The Day of the Harvest — Delivery Transcript

Revelation 14:14–20 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, May 1, 2022 · *The Day of the Lord*

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It was a nice break, but I've got to admit I was actually looking forward to getting back into the book of Revelation. And for those of you who are visiting today, typically in our church, we work through books of the Bible. Pick a book, work through it line by line, chapter by chapter. That way, if you get super insulted at the preaching, it just wasn't personal, you know. It's just whatever's next, so you take it up with the Lord if you didn't like it. But actually, a bad sermon's on me.

But if it's the text you don't like, that's, you know, God's sovereign providence of expositional preaching. One of the reasons we've been studying the book of the Revelation is because it's the only book in the Bible that I'm aware of that has a unique blessing attached to the people who study it. In fact, it says at the beginning of the opening lines of Revelation, blessed are those who hear the word of God, or who hear this book, who read this book, and who apply it to their lives. And so I don't know about you, but I stand ready for a blessing from the Lord.

Anybody else take a blessing from the Lord? Amen. And I would love to see the Lord bless our church in a special way, and he has promised a blessing to those who read and understand the word and put it into their life. Now obviously that's a blessing you could apply to all of Scripture. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable. But this one has a unique blessing. I think it's interesting. And so we've been going through it line by line, verse by verse, chapter by chapter. If you're new to the book of Revelation and if you're new to Bible study, maybe the most important thing you need to know about this book is it's what's called apocalyptic literature.

That's a ten-letter word that just means crazy— no, it doesn't mean crazy. But it means he uses pictures and metaphors and symbols to communicate. Now a lot of people read the

book of Revelation about a dragon trying to eat a baby and a woman that's clothed in the sun and they go, Oh, this is just pretend. This is like Star Wars or a Marvel movie. It's not for real for real. Like Blaze every time we watch a Spider-Man movie or a Marvel movie: Dad, is this one real life? No, sir, I'm sorry.

It's talking about real life, but it's not real life. And so they say, Well, that's what Revelation is. It's talking about real life, but it's not real life. I don't think that's what apocalyptic means. What apocalyptic means— it's not mythical truths or kind-of-sort-of truths. No, they're true truths, and I believe even literal truths, but the person who's describing these literal truths doesn't— human language is not sufficient to try to capture what he sees. You've all heard the phrase, A picture's worth a thousand words. You ever heard that before? That's the idea of apocalyptic literature.

Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words. And John seeing these things about the future that are going to transpire, he's left with pictures and images to try to relay what he saw in these visions. And so we've been looking at them. It's been a fascinating study. Again, if you're new to the book of Revelation, the second thing I think it's important for you to think about, just to simplify the book, is to think of it in terms of sevens. There's really four sets of seven that kind of frame out the book of the Revelation.

You've got seven churches, seven letters to seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, followed by seven seal judgments. Revelation 5 talks about this big scroll, and the scroll is sealed with seven different seals. And so chapter 6 is breaking those seals, and every time a seal is broken, something else happens on the earth. Those seals are followed by— does anybody remember? Quiz time. Seven seals, followed by seven— trumpets. Yeah, trumpets. Trumpets of judgment. And those trumpets of judgment are basically the Lord going scorched earth on the earth. He destroys the physical creation, talks about one-third of the earth being burned up, one third of the sea water going bad, one third of the fresh water going bad, which is up from the seal judgments.

In the seal judgments they had authority to kill one fourth of the earth. That upgrades to one third during the trumpet judgments. So you've got seven seals— wait, seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets; final seven is the seven— anybody know? Bowls. Bowls of wrath. And that's Revelation chapter 15, 16. So that's basically the book of Revelation. Letters to churches, seals that prepare the earth for judgment, trumpets that unleash the judgment, and bowls of wrath that kind of wipe everything off, after which the new creation comes down, new heavens, new earth.

Between those sets of seven, you've got what I'm going to call interludes or breaks in the action, a pause in the sequence of events, and it's almost like John gets brought up into heaven and the Lord gives him visions of the same events but kind of filling in the gaps from a different point of view. So like during the seal judgments, you saw all these things

happening on the earth. Well, in Revelation chapter 7, you get this pause, and it's essentially the Lord saying, even though there's catastrophe going on down on the earth, God has his people.

