



# God's Final Harvest

Revelation 14:14-20

**The great British Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834 – 1892) preached a sermon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London in 1876. The title of his message was “The Harvest and the Vintage.” The text was Revelation 14:14-20**

**In that sermon Spurgeon affirmed his belief that, “the Jews, as a people, will yet own Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of David, as their King, and that they will return to their own land.”**

**He also went on to say, “It is certain also that our Lord Jesus Christ shall come again to this earth, and that He shall reign amongst His ancients gloriously, and that there will be a thousand years of joy and peace such as were never known on this earth before.”**

To these affirmations he added, “[It] seems to me to be clearly revealed in the Scripture, that there is to come, some when – we know not when – a solemn winding up of all events of this world’s history.”

**Spurgeon was right on target at all points in his assessment. Spurgeon also was right on target in building his argument from the book of Revelation in general and 14:14-20 in particular. It is here in this text that the final harvest of God is depicted both in its rightness, but also in its horror. It is here that we gain a glimpse of the bowl judgements. It is here that we gain a glimpse of Armageddon (cf. 16:12-16).**

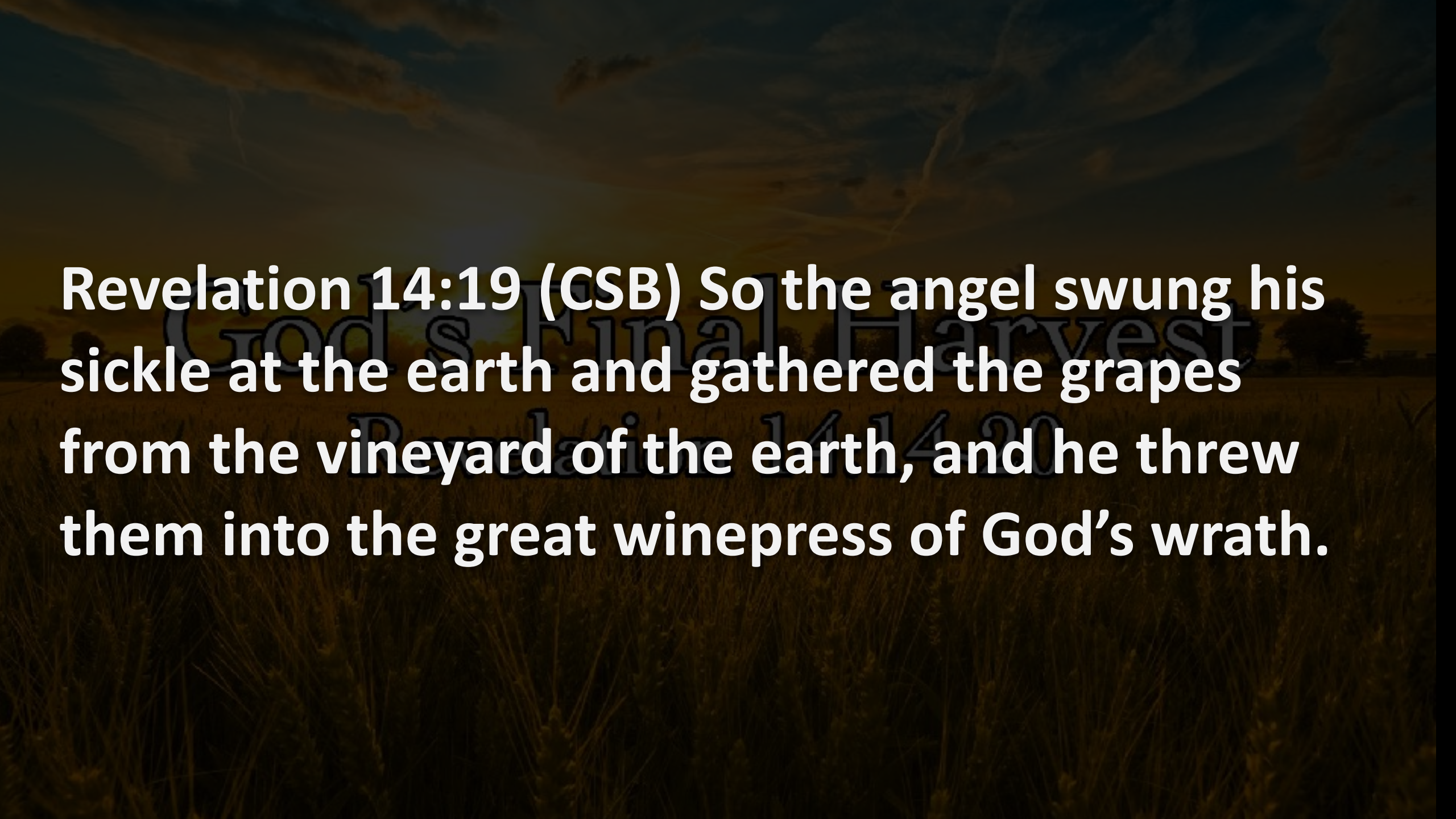
**Revelation 14:14 (CSB) Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and one like the Son of Man was seated on the cloud, with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.**

