

THE REVELATION

AUGUST 25, 2024

Chapter 14:19-15:4

(11) The Swing of the Sickle (14:19)

(a) The Uses of the Wine Press of the Wrath (14:19)

Rev 14:19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

The rebellious Jews may not be at Megiddo, but they will be thrown “... into the great wine press of the wrath of God...” when the angel gathers them from the earth. There, their blood will spill along with all the people who will be involved in the final evil empire.

(b) The Place of the Wine Press of the Wrath (14:20)

Rev 14:20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

It is about fifty-five miles from Jerusalem to the bottom tip of the valley of Megiddo, which itself is only about 36 miles long and 15 miles at its widest point. How can the blood come “out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles?” The “wine press” container is the valley of Megiddo; it is the place where all the enemies of the LORD will be judged in that hour. But we must not forget that it is a valley, and valleys have outlets through the hills that lead downhill to the rivers and streams to the sea. So, too, Megiddo has rivers and streams that leave the valley and head to the *Mediterranean Sea* to the west and the *Dead Sea and Red Sea* to the south. The Nation of Israel is 290 miles in length. The nation lies uphill 90 miles to the north of the valley of Megiddo and 200 miles to the south. Therefore, this blood will run south (downhill) out of the valley of Megiddo down the Jordan River and empty into the *Red Sea*. As it travels through the valley's rivers, John sees it as high as the horse's bridles. Note, too, that by necessity, the blood would pass near the city of Jerusalem as it journeyed south to the sea.

So, we have new information about the wine press in the valley of Megiddo, but we must remember that this is still the *seventh trumpet*, and we are only being introduced to the participants in the story with some specific details. It is not the time of the Megiddo event that will come later in the story after the pouring of the *seven bowls of wrath*.

Chapter 15

(12) The Sign (15:1-4)

(a) The Seven (15:1)

Rev 15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

Still in the seventh trumpet, we come to the introduction of the seven angels and the seven bowls of the wrath of God. These angels have seven ugly plagues that will torment the *beasts and followers*. The bowls will be poured upon the earth from heaven. When the last bowl is poured, the *two beasts* will be cast into the lake of fire, but that is still to come in the story.

(b) The Saved (15:2)

Rev 15:2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

John continues to describe what he is seeing. He has already mentioned the seven angels with the *seven bowls*, but he must describe their surroundings. Under their feet, he saw the floor, which looked like “a sea of glass mixed with fire.” Oh, how stately it is! A flat see-through surface, shimmering as a fire shimmers and acting as a pathway to the edge of heaven where these heavenly creatures will cast the contents of their bowls down, down, down, upon the earth. John already knew about these angels because they were involved with the pageantry of the LORD, leading to the wine press in the valley of Megiddo. But John also saw the glorious throngs of people who were victorious over the wiles of the “*beast and his image and the number of his name*.” And we see them now on that beautiful shimmering sea with their harps in hand – harps that belong to God. These people are not martyrs; neither are they dead. They are the ones (saved) who safely avoided the events in the valley of Megiddo.

The picture in this verse takes us back to the crossing of the Red Sea in Exodus 15. Chased by Pharaoh to the seashore, the Israelites were trapped at a dead end with nowhere to go. But they did have a place prepared by the LORD, and it rested on the other shore. The sea opened, and the Nation of Israel made the terrifying journey down into the middle of the seabed and then up to the other side. Once there, the nation stood at the shoreline of the sea and watched as the army of Pharaoh drowned. And the deep covered them, and they died in the depths like a stone. Within a few minutes, the sea returned to its normal levels, slowly shimmering as it went south to the gulf. With the sea calm, the nation erupted in song.

Ex 15:1-4 ... “I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him. The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his

army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea. The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone. ..."

So, too, these victorious souls who have survived the great day of the wrath of the LORD on His enemies in the valley of Megiddo will erupt in song.

(c) The Song (15:3-4)

Rev 15:3 And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! ⁴ "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."

