

# (Revelation) Revelation 14:13-16:18

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon explores the themes of the overcomers, the spirit of the Antichrist, perseverance, and the battle of Armageddon, highlighting the importance of faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the commandments.*

**Duration:** 1:00:43

**Scripture:** Matthew 19:6, John 14:15, 1 John 2:18, 1 John 5:3, Revelation 3:21, Revelation 14:1, Revelation 14:12

**Topics:** "Faith And Obedience", "Perseverance Of Saints"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of both faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the commandments as essential marks of a New Testament saint. He emphasizes that these two aspects should not be separated, as God has joined them together. The preacher also mentions the concept of overcomers, who are those who have wholeheartedly followed the Lord and overcome the spirit of the Antichrist throughout church history. Finally, the sermon highlights the need for the perseverance of the saints, as mentioned in Revelation 14:12.

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## Transcript

Word of God now in Revelation chapter 14. In our last study we considered the overcomers standing with the Lord Jesus on Mount Zion, mentioned in verse 1. Symbolic language, Mount Zion is a picture of the New Testament church and the Lord Jesus himself is the first overcomer. He says that clearly in Revelation 3.21, he who overcomes even as I also overcame.

So he stands as the head of all the overcomers along with a number of others. We are not sure whether the number is exact or symbolic, that's immaterial, but it's a small number of people who have wholeheartedly followed the Lord in their lifetime and who have overcome throughout the ages the spirit of the Antichrist. Although the Antichrist himself is going to rule the world only in the last three and a half years before Christ returns, the spirit of the Antichrist has been overcome by the overcomers throughout two thousand years of church history.

And we saw here there was a need for the perseverance of the saints mentioned in verse 12. And these saints are described as those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. These are the two essential marks of a New Testament saint.

Faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the commandments. God has joined these together and what God has joined together, let no man separate. But men have separated what God has joined together.

The end result is we have many people today who place an emphasis only on faith in Jesus, but not on obedience to the commandments. And this is the reason why they do not become saints, because the saints are those who keep the commandments and have faith in Jesus. All right, now we come to verse 13.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, write, Revelation 14, 13, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them. There is a sense in which at any time it is true that those who die in the Lord are blessed.

Why does it say, then, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on? I think it perhaps is because they're going to be in the graves for a very short time now. At that particular time in the history of the world, it's going to be a very short time in the grave for them before Christ returns. And we are approaching that time.

This is why when those who have been disciples of the Lord pass away from our midst, we know that they are going to be in the graves for a very short time now. It's not as long a wait as it has been for people who died, say, a thousand or more years ago. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on, that they may rest from their labors.

And this is also true for us at all times, that those who die in the Lord rest from their labors. And I want you to notice this phrase, their deeds follow them. And in this connection, I'd like to turn you to 1 Timothy chapter 5 and see two verses there.

1 Timothy 5, verse 24 and 25. The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment. For others, their sins follow after.

What that means is, there are some people whose sinful lives are so obvious. I mean, when they die, we know they were just downright sinners, and their sins were, as it were, publicly going in front of them to the day of judgment. But then there are another category of sinners who don't appear to be sinners when they die.

I mean, people may have thought these were righteous men when they were put into the grave. Their sins were more hidden and concealed. Their sins are going to be opened up.

They're coming after them. They're going to be opened up in the day of judgment, and that's when many surprises will be there. Likewise, verse 25.

Also, the deeds that are good are quite evident. There are some people whose good deeds are obvious. I mean, people have noticed them, and they have lived a good life very obviously, and their good deeds have gone in front of them.

Then there are others who have done a lot of good, but who have not spoken about it, or talked about it, or testified about it, and they are those whose good deeds are going to be exposed in the day of judgment. And it's a very sad thing if the only good deeds that there are in our life are those which are going in front of us, and there are no good deeds following us in our hidden life. It says here, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, Revelation 14, 13, for their deeds follow them.

They have lived in goodness in their hidden life, in areas of their life that other people knew nothing about, and when the books are opened in the day of judgment, it will become manifest. Blessed are those who

die like that, who have works that are concealed from the eyes of men, good works. Just like in the hypocrites, their sin is concealed from the eyes of men, God has a godly remnant in whose life their good works are concealed, and it follows after.

It's not going ahead publicly visible, it's following after as it were, hidden, concealed behind them, to be opened in the day of reckoning, and then everyone will know the inner quality of their lives. Blessed are those who die in the Lord, like this, from now on. And then, verses 14 to 20, we have two pictures of what we could call the battle of Armageddon, and the final judgment before Jesus sets up his kingdom on earth.