**Revelation 14:15 (CSB) 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."**

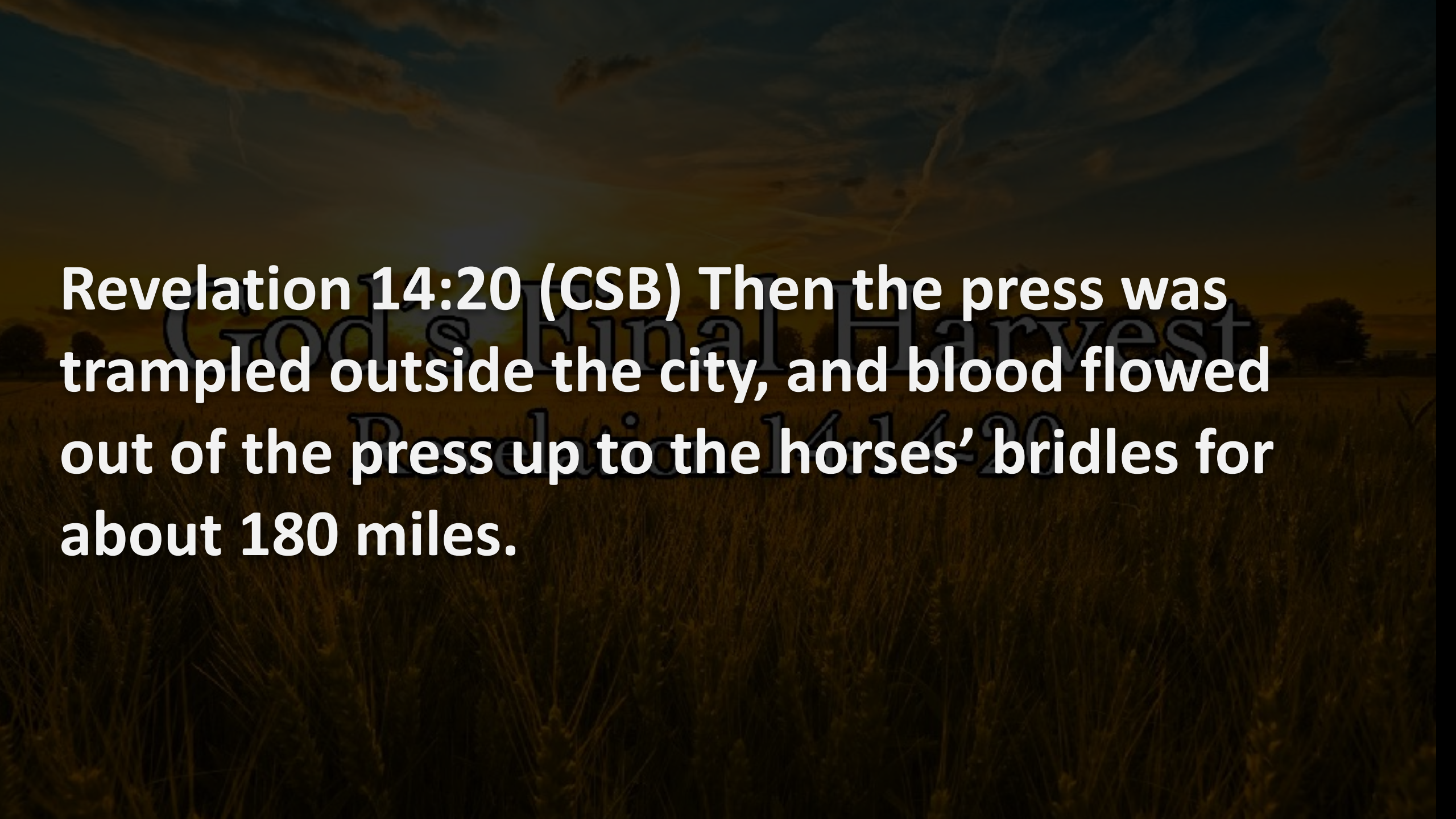


**Revelation 14:16–17 (CSB) So the one seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. Then another angel who also had a sharp sickle came out of the temple in heaven.**

**Revelation 14:18 (CSB) Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came 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."**



