

Understanding Revelation – Topic 24

Grapes of wrath or harps of God?

**The fourth, fifth and sixth
angels of Revelation 14**

An exposition of Revelation
Chapters 14:14-20 and 15:1-4

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Introduction

Many scholars have found the latter half of Revelation 14 difficult to interpret. It would be helpful to regard Revelation 14:14-20 and 15:1-6 as a single chapter, as these verses comprise a discrete topic.

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. Revelation 14:14 -16

This passage commences with the expression, *Then I looked, and behold...* This could mean that John is seeing a new vision, as distinct from the previous vision of the Three Angels.

A white cloud

Behold, a white cloud...

As previously discussed in the exposition of Revelation Chapter 10¹, a cloud represents the presence of the Deity. In addition, clouds are also associated with judgment. The above expression is drawn from Daniel 7:13 where Jesus Christ, *the Son of man*, is pictured being transported by the *clouds of heaven* into the presence of *the Ancient of Days*, to the judgment scene in the great heavenly temple. Thus in Revelation 14:14 we have a further representation of Jesus Christ and the angels coming to this world in judgment at the Second Advent.

John describes the cloud as being *white* and this is the only time the cloud is described thus. The Spirit of Prophecy reveals that at the Second Advent it first appears as a small dark cloud on the eastern horizon and then transforms into a glorious white as it nears the earth. White represents righteousness and justice, and is also associated with judgment. The colour white also features in the judgment scenes of Daniel 7:9 -10 and Revelation 20:

*His garment was white as snow and the hair of His head was like pure wool.
Daniel 7:9-10*

I saw a great white throne... Revelation 20:11

...and on the cloud sat One...

The cloud upon which Christ is pictured as sitting, is comprised of angels - the cherubim. It is one of the cherubim's functions to transport the Deity when He moves in state. In Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10, the Lord is depicted being borne by cherubim on a throne in the form of a giant four-wheeled platform. The living wheels are as high as the sky and above the firmament or platform, is a throne on which is a being with *the appearance of a man*.

¹ A.P. Cooke, *Time No Longer*, (Sydney: Self-published, 1985)

Significance of the term *Son of Man*

...like the Son of Man...

The one seated upon the cloud is described as *the Son of Man*. At the Second Advent Jesus is not referred to as the *Son of God* for two reasons:

1. The term *Son of Man* is derived from the Old Testament and represents the Messiah, the great deliverer of the race who was promised to Adam and Eve in Eden. He appeared first at Bethlehem, but now *He appears the second time without sin unto salvation* (Hebrews 9:28).
2. The term *Son of Man* represents Christ in His humanity. In the New Testament the term is used eighty-eight times. In Scripture the number eight represents regeneration, the newness of life and even resurrection. When calculated using the Greek alphabet's numeric values, the word *Jesus* adds up to 888. Revelation 14:14 is the last time - the 88th - that the term *Son of Man* is used in the New Testament. Here Jesus is depicted as the Great Harvester coming to gather the harvest of the earth, which includes the mighty resurrection of His people.

A golden crown

...having on His head a golden crown...

The first description of Jesus in the heavenly temple is found in Revelation 1:12-14, where there is no mention of Him wearing a head covering. At that juncture, however, Jesus as high priest would conceivably be wearing a mitre. Now in this current setting it is notable that He is instead wearing a golden crown. The significance of this is that He is no longer a priest but has rather become a king – the King of kings. His kingdom – this world - has been granted to Him and now He is coming to take possession of it.

Reaping earth's harvest

A sickle

...and in His hand a sharp sickle. V14

For two thousand years Jesus has been depicted holding a smoking censer, which symbolises His priestly intercession for His people. Now he holds a sickle, indicating that He is about to reap the harvest of the earth.

...Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for you to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. Revelation 14:15

Jesus said:

*...the harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels.
Matthew 13:39*

The term *end of the world* here does not refer to the final destruction of the earth by fire. Rather it refers to the period of the end of the world. The Spirit of Prophecy says that this harvest is at *the end of probationary time*² which is at the close of probation.

² Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1900) 72.

In the passage of Scripture covered by the previous topic (Revelation 14:6-13)³ three angels are represented as producing the crop - the expression *another angel* is mentioned three times. The current Scripture passage (Revelation 14:16 -18) indicates that three angels are also employed in reaping the harvest.

