

Revelation 14:1-20

A. The Army on Mount Zion (14:1-5)

1. In contrast to the number of the beast (666) there is no dispute that Jesus' name comes to (888).
2. 144,000—representative of the woman's seed (12:17); not persecuted as saints but a conquering army. Like the Lamb, their Lord, they have crushed the serpents head by letting it strike their heel; Gen. 3:15; Rev. 16:20. They are victorious through the Lamb of God.
3. Location: Mt. Zion—God's dwelling place in the present (Ps. 74:2) and in the future (Zech. 2:10) and hopes of salvation (Ps. 53:6) and triumph for Israel focus on Mt. Zion.
 - a. Jerusalem laid in ruins in 70 AD and Revelation describes the city being trampled in a symbolic sense (Rev. 11:2).
 - b. The prophets promised Zion's restoration (Isa. 1:27; 4:5; 46:13; 51:3; 62:11; Mic. 4:2,7)
 - c. God would dwell in the midst of Zion as a triumphant warrior who delivered them (Zeph. 3:15-19).
 - d. Temple—the new Jerusalem.
 - e. OT Babylon—the exile—oppressor; and destroyer of the Temple; also new Babylon—oppressor of the spiritual children of God.
 - f. Tale of two cities—City of God (Jerusalem) and the city of the world (Babylon).
4. Vision of the 144,000: “the sound from Heaven”—the song of 144,000 who have been taken from earth to heaven.
 - a. Roar of rushing water; loud peal of thunder—God's voice along with the innumerable multitude of the saints (19:6).
 - b. Harpists—offering praise and worship to God (1 Chron. 25:1-6; Ps. 81:2)
5. 144,000—those who are redeemed (14:3); purchased (14:4); they stand for all believers (5:9).
 - a. Following the Lamb to his sacrificial death (John 13:36-37); “Firstfruits” is sacrificial language—Israel was to offer the first fruits of their harvest to the Lord (Ex. 23:19; 34:26). Greek business documents speak specifically of people as “firstfruits (as temple servants) when offered to a deity.
 - b. Why do the 144,000 sing a new song?—Portrayed as God's end time army. Customary for victors to celebrate after holy war (2 Chron. 20:27-28). Praising God for the victory of the Lamb—just as Israel praised God when he overthrew their enemies in the Red Sea (Ex. 15:1-21).
 - c. 144,000 are celibate—does not emphasize their Jewishness but have kept themselves from women. Perhaps Rev. portrait of God's army—OT normally only men could participate in holy war and were required to stay away from women (Deut. 23:10; 1 Sam. 21:5; 2 Sam. 11:11).
 1. Just as the Bible portrayed Israel as prostitute or as a pure virgin or bride for God, Rev. portrays unrepentant humanity as prostitute and those faithful to Christ as pure spouse (19:7; 21:2,9).
 - d. PURE—contrast to the picture of Babylon (Rev. 14:8 ff.). They are blameless; God's saints speak the truth of the gospel and renounce idols regardless of the cost (6:9-11).

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B. Four Heavenly Announcements (14:6-13)

1. Visions of two angel 11:15 and 14:6 after the 7th trumpet—frames the intervening section on the beast and the saints (12:1-14:5) with emphasis on sufferings (12:17,13:7) and triumph (14:1-5).
2. Three announcements of judgment: to all the nations.
 1. General (14:7)—Call to fear and glorify God (repentance).
 2. Babylon (14:8)—double “fallen”—Babylon in OT and Rome in NT. Children of Israel have experienced captivity under both nations and both Babylon and Rome destroyed the temple.
 - a. Babylon is judged because she has made nations drink from the “maddening wine of her adulteries.”
 - b. Babylon brought God’s wrath against other nations who committed such immoralities.
 3. Beasts worshipers (14:9-11)—burning sulfur—Lake of Fire (19:20; 20:10, 21:8).
 - a. Cup—full strength not mixed—Cup symbolic of God’s anger (Isa. 51:17,22).
 - b. “Eternal torment” rather than annihilation—no rest.
4. Announcement of Vindication for the saints (14:12-13)—the saints are encouraged to stand firm. Encouragement: judgment = vindication.

C. The Harvests Have Come (14:14-20)

1. Two Visions: Contrast
 - a. Grain Harvest—evangelism and gathering of God’s people—144,000 were the “firstfruits” of the harvest.
 - b. Grapes—Wicked as grapes are gathered “vines of the earth.” Grapes are crushed in God’s winepress.
 1. The wicked must drink the wine of God’s wrath (14:10) which is their own blood (14:20; 16:6).
 2. Blood flows high outside the city—dismal outlook for Babylon—those who are oppressing.