**Revelation 14:19 (CSB) 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.**



**Revelation 14:20 (CSB) Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.**

**As we study God's final harvesting...**

**1. See the harvest of the Son of man (vs. 14-16)**

**God's Final Harvest**

**Revelation 14:14-20**

The second coming of Jesus will be nothing like his first coming. The contrast can scarcely be grasped:

**1st Coming** - Humiliation, Suffering Servant, In Poverty, To a Cross, To save sinners as a sower in grace.

**2nd Coming** - Exaltation, Sovereign King. In Majesty, On A Cloud, To Judge Sinners, As a Reaper In Wrath

**2 visions of judgement comprise Revelation 14:14-20: 1) grain harvest (vs. 14-16) and 2) grape harvest (vs. 17-20). Both harvests involve a sickle and a reaping. John MacArthur believes the grain harvest symbolizes the coming bowl judgements (Ch. 16) and the grape harvest symbolizes the coming battle of Armageddon (16:12-16; 19:17-21).**

The background is Joel 3:12-13 – “Let the nations be awakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow – for their wickedness is great.”



Revelation 14:14 (CSB) 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.

Revelation 14:14-20

This reaping comes from Jesus. 14:14 “**I looked**” (cf. 14:1, also 4:1; 6:2, 5, 8: 7:9)

**White cloud...Son of Man – background is Daniel 7:13 – 14 – “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.”**

Revelation 14:14 (CSB) ...one like the Son of Man was seated on **the cloud**...

**The cloud** – glory, majesty, dazzling brilliance, heavenly splendor and unearthly purity. On a cloud for all to see. – cf. Rev. 1:7 – “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

Revelation 14:14 (CSB)... the **Son of Man** was seated on the cloud, with a golden **crown**...

**Son of Man** - This is Jesus' favorite title for himself during His incarnate state.

**crown** – stephanos crown, that of a victor/conqueror – not a diadema crown, that of a ruler.

Revelation 14:14 (CSB)...a **sharp sickle** in his hand.

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**Sharp sickle** – long curved razor-sharp blade attached to a long broomstick-like wooden handle. Word occurs 7 times in vs. 14-20. It is an instrument symbolic of divine judgement.



**John sees “one like a son of man” (14:14) holding a sharp sickle. Shown here is an ancient agricultural sickle from Egypt.**

The central interpretive question, much debated by commentators, is whether the first vision depicts the gathering of the righteous at the return of Christ (e.g., Bauckham, Osborne, Smalley) or whether both visions portray God's judgment of the wicked (e.g., Mounce, Beale, Keener, Aune, Witherington). Both theological truths are affirmed elsewhere in Revelation, but the meaning of this passage remains difficult to discern.

**Some see the 1st harvest as that of the elect (believers). Some see the 1st harvest as general in nature. Some see the 1st harvest and the 2nd as that of judgement. This last view is better given the context and parallelism. Jesus comes to judge the earth.**



Revelation 14:15 (CSB) **Another angel** came out of the temple, crying out in a **loud voice**...

# God's Final Harvest

**Another angel** – (allos aggelos) – 4th in the chapter

Temple – (naos) – sanctuary

**Loud voice** – all will see Christ. All will hear the angel. Thrust – (aor. imp.) send, put in

Revelation 14:15 (CSB) ...“Use your sickle and reap, for the time to **reap** has come, since the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

Revelation 14:14-20

**Reap** – (aor. imp.) begin harvesting The time (lit. the hour, the appointed time)

**Revelation 14:15 (CSB) ... “since the harvest of the earth is ripe.”**

**Ripe – dried up, fully or over ripe, withered. The grain (meaning of “the earth”) is past usefulness and value. The day of grace is past. Now only judgement will be exercised. Verse 16 is brief and simple in its truth. The tragic details are left, as it were, to our imagination.**

**Revelation 14:16 (CSB) So the one seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.**

## **God's Final Harvest**

**God's wrath comes from Jesus. God's wrath comes on time. The ministry of mercy is over. Sowing has ceased. The time for "judgement reaping" has come. There will be no more tomorrows!**

