

Ministry of Grace

Revelation Chapter 14

¹Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, ³and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, ⁵and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water." ⁸Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality." ⁹And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name." ¹²Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. ¹³And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

¹⁴Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. ¹⁵And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." ¹⁶So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. ¹⁷Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." ¹⁹So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia. [ESV]

Notes

Revelation 14:1

¹Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

This scene possibly describes the Lamb of God, the Messiah, Jesus Christ returned to earth and standing on Mount Zion, which is Jerusalem. This occurs immediately after the battle (slaughter, really) of Armageddon. It is also possible that this is a heavenly scene depicting the 144,000 with a special honor, standing with the Lamb on heavenly Mount Zion. This is NOT a picture of the church, for the 144,000 are clearly identified as being Jews (see Revelation chapter seven).

“Then I looked, and behold” – This is an indication that John is about to describe a new vision. The word **“behold”** is in the imperative mood indicating a command. It’s as if John was saying, **“Then I looked, and ... look at that!”**

“the Lamb” – Some manuscripts say “a Lamb,” but the best Greek manuscripts say **“the Lamb.”** Throughout the book of Revelation, the Lamb of God is referred to with this Greek word **arnion**, a diminutive of lamb, which literally means “a little lambkin.” Our Savior does not have to appear as something mighty and powerful because He, and He alone, IS mighty and powerful.

“with him 144,000” – It is not clear whether this is the earthly Mount Zion or the heavenly Mount Zion. Some have equated this with:

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (**Hebrews 12:22-24**) [ESV]

This passage in Hebrews clearly refers to the heavenly Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem. Notice, in the Hebrews passage above, both angels and the church are described as being present.

On earth, it appears that Mount Zion will be the only mountain that remains at the end of the Tribulation. With the final bowl judgment in chapter sixteen, there will be a great earthquake that will level all mountains; apparently forming a relatively flat earth like it was before the flood.

The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. And **every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found.** (**Revelation 16:17- 20**) [ESV]

Isaiah also foresaw the effects of this great earthquake and the presence of the Lord in all His glory. Note, too, that John the Baptist quoted this passage in Isaiah with respect to the coming of the Messiah:

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. **Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.** And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (**Isaiah 40:3-5**) [ESV]

The Psalmist apparently foresaw this as well, describing the commencement of the Kingdom of God on earth, as he wrote:

"As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (**Psalms 2:6-9**) [ESV]

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. (**Psalms 48:1, 2**) [ESV]

Notice that the Psalmist referred to Mt. Zion as being in the far north. It is interesting that the description of Satan's fall involved his desire to sit on "the far reaches of the north."

You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;' (**Isaiah 14:13**) [ESV]

And Isaiah said of this mountain:

Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders. (**Isaiah 24:23**) [ESV]

Even though the current verse depicts only the Lamb and the 144,000, the verses following the current verse (**Revelation 14:2,3**) describe a heavenly scene. Therefore, it seems most reasonable to conclude that John's current vision of the Lamb and the 144,000 is a heavenly scene depicting the heavenly victory celebration at the end of the Tribulation.

"**His name and**" is not included in some translations but it appears in the most reliable manuscripts and should most likely be included in the translated text.

Revelation 14: 2

²And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps,

"**voice**" – This is from the Greek word *phonē*, which refers to a sound or tone made or given forth. So "**voice**" is most often the appropriate translation for an intelligent being whereas "**sound**" is probably more appropriate for a nondescript sound or the sound of inanimate objects like musical instruments. Given the context, it is more reasonable to read this as

And I heard a sound from heaven like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of loud thunder. The sound I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, “**from heaven**” – The Greek text here is *ek tou ouranou*, which literally translates as “out of heaven.” This is an indication that this vision is a heavenly vision which John sees from his earthly perspective.

“**like the voice of many waters**” – This may be a reference to the voice of God, Himself. Compare this to:

And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army. When they stood still, they let down their wings. (**Ezekiel 1:24**) [ESV]

And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. And the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory. (**Ezekiel 43:2**) [ESV]

his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. (**Revelation 1:15**) [ESV]

“**The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists**” –What is significant about the sound that John heard is that it is a musical sound, a sound of joy which is to be immediately followed by the singing of the 144,000.