And they had this 144,000 who are sealed and protected by God. Then John sees this vast multitude from every tribe, tongue, and language gathered around the throne, singing, Salvation belongs to our God. And so you feel this tension of God's judgment being poured on the earth, Satan, the antichrist, all of these forces trying to overcome Christ and his people. But then God filling his people with power, sealing them, protecting them, and ensuring that they continue to advance his mission on the earth. That's the tension. You see the same tension after the trumpet judgments.

John's ushered up into heaven in Revelation chapter 10. He's told by Jesus himself, You will prophesy again. Eat this scroll. It's going to be bitter, but it's going to be sweet. And then John in chapter 11 sees these two witnesses who have to fight against the antichrist. They have to fight against this unholy trinity, but they are persevering. They are preaching the gospel. They are advancing the mission even as they're being persecuted and warred against. Finally, the antichrist kills these two witnesses, but then God raises them from the dead. That's the break in the action.

So again, the tension: God's people filled with the Spirit, protected by God, fighting against God's enemies, the antichrist, this unholy trinity. They try to crush the people of God, but the people of God are protected. That brings us to the bowl judgments, and really, between that chapter 11 to chapter 15, which is where we're going to go next week. You have this big interlude within an interlude. Think of it as a story within the story. And in chapters 12, 13, and 14, God takes this drama that you see in the seals and you see in the trumpets.

And he plays it out with even more picturesque language. Chapter 12 was a chapter where this woman who represents Israel is being devoured by this dragon who represents Satan. The dragon tries to devour the child of the woman who represents the Messiah. And then in chapter 14[1] it kind of hones in on the forces of evil being the antichrist and the false prophet, a godless government followed by a godless religion. Those two actors, government and false religion, are used by the antichrist to crush the people of God. And crushed they do become.

If anyone doesn't take the mark of the beast, they're cut off from society, they have a death penalty resting on them. That leads to chapter 14, and chapter 14 is basically the same scenario but from a different perspective. Chapter 13 is from the perspective of the antichrist: We're a winning team. Chapter 14 is from the perspective of heaven. It may look like they're winning, but God gets the last laugh. And so chapter 14, you have this group of 144,000, the people of God, sealed and protected. And then you see this angel going to and fro— actually two angels— going to and fro all over the earth, and they're preaching the gospel.

And as they're preaching the gospel, God is warning those who refuse to repent, who refuse to drop and forsake their idols, that judgment is coming. And that's where we're at today. All right. Our text, if you're taking notes, is right in the middle, sandwiched between God's promise of judgment in chapter 14 and the execution of that judgment in Revelation chapter 15. And it's a really interesting text that kind of foreshadows or anticipates what's about to come with these bowls of wrath. And it's so fascinating. I think you'll be encouraged by the passage, and some of us may be rebuked and warned in our unbelief.

Let's pick it up. Revelation chapter 14, verse 13. John says, "Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'so they will rest from their labors, since their works follow them.'" Remember the context? Angels had been going to and fro over all the earth preaching the gospel, even as the antichrist is trying to crush the people of God. But to those even who are crushed, this blessing is attached, saying, You are blessed, even if you have to die, because you're dying in the Lord, and from now on you're going to rest from your labors and your works follow after you.

Then John looks and he sees, in chapter 14, verse 14: "Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and one like the Son of Man was seated on the cloud, with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Another angel came out of the temple, crying out in a loud voice to the one who was seated on the cloud, 'Use your sickle and reap, for the time to reap has come, since the harvest of the earth is ripe.' So the one seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested."

Harvest number one. "Then another angel who also had a sharp sickle came out of the temple in heaven. Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came from the altar"— which was in the temple in heaven— "and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, 'Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the vineyard of the earth, because its grapes have ripened.' So the angel swung his sickle at the earth and gathered the grapes from the vineyard of the earth, and he threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath.

Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles." That's kind of gross to think about, right? Blood flowing for 180 miles up to a horse's bridle, that's a lot of blood. So, what you have here in this passage is two different harvests, right? Now, some of you are West Texas people. You grew up in West Texas, you know all about harvest season. You know it's harvest season when your allergies flare up. Amen. That's when I always knew.