The fourth angel

And another angel came out of the temple...

Jesus has left the temple and is now ensconced on the cloud. As a consequence His mediation has ceased: the sin problem has been resolved. It was in the temple that decisions were made regarding the destiny of mankind. The reaping of the harvest involves destiny and judgment, rewards and penalties, and all these have been determined in the heavenly sanctuary.

Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary. Psalm 77:13

...I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end. Psalm 73:17

David is referring here to the destiny of the wicked. He had concluded that during their earthly existence the wicked prosper unfairly, until he entered the sanctuary. During the sanctuary service David gained a complete understanding of the fate of the unsaved.

It is in the heavenly temple that God's justice is revealed. This is why the heavenly temple is associated with the great harvest at the end of the world.

The three angels of Revelation 14:6-9, who represent the delivery of God's three final messages to the world before the coming of Christ, are symbolic. To be consistent then, this second trio of angels should also be seen as symbolic. Let us discover what they represent.

A loud cry

...crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud...

The first and the third angels of each trio mentioned in Revelation Chapter 14, cry out with a loud voice. The first angel of the latter trio (verse 15) cries to Christ upon the cloud. This indicates a message or an appeal from earth to Christ above.

Will there be a cry from the saints at this time? Yes – there will be a cry after the close of probation from around the globe for the deliverance of the saints from their murderous persecutors. There will also be a cry from the afflicted saints during the time of Jacob's trouble, a cry for God's approval when they are afflicted by Satan. This angel, crying with a loud voice to Christ on the cloud, represents the cry of God's people around the world.

In Revelation 18:1- 4, before the close of probation, there will be a *loud cry* on the part of God's people while Jesus ministers in the temple. However the cry of Revelation 14:15 occurs after probation closes, when Jesus has left the temple and is positioned on the cloud. This is illustrated, or foreshadowed, in the parable of the unjust judge.

³ A.P. Cooke, *God's Final Ultimatum to Men*, (Sydney: Self-published, 1985)

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' " Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:1- 8

In this parable, as demonstrated in the following table, we have a parallel with the experience of God's people after the close of probation. The widow represents God's elect, His remnant people.

Parallels between Luke 18:1-8 and Revelation 14:15	
The importunate widow	The persecuted saints after probation closes
No earthly support	The elect (v17) - The Remnant without earthly support or a divine mediator.
An adversary	Satan (which means 'adversary') opposes the Remnant through his earthly agents
The judge would not provide justice <i>for a while...</i>	God prolongs the time of waiting and pleading by the saints to purify them from the last of their earthliness. This is the Time of Jacob's Trouble.
Finally the judge responds and avenges the widow	Christ finally responds – He ... thrust in His sickle ... and the earth was reaped.
<i>And shall not God avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him...? ...He will avenge them speedily.</i>	

Note the comment from the Spirit of Prophecy on the first angel's loud cry:

This will not take place until Jesus has finished his priestly office in the heavenly sanctuary and lays off his priestly attire and puts on his most kingly robes and crown to ride forth on the cloudy chariot to "thresh the heathen in anger" and deliver his people. Then Jesus will have the sharp sickle in his hand, and then the saints will cry day and night to Jesus on the cloud to thrust in his sharp sickle and reap. This will be the time of Jacob's trouble out of which the saints will be delivered by the voice of God.⁴

⁴ James White, *A Word to the Little Flock* (Brunswick, Maine: Self-published, 1847) 12.

Christ's response

...he... thrust in his sickle on the earth and the earth was reaped. v15

This depicts a work of separation. The righteous are divided from the wicked. God turns the captivity of His persecuted saints and delivers them. This occurs under the fifth, sixth and seventh plagues.⁵

Reaping the grapes of wrath

The fifth angel

Then another angel came out of the temple...he also having a sharp sickle. v17

This fifth angel of Revelation 14 is the second angel reaper, implying a second harvest.

The sixth angel

Fire from the altar

And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire...

The altar within the temple is the altar of incense. In the Old Testament the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled upon the horns of the altar of incense.

*The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with the point of a diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart, and on the horns of your altars....
Jeremiah 17:1*

This verse suggests that the altar represents the record of the sins of the unsaved.

It would appear that God delegates to certain angels the authority to control the various elements of the natural world. For example we read of *the angel of the waters* (Revelation 15:5) and also of angels controlling the winds (Revelation 7:1 and Job 1:19).

