



# *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*

*"The Untouchables"*

14:1-5

They'll be like superheroes. No one will be able to harm or hurt them in any way. Their untouchable-ness will witness to the victory of God over Satan and the man of sin and his false prophet.

Others will fall. Multitudes of saints will be killed. Any who refuse to swear allegiance to and worship the antichrist will be hunted down and killed. Even the two witnesses, Elijah and Moses, will be killed and remain dead for three days.

Not the 144,000. They will walk unscathed through the years of the Great Tribulation.

We can learn a lot from these remarkable future followers of Jesus.

As chapter fourteen opens I remind us that the Book of the Revelation is not always in chronological order. If you want a chronology, a timeline, you follow the opening of the seals on the seven-sealed scroll. When the seventh seal is opened, seven trumpets are blown. When the seventh trumpet is blown, seven

bowls are poured out. Those series of sevens take you through the seven years of the Great Tribulation.

The seventh trumpet sounded. The pouring out of the bowls is imminent. Those bowls are poured out rapidly towards the very end of the Great Tribulation. They are the final birth pangs of the earth before the return of Jesus Christ.

Before we see the events in sequence, John sees the end of the Great Tribulation. He sees the 144,000 safe with Jesus at His Second Coming.

Revelation 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

John saw “the Lamb.” He saw Jesus. “Lamb” is the favorite name for Him in this book.

Jesus was “standing on Mount Zion.” There is a debate as to whether it is the heavenly Mount Zion or the one on earth.

- In favor of a heavenly scene is the fact that the 144,000 will be described in verse three as singing “before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders.”
- In favor of an earthly scene is the fact that these verses seem to describe their ministry on the earth after the return of the Lord.

I think it’s probably a look ahead to the Second Coming of Jesus to the earth to Mount Zion. There the 144,000 will gather to Him and then accompany Him into the Millennial Kingdom on the earth.

With Jesus are “one hundred and forty-four thousand.” We first were introduced to them in chapter seven. They are 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. They are Jews.

Don't overlook the fact that at the end of the Great Tribulation their number is intact. Not one of them was lost either to apostasy or martyrdom.

The verse literally reads, "having His name, and the name of His Father, on their foreheads." I think it most likely this is a visible marking.

We call ourselves Christians, which means Christ-like or little Christ's. WE might have a bumper-sticker on our car. Or wear something with a cross or an ICTHUS (fish). We might get a tattoo.

Even if we don't 'mark' ourselves, we are said to be sealed with the Holy Spirit. Whether invisible or visible, we, too, are marked men and women. Let's remember that and conduct ourselves as befitting our Lord and our Father.

Revelation 14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

I don't want to read too much into this but it would seem that John was on the earth, seeing the scene on Mount Zion, but hearing the sounds of Heaven.

These sounds coming "from Heaven" will be the soundtrack for the singing of verse three.

All of these moments of music in the Revelation seem carefully orchestrated. Think of the thousands of years of rehearsal that has been going on building up to this one event lasting for a fleeting moment.

It's not the length of time the event will last or even the size of the audience. It's always for an audience of one. No matter what we do we ought to do it as unto the Lord.

Revelation 14:3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

We've seen these characters "before the throne." The "four living creatures" are angels, probably seraphim, whose joy it is to worship the Lord day and night. The "elders" are the church - resurrected and raptured and safe in Heaven prior to the Great Tribulation.

Don't they need to be in Heaven to be singing "before the throne?" I don't see why! Whenever we sing, isn't it to God? Doesn't He hear it before His throne?

The 144,000 are on the earth with Jesus, on Mount Zion, at His Second Coming. Heaven is providing a live soundtrack for a song they sing.

It's a "new song." It encourages me to be thinking of new ways to minister to the Lord and for the Lord. "New" doesn't just mean different. Some of the things people think of as "new" are just whacky.

But I can't afford to go into cruise-control and keep doing things just like I've always done them.