**As we study God's final harvesting...**

**1. See the harvest of the Son of man (vs. 14-16)**

**2. Study the wrath of the wine press of God (vs. 17-19)**

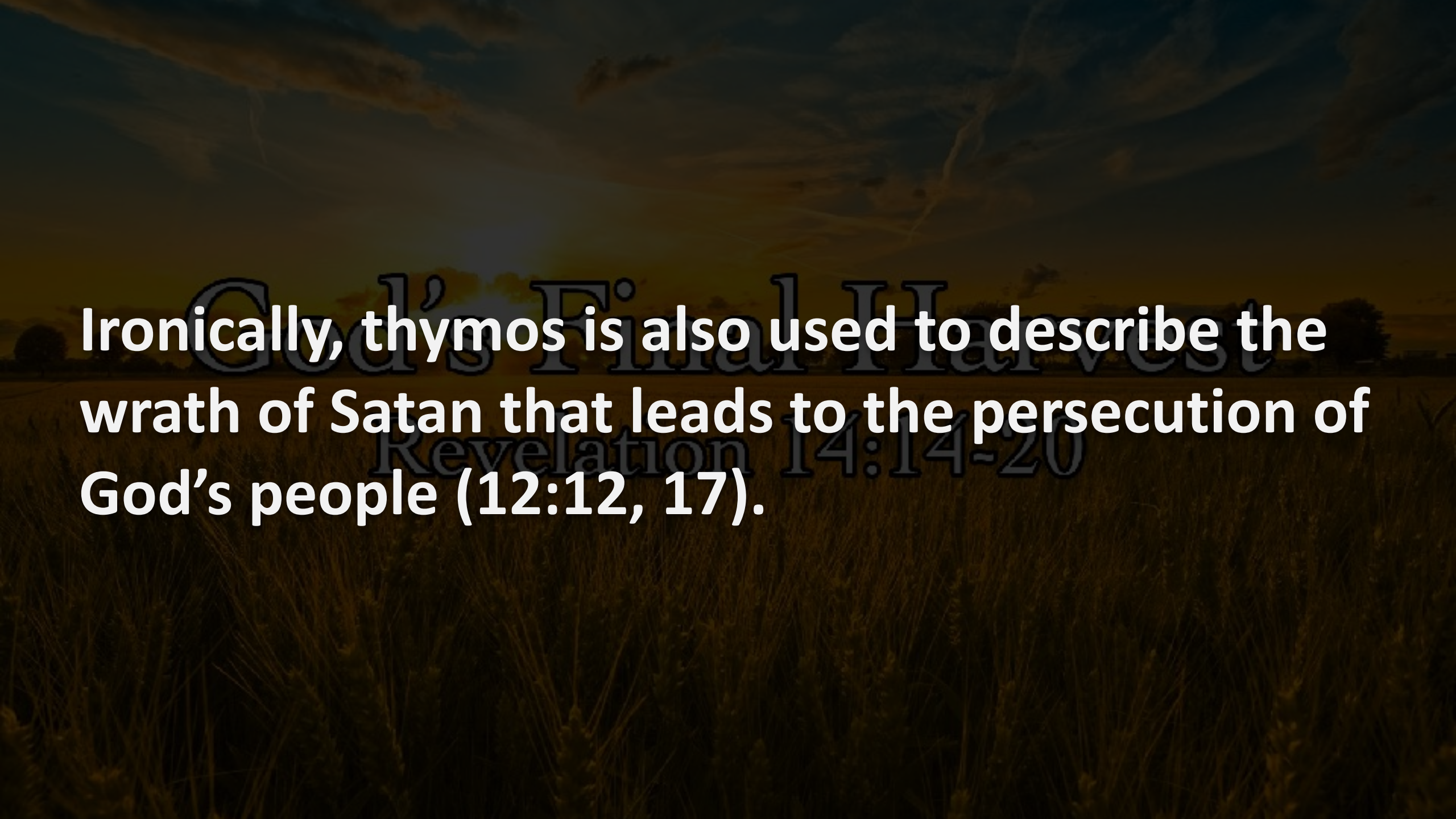
## God's Wrath

The “wrath of God” refers to God’s holy and righteous condemnation of sin and evil. God’s wrath is both a present reality (e.g., Rom. 1:18; 1 Thess. 2:16) and a future certainty (e.g., Rom. 2:5, 8; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9).

**The unrepentant wicked will experience God's wrath (e.g., John 3:36; Rom. 9:22; 12:19; Eph. 2:3; 5:6), whereas God's people will never experience his wrath (Rom. 5:9; Eph. 2:3–5; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 6:17–7:3; 11:18; 14:12–13).**

**Revelation uses two primary words for wrath:  
orgē (Rev. 6:16, 17; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15)  
and thymos (12:12; 14:8, 10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1,  
19; 18:3; 19:15).**

