

**Revelation**  
**14:1-20**  
**“Hearing voices”**

**I. Intro**

**II. Vs. 1-5 They sang a new song**

**III. Vs. 6-13 The message of angel’s**

**IV. Vs. 14-20 Reaping their rebellion**

**I. Intro**

It is always an interesting to examine oft-repeated words in the passage. In so doing the theme of the section is often discovered as is the case in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter as the word “voice” is repeated 11 times in these 20 verses. This chapter also is the conclusion of the spiritual warfare that was first pictured in heaven (chapter 12) then we saw the satanic element on earth in chapter 13, finally in this chapter we see the ultimate triumph of Jesus. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet has sounded, and the seven seals have been loosed and John records for us the key events in the tribulation period, the actual narrative won’t pick up again until the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter. This chapter records for us the Lord harvesting His crop and no doubt will be a source of great comfort for those during the tribulation period.

**II. Vs. 1-5 They sang a new song**

Vs. 1 John sees four things in this verse:

- The **Lamb**
- The **location**
- The **loyal**
- Their **Lord**

The **Lamb**: First notice the timing of John’s vision concerning the Lamb. **It is when most of the world is in love with satan.** Jesus as revealed as the lamb 11 times in Revelation and we have

seen the Lamb **crucified** (5:6), **worshiped** (5:8), **glorified** (6:10) and here as **reigning**. His right to reign as King of Kings is based upon His willingness to be slain as we are told in Acts 2:36 *“let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*

The **location**: John notices the location where Jesus will come down at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming as “Mount Zion” or Jerusalem (David’s city) will be the place where security, blessing and glory will be as well as the future “New Jerusalem”. This is the fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy in 14:4 where we are told that, *“His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.”*

The **loyal**: Here again is that specially set apart group of Jewish men (12,000 from each of the tribes mentioned) that were sealed by God before the 7<sup>th</sup> seal was opened in the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter. Here they are seen with Jesus on Mount Zion as well as the fact in verse 4 that they *“follow the Lamb wherever He goes”*. During the same time as the antichrist and the false prophet are causing the world to worship satan they will be faithfully offering the truth to the world as they proclaim Jesus as the true Lord of Lord’s! We are told that they have *“His Father’s name written on their foreheads”* or as the ASV renders it; *“having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads.”* These 144,000 belong to the Father because of the work of the Son.

Their **Lord**: The seal proclaims their ownership, their character because of their ownership and because of the first two things their loyalty to the One to whom they belong as well as the One who made that possible. In Exodus 34:6-7 we are told that God’s name means, *“merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands,*

*forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin*". What a glorious thing to be sealed on their foreheads with!

Vs. 2-3 The sound John hears reminds us of a triumphant army returning home after defeating a mighty foe. Harps in scripture are mentioned 51 times in the Bible and always with regards to a joyous celebration. **But this victorious procession happens before the battle! How certain the Lord is of His victory over His enemies and as such how confident we how are facing uncertainty can be of God's glorious victory!** They are singing a new song similar to that of the martyred saints of chapter seven, they are not only standing they are praising the Lord. **James 4:9 speaks of the un-repentant turning their laughter into mourning but here we see that the repentant will see their mourning turn into laughter.** Palm 40: tells us, "*He has put a new song in my mouth; Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear and will trust in the LORD.*"

Also, in the 98<sup>th</sup> Psalm, "*Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. The LORD has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises. Sing to the LORD with the harp, With the harp and the sound of a psalm.*"

Vs. 4-5 John records for us **four things about the character of those who were sealed:**

1. "*They are virgins*": This could both refer to sexual chastity or spiritual, but the text seems to indicate that it was sexual purity, however there is little doubt that this was because of their relationship with their Lord. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthian's Paul spoke of such a heart saying, "*I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*"

2. “*These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes*”: **Though said of the 144,000 this is also the best description of what a Christian is found anywhere in scripture.** They are **not trying to lead the Lamb**; their only desire is to follow after Him. *To many professing believers find following the Lamb wherever He goes is a difficult proposition perhaps the difficulty lies in that they are seeking to follow and not draw close? **When our hearts just want to be around someone who so loves us then following them just becomes part of drawing near!***
3. “*They are first fruits to God and to the Lamb*”: The idea here is that of the very finest of an expected harvest. ***These 144,000 are the start of God’s harvest of the those that love Him.*** These did not belong to the world as they had been sealed with the name of the Father.
4. “*In their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.*” **John speaks of the sincerity of their lives and makes this all the more remarkable is that they will be living through a time of lying signs and wonders yet remain pure in both conduct as well as speech.** Zephaniah speaks of this group in 3:13 saying, “*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.*” They have no guile or falsehood as it relates to their profession, and **they had done so through the greatest time of false religion the world has ever seen.** They are said to be without fault or stainless, I’m reminded of the truth that there are only two possibilities we will either impact our world or our world will impact us.

### III. Vs. 6-13 The message of angel's

Vs. 6 From verses 6-20 there are at least six angels involved each having a particular message to proclaim to a world rejecting Christ.

