

The Coming Harvest of Divine Wrath

Revelation 14:14-20

I would invite you this morning to take your Bibles and turn to the book of Revelation chapter 14. This morning we will be looking at verses 14 through 20. But before we do I have some words of introduction that I believe are important.

We come, once again, this morning, to a very somber subject. Frankly, a loathsome matter that most of the world considers both absurd as well as impossible, namely, the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and great glory to judge the earth.

I have entitled my discourse to you this morning, “The Coming Harvest of Divine Wrath.” And for most of the world this is laughably implausible. As we understand the Word of God and as we look around us we know that unregenerate man has no fear of God. He has no grasp of the holiness of God and so he has absolutely no understanding of the depth of his own depravity, nor of the wrath of God that abides upon those who are without Christ.

Despite the countless examples of God’s judgment down through redemptive history, even as we read them in the Word of God, those judgments that serve as warnings to man, despite man’s accusing conscience, despite man’s ability to see the attributes of God in creation that renders him without excuse, man still refuses to worship him. Man considers himself to be basically good, not guilty. Man believes that his problems are because he is deprived, not because he is depraved. Man believes that he is acceptable to God as he looks at his own scale of justice that in his mind causes him to believe that his good far outweighs his bad.

Well, with such profound spiritual blindness, man cannot see the impending judgment upon the world. He cannot see that it is coming to the world collectively nor to him individually. In fact, sinners scoff at God’s law. Sinners scoff at the idea of judgment. 2 Peter three the apostle tells us:

That in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."¹

The apostle went on to say, “For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that,”² according to verse seven, “By His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”³

Nevertheless, most men reject God’s common grace as Paul said in Romans two and verse four, “The riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience,”⁴ those things that God brings in an effort to make men see their need for repentance.

¹ 2 Peter 3:3.

² 2 Peter 3:5.

³ 2 Peter 3:7.

⁴ Romans 2:4.

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In fact, it was for this reason that the apostle Paul said in that same passage in Romans two where he warned the religious moralists, he said in verse five:

Because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.⁵

He went on to say in verse eight:

To those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil.⁶

Dear friends, I open up this text to you this morning in Revelation with a deep sense of reverence because in the apocalypse the Lord of glory discloses to us the amazing details of final judgment upon the world. He reveals to us the consummation of redemptive history. His unveiling of these events correspond and even expands upon the prophecies of the Old Testament as we read in Isaiah 13, anticipating the final destruction of future Babylon, the empire of the Antichrist. The prophet says this in verse six:

Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore all hands will fall limp, And every man's heart will melt. And they will be terrified, Pains and anguish will take hold of them.⁷

He went on to say in verse 11:

Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore all hands will fall limp, And every man's heart will melt.

8 And they will be terrified, Pains and anguish will take hold of them

Thus I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud, And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold, And mankind than the gold of Ophir. Therefore I shall make the heavens tremble, And the earth will be shaken from its place At the fury of the LORD of hosts In the day of His burning anger.⁸

Dear friends, mock me if you like. Mock the Word of God if you like. But the Lord's promises are sure. A day of judgment is coming. As certain as the sun rises in the East,

⁵ Romans 2:5-6.

⁶ Romans 2:8-9.

⁷ Isaiah 13:6-8.

⁸ Isaiah 13:9-13.

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so, too, a day of vengeance is approaching. The time of his patience and of his grace is running out. The cup of his indignation is overflowing.

Let me review for a moment the big picture of the Lord's unveiling in the Word thus far as we have studied the book of Revelation. It has been 25 years since the temple in Jerusalem has been utterly destroyed by the Romans as Jesus predicted. The timing of the writing of this text is somewhere around AD 95. Millions of Jews have now been slaughtered. Because of their rejection of their Messiah, Israel as a nation no longer exists. In fact, it has now been temporarily replaced by the Gentile Church as the custodians of divine truth. And even the land has been renamed. Although for time immemorial the land was called Israel and Judah, by now the Romans have renamed it Palestine, a very malicious act on their part, naming the land conquered by Joshua after the ancient enemies of Israel, the Philistines, an effort to utterly eradicate any vestige of the 1500 year Jewish presence in their land. And even today historical revisionists and millions of Arabs who have migrated to that region several centuries after the Jews were defeated by the Romans continue to promulgate this lie claiming that the modern Jews who are returning to their homeland have no claim to their Promised Land. We know, however, that during the millennium God has promised that Israel will possess her land from Egypt to the Euphrates.