In Roby growing up: They must be ginning cotton, because I can't breathe. Harvesting season is a unique season because in one way you're reaping the rewards of all of your patient endurance, all of your toil, all of your effort. The income is coming in. It's a joyous,

wonderful season, but it's also a lot of hard work. And growing up in Roby when it was time to strip cotton, we would get on those combines and those cotton strippers and work till like two or three in the morning because they have little lights on there and you had to do it because you had to get it done before the produce was overripe.

And that's kind of what you have here. You have this harvest season, and for some it's a harvest, I believe, of mercy, a harvest of goodness, a harvest of the reward of your patient endurance and faithfulness, whereas for others it's a harvest of judgment and a harvest of wrath. Now why do I think that? Well, Israel historically had two different harvest times, and this is kind of a little trivial tidbit of information if you enjoy these kinds of things. But in Israel there was a grain harvest followed by a fruit harvest or a grape harvest.

April-May area— no, no, no, March-April area— that was your grain harvest, whereas in May-June you would harvest things like figs and grapes and things of that nature. I think that's the same idea that John's communicating with these two different harvests. There's a grain harvest followed by a grape harvest. The harvest of grain I want you to think of as a harvest of God's mercy. Whereas the harvest of grapes is a harvest of God's wrath. And before I explain why I believe that's what this passage is teaching, you need to know that this view that I'm about to share with you is a minority view.

Most people see this as one harvest of God's judgment. I don't see it only as a harvest of God's judgment. I think there's a harvest of mercy that precedes or accompanies the harvest of judgment. I think the people who only see it as judgment say that because of the prior commitments they make earlier in the book. But my view is a minority view. Okay. And if your preacher always has a minority view, you probably should get another preacher. But I don't always have a minority view. I just happen to have a minority view on this.

Now why do I think that these are two different harvests, distinct in that one's a harvest of mercy and one's a harvest of judgment? Well, the first, and maybe the biggest reason, is because they are different harvesters. The harvest are described differently in all kinds of ways, but namely there's a different harvester. In the first harvest, it's Jesus Christ Himself who's doing the harvesting, right? He describes him as a son of man. He's seated on the cloud. He's got the *stephanos*, the victor's crown. He's instructed by the angel who comes out of the temple saying, the time has come, go and reap.

It seems like Jesus reaping the earth of his redeemed, of his people, as an offer of God's mercy. They've repented, they've trusted in the Lord, they've experienced God's mercy. The second harvest is not Jesus, it's an angel. It's not just any angel; it's an angel with power over fire, which is judgment. And the angel with the sharp sickle goes and reaps. The harvest is not just harvested like in the first harvest, it's actually harvested and then trampled. So different harvesters. It's also interesting. Everybody agrees that Jesus is the one doing the first harvest.

They just think Jesus is coming in judgment. The reason I don't think Jesus is coming in judgment is because of the way he's described. He's wearing— I'm sorry, he's sitting on a cloud. He's not standing, he's not riding, he's sitting. That does not suggest wartime judgment. In Revelation chapter 19, Jesus does come in judgment. It's the big battle of Armageddon. He's not seated on a cloud, he's sitting on a horse, a white horse. The other thing that's different is Jesus in Revelation chapter 14, he's wearing what's called a *stephanos*, or a victor's crown.

Every other time the victor's crown is mentioned in the book of Revelation, it talks about conquest, it talks about endurance, it talks about suffering. When Jesus shows up in judgment in Revelation chapter 19, he's not wearing the *stephanos*; he's wearing the *diadēma*, which is a crown of royalty, a crown of power, a crown of authority. A crown that someone would wear as they're going to judge the earth. But Jesus isn't wearing that crown here in Revelation chapter 14. It seems rather he's encouraging his people to endure, to advance the kingdom, to preach the gospel, and he's harvesting people.

As they're preaching the gospel, Jesus is harvesting souls rescuing them out of darkness into life. So the difference in the harvester, I think, is one reason why they're two distinct harvests, a harvest of mercy followed by a harvest of judgment. The second reason I think it's a different kind of harvest is because of the way the harvests themselves are described. A different harvester and different harvest. And this maybe gets a little bit too academic, and I'm sorry if it bores you to death. But you see those two words up there on the screen?