Israel had been saved from her bondage in Egypt, and she rejoiced with a song. Here, Israel will be saved from the bondage of all the nations that have afflicted them through all the centuries, nations controlled by the enemy of God. John hears the song. Interestingly, the song sung at the Red Sea is noted. This song, as short as it is, has a wonderful ring as a combination of the "*Song of Moses*" and the "*Song of the Lamb*." The first was sung at the Red Sea, and the second at the Crystal Sea. The first was a triumph over Egypt, and the second was a triumph over Babylon. The first explains how the LORD led His people out; the second explains how the LORD led His people in. The first was the first song in the Bible, and the second was the last song in the Bible. The first represents the execution of God's enemy; the second represents the exaltation of the saints. The redeemed Nation of Israel sings the first, and the second is sung by the converted Nation of Israel.

The song is thus. "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty..." In other words, "*How great a God You are!*" "Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!" In other words, "*How good a God You are!*" "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name?" In other words, "*How glorious a God You are!*" And there we have the song from the Red Sea renewed.

The song goes on to its second point. "For You alone are holy..." In other words, "*How holy a God You are!*" "For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU..." In other words, "*How magnificent a God You are!*" "FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED." And finally, in other words, "*How manifest a God You are!*"

With all that said, John saw in heaven what would transpire shortly on earth!

The Story of the Revelation - A Paraphrase

The Continuation – Part 3

Long, long ago ...

When the LORD broke the *sixth seal*, darkness covered the earth. The sun's light could not be seen, and when the moon came up at night, it was red. John saw what looked like stars falling to the earth, like figs that fell off a tree when blown by a great wind. The clouds were churning like a roll

of paper turning over and over, and the mountains and islands began to shake and move. This scared everyone to death, and they ran to hide in caves and behind rocks. They thought the world was ending, and they begged the rocks to fall on them and kill them, thinking it would be better than facing the anger of God. No one can stand the anger of God.

John then saw the four angels who control the winds, and he heard another angel tell them not to blow on the earth, sea, or the trees until 144,000 servants were stamped on their heads with the name of Jesus and God. They were twelve thousand men from each of the twelve tribes of the Nation of Israel.

After the stamping of the 144,000 men on earth, John turned his attention back to heaven, and he was amazed when he saw that a great multitude of people had arrived carrying palm branches from every tribe, nation, and language on earth. These people were thanking God for their salvation. An elder told John that they were the people who had washed themselves clean in the blood of the Lamb - the LORD Jesus, Who died on the cross for them. They were all the Christians in the world who had finally arrived in heaven to serve God day and night. God will protect them forever!

Then, Jesus broke the *seventh seal*, and there was silence in heaven for thirty minutes.

John then saw seven angels, who were given *seven trumpets*. These were the seven angels who have stood before the throne of God in heaven since the beginning of creation. Another angel came to the altar with a golden pan full of smoke. The smoke came from the incense in the pan, which represented the prayers of the saints of God. He threw the pan to the earth, and thunder sounded, lightning flashed, and an earthquake occurred.

The angel with the *first trumpet* blew his horn, and hail fell to the earth. Lightning struck and killed a third of the trees and burned the grass. Blood from the dead animals ran over the ground.

The angel with the *second trumpet* blew his horn, and John saw a huge rock that looked like a big mountain thrown into the sea. It killed a third of the marine life, and their blood turned the water red. It also destroyed a third of the ships sailing in the waters of the Great Sea.

The angel with the *third trumpet* blew his horn, and a star fell from heaven. It landed on the rivers and streams around the Great Sea and poisoned the waters.

The angel with the *fourth trumpet* blew his horn, and the sky became obscure again; only a third of the light from the sun, moon, and stars would shine down on the earth.

John then saw an eagle flying as high as it could in the sky. It screeched a warning to the earth, saying, "Woe, woe, woe" to everyone on earth because of what was about to take place with the sound of the last three trumpets!

