

Chapter 14

At the close of chapter 13: Truth had fallen in the streets; Saints (those saved after rapture of the Church) had been slaughtered; 'Good' had nearly vanished from the earth; Faith was almost unknown; and, the 'world' wondered after the 'Beast' because of lying wonders and miracles.

Chapters 14 & 15 are parenthetical in respect to what has been revealed and what will follow. They are the 'interval' between the 'Seven Personages' and the 'Seven Vials'. The seven 'Personages' in chapters 12 & 13 are:

- The Woman – Israel
- The Dragon – Satan
- The Man-child - 144,000 sealed Jews of the tribes of Israel
- Archangel – Michael
- The 'Remnant' - Jews not protected in the wilderness (likely in Petra) during last half of the Tribulation.
- Antichrist - (Likely a Syrian Jew)
- False Prophet - A great 'Religious Leader' of his day

Note: These two chapters give a preview of what is explained in detail in the remainder of the Revelation.

I. 'A Lamb stood on the mount Zion' (v.1). In the previous chapter, John saw a 'beast' that had horns like a lamb, yet, spoke as a dragon. Here, John sees the 'Lamb' Himself (the Lord Jesus Christ) standing on the heavenly Mount Zion. **Note:** The 'Lamb' is never pictured to be on the earth in the Revelation.

- Both Rice and McGee believe the 'Mount Zion' mentioned here to be that of the earthly Jerusalem - pointing to the Millennial Reign of Christ. Yet, most writers believe this to be the 'Heavenly Mount Zion, as mentioned in Heb.12:22,23. **(I agree.)**

II. 144,000 with the Lamb. These are the 'sealed ones' of Ch.7:3-8. They have been 'caught up' (Rev.12:5), and, here, appear with the Lord Jesus on heaven's Mount Zion - singing and playing harps before the throne, having been 'redeemed from among men'.

- A. They were 'sealed in their foreheads (Ch.7:3). The 'seal' was the name of the Father. **Note:** The Revised Version says: 'of the Father and of the Son'.
- B. They sing 'as it were a 'new song'. We are not given the 'words' nor the 'theme'. But, it's, undoubtedly, a 'new song' by a 'new people' with a 'new theme'.
- C. They are 'virgins'. 'We are not to suppose, with some, that these 144,000 are all males who have never been married: for there is no more impurity in marriage than in abstinence from marriage. 'Celibacy' is not the subject or virtue in this description (Vs.4,5), but 'purity' (Seiss).
 - a. The New Testament nowhere regards marriage as sinful, but rather as a shadow of the union of Christ and His Bride' (Halley).
 - b. 'They are virgins (saved men and women) who have not polluted themselves with the idolatrous and immoral religious system of their day' (Dake).
 - c. 'Virgins, in the sense that they kept themselves clean of the crowning sin of that day - 'spiritual fornication' (Larkin).
- D. They are 'the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb'. Not 'first fruits' of the first resurrection, nor 'first fruits' of the Church, but 'first fruits' of the restored nation of Israel.

III. An angel flying in the midst of heaven proclaiming the 'everlasting gospel' (Vs.6,7). McGee says the angel will be a 'broadcasting station in space', preaching to the entire world. Others, such as Scofield, believe the 'gospel' will be different than that preached during the Church Age; that it will call men to: Fear God; Give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment is come; and, Worship Him, for He is the Creator.

Note: The one difference is: The hour of His judgment 'is come' (a message of judgment). Today, we can only announce that it 'is coming'. Paul said, 'If an angel from heaven preach unto you any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be accursed' (Gal.1:8,9).

- 'Here is the first and only place in the Bible where an angel is commissioned to preach the 'everlasting Gospel' (Larkin).
- 'All theories that this gospel is a 'special one', given to certain peoples or denominations to preach, are false. The angel will be a literal one, doing what is here stated' (Dake).

IV. A second angel messenger announces the 'fall of Babylon' (v.8). He is actually saying, 'Babylon is falling', yet the details of Babylon's fall take place in Rev.16:18-21; 18. **Note:** This is the first mention of Babylon in Revelation, and the angel announces that it will fall.

- There are many theories concerning the 'Babylon', mentioned here:
 - A. 'Inasmuch as the city, or nation, of Babylon was of no consequence in New Testament times, this cannot be referring to 'literal' Babylon'.
 - B. This Babylon is actually Rome, or the 'evil world order', or 'New York City' (David Wilkerson).
 - C. This is speaking of 'literal Babylon', which is to be rebuilt in the last days.

Note: Saddam Hussein, of Iraq, claimed himself to be King Nebuchadnezzar re-incarnated. Too, he took bricks of old Babylon, having Nebuchadnezzar's name etched in them, and used them for the rebuilding of some of his palaces and buildings in Bagdad, with his name etched on the other side. And I'm sure there are many other such theories.
 - D. Babylon, here, represents the political, religious, and commercial system of the whole world in the time of the end. (I tend to agree with this.)