The fire over which this sixth angel appears to preside represents two processes:

1. Purification and punishment
2. Cleansing and consuming.

When fire and incense are mixed with the prayers of the saints, their prayers are purified. When fire is unmixed with incense it punishes. The fire in Revelation 14:8, therefore, represents punishment. Thus from the altar of incense comes the fire of God's judgment and retribution.

Revelation 8:5 gives another glimpse of the heavenly temple showing an angel taking fire from the altar and flinging it to the earth. As a result, the judgments of God afflict the inhabitants of earth during the period of the seven trumpets.

⁵ See: A.P. Cooke, *The Drying up of the Great River Euphrates* (Sydney: Self-published, 1985)

Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. Revelation 8:5-6

The third angel in Revelation 14:18 also has power over fire, that is, the authority to administer punishment, and during the period of the seven last plagues he gives the signal for the punishment of the unsaved to commence.

Ripe grapes

...and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe". Revelation 14:18

In Scripture the unsaved are likened to grapes. This expression *fully ripe* conveys two concepts:

1. The unsaved have consummated their wickedness. Just as the saved, when fully ripe, reflect the image of Christ in character, so the unsaved, when they are fully ripe, fully reflect the image of the Evil One.
2. The unsaved have reached the peak of their rebellion. They have completely filled the cup of their iniquity. When they determine to slay the saints of God their cup overflows with wickedness.

The loud cry of the angel at the altar therefore represents Heaven's response to the death decree leveled against the saints, and is a signal for the harvest of the wicked to commence. This harvest of the wicked entails retribution: it constitutes vengeance on the part of Heaven.

The winepress of God's wrath

So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. Revelation 14:19-20

In the Old Testament the punishment of the unsaved is likened to the treading of grapes in a winepress.

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. Lamentations 1:15

The prophet Isaiah portrays the punishment of the Edomites, the inveterate enemies of Israel, as follows:

Who is this who comes from Edom with dyed garments... like one who treads in the winepress? "I have trodden the winepress alone...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. ...I have trodden down the

peoples in My anger and made them drunk in My fury, and brought down their strength to the earth.” Isaiah 63:1-6

In the punishment and destruction of Edom, God portrayed Himself treading the grapes in the winepress. The Revelator draws upon this picture to describe the punishment of the unsaved which occurs when they fill up their cup of iniquity while attempting to destroy the saints.

Some believe that the wine press of Revelation 14:19-20 is the literal Valley of Jehoshaphat, a steep valley on the eastern side of Jerusalem, known today as the Valley of Kidron. However this valley is too small to contain even part of an army. The winepress, therefore, does not represent a battle field or a military conflict. This is symbolic language.

Others have claimed that the winepress represents the Valley of Megiddo, the Plain of Esdraelon east of Mount Carmel. Yet the passage states that when the wine press is trodden, the blood shed rises in depth to the horses' bridles. To imagine such a flood of blood accumulating in the vast Plain of Esdraelon is unrealistic. It must therefore be considered as a symbolic representation.

Further understanding of this passage is found by referring to the Old Testament books of Joel and Ezekiel.

*Proclaim this among the nations: “Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, ‘I am strong.’” Assemble and come, all you nations, and gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD. “Let the nations be wakened, 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.”*

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; but the LORD will be a shelter for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel. Joel 3:9-16

This prediction had its initial, literal, application to Israel back in Old Testament times when the Israelites returned from Babylon. If Israel had been faithful, Satan would have inspired the surrounding nations to unite and destroy Israel, but God would have intervened and destroyed them. In symbolic language, the valley of Jehoshaphat, being a steep small valley was likened to a large wine press and Israel's enemies were likened to grapes which would be crushed in the press. This prediction was not fulfilled because it was a conditional prophecy based on the measure of Israel's faithfulness. Israel was not faithful, so the prediction was not fulfilled.

The prophet Zechariah makes clear the conditional nature of many of the Old Testament predictions.

This shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God. Zechariah 6:15

Because this prediction wasn't fulfilled for literal Israel, Joel's prediction now has a spiritual application to spiritual Israel - the Remnant - during the final conflict of Armageddon. There are twelve parallels between Joel's prophecy and the final conflict.

