

Revelation 14:17 And another angel [or messenger] came out of the temple [the church] which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him

that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great

winepress of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

WINEPRESS OF THE WRATH OF GOD

Brother Emerson A. Wilson

Knowing Your Enemies

I realize I am dealing with a Scripture that many have tossed out into the future. They are looking for the fulfillment of this somewhere beyond the second coming of Christ. We have already shown you, however, that the appearance of Christ in this chapter is as a lamb. When He appears the second time, He will not appear as a lamb. When He appears the second time, He will not be dealing with sin. No, when He comes the second time, He will come as a Judge, and all nations will be gathered before His judgment seat. We are considering something that is going on right in this very time in which we are living.

Paul said that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Beyond salvation, there is truth to be understood. There is truth to be understood about the great battle of Armageddon, that battle of truth against error, which has been going on ever since the Garden of Eden.

I say it with kindness, but many people who profess to be Christians are enemies to the cause of Christ. The words of Paul in Philippians

3:17-19, warned the Church of God at Philippi that there were people right among them who claimed to be Christians, but were actually enemies to the very cause of Christ. He ended up by saying that they "mind earthly things." They accept only what the human mind can comprehend. They work on an earthly level. They refuse spiritual things.

Just as in Paul's time, the same is true today. There are people who profess Christianity, who profess the love of God, but when we begin to drop the Word down on them to check them out, we find they are actually enemies to the cause of Christ. This condition has been magnified until there are countless thousands out here in the religious world who claim to be Christians, but when you put the word of truth down on them, you will find they are actually enemies.

Now, friend, if we are going to carry on in the battle of Armageddon, we must know who our enemies are. How are we going to fight in the battle if we don't know who our enemies are? This is the reason the devil has made the inroads he has. Why? He keeps men in darkness to whom their enemies really are. The Word of God is given to let

us know who our enemies are. Certainly, even when we know who our enemies are, we must pray for them and love them. At the same time, if we are going to go safely through this battle, we must understand who our enemies really are.

God wants all men to be saved. If He had His way, all men would be saved, and beyond being saved, He wants them to come to a knowledge of truth. What knowledge of truth does He want them to come to? That there is just one God and one mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus. Now, you do not need a preacher to tell you that there are many supposed intervening mediators between man and God. It is sad to say, but these mediators are leading man further and further from God.

The Sharp Sickle

Now as we get right into the lesson, Revelation 14:16 lets us understand that He that sat on the cloud thrust in this sharp sickle, the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12 lets us know that the Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. It can come right down between the marrow and the bone, right down where you really are. It comes down

between soul and spirit, and is the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Everyone is naked before the Word of God; it works on every one of us.

There is no way you can hide from the Word of God. You may be hypocriting and fooling everybody, but the Word of God knows the intents of your heart. Brother, it not only knows it, but if you get around where the Word is preached, it will tell on you. The first thing you know, you will think everybody knows about you. Friend, it is not the fact that somebody ran and told the preacher about your sins; you are just not giving enough credit to the Word of God. Some people seem to forget that God knows you altogether. The light and the darkness are the same to Him. There is nowhere you can go to hide from Him. He has your number every day, and He keeps it up to date. He knows your thoughts afar off, before they ever get to you.

So the sharp sickle is the Word of God, and it is gathering the wheat and it is binding the tares. We are in the harvest period. The fields are ripe for harvest. Jesus said in Matthew 13:30, about His planting the good seed and the enemy sowing tares among the wheat, "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Some feel this must mean the second coming of Christ, but in verse 40, He explains, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world." Every Bible student knows that "in" the end of the world is not "at" the end of the world. Hebrews 9:26 tells us that Christ appeared on Calvary *in* the end of the world. When is "in" the end of the world? The last days beginning A.D. 33; it is "in" the end of the world.

When a train goes by, the engineer is in the engine and the brake-

man is in the end of it, the caboose. Now, when does the end of the train go by? After it is gone? No, the end of the train is the last car. So, the end of the world is the last days. Once in the end of the world He appeared. When did He appear? On Calvary's Cross to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The end of the world is the last days. These are the last days; the Holy Ghost dispensation is the last period of time.

The Gospel Binds or Looses

Now, Jesus said to let the tares and the wheat grow together until the harvest. In the harvest, in the end of the world, He will send for His angels, or the Greek says the messengers. Somebody may say, "Oh, I think He is sending angels out of Heaven." Angels out of Heaven cannot tell a saint from a sinner. We will judge the angels; they do not judge us. Read 1 Corinthians, the sixth chapter; when it comes to the spiritual things, we will judge the angels. Who are His angels? His ministers.

