

Our Decisions Determine our Destiny

Revelation 13 introduced us to the arrogant Antichrist, and to the supernatural false prophet. We saw death, destruction, signs and wonders, the mark of the beast on the forehead or hand, and the forced worship of the Antichrist, and Satan. Evil will be dark and powerful then, and men and women will helplessly die. The supernatural demonic forces will be without mercy towards anyone who does not cooperate. That was the message of Revelation 13.

When we come to Revelation 14 which is the last scene in heaven, and it reminds us of God's faithfulness. If I understand the timeline in the text, Chapter 13 is about 3½ years away from the battle of Armageddon and it will not cover any time at all because this whole scene of this chapter is occurring in heaven.

Interludes: Scenes In Heaven



Revelation of John contrasts: the Lamb and the beast—Earth and heaven—the harvest of the doomed and the harvest of the saved.

Revelation 14:1-5 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. ² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. ³ And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. ⁴ These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵ And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

Mount Zion is where the Lord will come when the Tribulation ends. This is where King David built his palace and Solomon his temple.

This is also where the Antichrist will call himself God and force the world to worship him.

... exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. (2 Thess. 2:4)

1. The Character of the Saved

The 144k that we see here are those witnesses we first saw in Revelation 7:4-8 and what are they doing here? THEY ARE SINGING a NEW song, and it sounds like “harpists on harps.”

Although these 144,000 are not us, by virtue of their salvation they do represent us, and in fact they represent everyone who has accepted Christ as Lord and Savior.

The word “new,” means new in character. That means it is a song that is unique to the experience of the singer.

We have a song that we can’t yet sing. The melody is already written upon the vocal cords of our soul and when we see Jesus, that melody will pour out of us like great thunder.

The text says they have been purchased from the earth: The tense of the Greek word for purchased is a *perfect passive participle*. This means that God selected them long ago and that He continued to own them.

The phrase “defiled with women” has a two-fold meaning. Some translators say this means they are virgins, others say not adulterers ... actually the context implies that a faithful husband or wife is considered virginal in the same sense.

It says in verse 5 that ***“in their mouth was found no guile.”***

These people, know the truth, believe the truth, tell the truth, speak the truth, and live the truth.

They will not be hypocrites who speak for the beast one minute and then for Christ the next.

(Rev. 14:6-8) ⁶ And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; ⁷ and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." ⁸ And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

Here we see the first of a series of 6 angels. The first 3 are calling people to fear God and give Him glory and to flee from the Antichrist. This angel will be in the skies and just imagine what people will see and hear as they encounter him—**this is the gospel.**

The 2nd angel will be prophesying of the downfall of the Antichrist's kingdom—this is judgment.

2. The Condemnation of the Hopeless

(Rev 14:9-12) ⁹ Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." ¹² Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

As you already know the Antichrist will have a minister of Propaganda who will cause everyone to receive a mark on the right hand or forehead. He will also be a controller of commerce. You will not be able to buy or sell without the mark of the beast, and to take the mark of the beast is to commit an unpardonable sin.

There will be no hope for those who take it—verse 10 says to take it is to drink from the cup of God's anger. Eternal hopelessness is the destiny of everyone who rejects Jesus.

Bernard M. Baruch said, "The saddest word in the English language is the word hopeless."

But there is a flip side... Those who do not receive the mark will be persecuted by the beast and put to death.

3. The Reward of the Righteous

Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

What a great verse!

The beast may put these tribulation saints to death, but your bible says, *"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."*

The moment a child of God dies, he is instantly ushered into the presence of the Lord.

Stephen was stoned in **Acts 7:55-56 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; ⁵⁶ and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."**

I know Jesus is normally seated in heaven, but here He stood up for Stephen.

Do you have a mother or father, brother or sister, perhaps a child in heaven? Here are three things from Revelation 14:13 that can give you comfort:

- They are rejoicing *"blessed are the dead"* In the Greek, the word blessed is *makarios* which means rejoicing.
- They are resting *"that they may rest from their labors."*
- They are rewarded *"their deeds follow with them"*

(Rev. 14:14-16) ¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. ¹⁵ And another angel (4th) came out of the temple, crying out with a loud

voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." ¹⁶ Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Here is the Lord preparing for the great "reaping" of humanity and the preservation of His children.

(Joel 3:19-21)¹⁹ Egypt will become a waste, And Edom will become a desolate wilderness, Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, In whose land they have shed innocent blood. ²⁰ But Judah will be inhabited forever And Jerusalem for all generations. ²¹ And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, For the LORD dwells in Zion.

Look at that judgment which will begin with a terrible battle.

(Rev. 14:18-20)¹⁸ Then another angel, (5th) the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." ¹⁹ So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered *the clusters from the vine of the earth*, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

Now we come to the bowls of wrath and the battle of Armageddon that Joel had prophesied about.