Parallels between Joel 3:9-16 and the final conflict of Armageddon	
Joel 3:9-16	Armageddon
1. <i>Proclaim this among the nations</i>	Tell the unsaved = the enemies of God
2. <i>Prepare for (sanctify) war</i>	Proclamation of a holy war against dissenters.
3. <i>Wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up.</i>	A call to the saints' enemies for action.
4. <i>Beat your plough shares into swords</i>	Preparation for conflict
5. <i>Assemble and come, all you nations, and gather together all around</i>	God's enemies unite against spiritual Jerusalem – the remnant church of God.
6. <i>Let the nations be awakened and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (punishment)</i>	The unsaved resolve to attack the saints and thereby become worthy of punishment
7. <i>There I will sit to judge (punish) all the surrounding nations (literal Jerusalem).</i>	Jesus Christ sits in judgment, in the "valley" of this world, to punish the unsaved.
8. <i>Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full.</i>	A call to the army of heaven to punish and destroy the unsaved (see Revelation 19:14-15)
9. <i>The vats overflow - for their wickedness is great</i>	The cup of iniquity overflows for the unsaved in their attempt to slay the saints.
10. <i>Multitudes...in the valley of decision (concision or threshing)</i>	Millions of the unsaved about to receive the wrath of God
11. <i>For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision (or probation/concision/threshing)</i>	Day of the Lord commences at the close of probation. Then the wrath of God comes
12. <i>The Lord...will utter His voice from Jerusalem... but the Lord will be a shelter for His people and the strength of the children of Israel.</i>	Christ will be in the midst of spiritual Jerusalem (His people) and will deliver them. Not a single saint is lost after the Close of Probation.

And the wine press was trampled outside the city...

The city is spiritual Jerusalem, the church of God, the Remnant. The wine press is trodden outside of the Remnant church. Of the holy city, Jerusalem, Scripture states:

... they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty two months. Revelation 11:2

This prophecy was fulfilled by the Papacy which for forty-two prophetic months (1260 years) trod down the Church of God.

In the final conflict the combined powers of the unsaved, led by the Papacy, again endeavour to tread down the Church of God. This time, however, God intervenes and treads *them* down outside the spiritual city of the Church. When the saints are surrounded by the unrepentant population of the world, who are determined to slay the saints, it is then that God intervenes and treads down the unsaved instead.

...and blood came out of the winepress up to the horses' bridles...

In Old Testament times it was not uncommon to use horses to tread down the grapes in the winepress. In the Book of Revelation this practice is drawn upon to symbolize the destruction of the unsaved.

*Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war....And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 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 19:11, 14 -15*

In Revelation 14:20 the angelic horsemen are pictured as treading down the unsaved in the great worldwide winepress of God's wrath. So terrific is the slaughter that the blood is symbolized as being deep enough to reach the bridles of the angelic horses.

...for one thousand six hundred furlongs. Revelation 14:20

This appears to be the size of the wine press. The word *furlong* in the Greek is *stadia* and the total circumference adds up to approximately three hundred kilometers. As with many expressions within the rest of this chapter, this one is also symbolic and its meaning can be determined.

The symbolism is drawn from the latter chapters of the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament, where the drama of Gog and Magog is presented. This ancient power was predicted to invade Israel and to attempt to destroy the city and the temple. If Israel had been faithful, God would have transformed the land of Israel into a purified, elevated plateau where He would have created a superlative city and temple. The temple and city area, called the *oblation*, would have been approximately three hundred kilometers in circumference.

This prophecy indicates that Satan would have inspired Israel's enemies to invade, and around the circumference of the oblation they would have been totally destroyed by God. The Revelator borrows this picture found in Ezekiel and uses it to represent the complete destruction of the enemies of God's people in the final conflict.

The seven last plagues

There is no break between chapters in the original Scripture, so we continue.

Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. Revelation 15:1

The persecuted church in the last days will be world-wide, so the wrath of God in the seven last plagues will extend across the whole planet.⁶

The fact that some commentators want to ascribe the responsibility of the plagues to Satan's activity or even to natural causes is incongruous as this sign is described as *great and marvelous*. The plagues are a result of the wrath of God and this final wrath of God, applied to the unsaved, is certainly something which should engender fear.

Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men. 2 Corinthians 5:11

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Hebrews 10:31

Yet the prophet calls it *great and marvelous*.

