

## Revelation 14:1-13 | The Three Angels

### Introduction

David Jeremiah notes that Revelation 14 and the visions it contains “are not in chronological sequence; they are more like a panoramic view of the Tribulation period. In some respects, this chapter is like a table of contents for the rest of the Book of Revelation, chronicling the salvation of God’s people, the fall of Babylon, the final battle, and God’s judgment on unbelieving humanity.” It should be noted that these verses are difficult to place chronologically.

### Verse-By-Verse Notes

#### Verse 1

- The key question with 1-5 has to be, is John seeing into *heaven* where the redeemed reign with Christ on the heavenly Mount Zion – Hebrews 12:22-23 (the text seems to indicate that), or is John seeing into the *millennium* period – Christ reigning in Jerusalem (Mount Zion) with the redeemed? That significantly affects how we identify the 144,000 in chapter 14 – are they the same as in chapter 7, or do they now represent *all the redeemed*? I favor the latter view.

#### Verses 2-3

- God’s people are a *singing people*. Songs are associated with victory and celebrating the works of the Lord (Psalm 96, 98, 107, Exodus 15, etc.) This song is the song of the redeemed – only those who are in Christ can sing it. Robert Mounce calls it the “anthem of redemption.”
- Jim Hamilton: “None but those sealed by the Father, redeemed by Jesus, can learn this song. There will not be Hindus, Buddhists, or Muslims singing this song, nor will there be decent people who were consistent with their own atheism. Only those who put explicit faith in Jesus will sing this song.”

#### Verses 4-5

- The redeemed (the 144,000) are marked by purity in life and speech. These verses should not be interpreted *literally* as if all the 144,000 were male virgins. It signifies the overcoming purity of the redeemed.
- All those who are truly redeemed are characterized by allegiance to Christ. Believers are frequently called “firstfruits” (2 Thess. 2:13; James 1:18).

#### Verses 6-7

- John now sees three angels. The first angel proclaims the “eternal gospel” to “those who dwell on the earth” (i.e., the wicked – anytime “those who dwell on the earth on the earth” appear in Revelation it refers to the unbelieving wicked).
- The message is a call the wicked to fear and worship God because judgment comes. The long-awaited consummation of redemptive history is imminent.

- Note that the gospel is a *command*, not an *invitation*. The verbs “fear,” “give” (God glory), and “worship” in verse 7 are *imperatives*. See also Acts 17:30-31.

### Verse 8

- The second angel pronounces the judgment the first angel predicted. Judgment always follows the gospel – see again Acts 17:30-31 and John 3:18.
- Babylon has an extensive biblical history as not just a literal city, but an image of the godless world’s system.
- John MacArthur: “Babylon refers to the entire worldwide political, economic, and religious kingdom of Antichrist.”
- Robert Mounce: [Babylon] is a symbol of the spirit of godlessness that in every age lures people away from the worship of the Creator. It is the ‘dark counterpart of Jerusalem,’ the final manifestation of ‘secular humanism’ in its attempt to destroy the remaining vestiges of true religion. Society set free from God is its own worst enemy.”

### Verses 9-11

- The third angel John sees predicts and describes the final judgment. All those who reject Christ and worship the beast will “drink the wine of God’s wrath.”
- Note the seriousness of divine wrath. It is: “full strength,” “His anger,” tormenting and literal, public “in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb,” eternal, and unrelenting.
- Jim Hamilton: “God will not hide the display of the glory of his justice, and the presence and observation of the holy ones will only make the torment of the wicked that much worse.”

### Verses 12-13

- This section concludes with a call to endurance and a blessing on the death of the saints.
- “From now on” does not indicate a distinction between saints who died *before* the tribulation as opposed to those who will die *during* it, but rather that the tribulation would be a season of greater persecution. The point is that tribulation saints will share the same blessed victory as those already at their reward.

**BIG IDEA: “AT THE RETURN OF THE LAMB, THE ENEMIES OF CHRIST WILL BE ETERNALLY PUNISHED WHILE ETERNAL REST AND REWARD ARE PROMISED FOR THOSE WHO HAVE THEIR FAITH IN JESUS.” – DANNY AKIN**