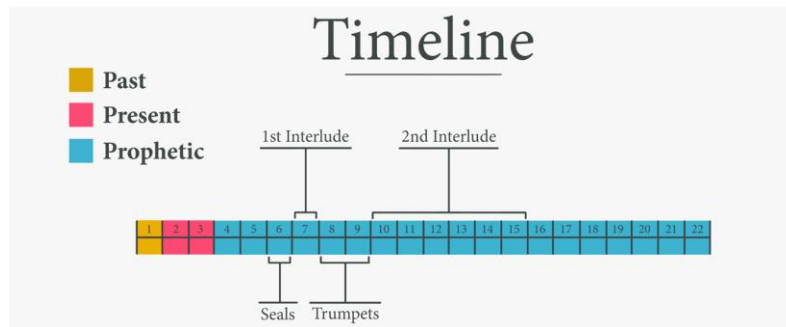


## Revelation 14:14-15:8 – Harvest, Seven Angels And Seven Plagues



**Rev. 14:14-20:** *“Then 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...”*

- The “white cloud” represents the glory and power of God (Ex. 16:10; Mt. 17:5).
- Vs. 14 mentions one like a “son of man.” This is Christ. This phrase is common in the Gospels and refers to Jesus (Mt. 16:27-28; Lk. 5:24).
- Jesus uses this title over 65x as a description of Himself.
- It is the Messianic title taken from Dan. 7:13-14.
- The title “Son of Man” is used three distinct ways when speaking of the Lord:

A) It speaks concerning His ministry on earth (Mt. 8:20).

B) It speaks concerning His death and resurrection (Mt. 12:40).

C) It speaks concerning His Second Coming (Mt. 13:41).

- “Son of Man” also denotes Deity. He forgives sin (Mk. 2:5-7, 10). He will execute judgment (Jn. 5:27). He gave His life as a ransom (Mt. 20:28).
- Vss. 14-16 notes that Jesus has a “golden crown” and a “sickle.” His crown is, in the Greek, a “Stephanos” crown, a “victor’s crown,” a crown of triumph.
- Regarding the sickle, this can be seen in passages such as Mt. 13:24-30 and Joel 3:11-17, where it speaks of the coming in of the millennium but there is no doubt that vss. 14-15 speak of judgment as things are coming to a close.
- The word “ripe” (vs. 15) means “dry or withered”, or the “overripening of the crops.” These are not saints of the tribulation. This is judgment, that the time is ripe for judgment, that God has given man a chance to repent (2 Peter 3:9).
- The people of the earth, by their decision, will face the time of judgment. The crop will be “overripe,” reading for harvesting, and in this case, judgment. We see this unfolding as we go through Revelation.

Chuck Swindoll notes, *“Instantly, the Son of Man swept His sickle over the earth and executed judgment. Commentator Robert Thomas notes, “The brevity of the statement dramatizes the suddenness of the judgment.” Like an overripe wheat field that demands immediate attention by the harvester, the evil of humanity will call for swift and decisive justice. The apostle Peter, after reminding his readers of the patience of God in delaying judgment, informed his readers, “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief” (2 Pet.*

3:10). *God is patient and merciful, but one day the earth will experience the sharp edge of His “terrible, swift sword.”*

- In vs. 17 another angel comes from heaven carrying a sharp sickle, one like Jesus had.
- In vss. 18-20 another angel came out from the altar who had authority over the fire and called for the angel with the sickle to gather from the “earth” (unbelievers) and they are thrown into the “winepress” of God’s judgment. Believers are not included in this.
- In the ancient world grapes were put into a bathtub shaped vat usually carved into rock and connected to a lower gathering chamber. As the grapes were crushed, the juice flowed into the chamber and was put in jars.
- That picture is used to describe God’s judgment on mankind’s rebellious state.
- Vss. 19-20 refers to the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:16; Rev. 19:15-21). We will see this battle in more detail.
- The image is of someone stomping grapes and the grape juice splattering. The blood will splatter as high as the bridle of horses. Armageddon is more than one battle, and it will encompass almost the entire land of Israel.