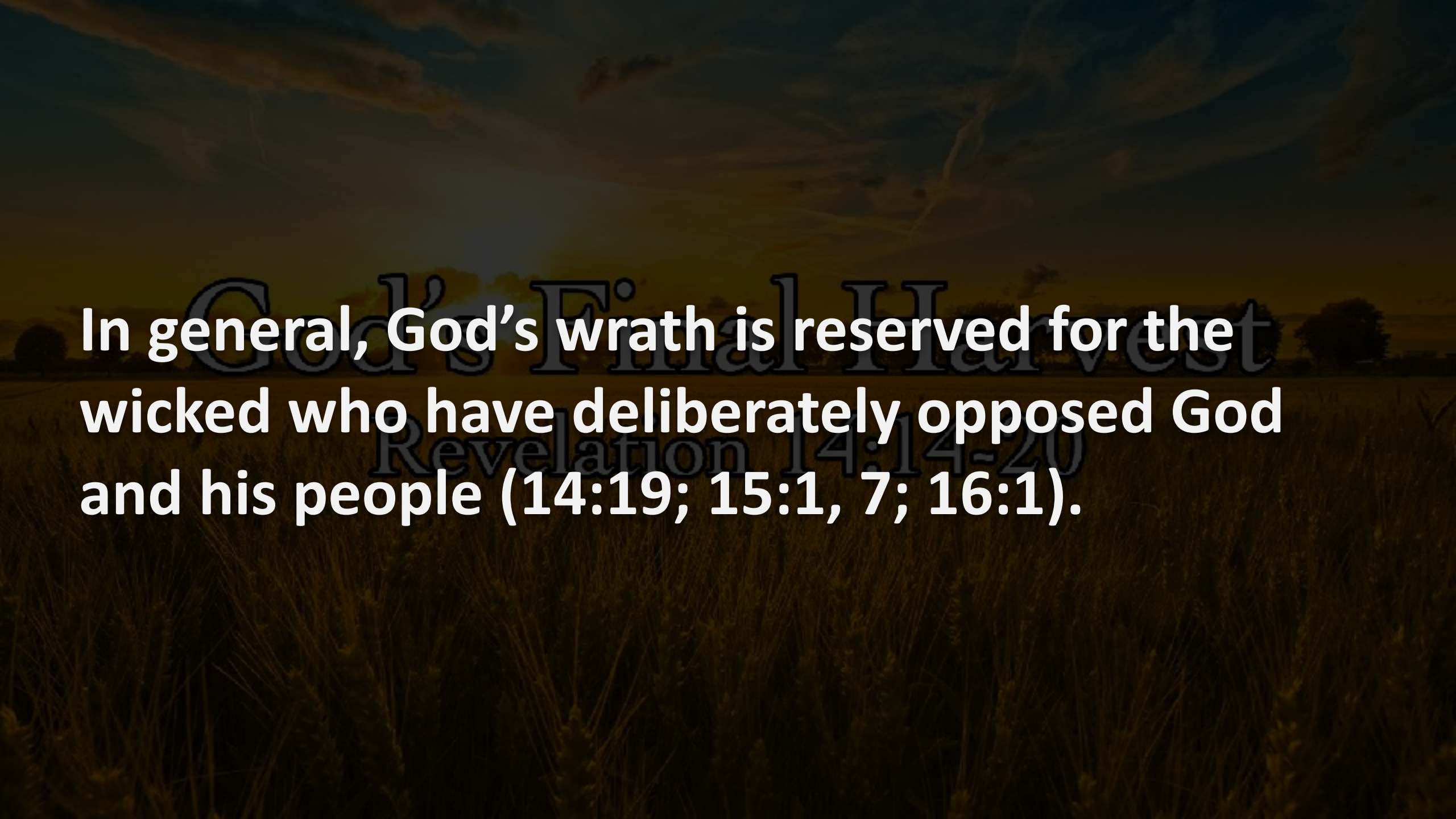




**Ironically, thymos is also used to describe the wrath of Satan that leads to the persecution of God's people (12:12, 17).**

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Revelation 14:14-20

**The focus in Revelation, however, is on the wrath of God, which is poured out on the unrepentant from every social order (6:16–17; 19:15–18), on those who “destroy the earth” (11:17–18), on those who worship the beast and his image (14:9–10), and on Babylon the Great (16:19).**



**In general, God's wrath is reserved for the wicked who have deliberately opposed God and his people (14:19; 15:1, 7; 16:1).**

**God's wrath is *his full and final expression of his righteous and holy character in the face of injustice and evil, and stands as the counterpart to his covenant love.***

**Revelation 14:17 (CSB) Then another angel who also had a sharp sickle came out of the temple in heaven.**

**The vision John sees now moves from the “grain harvest” to the grape harvest. This is also our first look at the battle or campaign of Armageddon (cf. 16:12-16; 19:17-21).**

Revelation 14:18 (CSB) Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came 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."

Divine judgement has come upon the world and there is no holding back. Of the 3 pictures of judgement in this chapter: 1) the unmixed wine cup, 2) the grain harvest, and now 3) the **grape** harvest, this is the most dramatic and striking. Verse 20 will bear this out.