Here's an example of what I mean. This year in the elections Republicans lagged way behind when it came to taking advantage of new technology, especially the internet, to get out the vote. Folks can sit around and think the internet is some kind of passing fad; or they can get on board to see how it can be used to further their message.

As for our untouchables, "no one could learn that song" except them. They were "redeemed from the earth" in a very special way unlike that of any other believers. No one could "learn" their song in the sense that no one else lived their life.

Revelation 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

The first part of the verse seems to describe their career on the earth during the Great Tribulation. The fact they “were not defiled with women” seems to argue for their all being men. As to sexual activity they are said to be “virgins.”

Think about it: These guys are untouchable by the forces of evil but that would not extend to a wife and family. They are better off without those relationships.

There’s nothing wrong with marriage and family. You’re not automatically more spiritual if you remain a virgin. In fact, under normal circumstances it’s weird to remain unmarried. Paul the apostle called celibacy a gift. If it’s a gift from God it can’t be chosen by everyone and it can’t be a mark of spirituality.

But at certain times celibacy is called for. The Great Tribulation is certainly one of those times.

Obviously these guys will be spiritual “virgins” in the sense that they are faithful to Jesus. They won’t be taken in by the antichrist or his false prophet. The world will not lure them away from their mission.

One commentator pointed out that, though we commonly say the 144,000 are evangelists, nowhere are we told that they preach. I think they do; I mean, come on. Why wouldn’t they?

But whatever they say is empowered by how they live. They are definitely set apart for the Lord. There’s no hypocrisy in them.

We, too, must strive to walk the walk.

When you read that “they follow the Lamb wherever He goes” it probably looks forward to their work in the kingdom on the earth Jesus will establish.

Talk about a posse! Jesus will travel around with quite an entourage.

“These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.” They remain redeemed men at the coming of Jesus and go into the kingdom as “firstfruits.” The firstfruits are always the promise of a greater harvest. These guys will be there to enter the kingdom before Jesus separates the believers from the nonbelievers. They will literally be the firstfruits of the Millennial reign of Jesus.

Revelation 14:5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

This comment strikes me as being somewhat odd. I mean, of course you’d expect them to be without “deceit” or “fault.” Why point it out?

“Deceit” can be translated “lie.” It’s a word that can be associated with idols and idolatry. The reign of the antichrist is characterized by lies and idolatry associated with them. In fact, we read in Second Thessalonians that there is something called “the lie” that people who follow the antichrist will believe (2:11).

Remember, too, that people in the Great Tribulation must swear allegiance to the antichrist. They must use their words to worship him.

The 144,000 never waver. There is no compromise at all in them. Not only do they all make it through to the end, they do so without being broken by the pressures exerted on them.

Easy if you’re invincible, you say. Think for a moment. There was one guy in the Old Testament who was nearly invincible. It was Samson. His invincibility became a snare to him as he took it for granted.

We, too, are invincible - at least eternally. Let’s strive to throw off the lies, the idols, that seek to lead us into being unfaithful to the Lord.

The 144,000 are also said to be “without fault.” It could be translated “without blemish.” Jews were familiar with the phrase as describing the quality of the sacrifices that were worthy of being brought to God.

There, standing with the Lamb of God Who was without blemish in His sacrifice on the Cross, are 144,000 followers without blemish. Like Lamb, like little lambs.

Jesus is working just as hard in you and me:

Jude 1:24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Colossians 1:21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

Colossians 1:22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:

It's the same thing we referenced earlier from the Book of Jude. Jesus is going to “present” us in Heaven.

We talk about people looking ‘presentable.’ Have you ever arrived at a function only to feel you were dressed wrong? Usually it happens when you're dressed too casually for the occasion.

The Lord will one day present us. His work in us will be complete and we will be presentable in Heaven.

In the meantime we ought to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to become presentable in every earthly circumstance. We ought to ‘wear’ things like gracious words, forgiving attitudes, humble hearts, and the like.

Dress for the occasion - and the occasion is grace.