Revelation 14:3

³and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

“**They**” is a reference to the 144,000. Since they are the only ones who are able to learn the song, it is obviously they who are the ones singing the song.

“**redeemed**” is translated from a form of *agoradzō*, which means “to purchase.” It is different than the word used by the Apostle Paul in reference to the redemption of Christians as in **Galatians 4:5** (*exagoradzō*, meaning to purchase and take out of the market place.) However, it is significant in that these 144,000 are also purchased (with the blood of the Lamb).

Revelation 14:4

⁴It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb,

“**not defiled themselves with women**” – The word “defiled” is from the Greek word *molunō*, which means “to stain” (always used in a bad sense). These 144,000 are not sexually stained, or defiled with women, as the text reads. This is conclusive evidence that the 144,000 are all men.

“**virgins**” – This is from the Greek *parthenos*, which means “a virgin,” one who has not engaged in sexual activity. Metaphorically, however, it can be a reference to one who has kept himself or herself free from adultery or fornication. As a result, there has been much

discussion as to whether these 144,000 are men who have never engaged in sexual activity or if the number might contain married men who have remained faithful to their wives. The simplest interpretation is often the best. Hence, these are most likely men who have never engaged in sexual activities. This fact would be particularly astounding given the fact that mankind is unrestrained from sin (by the Holy Spirit) during the tribulation, as well as under intense demonic influence like never before known to mankind. It is likely that sexual sin and perversion will be rampant on the earth during this time. Yet, these 144,000 will remain pure!

There are some who claim that the description of these as “**virgin**” refers to their spiritual purity as evidenced by the statement “**These are the ones who follow the Lamb**” which immediately follows. The grammatical construction of the opening sentence of this verse, however, makes a direct association between their virginity and the fact that they have not been defiled with women.

“**who follow the Lamb wherever he goes**” – This is most likely a reference to their total dedication to their calling by God as witnesses throughout the earth during the seven year tribulation.

“**firstfruits for God and the Lamb,**” – In the Old Testament the firstfruits, the first part of the crop to be harvested or the firstborn of animals, were offered to God as completely set-apart to be used in His service.

"When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance and have taken possession of it and live in it, you shall take some of the **first of all the fruit of the ground**, which you harvest from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket, and you shall go to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name to dwell there. And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.' Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. (**Deuteronomy 26:1-4**) [ESV]

And this shall be the priests' due from the people, from those offering a sacrifice, whether an ox or a sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach. **The firstfruits of your grain, of your wine and of your oil, and the first fleece of your sheep**, you shall give him. For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for all time. (**Deuteronomy 18:3-5**)

These 144,000, as firstfruits to God, have been set-apart for special service to God during the tribulation.

Revelation 14:5

⁵**and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.**

“**lie**” – Some Greek texts have the word *dolos* here, meaning “fraud or guile.” The best manuscripts have the word *pseudos*, meaning “a lie.”

“**blameless**” – From the Greek word *amōmos*, meaning “without spot or blemish.”

As representatives of the Lamb, these 144,000 will be undefiled and pure as the Lamb of whom they are witnessing. Since these are humans who have a sin nature, however, they will not be without deceit or fault in and of themselves. Rather, like those of us in the church age who are saved, they will be declared as pure and sinless and may even appear that way to the sinful earth dwellers during the tribulation.

Revelation 14:6, 7

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

First angel proclaims THE ETERNAL GOSPEL with a loud voice

“**Then**” – This is the Greek word *kai*, meaning “and” or “but.” It is not an indication of time sequence. Therefore, it is more appropriately translated “and.”

“**another**” – This is “another of the same kind” (the Greek word *allos*). The “same kind as what?” is unclear. Having seen many angels in his visions up to this point it is difficult to identify specifically what previous angel is referred to. John’s message, then, is simply that he saw an angel flying etc.

