel in preparation for the [Millennial Kingdom](#) to follow (Eze. 37).<sup>29</sup>

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. 11:25-26)

They may also be considered firstfruits from the perspective of their unique preservation through the Tribulation enabling them to contribute to the initial Jewish population which enters the Millennial Kingdom in their natural bodies and subsequently populates the kingdom (Isa. 65:20, 23).

These sealed Jews [Rev. 7:4-8+] are those who come to faith in Jesus as Messiah during the Tribulation period. They are further described as "first fruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4+), indicating that they compose the first stage of a final harvest of Jewish souls to be gathered later at the Lord's coming in glory. . . . These comprise the "remnant" of Jews "who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17+b).<sup>30</sup>

See commentary on [Revelation 7:4](#), [Revelation 11:13](#), and [Revelation 20:4](#).

## Revelation 14:5

in their mouth

Scripture implicates the mouth as the organ which speaks forth the heart: "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mat. 12:34); "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from Me" (Mat. 15:8); "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man" (Mat. 15:18); "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). The tendency of the tongue toward evil, and the immense difficulty with which it is harnessed is a frequent theme of Scripture.<sup>31</sup> These are standing upon Mount Zion, God's holy hill:

LORD, who may abide in Your [tabernacle](#)? **Who may dwell in Your holy hill?** He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; **He who does not backbite with his tongue**, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend. (Ps. 15:1-3) [emphasis added]

May their obedient and dedicated state before the Lamb be ever before us as motivation in our walk during the present age!

was found no deceit

Their mouths are to be contrasted with the blasphemous mouth of the [Beast](#). See commentary on [Revelation 13:5](#). Unlike the masses upon the earth at the time of their ministry, they do not mouth the lie (2Th. 2:11). Their mouths are like that of wisdom and of the Lamb:

Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, and from the opening of my lips *will come* right things; for my mouth will speak truth; wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth *are* with righteousness; nothing crooked or perverse *is* in them. (Pr. 8:6-8)

And they made His grave with the wicked-But with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor *was any* deceit in His mouth. (Isa. 53:9)

They are firstfruits in at least two ways: they are the first among many redeemed Jews during the Tribulation and they are the first among a purified Israel which will result from the time of [Jacob's Trouble](#):

I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall do no unrighteousness and speak no lies, nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed *their* flocks and lie down, and no one shall make *them* afraid. (Zep. 3:12-13)

They represent the early stages of the glorious promise made to Israel as part of her New Covenant:

But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more. (Jer. 31:33-34)

without fault

[μωμοι](#) [Amōmoj], used “of the absence of defects in sacrificial animals,<sup>32</sup> spotless. Applied to these, it denotes being *blameless*.<sup>33</sup> “In the Septuagint, amōmos is used as an ethical term and consistently refers to the holy behavior of the faithful (Ps. 119:1; Pr. 11:5) and, on occasion, is even applied as a title of honor to God himself (Ps. 18:30). . . . Christ was amōmos because there was no spot or blemish in him. Thus he could ask: ‘Which of you convicts Me of sin?’ (John 8:46).”<sup>34</sup> As exemplary as their conduct has been during their ministry, this speaks of something far beyond what they themselves were able to exhibit.

before the throne of God

This phrase does not appear in the [NU](#) or [MT](#) texts, but only in the [TR](#) text. It may have been added in an attempt to equate the 144,000 with those who sing before the throne, the living creatures, and the elders (Rev. 14:3<sup>+</sup>). However, the singers may be the harpists. See commentary on [Revelation 14:1](#). The phrase “without fault before the throne of God” can be seen in terms of a heavenly scale of perfection. On one end is *fault*. On the other end is *God*. How can these two be found together? Only because the central mechanism of the scale is the *cross of Christ*, the “tree of life!” Having been redeemed and washed by His blood (Rev. 1:5<sup>+</sup>), they stand clothed in the perfection of the Son before the Father. All their sins are cast behind them (Isa. 38:17) and they are without spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5:27). They are holy and blameless in His sight (Col. 1:22). They are “faultless before the presence of God” (Jude 1:24).

## Revelation 14:6

another angel

The most recent individual angel we encountered was the seventh angel who sounded his trumpet in Revelation 11:15<sup>+</sup>. Another angel (*eagle*, [MT](#) and [NU](#) texts) flew with a similar message of warning for the [earth dwellers](#) concerning the woes attending the sounding of the final three trumpets (Rev. 8:13<sup>+</sup>).

in the midst of heaven

[Μεσουρανήματι](#) [Mesouranēmati]: “The highest point of the sun’s circuit in the sky zenith, midair, directly overhead.”<sup>35</sup>

having the everlasting gospel

The gospel is founded upon the New Covenant, which is an eternal covenant (Heb. 13:20) resulting in eternal life (Isa. 51:6; Tit. 1:1-3).

to preach

[Ε αγγελιον](#) [Euangelion]: “To announce good news.”<sup>36</sup> The angel *gospelled the gospel* to those below on the earth. Not only was his message one of good news, but the very fact of his delivery of the message was a manifestation of that good news. For this angel on his lonely mission above the ravaged earth below stands as a beacon to the grace and mercy of God. He has not left these on the earth during the final week of His wrath without recourse. In the midst of terrible devastation and turmoil, He has not left those who have not yet heard subject to the well-intentioned, but often ineffective, witness of men. He provides a supernatural messenger who will finally fulfill the gospel mandate to all the earth (see below). “There is no record that it is believed or heeded. It may not be. Noah was a ‘preacher of righteousness,’ in view of the coming flood; but no one believed him except his own family.”<sup>37</sup>

to those who dwell on the earth

The gospel is preached to the same individuals who are undergoing the time of testing (Rev. 3:10<sup>+</sup>). A key purpose of the time of testing is to turn those who will be turned to salvation and to manifest those who are hardened and will continue to reject it. See [earth dwellers](#).

to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people

Those over whom the [Beast](#) was granted authority (Rev. 13:7<sup>+</sup>) receive the gospel message from a supernatural source. Although it is the Church’s mandate to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8) and to make disciples of all nations (Mat. 28:19), it will not be her who ultimately fulfills the words of Jesus concerning the gospel reaching the entire world prior to the end:<sup>38</sup>

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this **gospel of the kingdom** will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (Mat. 24:11-14 cf. Mark 13:10) [emphasis added]

The gospel message of the angel, founded upon the redeeming power of Christ's work on the cross, will likely include a significant emphasis upon the coming kingdom about to be ushered in on earth. In this, it will have much in common with that which was preached by John the Baptist and the disciples before they realized the destiny of Jesus upon the cross (Mat. 3:1-2; 4:17, 23; 9:35; 10:7).<sup>39</sup>

The "gospel of the kingdom" as announced by John (Mat. 3:3), by the disciples who were specially commissioned (Mat. 10:7), by the seventy (Luke 10:9), and by the Lord (Mat. 4:17) proclaimed the good news that the promised kingdom was "at hand." The Lord indicates this same good news will be announced again. . . . Although the news at the first advent was restricted to Israel, prior to the second advent it will be announced not only to Israel but to the whole world. This preaching . . . marks the beginning of the final step in the realization of the theocratic kingdom program.<sup>40</sup>

See [The Arrival of God's Kingdom](#)

While the majority of the Church's teachers are loudly proclaiming that "theday of the Lord" will not come till the world's conversion comes, the Spirit and truth of God are declaring that day shall not come until the apostasy comes (2Th. 2:3). While the majority of the Church's teachers are maintaining that the world is not yet good enough for Christ, the Spirit is declaring in the Word that the world is not yet bad enough.<sup>41</sup>

See [Trouble Ahead](#).