- a. Vs 6-7 The first angel proclaims the gospel then judgment as they don't receive it by giving glory to God. Interestingly enough during our present age angels are not allowed to proclaim the gospel as it is reserved for those of us who have tasted ourselves and seen that the Lord is good. Yet during the tribulation clearly this will be allowed and fulfill the words of Jesus in Matt. 24:14 where He says, "*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.*" Paul seems to make a reference as to imitators during this time in Gal. 1:8 saying, "*if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*" Jesus is not handcuffed by the apathy of His Church as far as fulfilling His word instead it is our privilege as well as our responsibility to proclaim His word by His spirit! The angel will proclaim the "*everlasting gospel*" which speaks of the fact that the "Good News" of the person and work of Christ is without time or age neither is for only a special class of people as we are told that it will be proclaimed to "*to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people*".  
**There is little time left for the inhabitation of the earth, yet the Lord still is reaching out towards those that refuse to love the truth and so be saved.** The angel will remind the world that God alone is the creator and as such He alone deserves their worship. Both in Roman's 1:18-23 as well as Colossians 1:16-17 tells us that all of creation bears witness to God's attributes this is what we call "*Natural Theology*".

b. Vs. 8 The 2<sup>nd</sup> angel proclamation is in anticipation of the future events recorded for us in chapter 16:18-19 and chapter 18. **Babylon is God's name describing the world system ran by satan, which is made up of the political, economic, and religious system.** John described this in his letter in chapter 2:16 as “*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*”. This angel is saying that the world system is about to be judged and as such all that man has accomplished apart from God is worthless.

c. Vs. 9-13 The 3<sup>rd</sup> angel speaks of the consequences of rejecting the gospel. Thus far we have seen the progression of the messages of these angels to mankind:

a. Vs. 6-7 **The good news proclaimed**

b. Vs. 8 **The worthlessness of all human effort to be right apart from the Lord**

c. Vs. 9-11 **The warning of paying for the consequences of their choice**

The Greek reads this as “*If any man continues to worship the beast*” which **suggests that there is still time to repent if that have not yet received the mark of the beast.**

**Anyone who participates in the worship of the best by receiving his mark will also participate in his judgement.** So many reject the notion of hell specifically as it

relates to Jesus yet **11 out of the 12 times hell** is mentioned in the N.T. it is Jesus

who speaks on it. **The righteousness of God is inexhaustible as the love of God is**

**infinite and His love cannot be enjoyed by those who reject the righteousness of His**

**Son!** What a contrast between verses 11 and 13 as the unrepentant has no rest day or

night and the saint in Christ rest from their labors. The option is clear, reign with

Jesus for eternity or with the antichrist for 1 ½ years, endure persecution patiently or

seek to escape it by worshipping satan and suffer for eternity. In chapter 13:10 we

were told that part of the patience of the saints rested in the truth that God would repay those who had sought to destroy them. Yet here the patience is seen in active obedience seen in two things:

1. Do nothing against those who seek to harm you
2. Follow the Lord with all your heart

The saints are thus described as those that “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”. The promises is for those believers who are killed for their trust, and it is better to be put to death by the antichrist then to be found among one of his worshippers, “**Better to die a saint then to live a short while as a sinner!**”

#### **IV. Vs. 14-20 Reaping their rebellion**

Vs. 14-20 These verses depict a scene of a harvest of unrighteousness so ripe that it is in the state of decay. Both the Lord and His angel are seen with a sharp sickle ready to reap and some of what they harvest will be thrown into the winepress of God’s wrath (verses 18-20) the juice of which will be as high as a horse bridle for 200 miles.

- a. Vs. 14-16 The person John sees here is none other than Jesus who is called only for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time the “Son of man”. There are two harvests in this vision of John the first (verses 14-16) is that of grain, the 2<sup>nd</sup> (verses 17-20) is that of grapes. It is interesting that John describes this as a “harvest” as we are more familiar with the harvest of souls in the sense those coming to Christ by faith, yet here this harvest is a picture of His righteous judgment. Jesus spoke of this in His parable of the wheat and the tares as both were harvested. The enemy, He said, sows the tares right alongside the grain and the Lord allows this to stay so as to not damage the crop until the time of the harvest when they will be separated. **John notices four things about the Lord:**

1. John sees a white cloud which speaks of His majesty
2. He sees the Son of man which speaks of His identification with humanity at His incarnation
3. He sees a golden crown upon His head which speaks of His ultimate victory as He is not just a “good teacher” He is the King of Kings
4. He sees a sharp sickle which is an instrument of harvest

In other words, John sees Jesus as the One before His incarnation full of glory and One who became man that He might redeem all those who place their trust in Him. In John 5:22-23 Jesus said, *“the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.”* This is the time Jesus spoke of as the Father sends an angel to whom He has committed all judgment and tells them to bring in the harvest of the tares. Some see the two harvests, (the first one by the Lord) being of saint’s “wheat” and the 2<sup>nd</sup> (by the angel) being tares or unbelievers. However, the wording for “ripe” in verse 15 dealing with the wheat and verse 18 dealing with the grapes is the same which makes this unlikely as the word means to “shrivel, or wither away”. ***The fact that judgement is ripe suggests that it is overdue!*** John sees this in what is called *“prophetic past tense”* meaning that he sees what has yet to happen but speaks of it in terms as if it had already taken place.

- b. Vs 17-20 The location of these angels is out from the altar in the temple of the Lord. The words “fully ripe” only appear here in the N.T. and it means to be at its prime thus the world will be at its prime for God’s righteous judgement. In Joel 3:13 the prophet spoke of this saying, *“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.”*

This will take place at **Armageddon**, when the armies of the world will gather against Jerusalem in one final attempt to keep Jesus from coming to reign upon the earth (rev. 16:12-16, Isa 63:1-6, Zech 14:1-4). **From Edom to Armageddon is 1600 furlongs or 184 miles, which is what is said here.** Revelation 19:15 tells us that, “*out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*”