The angel with the *fifth trumpet* blew his horn, and one of the stars that fell like a fig in the wind ended up being an angel with the key to the bottomless abyss. He opened the abyss, and smoke belched through the water and into the atmosphere, and darkness filled the air. Out of the smoke came locusts with stingers like scorpions. The LORD permitted the locusts to sting only humans for five months. They were not permitted to hurt any trees or green vegetation as most locusts like to

do – only humans, but not one of the 144,000 who had the name of Jesus and God on their foreheads. The stings were so bad that all the people wished they could just die, but they could not. The locusts had a king and leader; his name was Abaddon or Destroyer! That story ends the first woe.

The angel with the *sixth trumpet* blew his horn, and a voice from heaven commanded the release of the four evil angels who had been bound at the Euphrates River since the early days, just after the creation. They had been locked up all this time, but now it was their turn to kill one-third of mankind. They would not do it alone. They had two hundred million soldiers waiting to help them. Their chests were the color of fire; their heads looked like lions; smoke, fire, and burning sulfur came out of their mouths. Their tails had serpents' heads, and they had the power to hurt people. All who were not killed by these angels and their army did not turn to the LORD for help; they worshipped demons instead.

An angel appeared to John with a little book in his hand. His voice sounded like the roar of a lion, and when he spoke, the thunder grumbled. John was told not to write what the thunder said into the pages of this book. The angel swore by the name of the Creator that when the seventh angel sounded, the mystery of God would be revealed as it had been through the Old and New Testament prophets. The voice from heaven told John to eat the little book. It would be sweet in his mouth but make him sick to his stomach. John ate the book, and sure enough, it was sweet in his mouth but sour in his stomach. What did that mean? It was time for John to become a prophet and tell God's story while the two hundred million army was still killing one-third of the people on earth. His message would be sweet for those who believed but sour for those who rebelled.

John started by measuring the Temple, the Altar, and those who were already in heaven worshipping the LORD, but he was not to measure the courtyard outside the Temple. The courtyard was still being controlled by the nations of the world. The courtyard was all of creation outside of the Temple. Down on earth, the nations of the world had their eyes on the holy city of Jerusalem, and they tried to conquer it for forty-two months. But they would be hampered in that process by two witnesses of the LORD who had been looking after things on earth since creation. Other names for these two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands. They would be seen in the holy city of Jerusalem proclaiming the Gospel for twelve hundred and sixty days, or forty-two months. That time is also three and a half years. These two witnesses had the power to kill people with fire from their mouths, stop the rain, turn water to blood, and strike the earth with problems of all kinds. When their twelve hundred and sixty days of witnessing were complete, the beast from the abyss killed them. Their bodies lay in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days, and all the evil people of the world had a party, sending gifts to neighbors in joy over their deaths. At the end of the three and a half days, life came back into them, and they stood up, and all the world saw it happen! They rose into heaven, and all the evil people of the world were struck with fear. An earthquake struck Jerusalem. Ten percent of the buildings were destroyed. Seven thousand people were killed. But all the rest of the people in Jerusalem began to worship and give glory to the God of heaven. The Nation of Israel had finally accepted the LORD as Savior, and that brought to an end the second woe.

The third woe began with the sound of the *seventh trumpet*. All of heaven rejoiced and the twenty-four elders fell to their knees and worshipped God. But on earth, the events of the *seventh trumpet* enraged the nations because of the wrath of God that would come upon them with this woe.

John had prophesied about the coming of the two witnesses and the salvation of Israel, but in this woe, the LORD told John about all the participants in the story that led to Israel's salvation. It started with the promise of God's covenant for the people of the world that was recorded and stored in the Ark in heaven. John heard the lightning and thunder grumbling over the promise, and, as a result, another earthquake, along with a great hailstorm, fell on the earth.

The covenant of God was to run through a certain family, and it was presented next to the *woman with twelve stars* that looked like a crown around her head. She was pregnant and about to give birth. That woman was the Nation of Israel, and the twelve stars were the twelve tribes of that nation. The Child would be Jesus.

The next person presented looked like a *great red dragon* with seven heads, ten horns and ten crowns. He hated the woman and he hated the Child. He was not alone. He was created as an angel and he convinced one third of the angels to follow him in his devilish ways. He and his demons were waiting for the Child to be born so they could kill Jesus.