Now what did He do? Beginning at Pentecost, there was a morning-time harvest. Were the tares bound? Yes? God expects the saints and sinners to live together out in the world, but not in the kingdom. Remember, this is in the kingdom, or in the church. When the Day of Pentecost came, God sent forth His ministers ministering, and they began to bind the tares. Just follow through The Acts: Ananias and Sapphira were the first two bound, and from there right on through, my friend, the tares were bound and the wheat was loosed. There was a morning-time harvest.

Then Jesus began to prophesy of an evening-time harvest. He said the kingdom would be like a man who sowed good seed in his field, and when the wheat came forth, so did the tares. In Matthew 16:19, Jesus told His disciples when He sent them forth, ". . . whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever

thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." What power did He give them to bind and loose men? The Gospel.

Friend, when you hear the Gospel, if you believe it, it will loose you from every bondage. It does not make any difference how much you are bound in sin, how many habits of life have you bound, how much false religion you are bound with, how many spirits of the devil have hold of you, if you will believe and meet the conditions of the Gospel, it will loose you. On the other hand, when you disbelieve it and rise up fist it, it binds you.

You will be eternally bound if you do not change your mind, start believing the Gospel, and meet the conditions of it. So the binding and loosing power was through the Gospel, as Jesus sent people forth.

Angels, Angels, Angels

Revelation 14:17 tells us, "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle." The reason it says "another" angel is because there already have been three angels mentioned. In verse 14 we saw a picture of that pillar of cloud with one like the Son of man sitting on it with a sharp sickle in His hand. In verse 17 the ministry also had a sharp sickle. Every time we talk about this sickle, we are talking about the Word of God. When it says that it is a sharp sickle, it means it will cut.

It merely is a picture of the sickle in the hand of a man who is in the hand of the Lord. In Revelation 1:20 it refers to the seven stars, or angels, which are the pastors of the seen congregations of the church in Asia. They were all in Christ's hand. In His hand means that He can control them: He tells them what to preach and when to preach it. What the people want to hear does not affect them one bit. So we have a picture of a ministry with a sharp sickle in his hand, as he is in the hand of the Lord.

In verse 18 we read of another angel: "And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe." This sickle is two-edged. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that God's Word is sharper than any two-edged sword. Romans 11:22a tells us to "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God." Here are the two sides of the sword, and God can use either of them. Some people just cannot believe that God could be hard on anyone or cut people off. There is none who can be as good as God, and there is none as severe as God when He decides to turn to severity.

Now, this last angel talks about putting people in the winepress of the wrath of God. I realize this type of preaching does not catch the applause of the kind of world we are living in, but it is necessary that you hear it and understand it so that God can bring you to a just judgment. Man, in his earthly thinking, is trying to bring God down to his level. It is difficult for some people to accept the fact that God would send anyone to hell. We tend to forget that He is God; we want to bring Him down to a man's level. God is just. Certainly, He is love, but He is just. We need to behold the goodness and the severity of God in God's eternal Word.

Power Over Fire

This angel of the 18th verse had power over fire. In Jeremiah 23:29 God asked, "Is not my word like as a fire . . . and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Then He goes right on in Jeremiah 50:23 and says, "How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!" How did the hammer of God's Word get broken so that it lost its force? How has Babylon become a

desolation? When they added to and failed to preach God's Word, soft-peddled it and took the hammering qualities out of it, God moved out and it became a desolate state.

The same thing will happen to you and me, individually or collectively, if we desire to remove the harsh qualities from God's Word. We can be just as old Israel and ask for smooth things to be preached to us. Some people have the idea that they can do about anything they want to, that God is like a rubber doll which they can twist around any way they want to and fit Him into their mold. They are just deceiving themselves. "Power over fire" merely means that this angel, or ministry, was already measuring to the truth which he was preaching. Do you know why so many preachers do not preach about so many things? Because they would burn themselves. A preacher who smokes cigarettes just does not preach on the sinfulness of the tobacco habit.

The three Hebrew boys who were thrown into the fire had power over fire. They did not even smell of smoke. They had power over fire because they would not bend; they wouldn't compromise. They stood for the Word just as it was, and when they stood for it squarely and honored God, then God honored them. When they threw them in the fire, they stood right in the fire and praised God. That One walking in there with them looked like the Son of man. They had power over fire. Power over fire means you have been square with God; you stood straight with God; you would not bend or bow, but you stood squarely. So, this ministry had power over fire.

Someone may say, "That was just the ministry; the people do not have that power." Well, let us consider Revelation 15:2, which gives us a picture of the saints standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire, a type of the Word of God mingled with the fire of the Holy Ghost. Here

is a picture of a whole lot of saints standing right in the fire; they have power over this fire.

Too many times, the reason we do not see a greater work done for God is because many people who claim to be Christians cannot sit under fire-and-brimstone preaching without getting burned. Too often, the sinner sits and watches the saints get scorched. In any case, God has a people who can stand right in the fire, or the burning messages of God's Word.