**Rev. 15:1-4:** *“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished. And I...”*

- We are nearing the end of the tribulation period. These judgments will bring a finish to the wrath of God. The phrase “another sign” is a prelude to the bowl judgments. It is a new vision for John.
- In vs. 1 “heaven” here refers to where God dwells. These are God’s angels that are noted in vs. 1.
- The “sea of glass” is mentioned in Rev. 4:6 and we noted that there were five thoughts on what it could be but let’s focus on what we see here in Rev. 15:2. It is not a literal sea but what “appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire.”
- This sea of glass mingled with fire may be representative of the persecution of believers during the Great Tribulation. That could be based on the rest of vs. 2. It may be a statement of God’s coming, final judgments on the earth and these believers will not face those judgments. The focus is on God’s final wrath.
- The word “plagues” (vs. 1) means “heavy affliction, public calamity.” It is not a plague like Covid or some other disease, but it refers to God’s wrath, judgment, and punishment upon humanity. We see in Rev. 16 that these plagues are not necessarily diseases. These plagues will be quick and destructive.
- In vs. 2 there are those who have been saved during the tribulation period who are by the sea of glass. They refused the mark of the beast; thus, they did not surrender to the economic pressures. They also did not give in to the political and religious pressure of the antichrist and false prophet.
- The “harps” they are holding in vs. 2 are not what you and I think of when we visualize harps. These are smaller, held in the hand.
- Vss. 3-4 have various interpretations behind them. There are two songs that are noted here, the “song of Moses” and the “song of the Lamb.”

- The “song of Moses” was a song of deliverance from Israel’s enemies and all that occurred in that happening (Ex. 15:1-18; Deut. 32:1-43), though Exodus 15 in my thinking is probably the focus of the “song of Moses.”
- The “song of the Lamb” seems to be a new song though other songs in Revelation are sung to the Lord, the lyrics to this song seem to be those found in vss. 3-4. The purpose of worship, which encompasses all of our life, is to glorify God for Who He is and what He has done.
- Vss. 3-4 tell us God’s power, justice and righteousness, and holiness. We see His sovereignty and that He alone deserves to be worshipped.

**Rev. 15:5-8:** *“After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues...”*

- There seems to be a heavenly temple (vs. 5), the prototype of the ones that were on earth (see Heb. 8:2-5). No sacrifices are made in the heavenly temple.
- The angels who had the seven plagues (vs. 6) are clothed in “pure, bright linen” (representative of holiness and purity). The “golden sash” may point to the glory of God, but the garments are priestly. Angels are not priests, but in this scene are dressed as such as they are serving God. God’s holiness and justice are about to be vindicated in the final bowl judgments.
- In vs. 7 one of the four living creatures gives to each angel seven bowls full of the wrath of God. There is a thought that the bowls are possibly connected to Rev. 5:8 and the prayers of the martyred saints and God’s response to their suffering. God has given people time to repent (2 Peter 3:9) and they have rejected Him.

Lehman Strauss has some sobering thoughts about these judgments, *“In that day there will not be a single scientific or psychological means of pacifying the fears of men. Scientists and psychiatrists themselves will be totally helpless in those days. Men who have refused to drink of the cup of God’s salvation must drink from the bowls of His wrath.”*

- Vs. 8 speaks to God’s glory filling the sanctuary in heaven. When the tabernacle in the wilderness was completed, a cloud of glory filled it (Ex. 40:35) and when the temple was completed (1 Kings 8:10-11)

### **Practical Application:**

- As we see the judgment of God poured out on the earth, who do we know that we can pray for and share with that does not know Christ as Lord and Savior. What actions should we take to reach out to them.
- Think about the attributes, glory of God, and spend time thinking how each of His characteristics (holiness, mercy, grace, etc.) has practical application to us. We can be thankful for things such as His mercy and grace that saves us, for His desire for us to be holy (because He knows what is best for us) and for His care and concern for us.