We must understand that Satan continues to do all he can to thwart the purposes of God in fulfilling his ancient covenants, in fulfilling his redemptive purposes. In fact, in the most recent September 15th video from Osama Bin Laden he, once again, links America's support for Israel to the attacks on 9/11. And he tells us that our ongoing war with the Arab Muslims in Al Qaeda is because of our support of Israel.

Here is what he said, quote, "Ask yourselves to determine your position. Is your security, your blood, your children, your money, your jobs, your homes, your economy and your reputation dearer to you than the security of the Israelis, their children and their economy?" end quote.

It is also important to note that from the Israeli perspective the American Obama administration's increasing bias against Israel in favor of the Palestinians has now galvanized the Jews all over the world, especially in Israel against Obama. And now, according to the *Jerusalem Post*, we read that Netanyahu enjoys, quote, "unprecedented backing from his constituency."

The *Post* goes on to say, quote, "Clearly emboldened, the Palestinian Fatah General Assembly displayed contempt for any initiative that could further the peace process. Their intransigence, again, demonstrated the absurdity of the notion that this corrupt and duplicitous leadership could be a genuine peace partner. There were even elements of surrealism when the Fatah Assembly unanimously accused Israel of having assassinated Arafat and provided standing applause for a mass murderer." They went to say in this article in the *Jerusalem Post*, "There are also chilling predictions that without prior consultations with Israel, Obama intends to unilaterally submit a US plan for a

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comprehensive settlement at the UN or elsewhere.” And they close with this statement. “Such a move would be an unprecedented betrayal of a long standing ally,” end quote.

Well, no one would argue that the Middle East is a tinder box. It is ready to explode. And, once again, dear friends, we see the stage is set for the war of Gog and Magog against Israel as we read in Ezekiel 38 and 39 that we examined in our study of the first seal in chapter six. But never forget that from the beginning it has been Satan’s priority to exterminate the covenant people and to prevent the Lord from accomplishing his redemptive purposes. So, dear friends, this is an ancient war, ultimately a war between God and Satan, between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light.

So we come to our Lord’s revelation. The apostle John was fully aware of this war. And, by now, John was also aware that many of the churches that had been founded by the apostle Paul in the mid 60s there in Asia Minor were now in a state of spiritual decline. All the apostles are now dead except the beloved apostle who is now in his 90s. He has been banished to a tiny little island in the Aegean Sea, a Roman penal colony, a little island called Patmos. And he is there, according to Revelation one verse nine, quote, “Because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.”⁹

Though his faith remained strong, he longed to see his Savior once again. He longed for fellowship. He longed for the Promised Messiah to return and establish his glorious messianic kingdom in fulfillment of the unconditional and irrevocable covenants that God made to Abraham and David. And, no doubt, he wondered—as we all would—what the Lord had in store for him.

Then, suddenly in the pathos of his suffering the Lord whom he loved revealed himself to him on the Lord’s Day. The same Jesus whom he saw in his humiliation suddenly discloses to him the details of his glorification. What John saw on the mount of transfiguration was a preview of Christ’s second coming glory. And so now the Lord reveals to him what we have before us which is called, again, the Apokalypsis Iesou Christou. “apo” in Greek means to take away. And “kalypsis” is a cover. So this is an uncovering, a laying bear. This is a disclosure, beloved, of that which has been concealed. This is a manifestation from God that lays bear that which has been hidden.

And by way of review, so you keep in mind the big picture in chapter one we have a vision of the glorified Christ and John’s commission to write. And then in chapters two and three we have the letters to the actual churches in Asia Minor, a message of praise and admonition and condemnation as well as promise. And then in chapter four no longer is the Church depicted on earth. It is now in heaven and the Lord there reveals the glories of his throne. And then in chapter five the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb takes the scroll from the Father, the title deed of the universe, the only one who is worthy to break the seals of coming judgment. And then in chapter 6 through 19 you have the unveiling of the cataclysmic judgments that God will pour out upon the earth just prior to his return.

⁹ Revelation 1:9.

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The final week of Daniel's 70th week judgment, seven years of unparalleled judgments upon Israel and the nations of the world, judgments that are so dreadful that Jesus said in Matthew 24 verse 22 if they had not been cut short no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. And then in chapters 20 and 21 you have a detailed description of Christ's millennial kingdom, the consummating link between history and the eternal state. You have the great white throne judgment, the new heaven and the new earth, the ineffable splendors of the New Jerusalem and then finally in chapter 22 you have the glories of heaven.