These plagues are described as the *seven last*, or as the Greek renders it, *seven, which were the last*. It is obvious that there have been, and will be, still other plagues: as time passes they will increase in their number and intensity. For instance, the seven trumpets, while not the seven last plagues, are classed as plagues (Revelation 9).

The difference between the plagues and the trumpets is here revealed. The purpose of the trumpets was to bring apostates to repentance and reformation, while the purpose of the seven last plagues is to finally punish the impenitent. They are an exhibition of the justice of God, which explains why they are described as *great and marvelous*.

...in them the wrath of God is complete.

In the plagues God's wrath is consummated and is spent. Never again will the display of His wrath be seen as it will during the seven last plagues. Sin will not arise the second time.

Revelation 15:1 is inserted between the wine press referred to in Revelation 14:20 and the *sea of glass* of Revelation 15:2. This occurs because it is the culmination of the scene of punishment described in Revelation 14:17-20. It shows that the treading of the winepress is really the visitation of the seven last plagues in which God's wrath overflows.

Revelation 15:1-4 reveals the culmination of the harvest, which is the destiny of the wheat and the tares. In the parable of the harvest Jesus says about the tares:

His angels... will cast them into a furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 13:41-42

This will be fulfilled initially in the seven last plagues and finally in the lake of fire.

⁶ For further evidence that the seven last plagues are worldwide, but not universal, see Topic 25.

The destiny of the righteous

In the harvest parable Jesus promised:

Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! Matthew 13:43

Here is the fulfillment of this promise:

And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. Revelation 15:2

Revelation 15:2-4 reveals the destiny of the righteous remnant. These are the people of God who have come through the final conflict and now receive their due reward.

...a sea of glass...

The saints stand on the *sea of glass*. This appears to be a vast and colorful assembly area where the heavenly hosts gather before the eternal throne. According to Revelation Chapter 4 it is located in the Holy Place, the first apartment of the heavenly temple. If this is so, we can begin to comprehend how vast and awesome the heavenly temple must be.

...mingled with fire...

The sea of glass no doubt reflects the glory of God. In the Old Testament the Lord is pictured as being bathed in fire.⁷ This is the same fire that issues forth and devours the unsaved in the final judgment. It is *everlasting fire*. This is because it is associated with Him *who is from everlasting to everlasting* (Psalm 40:2).

...those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark...

Comprehend if you can how much is involved in the expression *have the victory*. This indicates the conclusion of an ordeal. The generation which goes through this time will have experienced the greatest conflict ever known to man. It is a trial similar in some ways to the one Jesus endured in the garden of Gethsemane.

This is the same group which was revealed in Revelation 14:1-5, who are symbolized by the number 144,000. This group exists only in the End Time, for only then is the conflict with the beast and his image an issue.

This victorious group will have faced adverse public opinion. They have felt compelled to disobey the laws of the land and to endure public ridicule and universal contempt. They have been boycotted and threatened with starvation. They have lost family and friends – every earthly joy. Finally they have faced the death decree. They have chosen to forsake everything, either fleeing to the mountains or enduring imprisonment. The only thing they retain is their implicit faith in God and their confidence in His promises. This represents the ultimate conflict and their subsequent reward.

⁷ Exodus 19:18; 24:17; Deuteronomy 4:11-12, 24; 5:22; 33:2; Daniel 7:9-10; Hebrews 12:29.

...having harps of God. Revelation 15:2

The righteous stand on the sea of glass *having harps of God*. The harps of God are mentioned three times in the Book of Revelation:

1. The twenty-four elders have harps (Revelation 5:8)
2. The one hundred and forty-four thousand have harps (Revelation 14:2)
3. The remnant (represented by the one hundred and forty-four thousand) have harps (Revelation 15:2).

The harps these people possess have special qualities, for no prior learning is required to play them; at a single touch the instruments respond with inspiring and enthralling tones. The saints themselves must also possess special abilities which were lost to mankind through sin and have now been restored. In the kingdom they will take the harps of God and, without any tutoring, perfectly produce the music of heaven. Yet beyond this, in the kingdom of grace on earth they have learned to praise God and rejoice even amid persecution.

Significance of the song of Moses

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb...