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#### EDITORIAL ADDENDUM:

The writers of the New Testament adapted the term Gospel as God's glorious message of salvation for lost otherwise hopeless, helpless sinners. **Euaggelion** is found in several combination phrases, each describing the gospel like a multifaceted jewel in various terms from a different viewpoint (from the NASB, 1977):

1. the gospel of the kingdom (Mt 4:23+, Mt 9:35+, Mt 24:14+)
2. the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk 1:1+) because it centers in Christ
3. the gospel of God (Mk 1:14+, Ro 15:16+, 2Co 11:7+, 1Th 2:2+, 1Th 2:8,9<sup>+</sup>, 1Pe 4:17+) because it originates with God and was not invented by man
4. the gospel of the kingdom of God (Lu 16:16+)
5. the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24+, Ro 1:1+),
6. the gospel of His Son (Ro 1:9+)
7. the gospel of Christ (Ro 15:19+, 2Co 2:12+, 2Co 9:13+, 2Co 10:14+, Gal 1:7+, Phil 1:27+, 1Th 3:2+)
8. the gospel of the glory of Christ (2Co 4:4+)
9. the gospel of your salvation (Eph 1:14+)
10. the gospel of peace (Eph 6:15+)
11. the gospel of our Lord Jesus (2Th 1:8+)
12. the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1Ti 1:11+)
13. In Ro 16:25, 26+ Paul called it "**my Gospel**" indicating that the special emphasis he gave the gospel in his ministry.
14. **An eternal gospel** - Rev 14:6<sup>+</sup> (Some writers such as C I Scofield interpret this as a "different gospel" than the other "gospels" mentioned above but I think such a distinction is incorrect and is poorly substantiated).

For a rewarding study, study the preceding references in context making notation of the truth you observe about the gospel. If you would like a special blessing, take an afternoon to go through all 76 uses of **euaggelion** in context making a list of what you learn about the gospel. The Spirit of God will enlighten your heart and encourage your spirit in a very special way...and you'll want to share the "good news" with someone because of your "discoveries"!

**Euaggelion** - Matt. 4:23; Matt. 9:35; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 26:13; Mk. 1:1; Mk. 1:14; Mk. 1:15; Mk. 8:35; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 13:10; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 16:15; Acts 15:7; Acts 20:24; Rom. 1:1; Rom. 1:9; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 10:16; Rom. 11:28; Rom. 15:16; Rom. 15:19; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:14; 1 Co. 9:18; 1 Co. 9:23; 1 Co. 15:1; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 8:18; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 10:14; 2 Co. 11:4; 2 Co. 11:7; Gal. 1:6; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 1:11; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 2:5; Gal. 2:7; Gal. 2:14; Eph. 1:13; Eph. 3:6; Eph. 6:15; Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:5; Phil. 1:7; Phil. 1:12; Phil. 1:16; Phil. 1:27; Phil. 2:22; Phil. 4:3; Phil. 4:15; Col. 1:5; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:2; 1 Thess. 2:4; 1 Thess. 2:8; 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Thess. 3:2; 2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:8; Phlm. 1:13; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 14:6

Fear God and give glory to Him

It seems unlikely that the words that John heard the angel say constitute the entire gospel message delivered to the [earth dwellers](#). Rather, it summarizes what their response should be. The specifics of the gospel message itself are not recorded. The warning of the angel occurs before the institution of the mark of the [Beast](#). Those who hear the angel and respond in faith are those who are found in the opening verses of the next chapter doing this very thing!

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true *are* Your ways, O King of the saints! **Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?** For *You alone are* holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested." (Rev. 15:3-4+) [emphasis added]

These who *hear and fear* have victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name.

the hour of His judgment has come

*Has come* is [λθεν](#) [ēlthen], prophetic aorist. The time of His judgment is certain and [imminent](#), as if it is already underway. Now is the time of decision.

The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that you should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth. (Rev. 11:18+)

worship Him who made heaven and earth

The Creator-creature distinction is the basis for all worship (Ne. 9:6; Acts 14:14). Only the Creator is worthy of worship. Worship of all else is idolatry. See commentary on [Revelation 4:11](#). The angel declares an important truth which great portions of the Church now compromise. Although readily admitting God as Creator, their Creator God is not that of the Scriptures, but a god of their own creation. They endorse the belief that both the universe and the earth are billions of years old and that God used, and continues to use, blind processes (accidental mutation and natural selection) to bring about His creative work.<sup>42</sup> Instead of upholding the clear Scriptural teaching of a six-day creation (Ex. 20:11), they accommodate flawed science and relegate the need for a Creator God into a smaller and smaller sphere, even embracing unscriptural ideas such as the existence of soulless *pre-Humans* before Adam.<sup>43</sup> These naively contribute to the ultimate state of godlessness of the [earth dwellers](#) at the end. The blindness of the [earth dwellers](#) to the Creator in the book of Revelation can already be seen in our own times. Great effort and expenditure is underway to find life on Mars and to search the far reaches of space for signs of intelligence. All the while, here on earth, advances such as those in microbiology, bioengineering, and genetics shout "INTELLIGENCE!" Lacking a belief in a Creator, the creature naturally seeks to elevate something else in His place. Such is the pattern of idolatry which will manifest itself in the last times as worship to the [image of the Beast](#) when he is brought to life (Rev. 13:14-15+).

## Revelation 14:8

Babylon

Here is the first mention of Babylon found in this book. Some suggest that "Babylon" should not be understood in a literal sense, but as denoting a spiritual location describing the centers of commercial success and sin attending each age of history (Rev. 17:5+). Some see "Babylon" as a code word for the city of *Rome*. Some believe "Babylon" means *Jerusalem*. Others are unsure what it means, or that its identification is important. It is our view that "Babylon" describes the literal city of history on the banks of the Euphrates River, originating with the kingdom of Babel established by Nimrod (Gen. 10:8-10). The city has had great influence throughout history, both in political and religious realms, and is to be rebuilt in the time of the end and to ultimately suffer God's wrath. See [The Identity of Babylon](#). See [#5 - Five Fallen Kings](#).

is fallen, is fallen

[πεσεν πεσεν](#) [Epesen epesen], prophetic aorist verbs. The judgment of Babylon has not yet occurred, but it is so certain that it is stated as a past event (Rev. 16:19+; 18:2-3+). When her destruction comes, it will be sudden (Jer. 51:8), "in one hour" (Rev. 18:10+), "in one hour she is made desolate" (Rev. 18:18+), "her plagues will come in one day" (Rev. 18:8+). Isaiah made the same declaration when he foresaw Babylon's ultimate destruction at God's threshing floor at the end of the age (Isa. 21:9-10). "The full thrust of which awaits the coming 'time of Jacob's trouble' (Jer. 30:5-7), the Great Tribulation, when Babylon, . . . will be destroyed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah at His second advent."<sup>44</sup> This is a preview and declaration of the final destruction of Babylon to follow (Rev. 18:2+). See [The Destruction of Babylon](#).

that great city

Babylon of the time of the end will be a great city, also called the [Harlot](#). “And the woman which you saw is **that great city** which reigns over the kings of the earth” [emphasis added] (Rev. 17:18<sup>+</sup> cf. Rev. 18:10, 18, 16, 18, 19, 21<sup>+</sup>). See [The Great Harlot](#). The phrase “great city” emphasizes the arrogance of humanism in its pride of accomplishment apart from God. Nebuchadnezzar’s declaration—followed by his judgment of seven years living as a beast—is a typological preview of this final week.

