

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

"The Zion Vision"

Revelation 14:1-5

Introduction

1. The seventh trumpet (11:15) is followed by an insert (chapters 12, 13). The one chapter portrays Israel (12) and the second (13) the infernal trinity. Now comes another insertion. It follows the gloom of the previous two chapters. There is a ray of light here. It is a prophetic note of the kingdom age.

2. The sequence of events here takes the events both backward and forward. The time of the chapter is like that of the previous one, that is, from the beginning of the tribulation right to its end and to the establishment of the kingdom. It is true that Satan is working during this time, but so is God!

3. Look then at the first fruits unto the Lord during the tribulation. Hang your thoughts on these three thoughts:

1. ABOUT THE LOCATION v. 1.

a. Where?

The place is Zion. This must be earthly and not heavenly. The Lamb is there (Zech. 14:1; Rev. 19:11). The Lamb "stands" (perfect active participle) as if on the edge of His divine movement into the world affairs. This may well be just prior to His invasion to the earth.

b. Who?

There are 144,000 who stand with the Lamb. It seems right to take these as identical with those of an earlier chapter (7). There may be a wider interest here, but the connection seems clear. The future of Israel is the concern.

c. Why?

These have the mark of the Father (cf. mark of beast, 13:16). The Father seals His own now (Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22). He will seal Israel then (7). This shows ownership and destiny. It is a badge of blessedness.

2. ABOUT THE PROCLAMATION vv. 2,3.

The 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Zion are heard with a tremendous song. Mark the description:

a. Its volume

The song is "like many waters" and a "great thunder." There is no part of the earth which will not hear the song. It is the song of the redeemed, cf. 5:9, 10. Those who know Him have a song!

b. Its accompaniment

Harpers join with the voices. Here is fellowship with the suffering Lamb. God uses instruments to increase the song!

c. Its newness

Here is something fresh and full of vigor. God has allowed songs in the night! There is nothing like this except the rapture and the marriage of the Lamb. Here is thunderous exultation.

d. Its participants

Only the 144,000 are the select choir. They have been redeemed. The verb is perfect passive and shows the assurance of true salvation! They are taken from the earth. Believers have no connection with this place!

e. Its hearers

The song is sung so that God on His throne, the four beasts, and the 24 elders all hear (v. 3). Hence, both earth and heaven resound with the praise here!

3. ABOUT THE DEDICATION vv. 4, 5.

Although not mentioned, the key here is service. Those redeemed have a job to do and they are qualified:

a. Negatively

Three statements made about them:

1) Their bodies. They are undefiled. They are virgins. This is not a strike at marriage, for this is confirmed by the Word (1 Cor. 7; 9:5; 1 Tim. 5:14; Heb. 13:5), but this is a time of distress and it may well be that marriage has been deferred (cf. 1 Cor. 7:25-31 with Matt. 24:19, 21). In any case, here are Nazarites. What a company of separatists!

2) Their mouths. Here is a tremendous word in view of the days. They do not have lies! The opposite is true of the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:9).

3) Their persons. What a tremendous word: no fault! As God sees them before His throne, they are full of His righteousness. They are accepted in the beloved Lamb!

b. Positively

1) Their sanctification. It is stated and oh how wonderfully: they are followers of the Lamb! This is a statement of their bodyguard activity. They are clean for this.

2) Their redemption. It has already been noted they have this (v. 3), but here the acrist passive is added. They are taken from other men for this purpose. It is the generic word for "man."

3) Their activation. They are the very firstfruits unto God and the Lamb in the millennium! Here is an earnest of more to come! The harvest is on! The world day has now arrived. What this will mean for the earth is beyond conception!

Conclusion. Beloved, just as the days in which we live are so very dark, it will be in that day (tribulation) also. BUT GOD will work and redeem people unto Himself. It will be wonderful! May the light of this truth dawn on us to understand that today also--in darkness--He yearns to see many redeemed unto Himself (2 Peter 3:9).