First, a picture of a harvest from the field, and second, a picture of grapes gathered in from the vineyard. Verses 14 to 16 is a picture of a harvest from the field, and verses 17 to 20 is a picture of grapes gathered in from the vineyard. And when you turn to Joel, chapter 3, we find there in the book of Joel, the Old Testament, the book of Joel, chapter 3, this is how we know that these are both pictures of the same judgment, Joel, chapter 3, and I want to read from verse 12 to 16.

Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Now, notice these two pictures in verse 13. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.

Come, tread the winepress, for the winepress is full. The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. This is speaking about judgment on the wicked, both of these pictures.

Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of God's verdict, or decision, for the day of the Lord. That is, that final outbreak of God's wrath upon the world, before which, just before which, those will be the last few days before Jesus sets up His kingdom on the earth, and it is immediately before the last few days of judgment and wrath that the Church, the Bride of Christ, will be taken up. The day of the Lord is near, in the valley of decision.

The sun and the moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness, and so on. But in that day, the last part of verse 16, the Lord will be a refuge for His people. So we see, this is what we see in Revelation 14, and verse 14.

I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man. Now, this is obviously a picture of Christ, having a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. This is what we saw in Joel 3.13. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, put in your sickle and reap.

Now, this is not an angel giving an order to the Lord, but an angel reporting to the Lord the condition of the people on the earth, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is, as the margin says, drying. You see, that's the literal translation of the word. The harvest of the earth has withered.

It's a picture of those who did not respond in the time when the Lord was calling them. You remember that passage in John 4.35, where Jesus said, Lift up your eyes, for the fields are already white unto harvest. You see, the reaping in, into the kingdom of God, is not going to take place in the final day.

That's taking place right now. The harvest is already ready. But there are people in this time of reaping of the harvest who did not respond, and then a cry goes up from them, which we read in Jeremiah chapter 8. I want you to see this.

Jeremiah chapter 8, and verse 20. Jeremiah 8.20, The harvest is fast, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. You see, this is the time when the Lord is gathering in the harvest.

The harvest is plenty, as Jesus said in Matthew 9.38, the laborers are few. So the harvest of reaping people into God's kingdom is now. But those who do not respond to the call and come into the kingdom now are going to remain out in the field, and are going to wither, because they would not be taken in.

Those are the ones referred to in Revelation 14.15. The hour has come. Which is that hour? The hour is what we saw earlier in verse 7 of Revelation 14, the hour of judgment. We saw the difference between the day of salvation and the hour of judgment.

This is the day of salvation when the harvest is being reaped into God's kingdom, but then will follow the hour, a brief period of judgment, when those who are withered, those who did not respond, will be reaped in for judgment this time, not reaped into the kingdom. And he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. The word used here for withered is the same word that Jesus used about the sower who sowed the seed, and some fell on ground which didn't have much depth of earth.

There was a superficial response to the word, and it says, when the sun arose, the plant withered. That's the same word used here. The harvest of the earth is withered.

It seems to me this is a picture of those who had a superficial response to the gospel, and whose inner life was withered, and they're going to be reaped in for judgment. And then the other picture is also of judgment. Perhaps we could look at it as a picture of religious sinners being gathered in, and non-religious sinners being gathered in.

Verse 17, another angel came out of the temple, which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth. Now this is not the vine of heaven.

The vine of heaven is Jesus Christ. John 15, Jesus said, I am the true vine, and my father is the gardener. But this is not those who belong to that vine.

No, this is another vine. The vine of the earth. The earth dwellers.

Because the grapes of that vine are ripe. Ripe for what? Ripe for judgment. This is an Old Testament concept that God judges only when things have come to a maturity.

I'll give you one example of that from Genesis chapter 15. When the Lord made a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15, it says here, the Lord told Abraham, your descendants are going to be slaves in a foreign country for 400 years. And we know that the descendants of Abraham were slaves in Egypt for 400 years, Genesis 15, 13.

And then he says, after that, 400 years are over, I'm going to judge the land of Egypt, verse 14, and I'll bring out your descendants from there with many possessions. And then verse 16 of Genesis 15, in the fourth generation, they will return to this land of Canaan. Why is God going to wait for four generations before he judges the people of Canaan for their sin? And if you read Leviticus chapter 18, sometime when you get time, you read it, you will find that most of the sins that the Canaanites indulged in were sins of sexual perversion.

That was terrible. That's one of the reasons why it says in Leviticus 18, God was going to judge the land of Canaan and destroy the whole lot of people. Many people don't understand why God used the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites.

It was the same reason why God destroyed the world in the time of Noah, because there was perversion, and the whole world would have been corrupted. It's like cutting off a gangrenous leg or a gangrenous hand so that the whole body doesn't get corrupt. Now, why didn't that take place in Abraham's time? There's a reason given in verse 16.