Those are the two different words that are used for ripe. The first time he says the harvest is ripe, in the first harvest, the harvest of I think of mercy, it's used the Greek word *exēranthē*.[2] It almost means too ripe. You know how you can wait too long to pick a plum and instead of getting a plum you get a raisin. Or you wait too long to— what's another one that shrivels up all the time? Peaches or pears. It's overripe. You waited too long. Now the moisture's getting sucked out and it's going bad.

That's the word used of the first harvest, whereas the second harvest, the word that's used is like super plump, super moist, perfect perfect time to pick it. That's a beautiful banana. That's a perfectly ripe apple. It's just so. Two different words. Now maybe he uses two different words to say, well one's a harvest of grain and one's a harvest of wheat and different kinds of fruit, different kinds of produce, different kinds of ripe. I don't think that necessarily. I think the first is a harvest of mercy, and he's saying it's almost run out.

Time's almost up. The mercy is only on the table for a little bit longer. If you don't come now, if it doesn't happen now, it'll be too late. So repent, believe, be saved from the judgment that is to come. Whereas the second word for ripe, it's plump, it's fat, it's juicy, and it's referencing the wickedness on the earth, and so it's basically John's way of saying, if God

doesn't judge the earth now, then he never will. If this is not just reward, if God doesn't come in judgment on this kind of wickedness on the earth, then I don't know if he'll ever come.

Really ripe. Really wicked. So one's a harvest of mercy, the other's a harvest of wrath. The last thing, the first harvest is just harvested. The second harvest is harvested, then thrown into the vat and crushed. One's a harvest of mercy, one's a harvest of wrath. Hopefully I made my point. The point is really not the different types of harvests necessarily. The point is which harvest will you be part of? This passage is a warning to people who are not believers. It's also a sobering warning for people who are believers that this judgment will one day come.

And the reality is today, because the day of judgment has not come, that means today is a day of mercy. Today's a day of salvation. And if you're here this morning and you're not a Christian, the offer is on the table for you to be delivered from destruction, delivered from sin, and given eternal life, and experience the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now you may say, Well, I want that. But wanting to be part of that harvest is not what makes you part of the harvest. The thing that makes you part of the harvest of mercy, as opposed to the harvest of wrath, is not about what you want.

It's about your response to the gospel. It's about how you respond to God's good news offer to repent of your sin and trust in Jesus as Lord. Now the reason I can say that with great confidence is because Jesus actually talks about that very dynamic in the Gospels, in Matthew chapter 13. It's eerie— it's so crazy how similar Matthew 13 is with Revelation 14. In Matthew 13, Jesus talks about the wheat and the tares. He talks about the sower sowing soil: rocky soil, thorny soil, dry soil, good soil. Then when he talks about the wheat and the tares, which is kind of what you have here, the good grain— a harvest of mercy versus a harvest of judgment.

The idea in Matthew 13 is that there's wheat and tares. There's good people, there's God's people, those are the wheat, and then there's the weeds, the tares. Those are people of the beast. Those are Satan's people. Those are people who are rejecting Christ and following their own way. And basically Jesus warns in that passage. If you're not going to be part of the wheat, you're going to be with the tares, and if you're going to stick with the tares, there's coming a day of judgment where the angels are going to come, separate the wheat from the tares, bundle up the tares, and throw them into the fiery furnace, and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, which is exactly what you see in Revelation 14.

Let me show you this. In Matthew chapter 13, verse 37, Jesus is unpacking— he's preaching on the parable that he just gave. "He replied, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man'"— exactly how he's described in chapter 14 of Revelation— "'the field is the world; and the good seed—these are the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one'"— people of the beast, the antichrist, the false prophet, Satan— "'and the enemy who

sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels'"— exactly what you see in chapter 14 of Revelation. "'Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.