The king spoke, saying, “Is not this **great Babylon**, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mightypower and for the honor of my majesty?” While the word *was still* in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles’ *feathers* and his nails like birds’ *claws*. (Dan. 4:30-33) [emphasis added]

At the height of his arrogant independence, Nebuchadnezzar was made like unto a beast. So too, at the time of the end, the [Beast](#), the final representative of the rule of man apart from God, rises to the apex of arrogance and blasphemy (see commentary on [Revelation 13:5](#)). When he makes a 7-year covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27), God’s response is to usher in the Tribulation bringing seven years of intense judgment upon the realm of those who follow the Beast. Jerusalem is also called a “great city” (Rev. 11:8<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 16:19<sup>+</sup>)<sup>45</sup> as is the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10<sup>+</sup>).

she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication

There is a close relationship between the nations and the intoxicating drink which Babylon offers: “I will show you the judgment of the great harlot, who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication” (Rev. 17:1b-2<sup>+</sup>); “He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication” (Rev. 19:2<sup>+</sup>); “For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury” (Rev. 18:3<sup>+</sup>). It is called “the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Although it primarily intoxicates the nations to participate in her *fornication* (Rev. 17:4<sup>+</sup>), it also brings them under God’s *wrath* for their participation. See commentary on [Revelation 16:19](#). Although fornication emphasizes her spiritual idolatry, it also includes commercial aspects as is recorded for the city of Tyre: “And it shall be, at the end of seventy years, that the Lord will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire, and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth” (Isa. 23:17). See [Her Harlotry](#). In the same way that God gives up the godless who refuse to acknowledge Him as Creator (Rom. 1:18-24), so too in His sovereign permission, He uses Babylon to promote the drunkenness of the nations which already rage against Him (Ps. 2:1): “Babylon *was* a golden cup in the LORD’S hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged” (Jer. 51:7). Because Babylon has made all nations drink her wine, God will make *her* drink *His* wine (see commentary on [Revelation 14:10](#)).

The mass hysteria, or drunkenness which permitted mobs to give themselves to such men as Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini, will head up in that mass-drunkenness which will bow to the image of the Antichrist and accept a brand upon the forehead or hand as a sign of subservience to him. To all such, God will give another wine to drink.<sup>46</sup>

## Revelation 14:9

then a third angel followed

The first angel brought the *carrot* (Rev. 14:6<sup>+</sup>), now the third brings the *stick*! Those who would not respond to God’s gracious offer of salvation are now warned of the eternal significance of worshiping the [Beast](#) and taking his mark. Unfortunately, many at the time of the end will follow in the well-worn pattern of those before them who continued to ignore God’s gracious warning:

However I have sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, “Oh, do not do this abominable thing that I hate!” But they did not listen or incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense to other gods. So My fury and My anger were poured out and kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted *and* desolate, as it is this day. (Jer. 44:4-6)

If anyone worships the beast

See commentary on [Revelation 13:4](#).

and his image



See commentary on [Revelation 13:14](#) and [Revelation 13:15](#).

and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand

See commentary on [Revelation 13:16](#).

## Revelation 14:10

he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God

*He himself*, emphasis is placed upon the individual who worships the beast. He will be held individually responsible for his actions which will result in receiving God's wrath and eternal damnation (see below). "The devotees of the Beast are here warned and threatened with punishments of so terrible a character that the very mention of them is enough to make one's flesh creep."<sup>47</sup> The reception of God's judgment is often described as *drinking* from His cup (Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17, 22-23; Jer. 25:15-17, 28; Hab. 2:16; Rev. 16:19<sup>+</sup>).

But God *is* the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another. For in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed, and He pours it out; surely its dregs shall the wicked of the earth drain *and* drink down. (Ps. 75:7-8)

Throughout history God has warned kings that unless they "kiss the Son," they would perish "when His wrath is kindled but a little" (Ps. 2:12). The ultimate fulfillment of this warning will be during the [Campaign of Armageddon](#). Having drunk from the cup, the recipient is the object of God's wrath (Job 21:20) and staggers with drunkenness, becoming mad so as to participate in the ultimate folly of his own destruction (Jer. 25:16, 27; Zec. 12:2-4). "You have made us drink the wine of confusion" (Ps. 60:3).

"In their excitement I will prepare their feasts; I will make them drunk, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake," says the LORD. "I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with male goats." (Jer. 51:39-40)

"And I will make drunk her princes and wise men, her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men. And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake," says the King, Whose name *is* the LORD of hosts. (Jer. 51:57)

This passage explains why, in the [sequence of seals, trumpets, and bowls](#), it is the *bowls* which are last. Each of the final seven bowls comprises a portion of the final *cup* of God's wrath. In "the seven last plagues . . . the wrath of God is complete" (Rev. 15:1<sup>+</sup>). They are "the bowls of the wrath of God" which are poured out on the earth (Rev. 16:1<sup>+</sup>). The wrath is manifest in Christ's treading of "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15<sup>+</sup> cf. Isa. 63:1-6). See commentary on [Revelation 11:18](#).

wrath . . . indignation

God's wrath is frequently mentioned in association with the judgments poured out during the Tribulation (Rev. 6:16<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 11:18<sup>+</sup>). Here, it denotes the wrath which is specifically associated with the worship of the [Beast](#), which probably occurs after the abomination of desolation at the midpoint of the Tribulation. See [Events of the 70th Week of Daniel](#)! Wrath is θυμο [thymou], indignation is οργη [orgēs]:

Thymos refers to turbulent commotion, the boiling agitation of the feelings . . . that will either subside and disappear or else settle down into orgē, which is more of an abiding and settled habit of mind ("an enduring anger") that is focused on revenge. . . . In his discussion of the two words, Origin arrived at the same conclusion: "Thymos differs from orgē in that thymos is anger [orgē] rising in vapor and burning up, while orgē is a yearning for revenge." Jerome said: "Thymos is incipient anger and displeasure fermenting in the mind; orgē however, when thymos has subsided, is that which longs for revenge and desires to injure the one thought to have caused harm."<sup>48</sup>

poured out full strength

[Κεκερασμένου κρότου](#) [Kekerasmēnou akrotou], *having been poured unmixed [undiluted]*, to "cause to be fully experienced."<sup>49</sup> This is a frightful phrase, for it indicates those who worship the Beast will undergo the *full force* of God's wrath. The contents of the cup are not diluted, but of full intensity! "whereas wine was so commonly mixed with water that to *mix* wine is used in Greek for to *pour out* wine; this wine of God's wrath is undiluted; there is no drop of water to cool its heat. Naught of grace or hope is blended with it."<sup>50</sup> They will experience divine wrath without restraint: eternal torment by the Power of powers, the author of a myriad of supernovas.