This portrayal is also drawn from the Old Testament: Israel's Exodus from Egypt under Moses' leadership. At that time Israel was pursued by Pharaoh and trapped between the mountains and the sea by his forces. However God divided the sea, congealing its water, and Israel marched across the seabed to safety on the eastern shore. When the Egyptians attempted to follow Israel, however, the sea became their nemesis, destroying them.⁸ This experience of Israel's deliverance typifies the experience of spiritual Israel during the final conflict. Parallels are noted in the following table.

⁸ Exodus chapters 14-15.

Parallels between Israel at the Exodus and The Remnant	
Israel at the Exodus	The Remnant
Egypt rejected the witness of Israel to the truth of God.	This world - spiritual Egypt - will largely reject the witness of spiritual Israel (the Remnant) to the truth of God
The result was the oppression of Israel.	The result will be the oppression of the Remnant
Egypt was visited with the judgments of God in the ten plagues.	This world will be visited with the judgments of God in the seven last plagues.
Israel was protected from the ten plagues	Spiritual Israel - the Remnant - will be protected from the seven last plagues
Israel experienced the threat of death from the Egyptians – they were pursued	The Remnant will experience the threat of death from the unsaved world – they will be pursued
Israel was cut off. They cried to God for deliverance	The Remnant will be cut off - they will cry to God day and night for deliverance
The sea opens - Israel passes through it to safety	Heaven opens. Christ appears. The Remnant pass through the heavens to safety
Israel, on the other side of the sea, witness the destruction of their enemies and sing the Song of Deliverance	The Remnant witness the destruction of their enemies, and on the “other side” sing the song of their deliverance.

Jesus said:

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:10 -12

Persecution awaits the remnant some time in the near future. Those who learn to sing amidst conflict and suffering will receive the harps of God and sing *the song of Moses and the Lamb* on the sea of glass. There is significance in the song of Moses. It is a song of deliverance.

The deliverance of the Remnant will be twofold:

1. It will be a deliverance from earthly foes - from the beast, from persecution, from the death decree.

2. It will be deliverance from spiritual foes - from the power of Satan, from the slavery of sin and self. Those who sing the song of Moses are overcomers. They are without fault. There is no guile in their mouths. What a magnificent deliverance.

...saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! ...

The seven last plagues are also said to be *great and marvelous* but here we see that the saved recognize the exhibition of the justice of God in the destruction of their enemies.

Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints!" V3

With this song the saved approve of God's dealings with the beast. This is an acknowledgement of God's justice and righteousness. It is a vindication of His character, His law and His ways.

The word *just* means *consistent with what is morally right*.⁹ It is a recognition of moral attribution. In Scripture it is associated with the vindication of God, especially with regard to His dealings with His creatures.

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? (Genesis 18:25).

When God metes out His judgments, these will unveil the righteousness and justice He has employed throughout the entire controversy between Christ and Satan. This is a revelation in which the Remnant has played a vital part. Before the eyes of the universe, the Remnant will proclaim the righteousness and justice of God's dealings. On earth, under the severest tests, they have displayed their loyalty and obedience to their Lord. They have demonstrated that God's law can be observed perfectly, even by those from earth's weakest and most corrupt generation. Now before the universe and the unfallen worlds they celebrate the revelation of the true character of the Creator. This will be a wonderful privilege and an immeasurable reward for God's chosen people.

"...For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested." V4

The word *judgments* in this verse means *righteousness*. This verse is recognition of the fact that God's righteousness will finally be acknowledged. All the unsaved from all nations will ultimately worship before God. In the final judgment before the great white throne, when all nations, all individuals, stand before the judgment seat of Christ, then *all* will acknowledge God's justice and righteousness.

*...For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God". So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.
Romans 14:10 -12*

Until this point in time only a few knees have knelt before God: only a few tongues have confessed His greatness and glory. Yet this prediction will be fulfilled when *all who are in the grave shall hear His voice and come forth...those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation...* (John 5:28,29).

⁹ *The Free Dictionary*, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/just>, Accessed 3 November 2011.

The only time that all nations will exist contemporaneously is during the final judgment. Then every member of the human race, from the first man Adam to the last person to be born on the planet, stand before the Most High in judgment. Then all nations, including the unsaved, will bow in acknowledgment of God's justice.¹⁰ All will confess that God indeed is a God of love and justice.

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¹⁰ A.P. Cooke, *The Final Windup of Human History*, (Sydney: Self-published, 1985)