And right in the middle of our Lord's revelation of these coming judgments in chapters six through 19, right in the middle of the chronology of the tribulation, just after the sounding of the seventh trumpet the Lord pauses and gives us a three chapter parentheses, an interlude, in chapters 12 through 14, to help us better understand these events in their proper sequence. In chapters 12 and 13 he recapitulates the events that are described in chapters six through 11. In chapter 12 you have the career of Satan. In chapter 13 you have the career of the antichrist and the false prophet. In chapter 14 the Lord reveals to us four announcements that will be made during the last half of the tribulation. Each of these are proclamations that provide incentive to believers to stay the course come what may, to be faithful to the Lamb, to fear God and give him glory. But announcements that are also warnings to unbelievers who reject the Lamb and worship the beast.

And all of this leads us to our text now this morning. The final words of this interlude that summarize the whole of our Lord's revelation leading up to his glorious return.

Follow along as I read them here beginning in verse 14 of chapter 14.

And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying 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."

And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped.

And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And 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."

And 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 trodden outside the city, and blood came

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out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.¹⁰

This scene provides a sweeping background summary of the seven bowl judgments that are about to be poured out upon the earth in the last half of the tribulation. And, as you can tell, the scene divides itself rather easily into two parts that correlate with a number of Old Testament passages, Old Testament prophecies.

In the first scene you have a grain harvest that symbolizes the final bowl judgments upon the earth. And there we will see two things, the victorious reaper and the vile harvest of the world. And then the second scene we have not a grain harvest, but a grape harvest of judgment symbolizing the slaughter that will occur at Armageddon. And here we have the angelic reaper and the vintage harvest of Armageddon.

So, first, let's examine scene one, a grain harvest of judgment, again, symbolizing the final bowl judgments that will be poured out upon the earth. The detail and the chronology of which we will see in chapters 15 and 16.

First, notice the victorious reaper here in verse 14.

“Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.”¹¹

In our day of bush hogs and weed eaters we don't know much about sickles, but sickles are an implement with a long handle and a long curved, single edged blade that was used to cut, especially wheat, by swinging the blade horizontally close to the ground. Notice the imagery here.

We have not only a sickle in his hand, but we see that there is a white cloud that the Son of Man is sitting on. Throughout the Word of God white clouds are emblematic of majestic glory. And notice he has a golden crown on his head. This is a *stefanos* crown worn by victorious generals, worn by victorious athletes, not the *diadema* worn by kings. This is very important for you to understand.

Beloved, although he is the King of kings and Lord of lords, he has not yet taken his stand upon the earth. But here he is pictured in a pose of ruling and preparation. Notice the Lord is pictured sitting, not standing. You see, he still awaits his time to stand and to swing the great sickle of sovereign wrath over the wretched harvest of the earth. Indeed, soon his nostrils will flare in indignation and he will rise in fury and the omnipotent conqueror will triumph over his enemies. And then he will seat himself upon the throne of David on Mount Zion as promised even as Isaiah promised in chapter nine verse seven where he said, “There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice

¹⁰ Revelation 14:14-20.

¹¹ Revelation 14:14.

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and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”¹²

My friends, this is a terrifying, yet glorious scene. Here we have the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ pictured as a magnificent resplendent reaper gathering a harvest of divine judgment.

The prophet Daniel saw this as well in Daniel seven and verse 13. There we read:

I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven
One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of
Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion,
Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every
language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion
Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be
destroyed.¹³

Beloved, what a contrast to his first coming. The one who came the first time in unthinkable humility now appears in unimaginable glory. The suffering servant is, indeed, the Lord of glory who is coming to execute judgment upon the world, a world that has long rejected him.

As I think about what John must have experienced—and, indeed, this is not in the text—but somehow I can see the tears running down his cheeks as his thoughts raced back in time to the scene that he witnessed when the Lord ascended into heaven, that scene recorded in Acts one verse nine when Jesus was, quote,

...lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."¹⁴

Now the old soldier of the cross sees the fulfillment of this prophecy with his very eyes. Now he sees the prophecies that were recorded by the Old Testament prophets, even by the Lord Jesus and by the other apostles and he records it as he has been commanded.

Now, no doubt, John remembers the words of Jesus that he had recorded earlier in John five and verse 27 where Jesus said of himself, that the Father gave him the authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of Man.

¹² Isaiah 9:7.

¹³ Daniel 7:13-14.

¹⁴ Acts 1:9-10-11.

