

**What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of The Book of The Revelation. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

1. Last week I taught Rev 14:14-19. When time expired we were reviewing the harvesting and separation of unbelievers when the Lord returns.
2. Before we continue I want to provide "1Jo 1:9 time" as may be necessary.
3. Let's first look at an expanded translation of Rev 14:9-19 and then we will return to the study of Rev 14:17-20.
4. I want to review some of that learned and then begin new material on page three.

### **Expanded Translation**

**Rev 14:9 A third angel followed the first two shouting as it flew behind the other two angels: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand,**

**Rev 14:10 they will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the elect angels and the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God.**

**Rev 14:11 And the smoke of their torment will rise and never end. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."**

**Rev 14:12 The trials and tribulations of this age call for patient endurance on the part of the saints; these saints will obey God's commandments and remain faithful to the Lord Jesus.**

**Rev 14:13 Then I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." "Yea!" says the Holy Spirit of God, "they will rest in heaven from their labors on earth; their divine good which was so hard to come by in the economy of the Tribulation will follow them as an eternal reward."**

**Rev 14:14 I, John looked up and suddenly, right there in my face was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was the Lord Jesus Christ; He looked much like as when I knew Him on earth but there were differences. He wore a crown of gold on his head and He held a sharp sickle in his hand.**

**Rev 14:15 Then I saw an angel, like those earlier seen, he came out of the temple and screamed in a loud and excited voice; he was screaming at the Lord Jesus who was still sitting on the cloud, The angel cried out "Take your sickle and reap, because God the Father has said it is time to harvest both the wheat and the tares, the tares are over ripe and more than ready for judgment."**

**Rev 14:16 So Christ swung his sickle over the earth, and the wheat was harvested out from the fields, leaving only the over ripened tares separate and ready for destruction. The wheat represents the believers who were taken into the Millennium to enjoy perfect environment.**

**Rev 14:17 Another angel of the same kind was seen coming out of the Temple in heaven, and this angel like Christ also had a sharp sickle.**

**Rev 14:18 Then I John saw another angel coming out of the Temple, this was the angel who was responsible for maintaining the perpetual fire in the Altar of Incense located outside the Holy of Holies; he cried out in a loud voice to the Lord Jesus Who was still sitting on the cloud, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, they are ripe and ready for the harvest."**

**Rev 14:19 This angel ordered the harvesting of the grapes; He and his angelic armies swooped down on planet earth where a violent harvesting took place; the grapes were thrown into the great winepress of God's wrath.**

Principles

1. The use of angels to assist in the harvest of the earth is now stated explicitly in verse 17. What is to be harvested has been in my view missed by many.

2. The angel of verse 17 is the ninth to appear in this chapter and, like the angel of verse 15, he is said to come from the Temple in heaven. The harvest here in my opinion is a reference to the armies of the world gathered to destroy Israel and not the general judgment of unbelievers already mentioned in verses 14, 15 and 16.

2.1 There are ten angels mentioned in this chapter:

Rev 14:3 And I also heard a new song being sung before the throne of God; standing before that throne were the **four** special **angels** earlier seen and the church age saints earlier raptured. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been preserved through the awful Tribulation.

Rev 14:6 And I saw another **angel** fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Rev 14:8 And there followed another **angel**, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

Rev 14:9 And the third **angel** followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

Rev 14:15 And another **angel** came out of the temple crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe .

Rev 14:17 And another **angel** came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

Rev 14:18 And another **angel** came out from the altar which had power over fire and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

3. Like the Son of man this angel of verse 17 has a sharp sickle indicating the severity of the judgment.

4. This angel is exhorted in verse 18 by another angel, the tenth in the chapter, to thrust in his sharp sickle

5. The angel making this request is described as coming from the altar and having power over fire.

5.1 The noun comes from **Thuo** meaning to slaughter an animal.

5.2 This would seem to indicate the altar is the one outside the Temple as over against the Altar of Incense were it not for the fact that Rev 8:3 which clearly speaks of the Altar of Incense and uses the same **Thusiasterios**.

Rev 8:3 And another came and stood at the altar, (**Thusiasthrios**) having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

5.3 There are those like John Walvoord who believe the actions of the angel here would seem to be a response to the prayers of the saints. Such is quite possible, however, the Greek does not make it clear which of the Altars is in view. Walvoord would seem to base his opinion on a positive identification that the altar in view is the altar of incense; this in my view cannot be supported quite so dogmatically from the passage, although, I too choose the Altar of Incense as the most viable of two very plausible alternatives.

6. Walvoord writes: "These allusions seem to indicate that the angel is acting in response to the prayers of the saints for divine judgment of wickedness in the earthly scene, and the fact that he has power over fire indicates the purging judgment of which he is capable."

7. The figure of divine judgment as a harvest is in verse eighteen enlarged. Twice the sharp sickle is mentioned in this verse and the clusters of the vine of the earth are described as grapes fully ripe.

8. The expression "fully ripe" in verse 18 is a translation from **Akme**; it is a different expression from the verb **Exeraino** used in the description of the harvest in verse 15.