The sins have not come to maturity. The iniquity of the Amorite is not yet mature, not yet complete. In other words, God is patient, long-suffering, waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting.

When we look at the world today and we find the amount of sexual perversion, the amount of violence and evil that there is, we think it's time for God to judge. No, God is very long-suffering. He gives opportunity for people to hear the word and to repent.

He sends forth his servants to preach the word, to tell people to turn from their sins, but they don't turn. And each time they reject the word of God, we can say they are becoming a little more ripe for judgment. Not yet fully ripe, a little more ripe.

And then they come and hear the word of God again and they don't respond, a little more ripe for judgment. A day will come when, as we read in Revelation 14, verse 18, the angel will say, the harvest is ripe. The grapes are now fully ripe because they have heard and heard and heard and heard and heard and heard.

And now God has decided the time has come for judgment. And the angel, verse Revelation 14, 19, swung in his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth and threw them into the great winepress of the wrath of God. This is a picture.

It's a picture of judgment where in the winepress is the place where the grapes were put in and they trod on it till the grape juice flowed out from it. It's used as a picture of how God is going to judge those who have refused to respond to his call. And the winepress, verse 20, was trodden outside the city and blood came out from the winepress up to the horse's bridles for a distance of 200 miles.

This is probably a picture of the final battle which is called in the Bible the battle of Armageddon, which is going to immediately precede the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth when the blood will flow for 200 miles. That is around the outside the city means outside the city of Jerusalem. Now we come to chapter 15.

And I saw another sign or wonder in heaven, great and marvelous. Seven angels who had seven plagues. Now notice we started out in Revelation 6 with seven seals.

The seven seals were not primarily an expression of God's wrath. They were the unfold opening up of the book. And we saw various events take place during the opening of those seals.

But when it came to the sixth seal, if you remember, in our study of Revelation 6, the word wrath came up there. And that's the beginning of wrath. And it's when wrath begins that the church is taken up before the wrath of God falls upon the earth because the church has no place in that.

And then we saw the seven trumpets which were various expressions of judgment. And now we find the seven bowls of wrath which are called seven plagues which are the last ones because in them the wrath of God is finished. Do you remember another place in the New Testament where it says it is finished? Yes, that's when Jesus hung on the cross.

He experienced the fullness of that same wrath of God. It was finished on Him. And because we have taken our place in Him, that's the only reason we don't have to experience that one there.

And a person who has not taken shelter in Calvary's cross, the death that Jesus died on that cross, there is no hope of escape from this wrath which is going to come. Yes, that's clear. We just want to read you a verse in Isaiah chapter 13.

Isaiah 13 and verses 6 to 11. Wail, for the day of the Lord is near. It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

Verse 9. Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, cruel with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation, and He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light. The sun will be dark when it rises.

The moon will not shed its light. Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. And notice this, what we have seen before, especially the proud.

I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud and abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. That is what we are going to see described in chapter 16. Now we come to chapter 15, Revelation again.

In this the wrath of God is going to be fully expressed. It is finished. Verse 2. And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast.

Now this is the overcomers, those who have been raptured to meet Jesus in the air, who are not going to be here when the wrath falls on the earth, because they have found their place in Christ on whom that wrath was finished, and because they have yielded their all to Him. And they have come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. The sea of glass we saw in chapter 4, verse 6, is before the throne of God, and this is where people are standing.

Notice in the book of Revelation, there are two things I mentioned. One is, we have frequent flashes of grace followed by judgment. You remember the book with John 8, which was sweet and then bitter.

Sweet and bitter. Grace and judgment. Grace and judgment.

Now we have a picture of grace, Revelation 15, before we come to judgment again in verse 16. The other thing I mentioned was, that in the book of Revelation, everything is not in a sequential order. It doesn't follow one after the other.

For example, in Revelation chapter 6, at the end of Revelation chapter 6, we saw the wrath of God bursting under the sixth seal. But that's actually also described in chapter 16. And then in chapter 7 and chapter 12, 13 and all, he goes back to something that happened before the sixth seal.

So what we see in the book of Revelation is, God gives a preview of the whole period as it were in chapter 6. In a nutshell, here it is. And then he gives little descriptions of what's going to take place in between.

Chapter 7, 8, then you come to chapter 9, 8 and 9 are a picture again of the final wrath.

So we can't try and say this is in sequence, and this is the mistake some have made in trying to interpret Revelation, because they are more interested in understanding it in terms of a chart and a diagram. I don't believe it's our calling to make a chart or a diagram to understand it, because the important thing is not for us to know the times and the seasons, as Jesus said in Acts chapter 1 verse 7, but to know the reality of what is going to take place, leaving the times and seasons in God's hands. And so we see here, those who have overcome, those who have been victorious from the beast.