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So, first, we see the victorious reaper. Second, we see the vile harvest of the world. Notice what happens next, verse 15. “And another angel came out of the temple...”¹⁵ the *naos*, the sanctuary, the holy place. This is fascinating. Remember, three angels have already spoken in this chapter warning about the judgment that was about to come and now a fourth angel is dispatched from the heavenly temple, from the throne room where God the Father is seated, and notice the message this angel is ordered to deliver to the Son. He is, “crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, ‘Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.’”¹⁶

“Ripe,” in the original language literally means dried up or withered, like a plant that is without a root system, a plant that is now worthless and dead and fit only to be burned. The Lord uses this same analogy elsewhere in Scripture. For example, when he was on earth he gave us the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew 13. And there he said:

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat...¹⁷

And later on in verse 30 he says, “Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.’”¹⁸

Dear friends, the reaping that will occur as a result of the final bowl judgments will be incomprehensible. Remember by this time the earth is already reeling from the seal and trumpet judgments. The inhabitants of the earth have experienced, by now, unprecedented destruction and death. And we know that these were only the beginning of birth pains. But now the pain is about to increase in severity and in frequency. These will be plagues that recapitulate the plagues upon the Egyptians in Israel’s first and great deliverance.

By way of summary in chapter 16 we will see that they will include loathsome and malignant sores upon the beast worshippers. We will see the seas turn to blood. Everything in the seas dies. The same fate befalls all of the fresh water rivers and springs. We read that the sun will scorch men with fierce heat. We read that darkness will encompass the earth and in verse 10 of chapter 16 we read that men will gnaw their tongues because of pain. And yet the text goes on to say that they blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores and they did not repent of their deeds.

The River Euphrates will also dry up allowing the kings of the east to be a symbol according to verse 14 of chapter 16, “For the war of the great day of God, the

¹⁵ Revelation 14:15.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Matthew 13:24-25.

¹⁸ Matthew 13:30.

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Almighty.”¹⁹ And in verse 16 we read that, “They gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.”²⁰

And then the final bowl judgment will be the greatest earthquake the world has ever known. We read in verse 20 of chapter 16 that:

every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.²¹

But, my friends, what is unthinkable, is that despite God’s repeated efforts to warn man of his wrath and their need to repent, they continued to reject him. So the victorious reaper puts in his sickle and reaps the vile harvest of the world.

In scene two we move from the grain harvest of the bowl judgments to a grape harvest of judgment, again, symbolizing the slaughter that will occur at Armageddon. At first we see the angelic reaper as another angel assists the Son of Man in this harvest.

Verse 17.

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.²²

Will you notice here that this angel does not come out from the throne room where the Father is seated, but from the altar. Now, the imagery here is rooted in the Old Testament tabernacle and in the temple of Israel. In fact, this is a reference to the same altar that we saw in Isaiah’s vision in Isaiah six as well as Ezekiel’s vision in Ezekiel 10.

In Revelation this altar was first described to us in chapter six verse nine through 11 where the martyred tribulation saints will cry out with a loud voice, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”²³ So now we see that this is the altar from which God’s judgments against the earth have always been launched in Revelation. We see the same thing described in Revelation eight verses three and five.

Now in the Old Testament, the altar of incense stood nearest to the holy of holies in which the glorious shekinah of the presence of God hovered, where it was housed. And now what we see is that in the celestial court it is likewise situated nearest to the presence of God before the throne as we read in Revelation eight.

¹⁹ Revelation 16:14.

²⁰ Revelation 16:16.

²¹ Revelation 16:20-21.

²² Revelation 14:17-18.

²³ Revelation 6:10.

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And there we read how that the Lord speaks of a golden censer which is literally a fire pan held by an angel. This finds its parallel in the duties of the Old Testament priests where every morning and every evening they would place red hot fiery coals from the brazen altar where sacrifices were offered and place them in the golden censer and then they would transfer them to the altar of incense where they would pour the coals upon the altar. Then the smoke from the ignited incense would then rise heavenward symbolizing the prayers of the Israelites who would be assembled outside in prayer watching this fragrant cloud of smoke ascend symbolically as if their prayers are being carried to the throne of God.

Now here in chapter 14 verse 18 we see this angel emerging from the heavenly counterpart of this wrath altar of incense. The text says the one who has power is over fire. Literally in the original language it is “*the* fire.” You see, this is an angelic minister of wrath responding to God on behalf of the prayers of the martyred saints. And now the prayers for God to avenge himself and for justice to be executed is about to be answered.

Notice what this angel does in verse 18. “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.’”²⁴ The word ripe here is different from the word that was used in verse 15 that referred to that which is dried up or withered, but rather here it refers to that which is in its prime. It means to be ripe at its peak. This symbolizes the perfect time for a harvest, the perfect time for the wicked of this world who are pictured as clusters of grapes to be harvested.

You see, by now the world is ripe with rebellion. It is full blown in its blasphemy. It is absolutely plump with the poison of idolatry and every manner of wickedness. And now the armies of the world are assembling themselves against the city of Jerusalem to eradicate God’s covenant people, to poke their finger in the apple of his eye. As we would say in our vernacular: Are you kidding me? God is not going to put up with that.

