

31. The Announcement of the Coming Defeat of the Beast

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God will offer mercy during the tribulation to those who have never heard. However, for those who reject that mercy and the message of life God will send an angel to warn that the time of judgment has come. In this topic, we will see that God will send another angel to speak of the coming defeat of the antichrist and his followers.

The second angel will warn that judgment is coming quickly. Then, we see that a third angel comes who warns who will be judged. Revelation 14:9-13 says, “Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’ Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, ‘Write: “Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.”’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.’” Here, we see the consequence of taking the mark of the beast (antichrist).

This warning is to everyone who worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on their forehead or hand. We see that all who worship the beast and receive his mark will drink the wine of the wrath of God. In addition, we see that this judgment will be poured out at full strength. All the people on the earth who worship the beast and take his mark will have heard the message of the everlasting Gospel, from the angel, and will have chosen to reject that message. Christ took the full strength of the judgment of every person when he bore our sins on the cross. As a result, they make the choice to receive the full judgment Christ received on their behalf since they will have rejected His payment for their sins and chosen to worship the beast and take his mark.

We see that all who take that mark will be tormented with fire and brimstone and that their judgment will be eternal. Revelation 20:14-15 says, “Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Then, Revelation 21:8 says, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” There will be no escape from this eternal judgment. In contrast, we see the reward of all those who become saints by repenting of their sin and placing their faith in Christ.

We read about the blessing that is promised to the saints. The saints are those who keep the commandments of God, because they have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. John was told to write that all those who die from that point on are blessed by the Lord. Those who die from that point on, during the tribulation, will die for their faith in Christ. We see that the Spirit gives them two promises in addition to being blessed. First, they will experience rest from their labors. This

particular word translated “labors” means *the beating of the breast with sorrow or to cause one trouble*. This means that the tribulation saints will experience rest from all of the troubles that will come on them prior to their deaths. Second, we see that their works will follow them. This means they can look forward to rewards for the suffering they will experience, during the tribulation, before the time they are killed.

Revelation 14:14-16 says, “Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, ‘Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.’ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.” We see a picture of Christ, because He will soon be returning to this earth. He will be coming in the clouds. Daniel 7:13-14 says, “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then 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 *the one* which shall not be destroyed.” These verses, in Revelation, speak of the fact that Christ will soon come to rule on the earth, and that, after the rule on earth, His kingdom will become an everlasting kingdom.

A crown was given to those who won a sports competition or who won the victory over another nation. The golden crown speaks of the fact that Christ will be recognized as the One who has won the victory over the kingdom of evil. He also will have a sharp sickle in His hand. In that day, farmers used a sharp sickle to harvest the grain in their fields. Another angel will come from the temple to announce what Christ will do with the sickle. This angel will tell Christ to thrust in His sickle and reap. The angel will then explain that the harvest of the earth is ripe. Here, we see that Christ will not be reaping a grain harvest. Instead, He will use His sharp sickle to judge Satan and the antichrist along with the people on the earth who have taken his mark. The fact that it says the harvest is ripe means that the time for this judgment has come, and there will be no further delay. We also see that this judgment of the people of the earth will begin soon. The details of this judgment of the people of the earth will be given in the next several chapters.

Revelation 14:17-20 says, “Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also will have a sharp sickle. And 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.’ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.” Here, we see that another angel will come out of the temple in heaven. He will also have a sharp sickle with him. We see that the sickle of this angel will be used to judge one particular group of the people that are on the earth.

However, we have it mentioned that there will be another angel who will have power over fire.

The angel with the power over fire is the one who tells the angel with the sharp sickle to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth because of the fact that her grapes are fully ripe. We see that the Lord uses a winepress to describe the final destruction that will come on all of the enemies that are still alive at the end of the tribulation in the Valley of Armageddon. This will be the fulfillment of the prophecy given by Isaiah in Isaiah 63:2-4, where we read: “Why *is* Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? ‘I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one *was* with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance *is* in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come.”

In the time of the New Testament, people would make a winepress by creating a hole in the ground in a place where the grape juice that was squeezed could run to the one end and be gathered. Then, they would place a large amount of grapes in the hole, and people would walk on the grapes to squeeze the juice out of them. The Lord said that the people of the earth would be gathered for this judgment at the time God will choose. God describes it as the time when the grapes are fully ripe.

We also see where this judgment, by God, will happen. The verse says that the winepress will be trampled outside the city. Zechariah 14:1-5 says, “Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, *making* a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, *and* all the saints with You.” This is talking about the city of Jerusalem. In fact, half of the city will be destroyed before the Lord comes to judge the people of the nations gathered against Jerusalem in the Valley of Armageddon (one hundred and sixty miles in length from Megiddo to Edom).

We see that this winepress will be trampled outside the city. This battle will be described in more detail when we get to Revelation 19:11-21. These armies are described in Revelation 19:19, and their judgment in Revelation 19:21. Those verses say, “And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army...And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.” We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain this judgment that will come on the rebellious in the Valley of Armageddon. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these verses.