He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone

Those who worship the Beast will be tormented with *fire and brimstone* indicating their ultimate destination. They will be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever"

(Rev. 20:10<sup>+</sup>). Those who worship the Beast and take his mark are *irredeemable*. Even though they have not yet died, their fate in the Lake of Fire is sealed. See [Beast Worshipers are Unique](#). They will “have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8<sup>+</sup>). As we saw in the previous chapter, those who worship the Beast “have not been written in the [Book of Life](#)” (see commentary on [Revelation 13:8](#)), thus they are destined for the Lake of Fire. “Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15<sup>+</sup>). Those who refuse to worship the Beast during this time of intense persecution and pressure will do so only because they have given their worship to Jesus Christ. The cost of doing so will often be their physical life. The benefit will be their eternal life and participation in the first resurrection. “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such, the second death has no power” (Rev. 20:6a<sup>+</sup>). See commentary on [Revelation 3:11](#). The fire and brimstone with which they are tormented is no less real than that which rains down upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24-25) and Gog and his troops (Eze. 38:22) and which those taken in such judgments *continue to suffer forever* (Jude 1:7).

in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb

Isaiah speaks of a time when all flesh shall come to worship before the LORD, but also go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who transgressed against God. Somehow, these who are “cast into outer darkness” (Mat. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30) are visible to the redeemed throughout eternity (Isa. 66:24).<sup>51</sup> The damned will also see the blessed who enter the kingdom, whereas they themselves are thrust out (Luke 13:28). Perhaps awareness of the alternative which the damned missed will contribute to their torment, similar to the way in which the rich man could see Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:23). Although the holy angels and the Lamb will be present to see the torment of the damned, the damned will not benefit from an awareness of the presence of God (2Th. 1:8-9) for this is the ultimate blessing reserved for the redeemed. “The [tabernacle](#) of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people” (Rev. 21:3<sup>+</sup>). See [The Abiding Presence of God, New Jerusalem](#).

## Revelation 14:11

the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever

This phrase speaks of eternal judgment, like that which will ultimately befall the land of Edom and the city of Babylon (Isa. 34:10; Rev. 19:3<sup>+</sup>). The “goats,” representing those among the [Beast](#) worshipers who remain alive upon the earth at the return of Jesus to take up the throne of David (Mat. 25:31), will be sent “into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Mat. 24:41b cf. Rev. 20:10<sup>+</sup>). The fire is *everlasting* (Isa. 66:24; Dan. 12:2; Mat. 3:12; Mat. 25:41; Mark 9:44-46; 2Th. 1:9; 2Pe. 2:17; Jude 1:13), but does not annihilate those who suffer its torment, for the Beast and the False Prophet are the first to experience its effects and have endured under it for one thousand years when they are joined by others (Rev. 19:20<sup>+</sup> cf. Rev. 20:10<sup>+</sup>, 15<sup>+</sup>). The answer to the question of how the damned could be due eternal torment might be found, in part, by understanding their hardened condition—which is without repentance:

In the next world the wicked, with all restraint removed, will go headlong into sin, blaspheming and cursing God, growing worse and worse as they sink deeper and deeper into the bottomless pit. Endless punishment is the penalty for ENDLESS sinning.<sup>52</sup>

I wish to present a paragraph or two from one of my teachers, Dr. R. A. Torrey. I sat in class as a boy of eighteen and heard Dr. Torrey lecture on the future destiny of unbelievers. . . . He said, “In conclusion, two things are certain. First, the more closely men walk with God and the more devoted they become to His service, the more likely they are to believe this doctrine. Many men tell us they love their fellow men too much to believe this doctrine; but the men who show their love in more practical ways than sentimental protestations about it, the men who show their love for their fellow men as Jesus Christ showed His, by laying down their lives for them, *they* believe it, even as Jesus Christ Himself believed it.

Second, men who accept a loose doctrine regarding the ultimate penalty of Sin (Restorationism or Universalism or Annihilationism) lose their power for God. They may be very clever at argument and zealous in proselytizing, but they are poor at soul-saving. They are seldom found beseeching men to be reconciled to God. They are more likely to be found trying to upset the faith of those already won by the efforts of others, then winning men who have no faith at all. If you really believe the doctrine of endless, conscious torment of the impenitent, and the doctrine really gets hold of you, you will work as you never worked before for the salvation of the lost. If you in any wise abate this doctrine, it will abate your zeal.<sup>53</sup>

have no rest day and night, who worship the beast

Neither do the four living creatures in the presence of God rest day or night, but they are blessed to render ceaseless worship to God (Rev. 4:8<sup>+</sup>). Those who gave their worship to the Beast have no rest. Instead of offering glorious worship to God, they suffer intense torment without relief. Their torment is eternal (Mat. 25:41; Mark 9:43-44; Jude 1:7; Rev. 20:10<sup>+</sup>). The beast worshipers may have rest during the brief time of the end, but will have no rest thereafter. The saints will experience extreme duress during the brief time of the end, but thereafter will “rest from their labors” (Rev. 14:13<sup>+</sup>).

who worship the beast

See commentary on [Revelation 13:4](#).

and his image

See commentary on [Revelation 13:14](#) and [Revelation 13:15](#).

and whoever receives the mark of his name

See commentary on [Revelation 13:16](#).

## Revelation 14:12

Here is the patience of the saints

The patience of the saints is found in their acceptance of God's sovereign control over their lives (Rev. 13:10<sup>+</sup>) and in the knowledge that God will avenge their blood at the hands of those who rejected Him (as here). As terrible as it might be, the awful experience of the saints at the hands of the [Beast](#) (see [#20 - Saints](#)) cannot compare with the doom which meets the Beastworshippers. See commentary on [Revelation 13:10](#).

who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus

Their faith is evident by their works—keeping God's commandments (Luke 6:46; Jas. 2:18). During this time, the woman who flees to the wilderness has offspring which "keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17<sup>+</sup>). Here, the phrase denotes those who are not just of Israel (her offspring), but also Gentile believers: all the saints of the end.

## Revelation 14:13

I heard a voice from heaven saying to me

This is probably the same voice which told John to "seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered" (Rev. 10:4<sup>+</sup>), and called the two witnesses up to heaven (Rev. 11:12<sup>+</sup>). The voice is undoubtedly that of God, either the Father or the Lamb, for it says, "Come out of her [Babylon] **my people**, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues" [emphasis added] (Rev. 18:4<sup>+</sup>). There is great comfort in the statement which follows because it comes from the highest authority.

Write

It was Jesus who first told John to "write in a book" (Rev. 11:1<sup>+</sup> cf. Rev. 1:19<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18<sup>+</sup>, Rev. 3:1, 7, 14<sup>+</sup>). Thus, it may be the Lamb which is speaking here.

blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord

*Who die* is [πoθv σkovτες](#) [apothnēskontes], *those presently dying*. Although there are many blessings for believers mentioned in this book (Rev. 1:3<sup>+</sup>; 16:15<sup>+</sup>; 19:9<sup>+</sup>; 22:7<sup>+</sup>, 14<sup>+</sup>), these receive a special blessing in recognition of the severe conditions they find themselves in. This is a unique time of incomparable Christian persecution coming upon the earth, "Those who 'die in the Lord *henceforth*,' do so as martyrs."<sup>54</sup> The victory of the saints will not be in influencing the social institutions of the globe toward service of God—as lofty a goal as that might be. It will be found in their cleaving to the Lamb through thick and thin, in living and dying. No more so than at the end of present history when the world issues one last blasphemous attempt to throw off the Father and His Christ. This recognition by God underscores the horrors of the reign of the [Beast](#) which includes unprecedented slaughter of Christians by the Beast (Rev. 13:7<sup>+</sup>), his image (Rev. 13:15<sup>+</sup>), and the [Harlot](#) (Rev. 17:6<sup>+</sup>). "Hence the special Benediction here pronounced upon all such as die rather than yield to the temptations and threats of the Beast and the False Prophet. 'Worship, or be slain' is their cry. 'Be slain, and be blessed' is God's encouraging reply to them."<sup>55</sup> Those who die during this time receive special mention at the commencement of the Millennial Kingdom, having undergone martyrdom (Rev. 20:4<sup>+</sup>). "Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of His saints" (Ps. 116:15). See [#20 - Saints](#).