Do you remember how God is going to take the filth away from the daughters of Zion? With the Spirit of judgment and the Spirit of burning. So here were people who stood right on the sea of glass, God's Word, mingled with the fire of the Holy Ghost. They not only accepted it, but they were also happy about it. They were harping on their harps right in the fire. They were singing songs, rejoicing in the great privilege God had given them.

Whenever you lay hold of this experience, where you get to the place that you can sit under the straight preaching of God's Word, rejoice in it and not get burned by it, you are ready to go out with victory over every circumstance. The preaching of God's eternal Word-straight, hot, and heavy-will produce a people who can stand something.

The Vine of the Earth

This angel, which came out from the altar, that had power over fire, cried with a loud cry to Him that had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe." Now, what is He going to do with the sickle this time? What are the clusters of the vine of the earth? Jesus said in John 15:5a, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Christians who have been inducted into the church through a born-again experience, or have been grafted into the true vine, are the branches.

When John talked about the vine of the earth, he was talking about the old dragon. He is spoken of as the vine of the earth, and the many religious organizations springing off of this vine are branches. Coming through the Revelation, we found that paganism (the dragon) was cast down when Roman Catholicism came up under the papal state (the beast). He spake as a dragon because he is a branch-off. We came right on over to Protestantism; he looked like a lamb, but spake as a dragon. Right over in our day and time, we hear dragon talk.

What is dragon talk? What was the herald and cry of the pagan Roman Empire? Why did they fight Christianity so? The cry of the Roman Empire was: "All religions are all right—one is as good as another." They would not have bothered Christianity at all if she would have taken her place right along with nominal religion, but God is a jealous God.

Jesus came teaching that there is only one way; every other way is false. Jesus came teaching that "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). True Christianity is just as narrow today as it was then, and that is what gets the true Christians in trouble. So when we talk about the vine of the earth, my friend, we are talking about this dragon power that reached clear through the Gospel day with the many clusters (different religions) springing off of it.

Their Rock Is Not as Our ROCK

Revelation 15:2-3 pictures the saints standing on a sea of glass, singing the song of Moses. What is the song of Moses? The entire song is found in Deuteronomy 32, verses 1-43. Let us consider verses 31-35: "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and

the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in store with me, and scaled up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste."

Let us consider what they were singing about. The Revelation tells us this was the song which the saints sung when, they stood on the sea of glass, the Word of God. Moses' song lets us know that their vine is the vine of Sodom, talking about the vine of the earth. People who will not have Christ as their rock, or their foundation, choose their own foundation. Their rock is not as our Rock. What happens when temptation comes? They break down and sin. They turn around and teach that you sin more-or-less every day. Everybody and anybody who says that, has not found the right Rock. When the trial or the temptation comes, their rock fails them, and is not able to keep them.

Moses says that "their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter." In the previous message, we found that Babylon is spiritually called Sodom because of the lewdness and ungodliness that goes on under the cloak of religion. Brother, there is more filth and corruption going on under the cloak of religion today than there is in the night clubs and the honky-tonks. My friend, when it goes on under the cloak of religion, it is much blacker in the eyes of God. So their vine is the vine of Sodom, and Babylon is spiritually called Sodom.

We have, a picture of an antichrist system of religion stretched clear out through the Gospel Day. It is an antichrist system of religion into which millions have been grafted without a real experience of Christ. Because of it, my friend, they are not able to live holy, not able to live any differently. They are forever endeavoring to do better, but never able to because they lack this power

that we talked about a little bit ago.

So, the clusters of this vine are the various religious organizations. From this vine of the earth came forth Roman Catholicism; from this vine of the earth came forth Protestantism; and the cluster continues to reach right on out. The further Protestantism goes, the more division there is. The dragon, my friend, is working through every one of them in one way or another to hinder them from finding the truth of God's eternal Word..

Grapes of Gall

The Revelation said that "her grapes are fully ripe." The song of Moses said that "their grapes are grapes of gall." The "grapes of gall" is an expression of people who have no real experience with God.

In Acts, Chapter 8, Simon thought he could buy the power to give the Holy Ghost to people. Verses 20-23 tell us: "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money . . . Repent therefore of this thy wickedness . . . For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

I want you to see that false religion is loaded down with people who have never been born again. Certainly we want all the sinners you can bring in, but we are not going to bring a sinner in and make a Sunday school teacher out of him; we knowingly are not going to bring a sinner in and let him lead the choir or sing in the choir; we are not going to have a sinner stand behind the pulpit and preach. In false religion today, however, preachers are standing there, as Jude said, and foaming out their own shame by saying, "I sin every day." Well, if they sin every day, they are still in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity; they do not have lot or part in the church of the living God. So, her grapes are fully ripe; they are the grapes of gall.