Now, what does it mean to be victorious from the beast? That is referring to overcoming the spirit of the Antichrist, which has been in operation, as we read in 1 John 2, even from the first century. For 20 centuries the spirit of the Antichrist has worked, it's building up, it's something like the slope of a mountain. It began in the first century, it's building up, we are somewhere near the peak now, and one of these days the Antichrist will be revealed.

But there have been people in 20 centuries who have overcome this spirit. We could take a spiritual application from this to our own life as well. One meaning of being victorious over the beast could be this, that when someone behaves like a beast towards you, it's quite something not to behave like a beast in return.

The world is full of people who, when somebody acts like a beast to them, they act like a beast in return. Then they haven't got the victory over the beast, no they haven't. Then they have been overcome by the spirit of the beast.

People acted like a beast towards Jesus when they crucified him, but he didn't act like a beast in return, he was victorious over that. That is where we can also be overcomers. To overcome the beast, his image, and the number of his name, and then we shall stand one day before the Lord.

And we have plenty of opportunities to do that. Have you seen these sometimes two dogs baring their teeth at each other? Sometimes we see two human beings like that. Well, what are they? They're really not much different from those dogs.

No, here is where we are to get the victory over the beast. And verse 3, they sang the song of Moses, the bondservant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God the Almighty, righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the nation. Now, the song of Moses, there are two songs of Moses mentioned in the Old Testament, and I just want you to look at them for a moment because it's got some significance.

Exodus chapter 15, and verse 1 to 4, it says here, this is immediately after the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, and after they crossed the Red Sea, Pharaoh and his army were drowned in the Red Sea. And that was a moment of tremendous thrill and triumph for the Israelites. And it says at that moment, Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the Lord, the song of Moses.

What did they sing? I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea. You remember in Revelation 6, we saw the Antichrist pictured as a man riding on a white horse.

Now, this is why we see the horse and the rider has been thrown down by the Lord. The Lord is my strength and song. He has become my salvation.

This is my God. I will praise him. My Father's God, and I will extol him.

The Lord is a warrior. The Lord is his name. In the final battle of Armageddon, we'll come to that later, the Antichrist and his forces are going to come into the land of Israel and it's going to be a massive attack upon the land.

And that's the time when Jesus Christ is going to come down from heaven with his saints and his feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives, from which place he had ascended up into heaven. And he is going to destroy the forces of the Antichrist. The people of God will just participate in that victory.

And that's how we win the victory even today. The Word of God says, as it says in Exodus 14, stand still, verse 13, and see the salvation which the Lord will accomplish for you today. We do not win with our own hands and with our own weapons.

We stand still and trust in the Lord, and the Lord destroys our enemies. And so those who have faith in that can sing the song of Moses even today. At least we can get some choir practice for that in our, I don't mean that stupid thing they do in some buildings with musical instruments.

I mean choir practice in the daily affairs of life where we can learn to sing the song of Moses. I'm going to stand still. I'm not going to fight back.

The Lord deals with my enemies. I stand still. The Lord is a warrior.

The Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his army he has cast into the sea. Exodus 15.4, the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea.

So that is the song of Moses. And finally verse 18, the Lord shall reign forever and ever. The other passage is Deuteronomy, the fifth book of Moses.

There's a song there called the song of Moses. In Deuteronomy 31, the last verse, it says these are the words that Moses sang in the hearing of the assembly of Israel. And there also he says in verse 42 and 43, I will make my arrows drunk with blood.

My sword shall devour flesh. Verse 43, rejoice O nations with his people for he will avenge the blood of his servants and will render vengeance on his adversaries and will atone for his land his people. The principle in both songs is this, that the people of God do not take vengeance on their adversaries themselves.

They stand back and God fights for them. That is the song we need to learn today. That is the song of Moses and that is the song of the Lamb because that's how the Lamb walked on the earth too.

He did not fight back. He left it to his father. He committed his soul to him who judges righteously.

We need to learn that song so that we can sing it up there in glory when we stand with the harps of God. That's what I meant by choir practice in the daily situations of life where we can learn it. And they sang the song of Moses back to Revelation 15 verse three, great and marvelous are thy works.

O Lord, the Almighty, righteous and true are thy ways. Thou King of the nations. In other words, what they are saying if I were to paraphrase those words it is this, Lord your ways are perfect.

There's a beautiful chorus that we sing and above the rest this note shall swell in my song. My Jesus has done all things well. That's the song we're going to sing.

Lord, your ways are perfect. Righteous and true are your ways. Everything that God ordained in our life.