"Yes," says the Spirit

The third Person of the Trinity joins in bestowing this special blessing upon the saints, most of whom will give their ultimate testimony in their martyrdom (Rev. 12:11<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 15:2<sup>+</sup>). Participation of the Holy Spirit in this blessing is of great significance, for it indicates His intimate involvement in the lives of the saints during the trials of the end. For it is only by the Spirit that those who are martyred are able to hold their testimony to the end (Rev. 12:11<sup>+</sup>; Rev. 20:4<sup>+</sup>).

that they may rest

Immediately upon death, all those of the faith obtain *rest* (Isa. 57:1; Dan. 12:13; Luke 23:43). This book stands in complete agreement with the teaching of Paul: “We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (2Cor. 5:8); “For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is far better*” (Php. 1:23). The martyrs attending the opening of the fifth seal are found under the altar in heaven (Rev. 6:9+). The ones coming out of the Great Tribulation are immediately before the throne of God (Rev. 7:14+). Those who overcome the Beast and his image (by death) are seen straightway in heaven (Rev. 15:1-3+). Scripture denies the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory:

The righteous who die “in the Lord” do not suffer torment or punishment after death, as in purgatory. There is no such place as purgatory known to Scripture, and even the Apocrypha contains firm testimony against such a view in a remarkable statement at Wisdom 3:1, “But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.”<sup>56</sup>

Those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb are *completely and permanently washed!* To infer that anyone, having trusted in Christ, must subsequently continue to pay for sin is completely unscriptural. It is doubly blasphemous:

1. It denies the sufficiency of Christ’s one-time sacrifice for sin—thereby demeaning His perfect work.
2. It infers that men could contribute something of merit on their own behalf *beyond that which Christ already obtained*

The doctrine of purgatory is both a denial of Christ’s *perfect* work and a vain attempt to add man’s *imperfect* work. At its heart, it is motivated by greed and the desire to control the biblically ignorant:

The collection of [Roman Catholic] relics in 1509 included 5,005 fragments, the viewing of which reduced one’s time in purgatory by 1,443 years. By 1518 it is estimated that there were 17,443 pieces on display in twelve aisles. Included among them were such remarkable relics as a veil sprinkled with the blood of Christ, a twig of Moses’ burning bush, and a piece of bread from the Last Supper. By 1520 the collection had grown—despite Luther’s opposition—to 19,013 holy pieces. Those who viewed the relics on All Saint’s Day and made the required contribution would receive from the pope an indulgence that would reduce time spent in purgatory—either by themselves or others—by up to 1,902,202 years and 270 days.<sup>57</sup>

their works follow them

God is intimately familiar with their works (Rev. 2:2+).

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. (2Ti. 4:7-8)

For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. (Heb. 6:10)

## Revelation 14:14

a white cloud

Clouds are often associated with God, and particularly the Son of Man (Mat. 24:30; Luke 21:27; Rev. 1:7+). See commentary on [Revelation 1:7](#).

*One* like the Son of Man

A clear indication that none other than Jesus is sitting on the cloud (Dan. 7:13; Mat. 26:64). The reason that Son of Man oversees the harvest of wheat is that it is He who sowed the good seed (Mat. 13:37).

having on His head a golden crown

*Crown* is [στέφανον](#) [stephanon]. See [Crowns](#).

## Revelation 14:15

another angel came out of the temple

When angels come out of the temple on a mission, this is an indication of their divine mandate. These seven angels with the seven last plagues come out of the heavenly temple (Rev. 15:6+). It is a voice from the temple which gives them final authority to “pour out the

bowls of the wrath of God on the earth” (Rev. 16:1<sup>±</sup>). The harvest of both the faithful and the ungodly are initiated by the Father, from within the temple.

for the time has come

The longsuffering and grace of God and His desire that all should have opportunity to repent now finally draws to a close for He knows that no more will come (2Pe. 3:9). His mercy withholds judgment, but his justice and righteousness make it unavoidable (Rev. 16:7<sup>±</sup>). “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Mark 13:32). This is the end of the age, the long period when both good and evil were allowed to grow side-by-side. Now there will be a separation in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom to follow:

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Mat. 13:47-50)

All who remain alive on the face of the planet must now identify with one or the other of the two criminals crucified with Christ. All the world stands guilty. Those in the first harvest, like the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:42), turn in desperation to Christ for cleansing of their sins. They are the wheat. Those in the second harvest (the vintage of wrath) are like the thief who continues to revile Christ (Luke 23:39). They are the tares which are gathered for destruction.

for the harvest of the earth is ripe

The harvest is used throughout the Scriptures to symbolize the final gathering and separation of that which is desirable and productive (wheat) from that which is useless and for the fire (tares, chaff). The judgment attending the harvest is often represented by the threshing floor where the grain is separated from the outer husk (2S. 24:16; 1Chr. 21:15; Jer. 51:33; Dan. 2:35; Mic. 4:12).<sup>58</sup>

For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor *When it is* time to thresh her; yet a little while and the time of her harvest will come.” (Jer. 51:33)

The long age so central to Jesus’ teaching concerning the “kingdom of heaven” (Mat. 13:24, 31, 33, 44-45, 47, 52) has now drawn to a close. (See [The Arrival of God’s Kingdom](#)) It is now the time of the harvest. “But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come” (Mark 4:29). At the harvest at the end of the age, there are both wheat and tares. The harvest includes a reaping of both and their separation. The wheat is gathered and preserved, the tares are gathered and destroyed.

But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.”’ (Mat. 13:26-30)

It seems best to understand the two harvests depicted here as two aspects of the final harvest at the end of the age: a harvest of redemption and a harvest of wrath.<sup>59</sup> Those who view both as harvests of judgment have difficulty explaining why there should be two such harvests of wrath and what, if anything, can be said to differ between them? When the two harvests are compared, we see that Jesus is specifically associated with the first harvest—for it was He who sowed the good grain. Unlike the second harvest, there is no hint of wrath associated with the first harvest: no angel from the altar, no power over fire, no grapes, no trampling, no blood. The only possible negative aspect concerning the first harvest is that it is said to be *ripe*, [ἔξηρανθῆναι](#) [exēranthē] from [ζῆραινω](#) [zērainō], which means *to dry up or wither* and is used to describe plants without good roots (Mark 4:6).<sup>60</sup> However, since the first harvest involves not grapes, but by implication wheat, this could just be a description of what naturally occurs when wheat reaches its maturity. All things considered, it seems best to understand these as two *different* harvests, one to gather faithful wheat and the other to destroy wild grapes. We are in agreement with Alford:

What is the distinction between the two ingatherings? And why do we read of the casting into the wine-press of God’s wrath in the second case, and of no corresponding feature in the other? Again, why is the agency so different—the Son of man on the white cloud with a golden crown in the one case, the mere angel in the other? Besides, the two ingatherings seem quite distinct. The former is over before the other begins. On the whole then, though I would not pronounce decidedly, I must incline to think that the harvest is the ingathering of the saints, God’s harvest, reaped from the earth: described here thus generally, before the vintage of wrath which follows.<sup>61</sup>

## Revelation 14:16



He who sat on the cloud

The Son of Man is the one who reaps the first harvest of the saved. Although He is intimately involved with the first harvest, Scripture reveals that angels carry out the details of both harvests.

the earth was reaped

The reaping which takes place is worldwide. "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Mat. 24:31). One view connects this event with the resurrection of the saved dead prior to the Millennial Kingdom (cf. Rev. 20:4+).