9. Here it pictures grapes fully grown in their prime almost bursting with juice. Though the figure is somewhat different, the spiritual meaning is the same.

10. The time has come for a great and juicy harvest.

11. The use of the vine in a figurative way is frequently found in the Bible in relation to Israel (Psa 80:8, 14, 15; Isa 5:1, 2; Jer 2:21, 24; Eze 17:5, 8; Hos 10:1); it is also used of the church in Joh 15:1, 6.

Psa 80:8 You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it ...

Psa 80:14 Return to us, O God Almighty! Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine,

Psa 80:15 the root your right hand has planted, the son you have raised up for yourself.

Isa 5:1 I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside.

Isa 5:2 He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

Jer 2:21 I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine?

Jer 2:22 Although you wash yourself with soda and use an abundance of soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me," declares the Sovereign LORD.

Jer 2:23 "How can you say, 'I am not defiled; I have not run after the Baals'? See how you behaved in the valley; consider what you have done. You are a swift she camel running here and there,

Jer 2:24 a wild donkey accustomed to the desert, sniffing the wind in her craving in her heat who can restrain her? Any males that pursue her need not tire themselves; at mating time they will find her.

Eze 17:5 "He took some of the seed of your land and put it in fertile soil. He planted it like a willow by abundant water ...

Eze 17:8 It had been planted in good soil by abundant water so that it would produce branches, bear fruit and become a splendid vine.'

Hos 10:1 Israel was a spreading vine; he brought forth fruit for himself. As his fruit increased, he built more altars; as his land prospered, he adorned his sacred stones.

Hos 10:2 Their heart is deceitful, and now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will demolish their altars and destroy their sacred stones.

Joh 15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

Joh 15:2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

Joh 15:3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

Joh 15:4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

Joh 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Joh 15:6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

12. Just as Israel and the church were to bear the fruit of righteousness to the Lord, so here we have the vine producing the fruit of wickedness and corruption; even as the armies of the world gather to destroy Israel; they have the leadership of the Antichrist and an overwhelming support from the nations.

13. In verse 19 the angel, in response to the entreaty, thrusts or "casts (Greek **Ballo**) his sickle into the earth and harvests its vintage casting it into what is described as the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Rev 14:19 And the **angel** thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

14. This action is actually fulfilled in Rev 19:15, in verse fifteen the same figure of speech is used in the description of the Lord Jesus' coming.

Rev 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

Rev 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

Rev 19:14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

15. In Rev 14:20, the winepress is described as trodden outside the city, and blood is said to come even to the bridles of the horses as far as 1,600 furlongs.

KJV

Rev 14:20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles (**Chalinos** a bridle), by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

NIV

Rev 14:20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.

16. "This" writes Walvoord "is obviously a picture of the ultimate judgment of the wickedness of men at the time of the second coming of Christ."

17. Alford interprets it: "A tremendous final act of vengeance is denoted. This passage speaks prophetically of that which will chronologically follow the return of Christ to the earth. The spurting of the grape juice from under the bare feet of those treading the grapes in the winepress is compared to the spurting of blood ... it speaks of the awful human carnage of Revelation 19:17-21."

Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God,

Rev 19:18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great."

Rev 19:19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.

Rev 19:20 But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Rev 19:21 The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

18. The unusual expression that the blood spatters to "the horse bridles" for "a thousand six hundred furlongs" has intrigued expositors.

19. The scene of this event is apparently the city of Jerusalem, outside of which the judgment takes place. The place of this great judgment helps identify the ones being judged. God's great winepress of judgment is said to be "outside the city."

19.1 The city as we have seen can only be Jerusalem. Ground zero of God's most awful judgment is just outside Jerusalem.

19.2 Zechariah gives us prophetic insight about this. As he predicts the last great battle of the last great war before the second coming of the Messiah, he gives us God's words: "I will gather all nations against Jerusalem ... " Zec 14:2.

19.3 He then adds "The Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle" Zec 14:3.

Zec 14:2 I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.

Zec 14:3 Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle.

Zec 14:4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.

