

Chapter 14:

Chapter 14 is a chapter that is foreshadowing events that will take place later in the Tribulation. It is a chapter that was likely intended to help provide explanation of events that still remain, but it can cause a little confusion in some manners.

Verses 1-5 speak of Jesus and the 144,000. John sees an image of Jesus standing on Mount Zion with 144,000 believers that have the name of Jesus and the name of God on their foreheads. Most commentaries and books I have read suggest that this is the same 144,000 sealed Jews from chapter 7. I do not believe this to be true. I believe this group represents the overcomers, and more specifically, the overcomers from the Philadelphia church.

Verse 3 states that no one could learn the song except the 144,000 that had been “redeemed” from the earth. I do not recall seeing any scripture that shows the group of “sealed” Jews being removed from the earth. It doesn’t mean that it doesn’t happen, or perhaps I’m missing it, but up to this point in my study, it appears that they remain on earth during the tribulation in the place prepared for them by God. I get into this further below.

Verse 4 speaks about people that never pursued anyone but Jesus. They keep the testimony of Jesus and never deny His name. They are offered as firstfruits to God and Jesus. Verse 5 speaks of no lie found in their mouths. From my current understanding of the sealed 144,000 from chapter 7, these are God fearing Jews, however, have not accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Later in chapter 12, we see Jewish people being carried away by God’s protection and saved from Satan’s fury after he is defeated and kicked out of heaven. It states they will be protected by God in this place that God has prepared for them for 1,260 days, or the last half of the Great Tribulation. I do believe at some point, after the killing of the 2-witnesses and “the woman’s” (Israel’s) escape into God’s protection, they come to realize that Jesus is the Messiah. I am unable to provide any scripture that supports that belief. I believe that they are forced to remain on earth during the remainder of the Tribulation, under the protection of God, but lose out on the rewards that Christ followers will receive by putting their faith in Him earlier.

Verses 6 and 7 speak to an angel flying in midair proclaiming the “eternal gospel” to everyone that lives on earth. The “eternal gospel” is the never changing good news of Jesus Christ and how He bought us with His sacrifice. I imagine this might make “headline news” and be translated over the internet and other broadcasts. Or maybe in some miraculous manner every eye will see the angel and hear the words. We don’t know exactly how it will happen, but know that it will. At this point in the Tribulation, there will not be a lot of Christians remaining on the earth, but there will probably be people that yield to Christ “late in the game” if you will. This angel is instructing that everyone is to worship God. We know this event will anger Satan and his minions greatly. We can bet the Antichrist will use this as reasoning to increase the persecution of any Christians that remain.

Verse 8 speaks to a 2nd angel flying in the air and proclaiming “fallen, fallen is Babylon the great”. “...which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries”, is speaking to her being the most corrupt city that the world will try and emulate. Christian persecution will be terrible in this city. Babylon, whether that is the “official name” or if it is figurative, will lead the world into all

the accepted sinful behaviors of the first part of the Tribulation. Although it isn't specifically stated when this great city will fall, by the Antichrist, we know it is after the midway point of the tribulation. I believe it will be close to when the Antichrist has his image set up in the Holy Temple and the False Prophet starts pushing the only accepted "religion" is worshiping the Antichrist as the messiah. This is really speaking to the political, religious, and social defeat of this city. It will still likely be a major hub of trade and will become even more evil. The destruction of Babylon is mentioned in Chapter 16 with the pouring out of the 7th bowl. Chapters 17 and 18 get into a lot more detail on the fall of Babylon when God destroys her for good.

Verses 9 through 13 are speaking of a 3rd angel flying midair and speaking about anyone who worships the beast, the image of the beast, and receives his mark. That person will suffer the wrath of God during the Tribulation and will spend eternity in the lake of fire. It states there will not be any rest day or night for those who receive the mark of the beast. There is a reminder here for believers and Christ followers to patiently endure. In verse 13 there is a voice from heaven stating that those who die in the Lord from this point on will be blessed. "Their deeds will follow them..." speaks to their martyrdom for keeping the testimony of Jesus and receiving rewards for their righteousness.

Verses 14 through 16 are speaking of Jesus harvesting the remaining believers from the earth. I imagine this to be anyone who has managed to escape the Antichrist, they do not have the mark of the beast, and believe in Jesus. It does not state the timing of this event, but I believe it is directly prior to Armageddon. I believe this because during the bowl judgements there is mention of "only the people with the mark of the beast" get the sores.

Verses 17 through 20 are speaking to the wrath of God and His judgment against those who worship the Antichrist. There is figurative talk here about gathering the grapes of "earth's vine" because they are ripe. The word for ripe here in the Greek is really speaking to being "over-ripened" or basically stating that this wrath is long overdue. Verse 20 is speaking to Armageddon and being trampled outside the city, which is in the valley of Megiddo. This occurs in chapter 19.

Chapter closing statement: As I mentioned earlier, this is a chapter that is a little confusing to me. I am praying for wisdom to better understand it as I continue this study. There are people that believe that the 144,000 are the same sealed Jews from chapter 7, and that they are left on earth to prophesize and witness about Jesus. That is always possible, I just haven't found scripture that supports that at this time. No matter your specific belief on this point, please don't forget, the message of the Revelation of Jesus is that we make ourselves ready for His return!