This, then, is our Lord's return at the end of the tribulation to harvest the bodies of the saints who die during the tribulation (Rev. 14:13+) so as to reunite them with their souls, which, up to this point, will have been under the altar before God (Rev. 6:9+). This reaping is the gathering of the harvest into Christ's barn (Mat. 13:30). . . . The living redeemed will still be on earth, but the bodies of all deceased saints will have been resurrected and taken to Heaven. This addresses the state of all the saved during the tribulation.<sup>62</sup>

The saints which remain alive at the end of the Tribulation participate in the Sheep and Goat Judgment and enter the [Millennial Kingdom](#) in their natural bodies (Mat. 25:31-34).

## Revelation 14:17

another angel came out of the temple in heaven

The authority to issue the command to reap the vintage of wrath is equally dependent upon the authority of God. See commentary on [Revelation 14:15](#). Jesus taught that the angels would be involved in the final harvest:

The enemy who sowed them [the tares] is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! (Mat. 13:39-43)

The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. . . . So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just. (Mat. 13:41-42, 49).

This second angel initiates the gathering of the tares, the removal of the ungodly who are "taken":

"Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two *men* in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two *women* will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two *men* will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." (Luke 17:30-37 cf. Mat. 24:28)

As in the days of Noah, those whom are *taken* are taken in judgment (Mat. 24:38-39; Luke 21:26-27). The "eagles will be gathered together" to feast on the carrion of the dead (Job 39:30; Rev. 19:17-18+).<sup>63</sup>

## Revelation 14:18

another angel came out from the altar

The mention of the altar connects the upcoming vintage of wrath with the cry of the souls under the altar at the opening of the fifth seal. "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' " (Rev. 6:10+). God had told them that they should rest until the remaining number of their fellow servants would be killed as they were. That time has now come.

who had power over fire

This may be the same angel who offered the prayers of the saints with incense "upon the golden altar which was before the throne" (Rev. 8:3+). There, after offering the prayers, he filled his censer with fire from the altar and threw it to the earth prefiguring the series

of trumpet judgments (Rev. 8:4-6±). Similarly, it was “a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God” which resulted in the release of the four angels bound at the Euphrates bringing the plague of demonic horsemen. This final vintage of wrath is also motivated by mountains of prayer by the saints of all times and ages for righteous judgment and vindication by God. This is the baptism of fire spoken of by John the Baptist. In his warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees who were coming to his baptism, he indicated that the One following after him would initiate two baptisms. Every person living would receive one or the other.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; **but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.** (Mat. 3:11-12) [emphasis added]

John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; **but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire**” (Luke 3:16-17) [emphasis added]

The term *and with fire* is better translated “or with fire.” The immediate context certainly indicates that to be baptized with fire is the result of judgment (notice the reference to purging and burning in the next verse). Other than the visible tongues (billows) of fire which appeared over the disciples’ heads at Pentecost, references to fire burning up unprofitable chaff refer to judgment rather than cleansing. The threshing fan (Mat. 3:12) refers to a wooden shovel used for tossing grain into the wind in order to blow away the lighter chaff, leaving the good grain to settle in a pile. The chaff would then be swept up and burned, the unquenchable fire refers to the eternal punishment of hell or the lake of fire.<sup>64</sup>

gather the clusters of the vine of the earth

Joel foresaw the vintage of wrath associated with the [Day of the Lord](#):

Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow-For their wickedness *is* great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision. (Joel 3:12-14)

The reason that these vines will be trodden is that they are wild grapes. Like His chosen nation Israel, those on the earth had not born the fruit God intended.

For their vine *is* of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes *are* grapes of gall, their clusters *are* bitter. Their wine *is* the poison of serpents, and the cruel venom of cobras. (Deu. 32:32-33)

Now let me sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He dug it up and cleared out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, and also made a winepress in it; so He expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected *it* to bring forth *good* grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? **And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.** (Isa. 5:1-5) [emphasis added]

for her grapes are fully ripe

God allows evil to have its full fruit for several reasons. First, He provides ample opportunity for the godless to repent and seek forgiveness and restoration. Secondly, He allows the depth of sin to have its full development in those who have forever turned their back on redemption. “But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete” (Gen. 15:16). Although His patience and mercy are abundant, He must eventually judge in order to vindicate His character: “The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that men will say, ‘Surely *there is* a reward for the righteous; surely He is God who judges in the earth’ ” (Ps. 58:10-11).

## Revelation 14:19

threw it *into* the great winepress of the wrath of God

This is not a fruitful winepress, for it is the winepress of *the wrath of God*. This is the time of the treading of the grapes of wrath, the final conflagration when God wipes out all His enemies at the second advent of Christ (Isa. 34:2-8; 63:1-6; Joel 3:12-14; Zep. 3:8;

Rev. 19:15+). See [Grapes of Wrath](#).

## Revelation 14:20

outside the city

*The city* is Jerusalem. Like unclean and accursed things, these will be disposed of outside the city.

For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. (Heb. 13:11-13)

The valley of Jehoshaphat was outside Jerusalem and it is there that the fullest vengeance of God shall be poured out, "the press is full" (Joel 3:13).<sup>65</sup>

The judgment of the nations in Joel 3:12-14 (which supplies the dual figures of harvest and vintage) takes place in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which traditions links with the Kidron valley lying between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. Zechariah 14:1-4 places the final battle on the outskirts of Jerusalem.<sup>66</sup>

See [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

and blood came out

The bloodshed associated with the judgment which falls at the [Campaign of Armageddon](#) at the close of the Tribulation period is unprecedented:

The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made overflowing with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. The wild oxen shall come down with them, and the young bulls with the mighty bulls; their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust saturated with fatness. For *it is* the day of the LORD'S vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion. (Isa. 34:6-8)

It results in the staining of Jesus garments (Isa. 63:1-6; Rev. 19:13+). See [Blood Stained Garments](#).

up to the horses bridles

Possibly a reference to the armies in heaven who follow after Christ on white horses (Rev. 19:14+). More likely, a reference to the horses of Christ's enemies.

one thousand six hundred furlongs

*Furlong* is [σταδίων](#) [stadiōn], a distance of one-eighth of a mile (185 meters)<sup>67</sup>. The total distance is approximately 200 miles.<sup>68</sup>

The blood stretches for 1,600 furlongs, which is approximately two hundred miles. The two hundred miles may refer to the entire area from the Valley of Armageddon to Bozrah, which is about two hundred miles. Another possible explanation is that it refers to the round trip distance between Jerusalem and Bozrah. The fighting will begin in Jerusalem and move to Bozrah (100 miles), and with the Second Coming, will return back from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (another 100 miles). But the best explanation is based on Jeremiah 49:20-22 . . . In the context (see Jer. 49:13-14), this passage is dealing with the Campaign of Armageddon. The massive blood-letting that begins at Bozrah begins moving south down the Arabah until it empties in the Red Sea at the present-day cities of Eilat and Akaba. The distance from there to Jerusalem is about two hundred miles.<sup>69</sup>