“**eternal gospel**” – This angel is proclaiming the “eternal or perpetual good news” to **the permanent earth dwellers** (*tous katoikountas epi tēs gēs*), which is an expression used throughout Revelation in reference to the unsaved who are on the earth.

This angel flies through the sky above the earth proclaiming to the unsaved, the eternal gospel, that God is the creator and salvation is in Him alone; time is almost up, so repent now before it is too late.

Revelation 14:8

⁸Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality."

Second angel announces CATASTROPHIC JUDGMENT

“**Babylon the great**” – There is much discussion as to the specific thing referred to by this expression. Throughout the Bible, Babylon is referred to and held up as an example of greedy commerce and false religious practices. In the book of Revelation it may be a reference to:

- A literal city, whether the actual city of Babylon or some other city of which Babylon is a symbol.
- A political, socio-economic system separate from and against the principles of God
- A false religious system

Some of the Greek texts have this as “Babylon the great city” If that is accurate, then this is likely either a reference to an actual city or to the political, socio-economic system that is symbolized by the great city. However, the reference to “her sexual immorality” is likely a reference to the religious system that is portrayed by Babylon. Throughout the Old Testament the nation of Israel was spoken of as an unfaithful wife (a harlot) and having committed

sexual immorality, specifically, her idolatry and unfaithfulness to God. Hence, this reference to Babylon the great may be an all-encompassing reference to the world religion in combination with the economic-political-religious system headed up by the Antichrist. If that is the case, then this proclamation by this angel is an announcement of the total demise of all that is ungodly during the tribulation.

“**fallen**” – This more accurately should be translated “**fell**.” It is repeated for emphasis. This is a use of the aorist tense referred to as “proleptic aorist” which is talking about something that has not yet occurred as if it has already happened because the eventuality of it is so sure.

“**she who made all nations drink**” – Literally this is “**she gave all nations to drink**.” There is nothing in the Greek to indicate that “she” forced all nations to drink. They have done it voluntarily.

“**of her sexual immorality**” – Since sexual immorality, fornication, and harlotry are images of spiritual unfaithfulness to God, this may be a reference to the false religious system of the tribulation. Or, as pointed out earlier, this may be a reference to the combined religious and political-socio-economic system which is in power during the great tribulation.

Revelation 14:9-11

⁹And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

Third angel announces IMPENDING DOOM with a loud voice

“**and receives a mark**” – This occurs during the 2nd half of the tribulation

“**he also will drink the wine of God's wrath**” – In no uncertain terms anyone receiving the mark of the Beast will experience the wrath of God!

“**full strength**” – This is literally, “**having been mixed unmixed**.” That is, it is not diluted at all like the wine of the first century which was mixed with water, typically six parts water to one part wine. This will be the full strength of God’s wrath.

“**in the presence of the Lamb**” – This seems to be contradictory to what Paul taught in:

in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, **away from the presence of the Lord** and from the glory of his might, **(2Thessalonians 1:8-9)** [ESV]

There is a reconciliation of these seemingly contradictory verses, however. In **Revelation 20:5** is a description of the damnation of all those not found written in the book of life. This occurs at the Great White Throne Judgment and even though angels are not specifically said to be there, it is likely that they will be. At this judgment the lost will be cast into the lake of fire, in the presence of God and in the presence of the holy angels, where they will suffer

torment eternally separated from God with no hope of ever being reconciled to God. This is the ultimate fate of all who receive the mark of the beast.

Revelation 14:12

¹²Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

Even in the midst of the terrible wrath and impending judgment of God there is mention of those who remain true to God and the blessedness of those who remain faithful even to death during the tribulation.

“**endurance**” – This is the Greek word *hupomonē*, meaning “to remain under.” It is the picture of a beast of burden remaining and continuing under a heavy load instead of shaking it off. It is sometimes translated as “**patience**,” but it can also be translated as “**endurance**” which is probably a better translation in this case. These are the ones who keep the commandments of God and remain faithful to Him through faith in Jesus. Some of the faithful will survive the terrible tribulation and persecution of this most horrible period in the history of mankind.

