

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Message #17
Revelation 14:14-20 – The Son of Man
(11/22/09 PM)

(Outline Map of the Tribulation)

Chapter 14 continues the parenthetical section between the sounding of the 7th Trumpet (11:15-19) to the beginning of the Bowl Judgments in chapter 15. We have seen that these verses serve as an overview to what will follow in great detail in Chapters 15-19. So far we have considered the following.

- The 144,000 on Mount Zion with the Lamb, Jesus Christ
- The angel proclaiming the everlasting Gospel
- The angel announcing the fall of Babylon, the kingdom of the Antichrist
- The angel warning of the doom of those who receive the mark of the Antichrist
- The preservation and blessedness of the saints

John introduces this vision with the familiar words “Then I looked, and behold” (14) introducing startling events.

This Final Vision of Chapter 14 Is Given through the Imagery of Two Harvests

1. The Grain Harvest (14-16)

The Seven Bowl Judgments

This is not a harvest of saints but of sinners. When the Bowl Judgments begin they will come in rapid succession.

- **A prophetic preview of the Second Coming of Christ**

(14) “... a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.”

The cloud and the title “Son of Man” come from Daniel’s prophecy. Daniel 7:13, “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven!”

When we studied Daniel we saw that Jesus identified Himself in this passage in Mark 14:61-62, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? Jesus said, I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

This was His favorite title that He used of Himself. Revelation 14:14 is the last time this is used in the Bible. The “crown” here is not a diadem crown of a ruler but a stephanos crown. This is the crown of a triumphant victor. The “sharp sickle” in his hand symbolizes judgment.

The fact that He is “seated” indicates Christ is waiting for the time decreed by God for judgment to come. Matthew 24:36, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”

The Tribulation Period will end with Christ coming in judgment. Christ will destroy his enemies as a reaper cuts down the grain.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, “...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- **Jesus came the first time as a sower; He will come the second time as a reaper**

(15-16) “And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You

to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped."

Having rejected God's offer of salvation and ignoring the warnings of coming doom the earth is ripe for judgment. The word "ripe" can mean overly ripe, withered or rotten.

This fourth angel mentioned in this chapter is not commanding Christ. He comes from "the temple", the presence of God, delivering God's message, "the time has come for you to reap." The hour of judgment has finally come to planet earth. The opportunity for salvation, the day of grace is over. There will be no more delay. God's judgment will come as prophesied.

Matthew 24:29-30, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

2 Peter 3:7, "But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The Reaping of the Earth Symbolizes the Seven Final Judgments

(15:1) "...seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete."

2. The Grape Harvest (17-20)

The Battle of Armageddon

(17) "Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle."

This is the fifth angel seen in this chapter. Angels have been prominent in Revelation. We saw in chapter 1 that Revelation is the only book communicated to its human author by an angel. Angels appear in every chapter except chapters 4 and 13. So far we have seen their association with the seven churches in chapters 2 & 3, worshipping before God's throne in chapters 4 & 5, calling out the four horsemen in chapter 6, sealing the 144,000 in chapter 7, sounding the Six Trumpet Judgments in chapters 8 & 9, descending from heaven with the little scroll in chapter 10, sounding the Seventh Trumpet in chapter 11, and defeating Satan and his demons in chapter 12.

• The prayers of the martyred saints are about to be answered

(18) "And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." This is seen in the description of the angel. He comes "out from the altar" and "had power over" literally "the fire". John has seen this altar before in Revelation 6:9-11 referring to the 5th Seal Judgment which is martyrdom. There the saints pray an imprecatory prayer. "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

John also saw the seven angels standing before the altar in chapter 8:3-5 in preparation for the Seven Trumpet Judgments. "And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets." The word "stand" is in the perfect tense indicating they were there in the past and have been for a long time. "Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar"

The censer that was normally used to bring prayers before God's throne is now used as an emblem of judgment in answer to those prayers. In 14:18 the word for "ripe" is a different word than that in verse 15. Here the picture is of lush grapes ready to be harvested. It is symbolic for the earth dwellers who are filled with wickedness and ready to be judged.

- **The imagery of the winepress is found in Old Testament prophecy**

(19) "So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

This is a picture of the battle of Armageddon when Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation depicted in Revelation 19. Isaiah presents a picture of Jesus that most people do not recognize.

Isaiah 63:1-4, "Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? — "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?

"I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come."

The prophet Joel prophesied of the same event.

Joel 3:9-16, "Proclaim this among the nations: "Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, 'I am strong.'"

Assemble and come, all you nations, and gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O Lord. "Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow — For their wickedness is great." Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. The Lord also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; but the Lord will be a shelter for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel."

- **This final slaughter will take place in the land of Israel**

(20) "And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs."

Bozrah is south of Jerusalem in Edom. The Valley of Jehoshaphat is about 60 miles north of Jerusalem. This final battle will cover the land of Israel and beyond. Jerusalem will be spared.

Zechariah 14:1-5, "Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley..."

The description of the depth of the blood may be literal or figurative language. It would be about four feet deep to come up to a horse's bridle. It would cover about 160 to 200 miles. It could be referring to the splattering of blood that will occur. This will be revealed in greater detail in chapter 19.

The Cutting of the Grapes Depicts the Destruction of Human Lives