V. A third angel messenger (Vs.9-11). He announces God's judgment upon those who 'worship the beast' and his 'image, and, receive his mark 'in their forehead or in their hand'. Those who do so will seal their doom, and will be punished in eternal hell.

- They are made to drink of the 'wine of God's wrath', which is poured out without mixture. The day of God's mercy is over. They will be 'lost forever'. No hope. Nothing awaits but 'eternal torment'.
- McGee believes that 'hell' will be forever visible to Christ and His holy angels.
- Dake says, 'Men in the new earth will be able to look upon those who have transgressed and are suffering punishment with the devil and his angels, as an everlasting monument of God's wrath on sin' (Isa.13:19-22; 34:8-15; 66:22-24). (I agree.)

VI. The faithful in Christ are blessed (vs.12,13). The 'saints' (those who accept Christ during the tribulation, refuse to take the 'mark of the beast', prove their patience and perseverance by keeping God's commandments, and, are put to death for their faith) are blessed indeed. They will die as martyrs. Think about it: It's better to be martyred for Christ and live with Him forever than to compromise (take the 'mark') and be separated from Christ for eternity - with nothing in the future but the torments of eternal damnation.

Questions that have been asked:

1. Are all professing Christians saints? (No)
2. Is it possible to be a Christian without being a 'saint'? (No)
3. Will all of those who have at some time in life been born again go in the rapture? (No)
4. Can a person repent and be forgiven during the tribulation after having taken the 'mark of the Antichrist'? (No)
5. Can people be saved during the tribulation? (Surely. But it will be a sad day for those who have heard the Gospel and rejected it. There is no promise of God giving another opportunity for those in this condition to be saved.) Read: II Thes.8-12). Today is the 'day of salvation'! Tomorrow could be 'too late'.
6. Which commandments of God are referred to in Rev.14:12? (Same as those required for us today: 'Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength - and neighbor as thyself'.)

Note: Rev.14:12,13 speaks of those who give their lives for Christ during the tribulation. But remember: A life of 'holiness', while living in today's wicked and evil world, is proof of one's faithfulness to Christ. And those 'faithful unto death' are called 'blessed'. They will rest from their labors. And according to Rev.2:10, they will receive a 'crown of life'.

That which is recorded in **14:14-20** and **16:13-16** is a 'Preview of Armageddon'. The verses in **Ch.16** tell how the armies are to be gathered. But the actual battle takes place in **Ch.19:17-21**.

- The first 3 1/2 years after the rapture of the Church, the world will be ruled by a '10-King Federation', which will actually be the 'Revised Roman Empire' (**17:11-13**), denoted by the 10 toes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (**Dan.2:42**) and the 10 horns of the beast in Daniel's vision (**Dan.7:7**). (Many believe the Revised Roman Empire will actually come by way of the 'European Economic Community'. The 10 kings will be in league with the 'one' who will later be revealed as the Antichrist. But during these first 3 1/2 years, he will assist them, gaining popularity and accumulating power.
- The Antichrist will be the 8th 'world power', and will rule the world during the last half of the 7-year tribulation, known as the 'Great Tribulation'. **Note:** Some believe he will rule only in the area of the Middle East. (I disagree.)
- 'White cloud' (v.14). **Note:** Seven different kinds of clouds are mentioned in Scripture: white, black, dark, bright, thick, great, and swift.
- The Lord's 'Second Coming' is in two stages: (1) The 'rapture', when He comes in the clouds as a 'thief in the night' to catch away His bride (the Church) - with only those 'watching' to see Him. (2) He returns to earth with His saints (**Rev.19**), wearing a 'golden crown', denoting His Kingship. Too, it's on this occasion that 'every eye shall see him' (**Rev.1:7**).
- At the Lord's 'first coming' (born of a virgin) he came as a 'sacrifice', to die for the sins of the world and to redeem mankind back to God. At His 'second coming' to earth, He comes as 'King of Kings' and 'Lord of Lords' (**Rev.19**). Amen! Too, He will take possession of the world that He created, and, which is rightfully His.
- 'Another angel' (v.15). Earlier, we learned of:
 1. An angel flying in the midst of heaven proclaiming the everlasting gospel (v.6).
 2. Another angel announcing the 'fall of Babylon' (v.8).
 3. Another angel warning people of the results of taking the 'mark of the beast' (vs.9,10).
 4. Now, another angel cries out that the time has come for Christ to 'thrust in his sickle, and reap'. It's time for judgment and destruction of the wicked.