Revelation 14: 13

¹³And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

Even in the midst of the terrible wrath and impending judgment of God there is mention of those who remain true to God and the blessedness of those who remain faithful even to death during the tribulation.

Since John is commanded to write this blessing, and those who are to read John’s writing are saints who exist from the first century on, this appears to be a blessing promised to all who are martyred for their faith throughout the church age and the tribulation. Back in the second chapter of Revelation, in the letter to the church in Smyrna, John gave the promise of the crown of life for those who are sacrificed for their faith:

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. (**Revelation 2:10**) [ESV]

“**blessed**” – This is from *markarios*, meaning “possessing the favor of God, that state of being marked by fullness from God.” Throughout the centuries faithful Christians have been martyred for their faith. Many, if not most, of these killings have been performed by those who claim to be worshipers of God and part of the organized church.

“**says the Spirit**” – Here and in **Revelation 22:17** are the only two places in the Bible where the Holy Spirit is quoted directly.

“**rest from their labors**” – One of the most consistent pictures of the heavenly reward for faithful believers is rest from their labors. The word translated “**rest**” is *anapauō*, meaning “to give rest, quietness, and refreshment.” It is the same word used in chapter 6 when God told those martyrs under the altar:

Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. (**Revelation 6:11**) [ESV]

The word here translated “labors” is *kapos*, meaning not just “labor” but “great and wearisome labor.” It is a picture of what believers go through when the ungodly are in power.

“**for their deeds follow them**” – No matter whether a soul appears before the Bema Seat Judgment (Christians), the Judgment of the Nations (Jews and tribulation saints) or the Great White Throne Judgment (all unsaved) it is their works which are looked at. The works will never result in salvation (they cannot meet God’s standard of righteousness) but they will apparently determine levels of reward or punishment. (see Bible Study on Judgments). In the book of Hebrews we are given this message:

For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, (**Hebrews 6:10, 11**) [ESV]

Revelation 14:14

¹⁴Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand.

“**Then I looked, and behold**” – This phrase introduces a new vision by John. There are two harvests described in verses 14 through 20. The first appears to be a grain harvest like the one alluded to in the parable of the wheat and the tares (**Matthew 13:25-30**). This represents the seven bowl judgments. The second harvest is a grape harvest which appears to be a picture of the battle of Armageddon itself.

“**One like a son of man**” – Though this is expressed as one “like” the Son of Man, it is apparent that this is, in fact, the Son of Man. You may recall in the first appearance of Jesus in Revelation he was referred to in the same way:

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands **one like a son of man**, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. (**Revelation 1:12, 13**) [ESV]

This return of the Messiah to set-up his earthly kingdom is also the scene that Daniel was describing when he saw one like the Son of Man:

"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came **one like a son of man**, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (**Daniel 7:13, 14**) [ESV]

This occurrence in **Revelation 14:14** is the last time in the Bible that the title “son of man” is used for Jesus Christ. Note the dramatic contrast between this and the first use of this title in the Bible:

And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (**Matthew 8:20**) [ESV]

He who came with nothing, not even a place to sleep, who judged nothing before its time, will come again as the conquering, ruling King of kings and Lord of lords, the judge of all the earth. He who came as a servant to save people from their sins will come a second time as the almighty God to judge people for their unbelief.

“**a golden crown**” – This is not a *diadema*, or ruler’s crown, rather it is a *stephanos*, or victor’s crown as He comes to claim victory over all who opposed Him.

Revelation 14:15

¹⁵And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe."

Fourth angel comes from the temple and proclaims IT’S JUDGMENT TIME with a loud voice

This angel comes out of the temple in heaven before the throne of God and he delivers the message from God the Father to God the Son that the time has come. Recall, that in Jesus’ answer to His disciples as to when the Day of the Lord would come, He said this:

But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. (**Matthew 24:36**) [ESV]

Jesus declared that He, the Son of man, did not even know the time. Now that the time has come, it is announced to the Son by an angelic messenger from the Father. God’s anger has reached its limit, and His wrath is about to be poured out. The time for grace is over, there will be no more delay; the harvest of judgment is come!