Zec 14:5 You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

19.4 The armies of all nations will be gathered in the area of Israel, especially around Jerusalem.

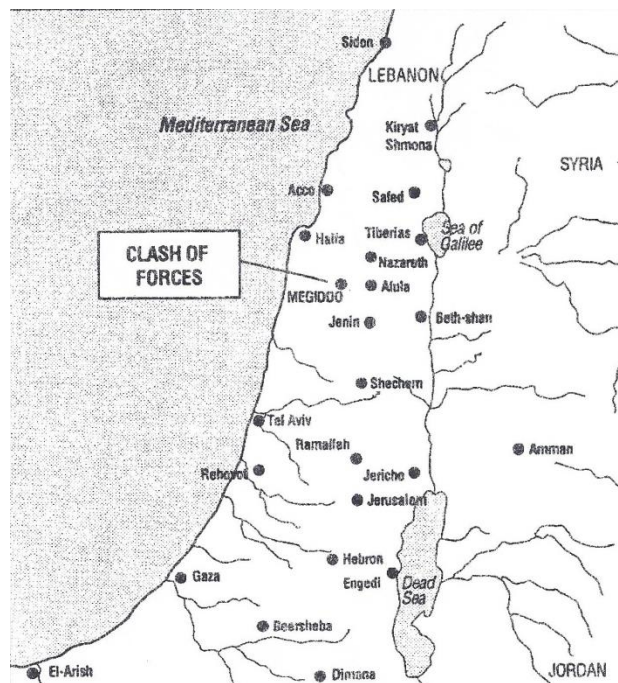
19.5 At least 200 million soldiers from the Orient; with millions more from the forces of the King of the West and King of the North headed by the Antichrist of the Revived Roman Empire will arrive to surround Jerusalem!

19.6 Jesus will apparently first strike those who are ravaging His city, and His people. He will then strike the armies amassed in the valley of Megiddo.

19.7 No wonder blood will stand to the horse's bridles for 200 miles.

19.8 It is grizzly to think about such a carnage. From the point where the Valley of Armageddon slopes down to the Jordan Valley southward down the Valley through the Dead Sea to the Port of Elath on the Gulf of Aqabah is approximately 200 miles.

19.9 Taken literally our prophecy teaches this entire area will be filled with blood.



19.10 As Alford states, "It is exceedingly difficult to say what the meaning is, further than that the idea of a tremendous final act of vengeance is denoted. This interpretation is confirmed by the parallel in Isa 63:3."

Isa 63:1 Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, Edom's capital, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save."

Isa 63:2 Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress?

Isa 63:3 "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing.

Isa 63:4 For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come.

Isa 63:5 I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm worked salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me.

Isa 63:6 I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."

20. There are others who take the position the description found in verse twenty is literal. Recall the Bible should be taken literally unless the context indicates otherwise. This is one of those passages which present difficulty.

21. The area covered, 1,600 furlongs, is approximately 200 miles, and would, say some, specify an area within a 200 mile radius from Jerusalem as the center of the final carnage at the time of the Second Coming of Christ.

22. The land of Israel covers about 200 miles from the north to the south, and the reference to distance may mean that only the length of Israel is in view rather than the more extensive territory of 200 miles in all directions from Jerusalem.





23. Alford objects to a literal distance ... and prefers a symbolic meaning of the distance. He concludes, however, "This is one of the riddles of the Apocalypse to which not even an approximate solution has ever yet been given."

24. There is no reason, however, for limiting the battle to the precise boundary of the holy land, and there is really no serious problem here in taking the distance literally.

25. The terrible picture of the blood-letting which will mark the end of the age may include various phases of the battle taking place in the great tribulation and the climax of Christ's victory when He judges the nations at its end.

26. William Kelly regards this chapter as the outline of the end of the age:

"In this chapter, then, we have the full outline of the dealings of God in the latter day crisis. There are seven divisions of it. Firstly, there is the full remnant of godly Jews associated with the Lamb on Mount Zion, in sympathy with His sufferings and waiting for the kingdom. Secondly, a testimony to the Gentile nations scattered all over the world as well as to those seated on the prophetic earth. Thirdly, the fall of Babylon. Fourthly, the fearful doom, both in this world and in the next, of such as should worship the beast and his image, or receive the mark of his name.

"Fifthly, the blessedness from that time of those that die in the Lord. Sixthly, the discriminating process of the harvest. And seventhly, the awful infliction of vengeance on religious apostasy, the first, at least of these two last acts of judgment being executed by the Son of man, which necessarily supposes the very close of the age; the wrath, not of God only, but of the Lamb."

27. Taken as a whole, chapter 14 of The Book of The Revelation emphasizes first that the 144,000 of Israel seen at the beginning of the great tribulation will be preserved triumphantly through it.

28. Second, the rest of the chapter is devoted to various pronouncements of divine judgment upon a wicked world, reassuring the saints of that day that, though they may suffer and even be martyred, God's ultimate justice will triumph, the wicked will be judged, and the saints will be rewarded.

29. This chapter reassures the saints after the two preceding chapters where the gigantic conflict of the great tribulation is described. The implications of the message for today are only too plain.

30. Today is a day of grace; but what is true of the Tribulation is also true today, namely, that God will ultimately judge all men.

31. Today, however, the invitation is still open to those who will trust in Christ and who thereby can avail themselves of the grace of God and be saved from entering this awful period which may be impending this present generation.

32. Now for an expanded translation of Rev 14:20:

**Expanded Translation**

**Rev 14:20 The armies of the world were trampled in the winepress outside the city of Jerusalem, and blood flowed out of the wine press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 200 miles; the armies of the world earlier gathered to destroy Israel were made to drink of the wrath of God.**

33. Now let's see what we can learn from chapter fifteen of the Book of the Revelation. The rather short chapter describes another scene in heaven and introduces the reader to the seven bowl judgments. It has been translated.

End Lesson Taught 8-16-2017

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