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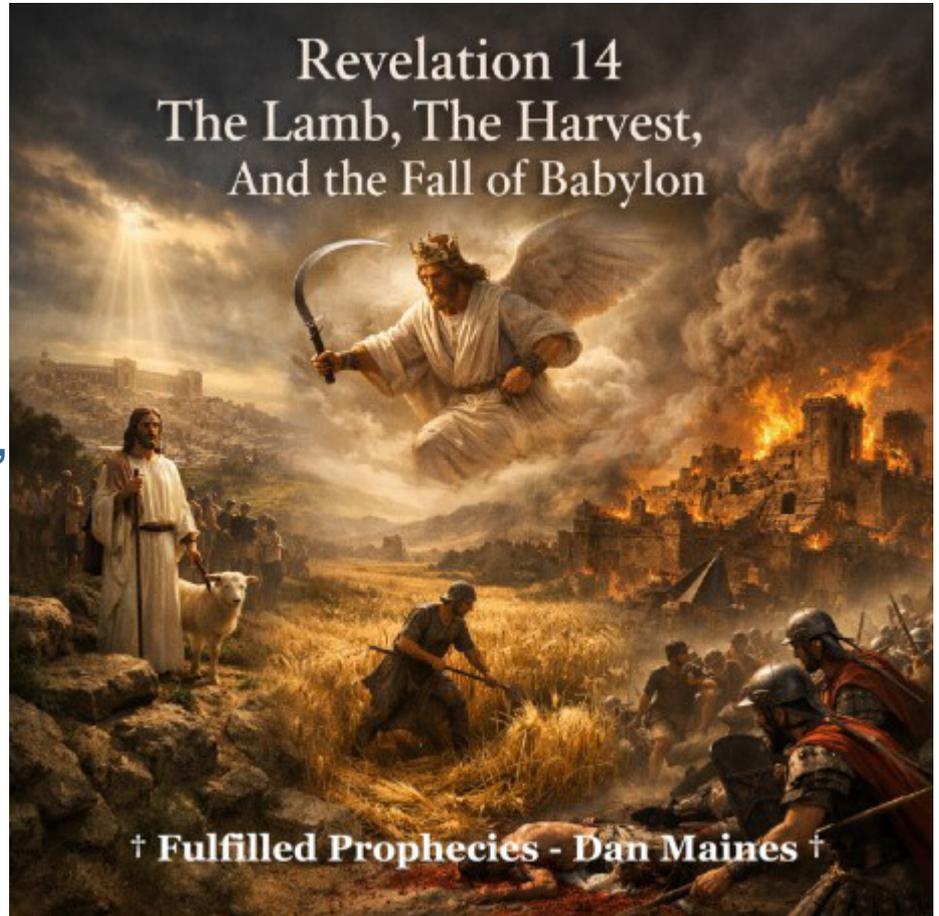
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Revelation 14 The Lamb, The Harvest, And The Fall Of Babylon



By Dan Maines

Revelation 14 The Lamb, The Harvest, And The Fall Of Babylon

Introduction

† Revelation 14 reveals the victory of the Lamb in the middle of the conflict described earlier. While the beast and his followers appeared powerful on earth, heaven shows the true reality. Christ stands victorious and His people stand with Him.

† This chapter unfolds in several scenes. The Lamb appears with the sealed remnant, the eternal gospel is proclaimed, Babylon is declared fallen, and the harvest of judgment takes place. Each scene confirms the authority of Christ and the certainty of His word.

† The vision would have brought comfort to the first century church. Even as persecution increased and Jerusalem moved toward destruction, heaven already showed that the Lamb had secured victory.

Revelation 14:1

Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

† The Lamb standing on Mount Zion fulfills Psalm 2:6 where God declares He has installed His King on Zion. Christ is already reigning.

† The 144,000 represent the faithful remnant of Israel sealed earlier in Revelation 7. They symbolize the Jewish believers preserved through the transition from the old covenant system to the new.