The woman gave birth to Jesus. The *great red dragon* could not kill Him. Jesus would then grow to be the ruler of the universe, and He went to heaven to sit on His throne with God. The woman was then in trouble with the *great red dragon*. He could not kill Jesus, so he turned his attention to Jesus' family. The woman ran away to the wilderness for twelve hundred and sixty days.

War broke out in heaven, and Michael, a powerful angel, fought with all of his angels against the great red dragon and all his angelic demons. The dragon and his demons lost, and they were cast out of heaven forever. They were thrown to the earth. A voice from heaven said, "*No longer will the accuser of the believers be standing by the throne of God.*" For those believers already in heaven, all the heavenly creatures rejoiced because the dragon did not win them over to his devilish ways. This red dragon was the devil, and he is also called Satan. From the time he landed on Earth, he knew that the time he had left to tempt the people would be very short.

The dragon turned his attention to persecuting the woman, but she was allowed to get away from him for three and a half years. The dragon tried to run over her with water, but an earthquake occurred and swallowed up the water. Because he could not hurt the woman, the dragon turned his attention to all the rest of the people who loved God and Jesus.

The dragon needed help, so he enlisted the help of a beast empire with seven heads, ten horns, and ten crowns. This beast had terrible names written on each head. The heads looked like leopards, the feet like bears' feet, and the mouths like lions' mouths. The dragon gave this beast all his great power. One of the heads of the beast looked like it had died and come back to life, and because of that and his great power, the empire he was leading was amazed and worshipped him. His language was terrible and nasty, and he made it his job to wage war with those who believed in Jesus. The

countries around the Mediterranean Sea, the Great Sea as it used to be called, were the homes of this beast.

But the dragon needed more help, and a *second beast* came for that job. His home was on land, away from the sea. He had two horns, and he acted as gentle as a lamb, but his words were evil like the dragon's. He had the authority of the *first beast*, and he made his nation worship the first beast and an image of the first beast. He required everyone to wear a number on their foreheads or right hands—666. He was evil, and he deceived the people.

John then saw the 144,000 Israelites again. They were standing on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. He heard harps playing, and he then heard those Israelites singing a song that only they could learn. These Israelites were blameless, pure, and untainted by the great red dragon.

Suddenly, John saw and heard an angel flying in the atmosphere who was proclaiming the eternal, everlasting Gospel message about Jesus to the whole world. Another angel appeared and told the world that *Babylon the Great* was about to be defeated. Then, a third angel warned everyone in the world, “*Do not worship the beast, do not worship his image, do not take his mark on your forehead or right hand. If you do, you will be tormented with fire and burning sulfur!*” The whole world will hear that Gospel message preached, not by humans, but by angels.

After the Gospel was preached to the world, John was told to write an interesting thing. “*Blessed are those who die in the LORD from now on!*” These will not listen to the message or fall for the devil's tricks, but because they will not follow him, they will die. When they die, they will go to be with the LORD.

John then saw Jesus on a throne, sitting on a cloud with a sickle in His hand. An angel encouraged Him to reap the fields of the earth, and He did.

Another angel came out of the Temple with a sickle. He was encouraged to reap the vines of the earth, and he did. His vines were to be thrown into the valley of Megiddo, and the blood rose to the height of the bridles of the horses and flowed for two hundred miles through the Nation of Israel. The Saved of the Earth sang a song that was half from the days of Moses' crossing of the Red Sea and half from the days of the blood flowing from Megiddo to the Red Sea. The song was about how great, good, glorious, holy, magnificent, and manifest God was and is!

What will happen next? John saw seven angels coming out of the Temple in heaven, and one of the four living creatures gave them the seven bowls containing the wrath of God! The third woe had ended.

And the awesome story continues!

The sound of the *seventh trumpet* was complete, and all its personnel were introduced to the story. The three woes were exposed. The three woes of the people of the world had been presented. It is now time for the *seven bowls of wrath* to be poured and a few more participants to be introduced.