The Son of Man will send out his angels'"— just like you see in chapter 14— "'and they will gather from his kingdom all who cause sin and those guilty of lawlessness. They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Let anyone who has ears listen.'" So Jesus is essentially saying to you and me today, if you have ears to hear, listen to this. God is not indifferent toward your sin. God is patient in withholding judgment.

Sometimes you can mistake God's patience for his indifference. You can think to yourself, Well, if God really cared about how I was living, maybe I wouldn't be having so many blessings in my life right now. Maybe if God really cared about how I was living, I would have some more remorse over my sin in my life. Now we have all different ways that we whitewash and justify our sinful rebellion. But the reality is God is holy. He cares about how you live your life and he will punish wickedness on the earth when the day of mercy runs dry.

And that day will come. In fact, in Revelation 14, the time is almost running out, and we may be in a day and age where the time is running out. Do not mistake God's patience in withholding judgment for his indifference towards your sin. He is not indifferent towards your sin. And if you're here and you're not a Christian, he's not indifferent towards your unbelief. It doesn't matter if you've tried really hard, with your good deeds trying to outweigh your bad deeds. Only perfect people go to heaven. Only perfect people, which means none of us get to heaven unless we're going covered in someone else's perfection, namely Jesus Christ.

And the only way to have his righteousness clothe your unrighteousness is for you to repent of your sin and to trust in Jesus for salvation. So trust him. Make today the day of salvation. Don't mistake his patience for indifference. It's kind of like student loans. Anybody ever had a student loan? You don't have to raise your hand. You remember when COVID hit, they— you know, whoever's the money man up there— Well, you don't have to pay the loans back. Or if you're in school, you know, you don't have to pay the student loan back while you're in school.

That's why some students stay in school forever: because I don't have to pay the loan back. But that debt is still due, correct? You still owe the government a lot of money. And the day will come when you have to pay it back. And the same is true of our sin. God may be kicking the can down the road. He's patient. He's deferring judgment, but that doesn't mean judgment won't come. You will stand before God one day. You will give an account for the life that you lived. All sin— the wages of every sin, little sin is big sin— the wages of sin is death, eternal separation from the God who made us.

And the only way for you to be delivered from that destruction is to repent of your sin and trust in Jesus for salvation. Harvest of mercy, followed by a harvest of wrath. Let's look at that second harvest very quickly and then we'll be finished. Chapter 14, verses 17 to 20. The second harvest is described, it's not a harvest of life, it's a harvest of death. It's not a harvest of salvation, it's a harvest of destruction. Chapter 14, verse 17: "Then another angel who also had a sharp sickle came out of the temple in heaven.

Yet another angel, who had authority over fire"— meaning authority to judge— "came from the altar"— not out of the temple in general; he's coming specifically from the altar— "and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, 'Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the vineyard of the earth, because its grapes have ripened.'" In other words, the wickedness on the earth is great. "So the angel swung his sickle at the earth and gathered the grapes from the vineyard of the earth, and he threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath.

Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles." If you have a more literal translation, it's going to say 1,600 stadia. Now there's a lot of questions obviously that come up from that paragraph, so I'm going to try to nail down the interpretive questions and then make some application, then we're going to be finished. The harvest of wrath, number one, falls on people who follow the beast. God's wrath is not falling on those who are in Christ.

Those who are in Christ are sealed and protected. These are the people who bear the mark of the beast, the people who've rejected the mark of God, who've said, I don't want to trust in Jesus; I want to do my own thing, I don't want to follow God's word, I want to follow this antichrist, false religion, unholy trinity. I'm more attracted to the world than I am to the kingdom. Those are the people who experience God's wrath. And the fact that it's executed by this angel who receives the instruction from another angel.

Where does this angel come from? Remember in the text? He comes from out of the temple, but where out of the temple? The altar. We've seen that altar before in Revelation chapter 5. We saw it in Revelation chapter 6. We've seen it in Revelation chapter 8. Every time you see the altar mentioned, it's associated with the prayers of the saints. In chapter six, it's associated with the cry of the martyrs. They're crying out, How long, O Lord, until you bring justice? How long until you avenge our death? In Revelation chapter 8 and 9, as the trumpet judgments are being unleashed on the earth, it's done in response to the prayers of the saints being offered up to God.