† The name of the Father written on their foreheads identifies them as belonging to God. This stands in contrast to the mark of the beast which represents allegiance to Rome.

† Mount Zion here represents the heavenly Jerusalem. Hebrews explains that believers had come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God (Hebrews 12:22).

Revelation 14:2-3

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they

sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one was able to learn the song except the 144,000 who had been purchased from the earth.

† The voice like many waters and thunder reflects the majesty and authority of heaven.

† The new song represents redemption accomplished. When God delivered Israel from Egypt they sang a song of victory in Exodus 15.

† In the same way the redeemed now sing a new song because Christ accomplished the greater deliverance from sin and from the condemnation of the law.

† Only the redeemed can learn this song because it belongs to those who experienced the redemption Christ purchased.

Revelation 14:4-5

These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they are celibate. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from mankind as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And no lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.

† The purity described here is symbolic purity rather than literal celibacy. The prophets often described idolatry as spiritual adultery.

† Hosea used the same imagery when condemning Israel's unfaithfulness (Hosea 2:2). These believers are the opposite, those who remained faithful to the Lamb.

† They are called first fruits because they represent the beginning of the harvest of the new creation.

† James calls believers the first fruits of God's creatures (James 1:18).

Revelation 14:6-7

And I saw another angel flying in midheaven with an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation, tribe, language, and people; and he said with a loud voice, Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth, and sea and springs of waters.

† This angel represents the universal proclamation of the gospel before the coming judgment. The message goes to every nation, tribe, language, and people, showing the global spread of the message of Christ.

† The statement the hour of His judgment has come shows the immediacy of the coming event. This was not a distant prophecy but a judgment about to unfold.

† Paul confirmed that the gospel had already spread widely when he wrote that it had been proclaimed in all creation under heaven (Colossians 1:23).

† Paul also said that the faith of the Roman believers was being proclaimed throughout the whole world, confirming the rapid spread of the gospel before the coming judgment (Romans 1:8).

† The command to worship the Creator echoes the language of the prophets who called Israel back to the true God before national judgment fell.

Revelation 14:8

And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.

† Babylon in Revelation symbolizes apostate Jerusalem, the city that rejected Christ and persecuted the church.

† Earlier Revelation identified the same city as the place where the Lord was crucified (Revelation 11:8), clearly pointing to Jerusalem.

† Jesus Himself held Jerusalem responsible for the blood of the prophets and warned that judgment would fall upon that generation (Matthew 23:35-36).

† The language fallen, fallen echoes Isaiah's prophecy concerning the fall of ancient Babylon (Isaiah 21:9), showing the prophetic pattern of judgment.

Revelation 14:9-11

Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

† This warning addresses those tempted to compromise with the Roman system and its emperor worship.

† Receiving the mark of the beast symbolized loyalty to Rome and participation in its idolatrous structure.

† The imagery of smoke rising forever comes directly from Old Testament descriptions of national judgment.

† Isaiah used the same imagery when describing the destruction of Edom, where the smoke would rise forever even though the judgment was temporal (Isaiah 34:9-10).

† The imagery therefore describes complete and irreversible destruction rather than endless torment.

Revelation 14:12-13

Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on! Yes, says the Spirit, so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.

† These words encouraged believers who were facing persecution and possible martyrdom.

† While those who followed the beast would face judgment, those who died in Christ would enter rest.

† Their works followed them because their faithfulness to Christ was not forgotten by God.

† Early Christian testimony confirms this confidence. When Polycarp faced martyrdom he spoke of resting in Christ, reflecting the hope described here.

Revelation 14:14-16

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, with a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Put in Your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe. Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

† The Son of Man on the cloud fulfills the prophecy of Daniel 7:13 where the Son of Man receives authority and dominion.

† The harvest imagery reflects the separation that occurs at the end of the age.

† Jesus described this same harvest when He explained that the harvest is the end of the age and the angels would gather the harvest (Matthew 13:39-43).

† Jesus also warned that the wheat and the tares would be gathered in the harvest at the end of the age (Matthew 13:30).