**Revelation 14:18 (CSB) Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came from the altar...**

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**5th and 6th angels in chapter 14 appear in vs. 17-18. The 5th angel, like the 4th, comes from the temple (naos); like the Lord he has a charge sickle.**



**Revelation 14:18 (CSB) Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came from the altar...**

**Revelation 14:14-20**

**The 6th angel comes from the altar (cf. 6:9-11; 8:3-5), the altar of incense.**

**Revelation 14:18 (CSB) Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came from the altar...**

**This connects the judgement with the prayers of the saints and finally answers the question of 6:10, “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’”**

Revelation 14:18 (CSB) ...who had authority over **fire**, came from the altar...its grapes have **ripened**.

**Fire** - would symbolize holiness, purity and judgement

**ripened**— prime, at its peak, really for

harvesting. The earth in its wickedness, evil and rebellion is ripe for the picking, ready for the “judgement harvest.”

**Revelation 14:19 (CSB) 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.**

**The angel responds immediately and decisively. There is no delay, no hesitation.**

**In the Ancient Near East, in the time of John, grapes were trampled or stomped by foot in a trough that had a duct leading to a lower trough or basin where the juice was collected. Treading grapes in a winepress was a familiar figure of divine wrath and judgement. “The splattering of the juice as the grapes are stomped vividly pictures the splattered blood of those who will be destroyed” (MacArthur, p. 117).**



**Shown here is an ancient winepress with its upper rock depression where grapes were crushed and lower basin into which the juice would flow.**



**The unrighteous are gathered like grapes and trampled in the “winepress of God’s wrath” (14:19).**

**Shown here is a scene from the Egyptian tomb of Nakht in which grapes are being harvested and then tread upon in a winepress (fifteenth century BC).**

**Isaiah 63:3-4 – “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.”**



**Lamentations 1:15 – “The Lord has trampled underfoot all my mighty men in my midst; He has called an assembly against me to crush my young men; the Lord trampled as in a winepress the virgin daughter of Judah.”**

**Joel 3:13 – “Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow – for their wickedness is great.”**

**Revelation 19:15 – “Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”**

**Revelation 14:20 (CSB) Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.**

**Revelation 14:14-20**

**Jerusalem will be spared the terrible judgement at the 2nd Coming of Christ. She will be damaged but not destroyed.**

**This is in keeping with God's prediction and promise in Zechariah 14:1-5. "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.” Zechariah 14:1-5.

**The war that will truly end all wars will no doubt be worldwide, yet its focal point will be on the Plain of Esdraelon near Mt. Megiddo (c. 60 miles north of Jerusalem). This we know as Armageddon. Here will take place the most horrific and destructive battle the world will ever know.**



**Armageddon is also noted in 16:12-16 and 19:17-21. Armageddon is more a slaughter than a battle.**

**Revelation 16:12–13 (CSB) The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the east. Then I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming from the dragon's mouth, from the beast's mouth, and from the mouth of the false prophet.**

**Revelation 16:14–15 (CSB) For they are demonic spirits performing signs, who travel to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for the battle on the great day of God, the Almighty. “Look, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who is alert and remains clothed so that he may not go around naked and people see his shame.”**

**Revelation 16:16 (CSB) So they assembled the kings at the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.**

**Revelation 19:17–18 (CSB) Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out in a loud voice, saying to all the birds flying high overhead, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of military commanders, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and of their riders, and the flesh of everyone, both free and slave, small and great.”**

**Revelation 19:19 (CSB) Then I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and against his army.**

**Revelation 19:20 (CSB) But the beast was taken prisoner, and along with it the false prophet, who had performed the signs in its presence. He deceived those who accepted the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image with these signs. Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.**