- 'Winepress of the wrath of God' (vs.17-20).
 - A. 'vine of the earth' (with its branches) speaks of Antichrist and his followers. **Note:** Jesus is the 'True Vine', with believers as the branches (**Jn.15**).
 - B. 'Winepress': A vat, or trough, usually made of stone and lined with cement, from which juice flowed through a hole near the bottom into a container. The grapes were pressed by men treading them. **Note:** The treading of grapes was used in the Old Testament as a 'figure' for the execution of divine wrath upon the ungodly (**Isa.63:3**). Here, it speaks of the 'Battle of Armageddon' (**Rev.19:15**).

Battle of Armageddon

Seven important aspects of the battle: Place, time, participants, purpose, length, how fought, results.

- A. Place. Various names are mentioned in Scripture letting us know that it will be in and around the holy city of Jerusalem (**Joel; 3; Zech.14:1-15; Rev.16:13-16**).
 - a. Armageddon (Gr.). From Hebrew: Mount Megiddo, the great Esdraelon Plain, the Valley of Megiddo. All speak of the great plain of Megiddo, which lies between the Galilean hills and the mountains of Israel.
 - b. 'Valley of Jehoshaphat', named by the Prophet Joel (**Joel 3:2**) as place, which geographically denotes the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem.
 - c. Bosrah, named by Isaiah (**Isa.34:6**) as the place where the mighty Savior treads the winepress, and stains his raiment with the blood of his foes.
Note: All of these localities are probably included, with forces encamped for battle from Bosrah in the southeast to Megiddo in the northwest - an area of some 1600 furlongs (stadia), or nearly 200 miles (**Rev.14:20**).
- B. Time.
 - a. Immediately after the Great Tribulation (Daniel's 70th Week).
 - b. After Antichrist has reigned 42 months (3 1/2 years).
 - c. After the 'Two Witnesses' have fulfilled their ministry, been slain by Antichrist, resurrected, and, caught up to heaven.
 - d. After 144,000 have completed their mission and been caught out to heaven.
 - e. When 'First Resurrection' has been completed.
 - f. After 'Marriage Supper of the Lamb.
 - g. When Jerusalem is surrounded by armies of nations of the world under the leadership of Antichrist.
 - h. When God's chosen people (Israel) have been 3 1/2 years hidden away in the wilderness.

Note (16:12): The Euphrates River will be dried up (or rolled back), just as was the Red Sea and the Jordan River in days of Moses and Joshua. This will make it possible for the armies of the 'north' and 'east' to march across the land on their way to Israel to join forces with Antichrist at Armageddon.
- C. Participants. Armageddon will be a battle between Christ, His heavenly hosts (saints and angels), Israel, and, likely, other nations which have befriended Israel - on one side, and Satan, his angels, demons, and earthly armies under the direction of Antichrist - on the other side (**Jude 14,15; Dan.2:44,45; Rev.19:19**).

Note (Rev.16:13,14): 'Unclean spirits', with their lying miracles, will convince world leaders that the success of their future lies in their coming together to stop Christ from taking control of the earth at His Second Coming. And the nations will be led to Armageddon by demonic spirits in the vain hope of defeating Christ.

One other Note: Some teach that when Christ returns for the Battle of Armageddon 'all unbelievers' in the world will be gathered and judged in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and then killed. (I disagree.)

D. Purpose of the Battle.

- a. Satan's purpose: To hinder Christ from taking possession of the earth (which is rightfully His) and sitting up His reign of righteousness.
- b. God's purpose:
 - To deliver Israel and bring the 'Gentile Age' to a close (**Zech.14:1-5; Rev.11:2**).
 - To punish nations for their persecution of Israel (**Matt.25:31-46**).
 - To set up a divine government over nations of the earth.
 - To re-establish the Kingdom of David, as promised (**II Sam.7; Isa.9:6,7**).
 - To gather in one all things in Christ, both in heaven and in earth (**Eph.1:10**).

E. Length of Battle. Undoubtedly, it will be of a short duration; likely, just 'one day' (**Zech.14:1-7**).

F. How the Battle is fought. 'Out of his (the Lord's) mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he may smite the nations' (**Rev.19:15**)

- Isaiah said, 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked'. The Lord speaks, and it is done!

G. Results of Battle.

- a. Total defeat of evil forces under the leadership of Satan and Antichrist.
- b. Blood flows to height of horse's bridles for 184-200 miles. This 'blood river' will come from the multitudes slain in battle, and, from hail, blood, and over-flowing rain poured out from heaven.
- c. Carcasses of dead armies are a 'feast' for fowls of the air and beasts of the earth (**Rev.19:20 - 20:1-3**).
- d. Antichrist and False Prophet are consigned to Lake of Fire - forever.
- e. Satan is consigned to the Abyss (Bottomless Pit) for 1000 years.

Note: In the beginning he (the Word) created the heaven and the earth. Now, with his 'word', he totally defeats the enemies. Christ came the 'first time' to shed His blood as a ransom for sinners; but when He comes the 'second time' it will be to shed the blood of His enemies.