† This harvest represents the covenantal judgment that separated the faithful remnant from those who rejected Christ.

Revelation 14:17-20

And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe. So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trampled outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of about two hundred miles.

† The wine press represents the crushing judgment of God against the rebellious city.

† The judgment occurs outside the city, mirroring how Christ was crucified outside Jerusalem (Hebrews 13:12).

† The imagery of blood reaching the horses' bridles communicates the magnitude of the destruction.

† Josephus described massive bloodshed flowing through the city during the Roman siege, illustrating the devastation of Jerusalem's fall (Josephus, Wars 6.9.4).

Historical References

† Josephus recorded the corruption and madness that overtook Jerusalem's leadership during the final years before its destruction (Josephus, Wars 5.13.6).

† He also described enormous bloodshed during the fall of the city, confirming the severity of the destruction (Josephus, Wars 6.9.4).

† Tacitus, the Roman historian, recorded the disasters that struck Judea during the Roman war (Tacitus, Histories 5.13).

† Eusebius recorded that the Christians in Jerusalem fled the city before its destruction, remembering the warnings given by Jesus (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5).

How it applies to us today

† Revelation 14 reminds us that Christ reigns even when earthly powers appear strong.

† The contrast between the sealed followers of the Lamb and those who followed the beast calls believers to remain faithful to Christ.

† The fulfilled judgment confirms that every word spoken by Jesus came to pass exactly as He said.

† Because His prophecies proved true, we can trust every promise He has made.

Q and A Appendix

Q What does the 144,000 represent?

A They represent the faithful remnant of Israel who believed in Christ and were preserved during the transition from the old covenant system to the new covenant kingdom (Revelation 7:4; Revelation 14:1).

Q What is the eternal gospel mentioned in this chapter?

A The eternal gospel is the message of salvation through Christ that was proclaimed to the nations before the judgment came upon Jerusalem (Matthew 24:14; Colossians 1:23).

Q Who is Babylon in Revelation 14?

A Babylon symbolizes apostate Jerusalem, the city that rejected Christ and persecuted the prophets and the church (Revelation 11:8; Matthew 23:37-38).

Q What does the harvest represent?

A The harvest represents the covenantal judgment that occurred at the end of the old covenant age when the faithful were separated from those who rejected Christ (Matthew 13:39-43).

Q Why is the winepress trampled outside the city?

A The judgment fell outside the covenant protection of the city because Jerusalem rejected the Messiah. Jesus suffered outside the city, and later the judgment also fell outside the city in fulfillment of covenant justice (Hebrews 13:12-13; Luke 21:20-22).

Q Why are the 144,000 called first fruits?

A The term first fruits refers to the first portion of a harvest offered to God. These believers from Israel represented the beginning of the greater harvest of the new covenant people. Scripture calls believers the first fruits of God's creatures, showing that the new creation had already begun through Christ

(James 1:18; Romans 8:23).

Q Why is the judgment described using harvest imagery?

A The harvest imagery comes directly from the teaching of Jesus. He explained that the harvest represents the end of the age when God separates the righteous from the wicked. This imagery shows the covenantal judgment that occurred at the end of the old covenant age (Matthew 13:39-43; Matthew 13:30).

Q Why does the angel call people to worship the Creator?

A The call to worship the Creator echoes the language used by the prophets when warning Israel before judgment. It reminds the people to turn away from idolatry and recognize the authority of the true God before the coming judgment (Jeremiah 10:10-12; Acts 14:15).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Revelation 14; Psalm 2:6; Hebrews 12:22; Exodus 15; Hosea 2:2; James 1:18; Colossians 1:23; Romans 1:8; Isaiah 34:9-10; Isaiah 21:9; Daniel 7:13; Matthew 13:30; Matthew 13:39-43; Matthew 23:35-36; Revelation 7:4; Revelation 11:8

† Josephus, Wars 5.13.6; 6.9.4; Tacitus, Histories 5.13; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5; Polycarp, Martyrdom of Polycarp

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