So we shift from the angelic reaper to the vintage harvest of Armageddon, verse 19. “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.”²⁵

This is vivid imagery here. I have seen ancient wine presses in the Middle East, especially in Israel and basically what they are are two massive bowls that are hewn out of rock, one slightly higher than the other. And the higher bowl is the place where they would place the clusters of grapes and individuals would walk upon those grapes and, shall we say, trample them or squash them. And the juice from the upper basin would flow through a little rock trough down to a lower basin where the juice would be harvested for consumption.

²⁴ Revelation 14:18.

²⁵ Revelation 14:19.

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Now the splattering of the juice here is a dramatic and gruesome picture of what God will do when he assembles the armies there at the battle of Armageddon. According to verse 20 we know that it will be outside of Jerusalem because God has sworn to jealously protect Jerusalem as we read in Zechariah 12 and Zechariah 14.

Beloved, this one day will be a battle field that will extend from the plain of Esdraelon, that stretches out from Mount Megiddo which is about 60 to 65 miles north of Jerusalem, all the way down to the ancient region of Edom and the capital city of Bozrah at the southern part of Israel. This will be a massive basin in which the Lord will trample these grapes of wickedness.

Notice in verse 20. "And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles."²⁶

We will look at this more closely when we come to it in later on in our study of Revelation, but according to Isaiah 14 and Zechariah 12 and Zechariah 14 as well as Joel three verses 12 through 13, the antichrist will amass his forces and launch one final assault against Israel. But we know that Christ will utterly destroy them.

The Lord spoke of this day in a marvelous soliloquy as recorded in Isaiah 63. There he spoke of ancient Edom and its capital city Bozrah as being representative of the foes of God that he will some day eliminate. It is interesting that Bozrah literally means vintage, the place where Christ will tread the winepress of his great wrath.

And speaking proleptically, in other words, speaking about something future in the past tense to underscore the fact that it is absolutely certain that it is going to happen, God says this in Isaiah 63 verse one.

Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

"I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."²⁷

²⁶ Revelation 14:20.

²⁷ Isaiah 63:1-6.

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The prophet Joel also describes this event in chapter three beginning at verse 11 where he says:

Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, And gather yourselves there. Bring down, O LORD, Your mighty ones. Let the nations be aroused 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, tread, for the wine press is full; The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.²⁸

Notice, finally, again, the vintage harvest of Armageddon in verse 20. We read the winepress was trodden outside the city and then it says, “And blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.”²⁹

Beloved, this really won’t be a battle. It will be a massacre. And here the Lord uses hyperbole to describe the extent of the slaughter. The carnage will extend for a distance of 200 miles from northern Israel to southern Israel.

So here we see an angel that emerges from the presence of God with sickle in hand and then another angel emerges from the altar of incense and instructs the angelic reaper to put in his sickle and reap. He is to cut the ripe grapes to be trod in the winepress of the wrath of God by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah king who has revealed to us the details of this coming slaughter.

If you will turn over to Revelation 19 we will close with this text. Beginning in verse 11 we read of the time when he will come.

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.³⁰

Beloved, that is a reference to us. That is a reference to the glorified Church.

Verse 15.

And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and

²⁸ Joel 3:11-13.

²⁹ Revelation 14:20.

³⁰ Revelation 19:11-14.

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on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God; in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.³¹

May God have mercy upon those who scoff at the coming harvest of the divine wrath. May I say to you unless you repent you will perish in your sin. So I plead with every one who does not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, please understand that he is your only hope of salvation. The Word of God tells us that if you will confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. That is my prayer and my passion for each of you that do not know Christ.

For those of us who do, oh how we can glory in the cross because were it not for his grace we, too, would be recipients of his wrath.

Let's pray together.

Father, we are humbled as we read your Word and understand more of the glory of your wrath. Lord, it causes us to shudder for the lost many of which are people that we know and love. Lord, how we cry out to you to save them by your grace. And, Lord, for those of us who long to see you face to face, may what we have studied this morning motivate us to be faithful in witness and in obedience. I ask all of this in Jesus' precious name and for his glorious sake. Amen.

³¹ Revelation 19:14-21.

The Coming Harvest of Divine Wrath

Revelation 14:14-20

Transcript Explanation: Each transcript is a rough approximation of the message preached and may occasionally misstate certain portions of the sermon and even misspell certain words. It should in no way be considered an edited document ready for print. Moreover, as in any transcription of the spoken word, the full intention and passion of the speaker cannot be fully captured and will in no way reflect the same style of a written document.

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