Armageddon is in the north of Palestine [Rev. 16:14-16+], the valley of Jehoshaphat is in the south. Bozrah is named by Isaiah as the place where the Lord treads the winepress [Isa. 63:1-6]. And the distance between the farthest points of this "front" is 1600 furlongs.<sup>70</sup>

What is signified is a vast destruction of human life over a circumscribed area. Certainly what is stated of the vast slaughter is beyond anything ever known.<sup>71</sup>

Although it is possible that this description is [hyperbole](#), one must ask why then does Scripture mention this precise distance? Besides implicating the areas that might be involved (above), it would seem to indicate the magnitude of the final slaughter of all the ungodly. Attempts to understand the exact magnitude of the judgment are nearly impossible, but can provide some insight into the immensity of the slaughter:

Let us consider the biblical portrayal of the size of this disaster: this river of blood is 184 miles long, and its depth is the height of a

horse's bit. Now, if a horse's bit is four feet high, we can calculate the volume required to fill a blood stream of varying widths, and as we know that the typical quantity of blood in a person is six quarts, we can then calculate how many people it would take to supply the blood. The blood from one billion human beings would make a stream not even twenty yards wide over this length of 184 miles (a trough 4' deep with radiused sides would average 53 feet in width to hold the blood from one billion humans). If these figures are taken literally—and surely, when we recognize the literality of fulfilled prophecy in Daniel, they must be—then it is clear that God portrays the slaying of all unregenerate mankind. Notably, as the width is not given, we cannot determine the population of the earth at this time.<sup>72</sup>

See [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

Child of Adam, hear, and be admonished now while salvation is so freely offered. Be not deceived, for God is not mocked. Those impieties of thine, those guilty sports and gaities, will yet have to be confronted before the judgment seat. Those gatherings in the gaming-hells and drink-shops of Satan, those sneers and witty jests at sacred things, those fiery lusts burning on the altars of carnal pleasure, are all written down in the account-books of eternity to be brought forth in the great day. . . . Think, O man, O woman, how would you fare were He this night to strike! If not *in the city*, in reconciliation with the King, outside is only death and damnation, and nothing can make it different.<sup>73</sup>

Notes

<sup>1</sup>J. A. Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), 349.

<sup>2</sup>“The word ‘Zion’ is first used of the stronghold or fortress of the ancient city Jebus. Though the Jebusites considered their city impregnable, David was able to conquer it. He lived in the fortress and named the city ‘the city of David.’ In time the word ‘Zion’ took on a broader meaning. It came to mean the entire city of Jerusalem, not just the fortress in it. The word was even used at times of a group such as ‘the daughters of Zion’ (Isa. 3:16-17), that is, female inhabitants in the city. Later the word came to mean the entire Jewish nation.”—Mal Couch, [“Israelology in the Book of Revelation,”](#) in Mal Couch, ed., [A Bible Handbook to Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 180.

<sup>3</sup>Merrill F. Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#) (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), s.v. “Zion.”

<sup>4</sup>By the same logic, we know that passages such as Isaiah 62 record promises which will be fulfilled in the earthly Jerusalem rather than the New Jerusalem. For what need has the heavenly city ever had for watchmen on its walls (Isa. 62:6)?

<sup>5</sup>Although it is possible they could have been taken up directly to heaven, the text is completely silent as to this possibility.

<sup>6</sup>“The Vision is in heaven; for the singers stand before the Throne, and they are with the Lamb. He is not yet descended to the Earth. This decides the point that it is the heavenly Zion which is here referred to. The Temple on Earth was close to Mount Zion; so the Temple in heaven is correspondingly near to the heavenly Zion.”—E. W. Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1984, 1935), Rev. 14:1. “Some writers take it as the earthly site of a millennial reign, but the entire scene is one of praise before the throne in heaven.”—Robert H. Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), Rev. 14:1.

<sup>7</sup>The phrase “before the throne of God” in Rev. 14:5<sup>+</sup> does not appear in the NU or MT texts, but appears only in the TR text.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas holds to an unusual interpretation: he takes the 144,000 to be on *earth*, but also has them *slain*. The entire problem with having them in heaven is because their seal would not have protected them. Most who take them to be on the earth do so partly out of deference to the effectiveness of their sealing—they survive the Tribulation.

<sup>9</sup>Robert L. Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), Rev. 14:1.

<sup>10</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>*ibid.*, Rev. 14:3.

<sup>12</sup>Arno C. Gaebelien, [The Revelation](#) (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1961), 86.

<sup>13</sup>“We gather that the harp-singers of chaps. xiv. and xv. are the same company.”—Walter Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#) (London, England: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.), Rev. 15:2.

<sup>14</sup>“We first find the 144,000 on earth (Mount Zion) and then in Heaven (before the throne). Now, this is remarkable, for it suggests that the Lamb will gather them together in Jerusalem in order to transport them to Heaven. It suggests, too, that these 144,000 will

be raptured from Jerusalem, for there is no mention of them dying.”—Monty S. Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1987), Rev. 14:1.

<sup>15</sup>Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), rev ed (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 2003), 269.

<sup>16</sup>William R. Newell, [Revelation: Chapter by Chapter](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1994,c1935), 210.

<sup>17</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, [Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 300.

<sup>18</sup>“The two distinct companies—of Israel and the Gentiles—were beheld by the Seer in separate visions (Rev. 7<sup>+</sup>). The elect company from the twelve tribes (Rev. 7:4-8<sup>+</sup>), is not only distinct from their Gentile associates (Rev. 7:9-17<sup>+</sup>), but is equally distinct from the 144,000 from amongst Judah who emerge out of the horrors of the coming hour of trial standing on Mount Zion. There are two Jewish companies of equal number. The hundred and forty-four thousand of *Israel* (Rev. 7<sup>+</sup>) and the hundred and forty-four thousand of *Judah* (Rev. 14<sup>+</sup>).”—Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), 158.

<sup>19</sup>A. R. Fausset, “[The Revelation of St. John the Divine.](#)” in Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [A Commentary. Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments](#) (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997, 1877), Rev. 14:3.

<sup>20</sup>“During the time of the First and Second Temples, a number of the Levites played on two types of harps, singing arcane melodies that no one else was permitted to learn. This knowledge was passed from father to son, until the destruction of the Second Temple.”—Randall Price, [The Coming Last Days Temple](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1999), 390.

<sup>21</sup>Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), Rev. 14:3.

<sup>22</sup>Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F. Miller, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 266.

<sup>23</sup>Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), Rev. 14:4.

<sup>24</sup>John MacArthur, [Revelation 12-22 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2000), Rev. 14:4.

<sup>25</sup>Newell, [Revelation: Chapter by Chapter](#), 216.

<sup>26</sup>Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), Rev. 14:4.

<sup>27</sup>Friberg, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#), 33.

<sup>28</sup>*ibid.*, 61.