Yeah, when we get into eternity and look back over the way God led us, we shall discover that everything that God ordained in our life was exactly the very best for us. You may not understand that today. Sometimes it's very difficult for us to understand the way why certain things happen like this or that, but in that day we'll have no doubt.

And the man of faith is the one who can see that even now. Who does not have to wait till eternity where God explains the reason for everything that happened in our life. But who can say right now, Lord your ways are perfect.

Who will not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou alone art holy, for all the nations will come and worship before thee, for thy righteous acts have been revealed. Now we earlier read in chapter 14 verse 7 that there was a gospel that's preached saying, fear God, give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come. These are the things that are being mentioned here in chapter 15 verse 4. Who will not fear thee, O Lord, and give you glory? For the nations will come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed.

And after these things, I looked, verse 5, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened. And the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple clothed in linen, clean and bright. Now it's significant that it's mentioned here that the angels are clothed in linen, clean and bright.

If you turn over to chapter 19 and verse 8, we are told there that the fine linen, clean and bright, is a picture of the righteous acts of the saints. So fine linen, clean and bright, is a picture of righteousness. And these angels who are bringing forth the final judgment of God upon the earth, the significance of their being clothed in fine linen, clean and bright, is that they are doing it in righteousness.

It is a righteous judgment. There is a beautiful verse in Isaiah chapter 11 verses 2 and 3, where it says about Jesus, he will not judge according to the sight of his eyes, nor will he rebuke according to what he heard with his ears. Now we have a tremendous tendency for that.

The children of Adam are specialists in judging by what they have seen and in judging by what they have heard. By hearsay and by what we have seen, we exercise all the judgments we have ever exercised in our life. And we have trained that art to perfection, to judge according to the sight of our eyes and according to the hearing of our ears.

That proves that we are the children of Adam. But when we get converted, the Holy Spirit, if we mean business with God, begins to change us and begins to tell us, you must not judge anymore by what you hear. Somebody told you something and you form a judgment, you are a child of Adam.

You are an idiot if you say you are a disciple of Jesus and you are going that way. The Spirit of God says, I want to change you, not by what you hear, not by what you see. Follow Jesus, who never judged by what he heard, never judged by what he saw, but he listened, he saw, but then he took it to the Father and said, Father, I have come in the flesh and because of this flesh I can make a wrong judgment because of what I have seen and what I have heard.

I don't want to make a judgment, I want to hear. And if the Father said something to him, he responded to that. That's why the judgment of Jesus was always righteous.

And that's why he told us, judge not. You see, we are not to judge according to what our eyes see or our ears hear, because it will always be an unrighteous judgment. Here we see the angels coming forth with righteousness, fine linen, clean and bright, and they come forth with the plagues of judgment.

That's the significance. Girded around their breasts with golden girdles. And then we read, verse 7, one of the four creatures, living creatures, gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls, full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever.

Now it's significant that these four living creatures, who up until now in the book of Revelation, we've always seen them only participating in worship. Every picture we saw of these four living creatures was worshipping God, worshipping God, worshipping God, praising God, worshipping Him. Now, these living creatures, these worshipping creatures, are now executing, having, participating in God's judgment.

You see, God's righteousness and God's judgment are not two different things. One is the direct result of the other. And it's just as natural for these four living creatures to worship God and to execute judgment when the time comes.

And it's just perfectly proper for God to manifest love and goodness and execute judgment also when the right time comes. Like a true godly father who knows how to love his children and also to punish them, and to execute judgment, and also to turn off the rebellious out of the house. Verse 7, verse 8, and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God.

In the Old Testament, we read that when Solomon completed the temple, the glory of God filled the temple. But here we read the glory of God fills the temple when judgment takes place. And no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

I don't think any of us would have minded being there when Solomon's temple was filled with the glory of the Lord. We'd have been very happy if we could have been there and seen the glory of God fill that place. I want to say this, brothers and sisters, because this has an answer to this question that many people ask.

If some unconverted relative of mine is finally lost and is burning in hell, how can I stand and watch that? How can I bear to see that? The answer to that is that when we see Jesus, we will be like him. And we can never love that unconverted relative any more than Jesus loved him. And if Jesus can bear to see that person eternally damned, we will also be able to bear it.

We will be there in the presence of the glory of the Lord. There is a glory in judgment, which we can't understand fully now because we are still in the flesh. But there is a glory of God in judgment, just like there is a glory of God in a godly life.

That we can understand now. We beheld his glory, we read in John 1, 14, full of grace and truth. That glory, it is easy for us to understand now.

But even that glory, people out in the world can't understand. The only glory people out in the world can understand is the glory of men, the honor of men, and the glory that comes from money and position and power. But we who have been converted from that, who become disciples of Jesus, have seen another glory, which is the glory of God seen in Jesus, full of grace and truth.