And so essentially what I want you to see this as is God's choice to reap the earth in judgment is not just random, willy-nilly. It's an action that is done in response to the prayers of his saints. So there's nothing wrong with us as God's people to say, Maranatha, come Lord Jesus, make it right. It's nothing wrong when you see injustice and brokenness in the world

to say, Lord, make it right, bring your justice. This is not correct. Just like the martyrs did in Revelation 6, just like the saints do in Revelation chapter 8.

God responds to the prayers of his people. And so you pray for people to come to know Christ. You pray for Jesus to come and to make things right. We should not get used to the wickedness of this world, we should not grow accustomed to it. We should pray for God to come. Joel chapter 3. Same imagery. I think this is a fulfillment of Joel chapter 3. The Lord says in Joel 3, "Swing the sickle because the harvest is ripe. Come and trample the grapes because the winepress is full; the wine vats overflow because the wickedness of the nations is extreme."

So think of a world full of brokenness, full of evil, full of people who've abandoned God, rejected God, going their own way. That's what our world will look like before Jesus comes again. It will not be better. It will be worse. That does not mean the gospel won't still be preached. God's people will still be faithful to evangelize. People will come to know Christ. There will be the harvest of mercy. But it will also be really, really bad. When the harvest of wrath comes, it says that it's this trampling of grapes.

It's kind of a really gross idea. Back in the day, the way that they would make wine is they would get all the grapes and they would dump them into this little vat and has anybody seen the movie The Chosen, the TV show The Chosen? Anybody seen that? You should go watch it. It's really good. One of the episodes in The Chosen shows them making wine. And so what they would do is they'd put all the grapes in there, and then they would just walk around smishing the grapes with their fungus feet and all that nasty stuff going on and every time they would squish the grapes the juice would kind of fall to the bottom and then that juice would drain down a little drain pipe into the cask, and then the grape juice would stay in the cask for a long enough period of time for it to ferment, become some really nice-tasting wine.

Happy juice for your wedding, all those kinds of things. And that's the picture John uses here, but he's saying it ain't grape juice, it's blood. And it ain't grapes, it's people. The judgment will be literal physical death, war, bloodshed on the day of the Lord. And it will be so much blood, it's going to flow for 180 miles, which again is 1,600 stadia. In the book of Revelation, numbers are significant, right? This number, 1,600, is the square root of four and the square root of ten.[3] Four times four is 16.

Ten times ten is a thousand. 1,600. You times all those together, you get 1,600. Four in the book of Revelation is symbolic of the entirety of the earth, north, south, east, and west. We saw it in Revelation chapter 5 with the four living creatures representing all of the earth. And so this judgment is global. Every person who rebels against the Lord will be crushed on that day. Not just spiritually crushed, but physically, literally crushed for their rebellion against God. He's going to judge the earth, burn it up with these bowls of wrath that we'll see next week, and it will be horrendous.

What about this idea of being outside the city? That city I believe is a reference to Jerusalem. Some say it's a figurative reference to Jerusalem, like Jerusalem is the holy city. The holy city is where God's people are, and so the New Jerusalem is all of the earth where God's people are. I don't know if I buy that. It could be. Some people have that view. I think it's a reference to Jerusalem, the city, Jerusalem. Zechariah chapter 4[4] says, when Jesus returns, he'll put one foot on the Mount of Olives and the other foot behind it, and that Mount of Olives will split in half and there will be a big valley, which is exactly what Joel 3 talks about that we just read.

A valley of decision, a day of choosing. Will you be someone who experiences mercy or will you be a vessel for wrath? It's done outside the city, which is a throwback to where Jesus died. Jesus died outside the city. He died for the wicked outside the city. That's why Hebrews says we could come to Jesus outside the city. Bear the shame and reproach now. Don't wait until it's too late because if you wait till it's too late, Jesus isn't going to die outside the city. Jesus is going to crush the wicked outside the city.

Those who refuse to have their sins atoned for by the blood of Jesus will themselves atone for their own sin, not just in death at this great final battle, but eternally in a place called hell. Forever paying the penalty for their forever sin against a forever God. It's also a reminder that the hell that this passage describes is the same exact hell Jesus went through on the cross when he died in our place for our sin. So Revelation is a twofold message. It's a message of encouragement for the saints to endure, and it's a message of warning for those outside of Christ and encourages the people of God to persevere in their obedience to God's commands and their faith in Jesus.