**Revelation 19:21 (CSB) The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate their fill of their flesh.**



**As we study God's final harvesting...**

**1. See the harvest of the Son of man (vs. 14-16)**

**2. Study the wrath of the wine press of God (vs. 17-19)**

**3. Survey the coming devastation (vs. 20)**

**Revelation 14:20 (CSB) Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.**

**Up to a horses bridle – about 4 feet**

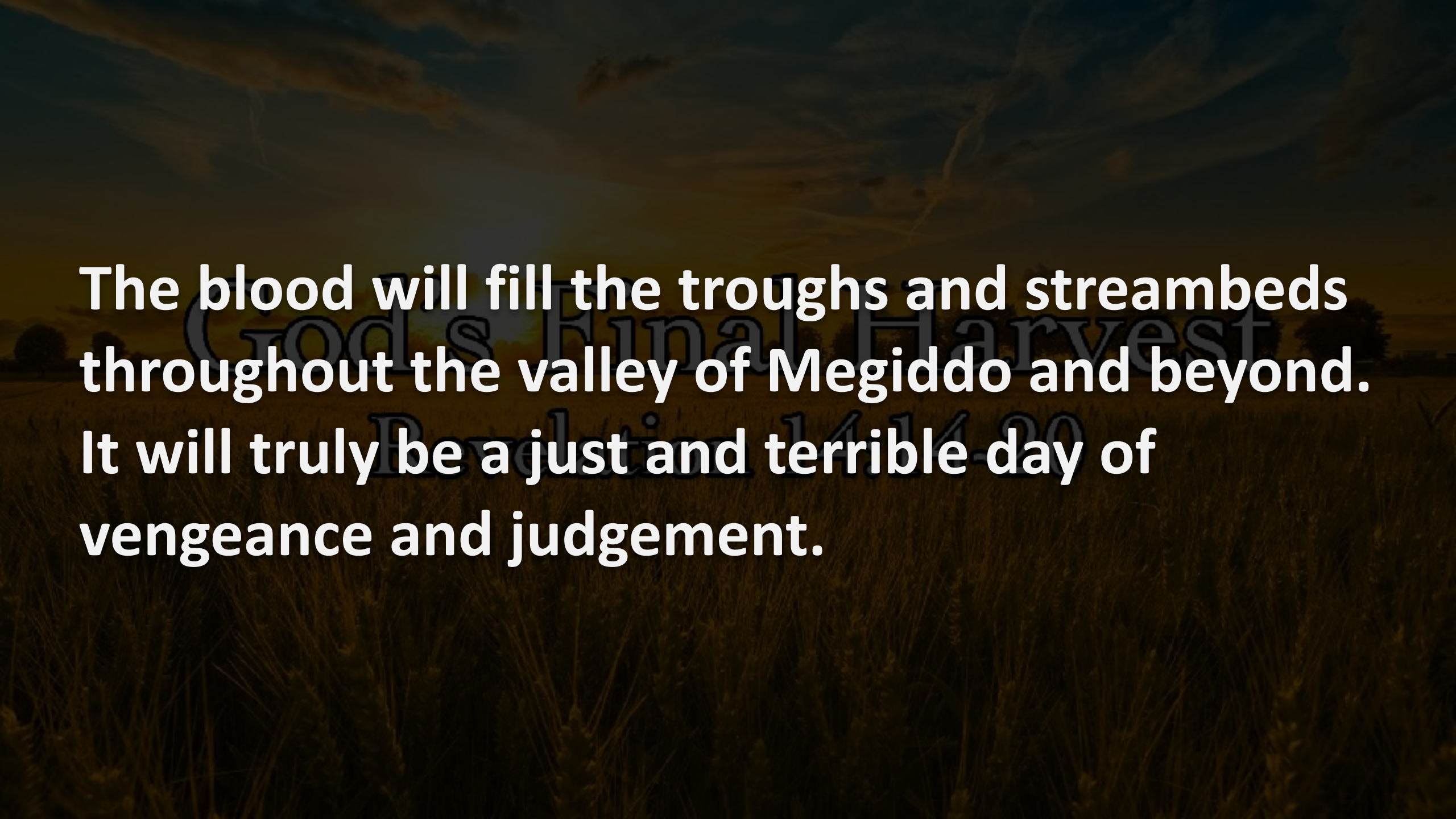
**Revelation 14:20 (CSB) Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.**

Revelation 14:14-20

**This is a hyperbole suggesting massive, unimaginable slaughter and destruction.**

**In Revelation 19:15 it is Jesus himself who “treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.” This trampling occurs “outside of the city,” a sign of separation from the covenant people (e.g., Rev. 22:14–15; Heb. 13:12), and the graphic description of the amount of bloodshed only adds to the horror of the image.**

**Josephus tells us that when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70 by the Roman general Titus, he killed so many Jews that the whole city ran with blood so much that the fire of many houses were quenched with their blood.**



**The blood will fill the troughs and streambeds throughout the valley of Megiddo and beyond. It will truly be a just and terrible day of vengeance and judgement.**

**CS Lewis from Mere Christianity -**

**“God will invade. But I wonder whether people who ask God to interfere openly and directly in our world quite realize what it will be like when He does. When that happens, it is the end of the world. When the author walks onto the stage the play is over.”**

**God is going to invade all right: but what is the good of saying you are on His side then, when you see the whole natural universe melting away like a dream and something else—something it never entered your head to conceive—comes crashing in; something so beautiful to some of us and so terrible to others that none of us will have any choice left?**