But there is another aspect of the glory of God which is difficult for us to fully comprehend here on this earth. And that's the glory of God seen here in judgment. There is a glory there we mustn't forget.

And that is what is described in chapter 16, the seven last plagues. First one, I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, go and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth. And we read here, the first angel went and poured out his bowl into the earth.

Now I want you to notice something in these first eight verses, that there is a lot similarity between this and the trumpets that we read off, the first four trumpets that we read off in chapter eight. And it's quite likely that these will operate, these will take place simultaneously. You notice the first bowl was on the earth, verse two.

The second one is on the sea. The third, verse four, was on the rivers and springs of water. And the fourth was on the heavenly body, the earth, the sea, the springs of water and the heavenly bodies.

And notice that in chapter 14, verse seven, chapter 14, verse seven, fear God and give him glory because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made these four things, the heaven, the earth, the sea and the springs of waters. And we see that in chapter eight, if you remember chapter eight of revelation, the first trumpet was blown and something was thrown down to the earth, revelation eight, verse seven.

The second one, something was thrown into the sea, verse eight. The third trumpet and something fell on the rivers and the springs of water, verse 10. And the fourth on the heavenly bodies.

I just point that out as a similarity, which seems to indicate that what's described in revelation eight and what's described in revelation 16 are going to take place around the same time. Anyway, let's turn to revelation 16 again. And the first angel went and poured out his bowl into the earth and it became a loathsome and malignant sore upon the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

We've seen about the mark of the beast. I just want to mention a spiritual application for our life of the mark of the beast. I want to say that all human beings, as they grow in the world, develop the mark of the beast in a spiritual way.

In other words, they behave like animals, as we just saw. I want to show you a verse in this connection in Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament and chapter three. Ecclesiastes chapter three and verse 18.

Ecclesiastes chapter three, verse 18. I said to myself concerning the sons of men, God has surely tested them. That means allowed them to go through various trials and testings like all of us faith in order for man to see in order for men to see that they are really only beasts.

That means when a trial comes and I bear my teeth like the dogs bear their teeth at each other, that's one opportunity where God shows me, you're no better than the dog, if I have years to hear God speaking to me at that time. And it's not just once. It happens a second time.

It happens a third time. What about when a husband and wife bear their teeth at each other? They both get the opportunity to discover they are just beasts. Or two brothers or two sisters.

Just the same. Just beasts. And it says God allows people to be tested in various situations so that they will see this.

And blessed are those who say, oh God, how blind I have been. You created me to be a son of God and I'm descending to be a beast. Help me to follow in the footsteps of the one who walked on the earth who manifested what it is to be a son of God.

That is Jesus who never bared his teeth at others. The mark of the beast. The opposite of the mark of the beast in the book of Revelation is what? The mark of the lamb whose mouth was shut.

And in the different trials and testings of life we can say in a spiritual sense, I'm getting a little more of the mark of the beast or getting rid of a little of the mark of the beast that I have had all of my life. And getting a little more of the mark of the lamb. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Anyway, this loathsome and malignant sore, Revelation 16.2, is poured out upon those who had the mark of the beast. God gave them enough time to get rid of it. To avoid it, they wouldn't.

And who worshipped his image. Who worshipped the earthly whose mind was set on the things of earth. And then the second angel poured out his bowl, verse 3, into the sea.

And it became blood like that of a dead man. And every living thing in the sea died. Now these are all various types of plagues.

They can be literal or they could be symbolic. We do not know exactly what it means. I do not believe that the bride of Christ is going to be here on the earth when this takes place.

Certainly not. We saw in Revelation 15 they're going to be up in the sea of glass before the throne of God. But there is going to be something terrible described in this symbolic language as we saw when we considered chapter 8 and chapter 9. And there's a lot of similarity between Revelation 16, the seven bowls of wrath, and the seven trumpets described in chapter 8 and chapter 9. Sometimes if you compare these seven with the other seven there, you'll see a lot of similarity.

Verse 4, And the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters, and they became blood. And then I heard the angel of the waters saying, verse 5, Righteous art thou, O who art and who wast, O holy one, because thou didst judge these things. Again, notice righteousness and judgment together in that verse.

You are righteous in your judgment, O God, because, verse 6, notice this. I could paraphrase verse 6 like this. O Lord, they have reaped what they have sown.

Correct. They poured out the blood of saints and prophets, so now you have given them blood to drink in the seas and the rivers. Isn't that righteous of God? Absolutely right.

Everyone is going to reap exactly what he sows. Psalm 18, verse 25 says, With those who are merciful towards others, God shows himself merciful. Those who forgive others, your heavenly father forgives them.