It's a warning to those who follow the beast, judgment is coming, justice will be served, and eternal torment awaits those who reject the gospel and persist in sinful rebellion against God. So, what about you this morning? Which message do you need to heed? A message of warning or a message of encouragement? As Taylor comes and leads us through a time of response, I want to make three points of application. The reality of these judgments should inspire action. Remember, not just those who hear the word, but those who apply it to their lives.

And so if this is true, if God will come in judgment and if it's true that today is the day of salvation and he's offering mercy to those who will repent and believe, if you're here this morning and you're not a Christian, it should inspire faith in Jesus as Lord. If you're not a believer, today's the day of salvation. Repent and trust in Jesus for salvation. Receive the miracle of salvation into your life by recognizing you can't save yourself and trusting: Jesus, and Jesus alone, is my salvation. I'm not trusting in my righteousness.

I'm not trusting in my past or my future. It ain't about me. It never has been. It's about Jesus. And so I'm trusting him. If you're here and you are a Christian, it should also inspire

greater faith in Jesus, greater faith to trust him, greater faith to endure, greater faith to persevere, greater willingness to get rid of the sin in your life because you know that's the sin for which Jesus died. He went through hell to make atonement for that sin. Why would I live in it any longer? Lord help me to be holy.

Help me to live righteously. If you're not a Christian, it should also inspire greater love for the lost. If you really believe hell exists and it's really real and real people will spend a real eternity separated from God, then how can we be complacent? How can we not, every single day when we go into the workplace, be pleading with people, Be reconciled to God? How can you sit complacent in your nice, big, cushy houses and big nice cars and I'm just as bad as everybody else getting all distracted with all of the things that the world gives us to be distracted by, oblivious and mindless to the fact that there are people, real people, who are perishing without the hope of salvation that's in the Lord Jesus.

And so if you have the Spirit of Christ living in you, his spirit should create in you a passion for his mission, a love for the lost, just as Jesus loved the lost. And then finally, it should inspire greater hope for the future. And I know there are people right here this morning who have been sinned against. You've experienced brokenness personally, not because of your choices, but because of the choices that were inflicted on you. It could be abuse, sexual or otherwise. It could be you just see things like Hitler's Germany and you see the horrendous suffering that we've seen in our history or that we see still today and you wonder, God, do you care?

God, will you act? Will justice ever be served? And this passage is a reminder, that day will come and God will be just. And justice will be served. And so I can entrust myself to him who judges justly. I can rest knowing vengeance doesn't belong to me, it belongs to the Lord. And so I'm going to entrust myself to the perfect judge. And I, in obedience to Christ, am going to forgive. I'm going to bless my enemies. I'm going to pray for those who persecute me, knowing that their sin will either be covered by the blood of Jesus on the cross or dealt with eternally in a place called hell.

But God is not indifferent. God sees it. Justice will be served. That inspires hope for the future, an ability to trust God even when life doesn't make sense, even with the great evils that we see in the world today.

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1. Transcript note: spoken as "chapter 14"; the antichrist (the beast from the sea) and the false prophet (the beast from the earth) are introduced in Revelation 13, as Wes says just after. Source: Revelation 13:1–18 (CSB), BibleGateway. ↩
2. Transcript note: spoken as "ekrano"; the word in Revelation 14:15 is *exēranthē* ("dried up, withered," from *xērainō*), while verse 18 uses *ēkmasan* ("ripened, at its peak"). Source: Bible Hub Greek text, Revelation 14:15 and 14:18. ↩

3. Transcript note: spoken as "the square root of four and the square root of ten … ten times ten is a thousand"; 1,600 is the square of four (16) times the square of ten (100). Wording left as spoken. Source: arithmetic. ↩
4. Transcript note: spoken as "Zechariah chapter 4"; the Mount of Olives splitting to form a valley is Zechariah 14:4. Source: Zechariah 14:4 (CSB), BibleGateway. ↩