**For this time it will be God without disguise;  
something so overwhelming that it will strike  
either irresistible love or irresistible horror  
into every creature. It will be too late then to  
choose your side.**

**C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity (New York:  
Macmillan, 1960), 66.**



# God's Final Harvest

Revelation 14:14-20

**MODERN APPLICATIONS**

**1. God will vindicate his people by judging the unrighteous. Those who seem to have the most difficult time with God's condemnation of the wicked are those who have suffered very little injustice and persecution.**

**“Everyone just needs to be nice,” they seem to believe. But those who have been cruelly oppressed and violated by evil cry out for God to set things right. This passage reinforces God’s promise to judge evil and to vindicate his children, and Revelation as a whole affirms God’s justice.**

**God will not allow evil to go unpunished. He will call for the blood of those who have shed the blood of his people (14:20; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24).**

**Many people attending church today have suffered unspeakable acts of abuse, violence, and injustice. They need to know that God is not going to sweep everything under the cosmic rug and pretend that nothing bad really happened. They need to know that God is holy and righteous and will not allow evil to win.**

**We are not to take our own revenge, but the monsters will not get away with it. The terrible images of judgment burn into our imaginations the reality that judgment is coming. God will make things right. And those who have suffered will be comforted as God himself wipes away their tears and assures them of no more death or crying or pain (21:4).**

**2. Believers should adopt the appropriate attitude toward the coming judgment. The first point of application needs to be followed closely with a caution. Judgment is a somber reality and not something to be taken lightly or wielded as a weapon in theological arguments.**



**Our attitude about the reality of judgment is as important as our theological view since this attitude will determine how our doctrine is lived out. Judgment is God's business. We make judgments to be sure, but we dare not set ourselves up as Judge, since God alone decides a person's eternal destiny (Matt. 10:28).**

**Our job is to entrust ourselves and our circumstances to God and to remain faithful to Jesus in spite of the suffering (Rev. 12:11).  
When it comes to judgment especially, it seems crucial not to confuse God's role with our role.**



# God's Final Harvest

Revelation 14:14-20

**OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS**

Revelation 14:14 - 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.

Daniel 7:13 - I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a **son of man** was coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him.

Revelation 14:15 - 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."

Revelation 14:14-20

Joel 3:13 - 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.

Revelation 14:18 - Yet another angel, who had authority over fire, came 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."

Revelation 14:14-20

Joel 3:13 - 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.

Revelation 14:20 Then the **press was trampled** outside the city, and **blood** flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.

Isaiah 63:3 I **trampled the winepress** alone, and no one from the nations was with me. I trampled them in my anger and ground them underfoot in my fury; their **blood** spattered my garments, and all my clothes were stained.

**Revelation 14:20** Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.

**Jeremiah 25:15** This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take this cup of the wine of wrath from my hand and make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink from it."



**Revelation 14:20** Then the press was trampled outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press up to the horses' bridles for about 180 miles.

## God's Final Harvest

**Lamentations 1:15** The Lord has rejected all the mighty men within me. He has summoned an army against me to crush my young warriors. The Lord has trampled Virgin Daughter Judah like grapes in a winepress.

Revelation 14:14-20



# God's Final Harvest

Revelation 14:14-20

**SUMMARY**

## Key Themes of Revelation 14:14–20

- Jesus is not only the Lamb of God who gave himself for our sins; he is also the exalted Christ who will return as Judge.
- Christians who are faithfully enduring opposition can rest assured that God will judge evil and vindicate his children.
- Those who rebel against God and persecute his people will experience the terrible wrath of God at the last judgment.



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Revelation 14:14-20

**CONCLUSION**

**At the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre in Rwanda, the story of the Hutus' genocidal rampage against the Tutsis in 1994 is told in excruciating detail. Panel by panel, object by object, one is exposed to the dangers of the mob run amok.**



As one journeys through, a terrible insight emerges: the killers didn't consider the consequences of their actions. This is clear in the photographs, the statistics, and the firsthand testimonies. They were focused only on the moment.





**They never imagined that one day their faces would be on display, their names forever stained, and their infamy memorialized for the ages. The prospect of future justice never crossed their minds.**

**Whether we know it or not, our lives right now are being marked for a coming day of judgment. The things we have done, causes we have loved, and time we have spent will be known, and we will give an account.**



**Newsweek reported November 1, 1999 that  
“40% of U.S. adults believe the world will end  
as foretold: in a Battle of Armageddon  
between Jesus and Antichrist.”**

**Today God speaks in grace. Soon He will speak in wrath. Today God speaks in mercy. Soon He will speak in judgement. The harvest is near. The reaping is about to begin. God help you if you are not ready. God help you if you are not prepared.**