“**the harvest of the earth is fully ripe**” – The word translated “fully ripe” is the Greek word *exēranthē*, from the word *xēros*, meaning “dry.” It is a word that implies that the harvest has become all dried up and withered. This is an indication that this is a grain harvest. No one can say that God has not waited until the last moment to execute judgment. He has given mankind every opportunity to repent of sins and now the time has finally come to execute His judgment.

Revelation 14:16

¹⁶So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.

We are not told what the distinction is between the grain harvest and the grape harvest. Some have speculated that the grain harvest represents the common people of the world and that the grape harvest represents the political and religious leaders and the military. I see no evidence for that. Another idea put forth is that the grain harvest represents the gathering of the believers and the grape harvest represents the unbelievers. This could be the separating the sheep from the goats for the judgment described in chapter 20.

He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and

the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”

Another suggestion is that the grain harvest represents the seven bowl judgments that are poured out in rapid succession upon all the earth dwellers and the grape harvest is the final destruction of the armies fighting against God at the battle of Armageddon. This grain harvest, then, represents some of the most horrific actions of judgment against the earth dwellers:

- Malignant, oozing sores all over the bodies of those who have the mark of the beast
- The sea becomes blood like the blood of a dead man and all creatures in the sea die
- All rivers and water sources become blood
- Scorching rays from the sun burn men with intense heat
- Intense darkness comes over the kingdom of the beast
- The Euphrates river dries-up making way for the kings of the east to assemble for Armageddon
- The most violent earthquake to ever strike the earth, all islands will disappear and all mountains will be brought low.

Revelation 14:17, 18

¹⁷Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. ¹⁸And 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."

Fifth angel comes from temple with a sharp sickle

This angel is God’s version of “the grim reaper,” who comes to reap vengeance on all who oppose God

Sixth angel, the one having power over fire, comes from the altar and cries with a loud voice, “IT’S GRAPE HARVEST TIME.”

“**who had power over fire**” – Literally this is “the one **having** power over fire.” This angel comes from the altar of incense under which the slain martyrs reside (see the fifth seal judgment of **Revelation 6:9-11**). These martyrs are the ones who prayed to God, “**O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?**” Their prayer is now being answered. This altar is also described in **Revelation 8:3-5** just before the trumpet judgments begin. Here, again, it is associated with the prayers of the saints.

“**gather the clusters of the vine of the earth**” – The rebellious, unrepentant sinners are represented here as clusters of the vine. Their being cut off represents their being severed from life on the earth.

“**grapes are fully ripe**” – The word here translated “fully ripe” is a different word from what we saw in verse 15. Here it is the Greek word **ēkmasan**, meaning “at the point of complete

ripeness.” It pictures these as completely full of the juice of rebellion against God, at the maximum point of being ready to make juice from.

Revelation 14:19, 20

¹⁹So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

This is God expressing His wrath against those who have rejected His offer of grace as pictured by their blood coming out of the winepress. This is a reference to the battle (slaughter, actually) of Armageddon where all those who have come out against God will be slain without mercy by the word out of the mouth of the returning Messiah.

“as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia” – This is one of the most wildly interpreted verses in the book of Revelation. The word translated “as high as” is *achri*, which is an adverb of time or distance meaning “up to the point of or as far as.” In this verse it does not necessarily mean that blood flowed in a stream as deep as a horse's bridle as many have interpreted it. There simply is not enough blood in all of mankind (especially after more than half of them have been previously killed) to flow 4 feet deep for 200 miles. The word translated “for” is *apo*, meaning “from.” Taking all this together, we see that it could just as easily be referring to the blood splattering (as it came out of the winepress) as high as (up to) a horse's bridle and the splattering occurring over a distance of (from) **1,600 stadia** (approximately two hundred miles). The size of Israel from north to south is approximately 200 miles. This could be the implication of the **1,600 stadia** or it could simply be a description of the vastness of the battlefield over which God obtains His victory.

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