

Series: "People Get Ready"

C.R. 10-17-21

"Harvest Time"

**Text:** Revelation 14: 14-20

**Intro:** Today we close at the 14 chapter of the book of Revelation and we see our Lord in a much different role than we are accustomed to. I remind you it is much easier to see this chapter in light of a movie trailer, than to think of it in chronological order. We saw the 144,000 standing and singing with the Lamb. Last week we observed the angels flying with the everlasting gospel, the words of the fall of Babylon, and the word of damnation on those who take the mark of the beast and follow the beast instead of the Lamb. The movie trailer also showed us a stark contrast between verse 11 and verse 13.

Today we see the reaping. The movie trailer will show us a snapshot of what I believe is the last 3 and ½ years of the Tribulation. A time when God says enough is enough and its time to harvest.

When Jesus came the first time, He came as a Savior. He came to give His life on the cross so that sin might be paid for and sinners might be set free. When He comes the second time, He is coming as a Judge. He is coming to destroy sin, Satan and all those who stand in defiance to God. When Jesus returns, He will come in power, glory and judgment and none will be able to withstand Him! There will be no cross for Jesus the next time He comes. There will be a crown! There will be no tree for Him to hang upon; but there will be a throne for Him to sit upon.

Many don't want to think of God in this way. As one who comes to judge and reap the harvest, but I assure you this is God. He will judge the living and the dead. He will judge the lost and the saved. He is the only one who can, as He is the only righteous and Holy one.

**1) The Return. (v. 14-)**

- a. There can be no denying who this is. This is none other than Jesus himself.
- b. The crown here is the victors crown. Not the diadem, but the stephanos crown.
- c. It pictures the Son of Man not in His identity as the sovereign ruler, but as the triumphant conqueror victorious over all His enemies
- d. "How different it will be to see him with a crown of gold upon his head from what it was to see him wearing that terrible crown of thorns which the cruel soldiers plaited, and thrust upon his brow! The word used here does not usually refer to the diadem of power, but to the crown won in conflict; and it is very remarkable that it should be said that, when Christ comes to judge the world, he will wear the garland of victory, the crown which he has won in the great battle

which he has fought. How significant of his final triumph will that crown of gold be about those brows that were once covered with bloody sweat when he was fighting the battle for our salvation!" **(Spurgeon)**

- e. We read often in the scriptures of Him on the clouds.
- f. When Jesus comes back, there will be no debate. The United Nations will not convene to see whether He can reign or not. When He comes, He will be wearing the golden crown of the victor. This just means that all the battles have already been fought and He is the winner! Jesus will not rule by the leave of men. He will rule by His right at Creator, Lord, Savior and King!
- g. Note. He has the sickle in his hand. He is in full control of the harvest. He can tell the wheat from the tares.
- h. Each one of us will face him. He will either be our Savior or our Judge.

## 2) The Reaping. (v.15-19)

- a. The first time our Lord came he came sowing the seed of salvation. The Good seed.
- b. With all sowing there is a time to reap. A time for gathering.
- c. The reaping of the grain here shows us a picture that the earth is ripe, (overly ripe—his mercy and grace has gone as far as it will go).
- d. **Read Matthew 13:24-30 & Matthew 13: 36-43**
- e. The problem with the wheat and the tares is that the two cannot be told apart while they are growing. The tares, which is a plant called the Bearded Darnel, look just like wheat as it matures. The difference between the two plants becomes clear when they near harvest time. The head, or top, of the tare turns black and stands up straight. It is filled with tiny black seeds that can cause nausea, or even death. It is a natural emetic and when tares are harvested with the wheat, every kernel must be inspected. The wheat, on the other hand, has a head filled with heavy kernels of wheat. These kernels cause the head of the wheat plant to bend toward the earth. ( The obvious contrast between the saved and the lost.)
- f. The frightening details of that judgment are unfolded in chapter 16: loathsome and malignant sores on the worshipers of Antichrist (v. 2), the death of all life in the world's oceans (v. 3), the turning of the world's rivers and springs of water into blood (v. 4), the intensifying of the sun's heat until it scorches people (v. 8), painful darkness over all of Antichrist's kingdom (v. 10), the drying up of the Euphrates River in preparation for a massive invasion by the kings of the east (v. 12), and the most powerful and destructive earthquake in history (v. 18). Those seven rapid-fire bowl judgments mark the first phase of the final reaping of the earth.
- g. "the Lord knoweth them that are his," **2 Tim. 2:19.**
- h. We can rest sure today that the Lord knows His own. He knows who has called on his name and trusted in Him for salvation.

- i. There will also come a time when with sickle in hand he harvests the field.
- j. Note the word “ripe” here. This ancient Greek word for ripe has a negative sense, "to become dry or withered." The idea is of something that is over-ripe. This means that God will judge the earth only when it is over-ripe for judgment. He doesn't rush into judgment.
- k. "It must be remembered that evil has its harvest as well as good. There is a harvest of misery and woe, - a harvest for the gathering, binding, and burning of the tares, - as well as for the gathering of the wheat into the garner of heaven."
- l. In the text we go from the field to the vineyard. The lost are compared to very ripe grapes.
- m. **Illustrate:** Grapes thrown down in the vats and stomped on until every drop of juice is extracted.
- n. Those who have rejected Christ have attached themselves not to the true vine, but to the vine of the world.
- o. This is the very image Isaiah paints of the coming King in **Isa. 63:1-6**. Jesus is coming in wrath and judgment and there will be no escape! The enemies of God will be thrown into “the winepress of the wrath of God” and they will be judged!

### 3) The Reckoning. (v.20)

- a. Many believe that this verse is referring to the battle of Armageddon (which will be come back to), where many armies will march to at war with God.
- b. Fully Ripe is mentioned again. pictures grapes fully grown in the prime almost bursting with juice ... 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 and speaks of the awful human carnage." **(Walvoord)**
- c. What strength have grapes against the weight and power of a man when he comes to set his feet upon them? And the riper they are, the more helpless ... The heel of Omnipotence is upon them, and they can only break and sink beneath it." **(Seiss)**
- d. It is hard for our minds to comprehend blood this deep.
- e. Matt looked it up for me. 184 miles long, 4 feet deep, 20 yards wide, 6 quarts of blood per person....would require the blood of 1 billion human beings.
- f. Armageddon, as this passage indicates, will actually be a slaughter rather than a battle. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns, Antichrist, the false prophet, and all their human and demonic forces will be immediately destroyed. (MacArthur)
- g. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord, He is trampling out the vineyard where the grapes of wrath are stored He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword His truth is marching on!
- h. Remember we will look at this battle in more detail in days ahead. This is just he movie trailer.
- i. Joel calls this the “valley of decision”. Decision determines destiny.

**Conclusion.** Two principles present themselves. One relates to God's grace, the other to His justice.

***First, God's grace gives us the freedom to choose righteousness.*** Adam and Eve were created with the capacity to obey or disobey. They could submit to God or rebel against Him. When they sinned, they became slaves to sin, sending humanity headlong into a state of sin and death (Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:22). But Christ's death has set us free from slavery to sin (Rom. 6:5-7).

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to choose righteousness instead of wickedness

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. (Rom. 6:12-13)

***Second, God's justice holds every person accountable.***

Many Christians believe that because they're eternally saved by grace they are no longer subject to the scrutiny of God.

Scripture is just as clear that "we will all stand before the judgment seat of God" (Rom. 14:10).

For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Cor. 3:11-15)

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor. 5:10).