<sup>29</sup>Some disagree: “Adams explains: ‘The 144,000 cannot be interpreted as Jews who will some day escape persecution in a yet future age. In no intelligible sense could such a group of Jews be considered “firstfruits.” Historically, the firstfruits of the Christian church were among the Jews—in fact among the very Jews who are here mentioned: those in Jerusalem, who escaped the destruction in 70 A.D. How artificial to twist “firstfruits” into the very *last* fruits of the Christian era!’ ”—Steve Gregg, [Revelation Four Views: A Parallel Commentary](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 316. The problem with Adams’ view is it completely ignores the distinction which Scripture makes between the Church and Israel. Those Jewish believers who frequent the pages of the NT are members of the Church, not the restored revived Israel. This is Paul’s point throughout three full chapters of Romans (Romans 9, 10, and 11). Furthermore, if these are uniquely preserved throughout the Tribulation, they form an initial Jewish population of the Millennial Kingdom. They serve as “firstfruits” of that *physical Jewish population* in a unique way.

<sup>30</sup>William Varner, [Jacob’s Dozen: A Prophetic Look at the Tribes of Israel](#) (Bellmawr, NJ: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1987), 103.

<sup>31</sup>Concerning the need to tame the tongue: Ps. 5:9; 17:3; 19:14; 39:1; 120:1-7; 141:3; Pr. 10:19, 31-32; 15:2, 4; 15:28; 18:21; 21:23; Isa. 6:5, 7; 59:3; Mat. 12:34-35; 15:18; Jas. 1:26; 3:6-3:8.

<sup>32</sup>Frederick William Danker and Walter Bauer, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 47.

<sup>33</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>Richard Chenevix Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#) (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers,



1861), 402.

<sup>35</sup>Friberg, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#), 259.

<sup>36</sup>Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 317.

<sup>37</sup>Newell, [Revelation: Chapter by Chapter](#), 220.

<sup>38</sup>Why? Because she will be absent from the earth at the time of the end, having been taken in the [Rapture](#).

<sup>39</sup>“This is the good news that God purposes to set up on the earth, in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (2S. 7:16, and refs.), a kingdom, political, spiritual, Israelitish, universal, over which God’s Son, David’s heir, shall be King, and which shall be, for one thousand years, the manifestation of the righteousness of God in human affairs. . . . Two preachings of this Gospel are mentioned, one past, beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist, continued by our Lord and His disciples, and ending with the Jewish rejection of the King. The other is yet future (Mat. 24:14), during the great tribulation, and immediately preceding the coming of the King in glory.”—C. I. Scofield, [The Scofield Study Bible](#) (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002, 1909), Rev. 14:6.

<sup>40</sup>Pentecost, [Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology](#), 472.

<sup>41</sup>Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), 110.

<sup>42</sup>Ignoring the fact that accidents of mutation result in a net *loss* of information whereas evolution requires a *gain* in information.

<sup>43</sup>“To revert to the problem of the Pithecanthropus, the Swanscombeman, the Neanderthal and all the rest (possibly even the Cro-magnon man, who is apparently to be classed as *Homo sapiens*, but whose remains seem to date back at least to 20,000 B.C.) it seems best to regard these races as all prior to Adam’s time, and not involved in the Adamic covenant. We must leave the question open, in view of the cultural remains, whether these pre-Adamic creatures had souls (or, to use the trichotomic terminology, spirits).”—Archer, G. Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, rev. ed., (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1985), pp. 204-205 cited in *Creation Magazine*, 24(4), September-November 2002, p. 45. [www.AnswersInGenesis.org](#) “My acceptance of Adam and Eve as historical is not incompatible with my belief that several forms of pre-Adamic ‘hominid’ seem to have existed for thousands of years previously. . . . It is conceivable that God created Adam out of one of them. . . . I think you may even call some of them *Homo sapiens*. . .” John Stott, *Understanding the Bible*, rev. ed., (Sydney: Scripture Union Publishing, 1984), p. 49 cited in *Creation Magazine*, 24(4), September-November 2002, p. 43. [www.AnswersInGenesis.org](#)

<sup>44</sup>Unger, [Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament](#), Jer. 21:10.

<sup>45</sup>Interpreters are divided as to whether Rev. 16:19<sup>+</sup> describes two categories of cities (Babylon and the cities of thenations) or three (Jerusalem, the cities of the Gentile nations, and Babylon).

<sup>46</sup>Donald Grey Barnhouse, [Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), Rev. 14:9.

<sup>47</sup>Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), Rev. 14:9.

<sup>48</sup>Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#), 146.

<sup>49</sup>Friberg, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#), 228.

<sup>50</sup>Fausset, [The Revelation of St. John the Divine](#), Rev. 14:8.

<sup>51</sup>God is omnipresent, even in hell: “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall fall on me,’ even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You” (Ps. 139:7-12). Yet something more is in view here, for the *holy angels*, who lack omnipresence, are also said to have access to the damned.

<sup>52</sup>Loraine Boettner, [The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination](#) (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1932), 79.

<sup>53</sup>Barnhouse, [Revelation](#), Rev. 14:11.

<sup>54</sup>Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), Rev. 14:13.

<sup>55</sup>Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), Rev. 14:13.

<sup>56</sup>Jerome Smith, [The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), Rev. 14:13.

<sup>57</sup>William R. Estep, [Renaissance and Reformation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 117.

<sup>58</sup>The Church can take great comfort in the fact that Ruth, the Gentile bride of Boaz (a type of the kinsman-redeemer Christ), was at his feet during the time of threshing (Ru. 3:2-7).

<sup>59</sup>Seiss disagrees: "That this is the [a harvest of redemption] seems to me very improbable, if not entirely out of the question. According to the record up to this point, the great harvest of the good seed has already been reaped. The Living Ones, the Elders, the innumerable multitude, the Manchild, and the 144,000 all of whom are the good seed, are in heaven before this reaping comes."—Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 358. Seiss would have us believe that not a single believer remains upon the earth at the time of this harvest! How could that be? For the second harvest is most certainly the second advent of Christ, including the [Campaign of Armageddon](#) which occurs at the end of the Tribulation. There are still saints alive on the earth at the time of Christ's second advent because they are those who enter the Millennial Kingdom and form its initial population (Mat. 25:31-34).

<sup>60</sup>Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 548.

<sup>61</sup>John F. Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966), Rev. 14:14.

<sup>62</sup>Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) Rev. 14:16.

<sup>63</sup>Concerning birds feasting on carrion in judgment: Deu. 28:26; Job 39:30; Eze. 32:4; 39:4, 17-20; Jer. 7:33; 12:9; 15:3; 16:4; 19:7; Mat. 24:28; Luke 17:37; Rev. 19:17-18<sup>±</sup>.

<sup>64</sup>Jerry Falwell, Edward D. Hindson, and Michael Woodrow Kroll, eds., [KJV Bible Commentary](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1994), Mat. 3:11.

<sup>65</sup>Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), Rev. 14:19.

<sup>66</sup>Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#), Rev. 14:19.

<sup>67</sup>Trent C. Butler, Chad Brand, Charles Draper, and Archie England, eds., [Broadman and Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#) (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2003), 1666.

<sup>68</sup>Several witnesses read 1606 stadia, a few read 1200 stadia.[Bruce M. Metzger, [A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament](#) (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), Rev. 14:20].

<sup>69</sup>Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 360.

<sup>70</sup>Barnhouse, [Revelation](#), Rev. 14:20.

<sup>71</sup>Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), Rev. 14:20.

<sup>72</sup>Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) Rev. 14:20.

<sup>73</sup>Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 365.

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[contact@SpiritAndTruth.org](mailto:contact@SpiritAndTruth.org)