Those who are righteous towards others, God is righteous towards them. Those who open their hand and give to others, God opens his hand and gives to them. Those who are stingy towards others, God is stingy towards them.

Those who are unmerciful and hard towards others, God is hard and unmerciful towards them. Those who shed the blood of others with their tongues, or any other way, God will give them blood to drink one day. That is righteous.

And we will find in the day of judgment that there is an exactness in God's judgment. That means exactly according to what we have done, corresponding to that will be our judgment, just like our rewards also will be exactly according to what we have done. The Lord says, Behold, I come quickly, Revelation 22, I think it's verse 12, and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be.

That will be an exactness. We'll find that in the final day. Righteous art thou, O Lord, because they shed blood, and you've given them blood to drink.

And notice this. It's a beautiful phrase. They are worthy.

There's another group of people about whom we read in Revelation 3, where Jesus says, They are worthy to walk with me in white, the overcomers. And here is another group of people about whom it is said they are worthy to drink blood, because that's what they deserve. As it says here in the main text, they deserve it.

They deserve it. They were unmerciful to others. Lord, you're righteous in being unmerciful to them.

They were stingy and hard towards others. Lord, they deserve it when you're stingy and hard towards them. Yes, there will be an exactness.

And that is why the Lord has given us his word, so that we learn that the way we treat others is the way God is going to treat us now and in that final day of judgment. Remember that, brothers and sisters. Our relationship with others is going to be the way God is going to deal with us.

Why does it say, for example, in the Bible that adulterers and fornicators God will judge? How should God deal with men who have treated the bodies of women as something just for them to get carnal pleasure? God is going to take the bodies of those men and say, All right, now I'll give it back to you in the same coin, the same way you treated somebody else's body as something to give you satisfaction. You couldn't care for that person's feelings. Now you're going to get it back.

I have no doubt in my mind that there will be an exactness in God's judgment of adulterers and fornicators and those who have committed acts of violence. Remember that. It's good for us to remember this because we see in the final day that God is righteous in his judgment.

Everyone will say, Yes, Lord, that was absolutely righteous, what you did to that person and the other person. And the person himself will also have to acknowledge, Lord, I have to admit I deserve it because that's exactly how I acted on earth. Now you're treating me the same way.

Now God's given us his word so that we don't fall into that category, so that we never need to be in that number. We can love righteousness and mercy in our earthly life. And I heard the altar saying, Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments.

We read of the souls under the altar in Revelation 6 and verse 9 who said, Lord, how long before you judge? Now that voice comes forth. Yes, Lord, you are true and righteous in your judgments. Notice this connection between righteous and judgment coming right through as we approach the end of Revelation.

That is what I was referring to earlier, that we will understand clearly in that day that there is a righteousness in the judgment of God. And now we come to verse 8, And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. And men are going to be burned.

Men were scorched with fierce heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent. Notice that repetition of that phrase which we saw earlier. If you remember in chapter 9, verse 20 and 21, you notice that phrase, they did not repent, they did not repent.

Notice it repeated here again in verse 9 and in verse 11, they did not repent. They did not repent so as to give him the glory. And the fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast, verse 10, and his kingdom became darkened, and they gnawed their tongues because of pain.

Pain and darkness, something similar to the plagues of Egypt. And they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain. We sometimes see that in people who are sick in their sickbed, even today.

A small picture of that sometimes. Instead of repenting on their sickbed, and instead of submitting to God, there are people on their sickbed who curse God and say, why has he allowed these pains and sores to come upon me? Instead of repenting. Repentance is the best thing when we get pains and sores and sickness.

Sure, there's nothing better than repentance, better than any medicine in the world. But instead of that, they curse God, question Him. Well, it's going to this spirit of questioning, blaspheming, cursing God, it's going to multiply and it's going to come to a culminating point, a climax.

In verse 11, they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and they did not repent of their deeds. They didn't realize that it is because of their sins that they're having all these problems. They did not repent.

They did not repent twice in verses 9 and 11. I want to tell you this, dear brothers and sisters. It is this spirit seen in these words, they did not repent, that leads to the building up of Babylon, the harlot church, which is described in chapters 17 and 18.

We can say Christians end up in Babylon because of four words. They did not repent. And the opposite of that is true for those who are going to be a part of Jerusalem, the bride of Christ.

They did repent. That's why you find in the Lord's message to the churches in Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3, what does the Lord Jesus say to the church? I'm not talking about the unbeliever, to the church. What is His primary message? Repent and be an overcomer.

Repent, repent, repent, repent, comes right through chapter 2 and 3. And those who listen to that voice and repent, become a part of Jerusalem. And those who hear that word and do not repent, end up in Babylon. I want to say this, that Jerusalem, the true bride of Christ, is built by people, and I trust you're listening carefully at this point, who have a continuous spirit of repentance in their life.

Who are seeing that in every situation, there is something they have to repent of. Something they have to judge themselves in. Blessed are you, brothers, sisters, if you have a continuous spirit of repentance.

Never lose it. It's a sad thing when you begin to lose that spirit of repentance. It's a sad day for you when it becomes a little difficult for you to go and apologize to a brother and say, I'm sorry.

When those words, I'm sorry, come out with more difficulty from your mouth, beware, you're on the road to Babylon. Blessed are you, if those words are always on your tongue. I'm sorry, brother.

Live in that spirit as we approach the end, in a spirit of continuous repentance, so that we can be a part of the bride of Christ. They did not repent. And one of the things the devil is seeking to do among believers today is take away that repentance.

When the loss of desire for repentance begins to come in, we need to be alert and acquire it again. Humble ourselves. And when we repent, it says in verse 9, we give glory to God.

How do we glorify God? It says they did not repent and give Him glory. We give Him glory when we repent to God. Otherwise, we don't give glory to God.

Now we come to verse 12. And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates. Remember in chapter 9, we saw that in the Euphrates, there were those spirits died up.

Very significant, this long, prolonged war that's going on around the Euphrates River at the present time between Iraq and Iran. It's all a preparation for the end. And Euphrates is the site of ancient Babylon, the headquarters of Nebuchadnezzar.

And its water was dried up that the way might be prepared for the kings from the east. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon. Now, we do not know exactly what that refers to, whether this is referring to the Chinese army.

Because in Revelation 9, it speaks about 200 million people in that army. And about the only country in the world that has such an army is China. And it says here about the kingdom from the east that's coming forth into that battle.

Probably a concerted communist attack with Russia from the north and China from the east. We don't want to be dogmatic about it, but there is some indication of that. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the mouth of the beast, the mouth of the false prophet.

Notice again what I mentioned in the study, the emphasis on the mouth. What comes out of the mouth? Three times in verse 13, out of the mouth, out of the mouth, out of the mouth. What comes out? An unclean spirit.

Those who have not repented, what comes out of their mouth is an unclean spirit. The spirit of the dragon, the spirit of the beast, and the spirit of the false prophet. Remember every time evil words come out of our mouth? Think of this.

Unclean spirits like frogs. If only we believers could get this picture clearly in my mind. Every time I speak an evil word, it's a frog coming out of my mouth.

Another frog. What a sad thing it is if believers go around spitting frogs all over the place. It's like the plague of Egypt, the plague of frogs.

And here's where there's a terrific need for the spirit of repentance, so that no more frogs come out of our mouth, that we repent. For they are the spirits of demons, verse 14. Spirits that are going to be let loose by the devil, performing wonders.

Notice again the emphasis on deceptive signs in the last days, to deceive the nation, which go out to the kings of whole world to gather them together for the war of the great day of God the Almighty. This is the satanic trinity mentioned in verse 13, the dragon Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. And they're going to let loose the spirits to gather the people together, the kingdoms and rulers of the earth, down to Jerusalem for the final battle of Armageddon, which is called here the great day of God the Almighty.

These words that come out from the mouth lead to war, lead to the final war of Armageddon. And there's also a spiritual lesson for us, that words that come out of our mouth that provoke to war are unclean spirits. How many believers speak words that provoke to war? Let's learn a lesson from here.

Frogs, unclean spirits, whatever picture you use, it's filthy, it's from the pit of hell, we need to repent of it. The war, and then in the middle of that, this tremendous verse, behold I'm coming like a thief, blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame. You don't have to be there, brother, you don't have to be there, sister, keep your garments pure, watch your mouth, watch your life, watch your heart, and Jesus will come like a thief and you'll be taken up, and you won't be there when this is happening, what's described in this chapter.

That's why that's put in brackets there, I'm coming like a thief, be ready for that day, watch and pray so that your garments are clean, walk in the light. And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har Megiddon, that is 50 miles north of Jerusalem where there's a great big field called the field plain of Megiddo, where it's going to be the final battle when Jesus comes and sets up his kingdom, just before he sets up his kingdom on the earth. And then we read in verse 17 about the seventh angel pouring out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne saying, it is done, that is the end.

The battle of Armageddon is going to be the final thing before Jesus sets up his kingdom on the earth. There were flashes of lightning, sounds, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake when Jesus sets his foot on the Mount of Olives, there's going to be an earthquake such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it and so mighty. Jesus said there would be an increase of earthquakes as we approach the end of the age and this is going to be the final one when Jesus sets his feet upon the Mount of Olives.

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