Let us read Joel 3:12-13: "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat [the word Jehoshaphat means "judgment"]: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down: for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great." When God brings us to preliminary judgment, He is doing it in love. If He would let us go on to a final judgment without this preliminary judgment, many would be lost. Through His love and concern, though, He gives us the preliminary judgment, or a chance to see our true condition while there is still life, time, and opportunity to do something about it.

Revelation 14:19 says, "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." I want to make it plain again that this is not a final judgment, because a man is doing it. This was an angel, a messenger, who took the sickle and cast the vine of the earth into the winepress of the wrath of God. This is symbolic talk, merely telling us that the Word of God will put the pressure on you. The Word of God will see what is in you.

The Winepress

The winepress consisted of an upper vat and a lower vat, with a screen in between. The grapes were put in the upper vat, and then they trampled on them. As they trampled on them, the juice (the fruit of the vine) went down through the screen and into the lower vat. When you get around where the preacher is taking the sickle and putting you in the winepress, you are liable to get trampled on. You are liable to get some pressure put on you, and you are liable to get screened.

God uses the same Word to bring about unity. Isaiah 2:2 tells us, "... in the last days ... the mountain of the Lord's house shall be

established in the top of the mountains . . . and all nations shall flow unto it." God brings about unity the same way He separates. Let us say that we are Christians, and He puts us into the winepress and treads the winepress. Brother, if we are truly Christians, the fruit of the vine will flow out. He liquidizes us, as it were, into real unity.

When you get into real unity, you will find that we lose our fleshly recognition. Paul said, in 2 Corinthians 5:16, that we know no man after the flesh. In salvation, we are brought through an experience where we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body, the church of the living God. Well, God puts us in the winepress and puts the pressure on us. If we are not grapes of gall, if we are good, sweet grapes, nothing but sweetness will come out of us. If you squeeze an old sponge, you only get out of it what is in it.

In Isaiah 63:3 we read, "I [Jesus] have trodden the winepress alone; and . . . there was none with me. . . ." Why? He was God's only Son. All men were in sin until He came, but when He shed His blood on Calvary's Cross, ascended and sent the Holy Spirit, He perfected a plan of salvation whereby people can be holy.

He now has people to help Him tread the winepress of the wrath of God. We studied in the last message about people who will stand the Spirit of judgment the Spirit of burning. Isaiah tells us, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken" (Isaiah 62:12).

I do not want you to lose the thought that this is the winepress of the wrath of God. In other words, this is the part of the preaching of the Bible that reveals things which stir God's wrath, things which God definitely hates. Many things are highly applauded today, but when they are put in the winepress of the wrath of God, they begin to show forth what is really there. In Deuteronomy 32: 35a, God said, "To me

belongeth vengeance, and recompence."

What is God actually putting in the winepress here? Something that claims to be God's church. All these abominable idolatries, all these images built to the beast, say they are all God's church. Well, God puts them in the winepress and puts the squeeze on to see what comes out. If they are really God's church, they can stand the Word. There will be nothing about the Word that crosses them up. There will be nothing about the Word that makes them bitter. There is no Christian anywhere who gets bitter at the Word. If you get bitter at the Word, there is something the matter with you, and this is the message that God is trying to get to you. When God puts a Christian in the winepress of His Word, if he is part of the true vine, Jesus Christ, then the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of the vine, will flow out. If he is not, something else will happen.

"Without the City"

Let us go just a little further. Revelation 14:20 tells us, "And the winepress was trodden without the city . . ." Here he is speaking about that great city, Babylon, the vine of the earth: It is trodden without the city because you cannot preach these messages in Babylon. Why? It would put them out of business.

Paul said in Hebrews 13:8-12: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."

The priests could eat the bodies of some sacrifices. After they killed the sacrifice and shed its blood, they lived on the meat of the sacrifice, except the sacrifice that the high priest killed as a sin offering; they could not eat that. It had to be carried without the camp and burnt up. That is a type of Christ; He was our sin offering. He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, and we can eat of our sacrifice. Back then they could not partake of the sin offering, but our sin offering, the Lamb, says, "... Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). Not only did He lay down His life to redeem us, not only did He shed His blood to cleanse us, but He ever lives for us to partake of His life. You eat His flesh when you eat His Word, and you drink His blood when you drink into His Spirit.

In verses 12-13 Paul said: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." As the perfect type of the offering for sin, Christ went without the city of Jerusalem, on Calvary's hill, to die alone; He did it without the camp, or without the city.

Paul therefore tells us: "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (verses 13:14). In Babylon (false religion) you have no continuing city; you look for one to come. Every human organization is looking for a millennium; they are looking for this city to come.

You and I who have come to the truth, according to the 12th chapter of Hebrews, have already come to that continuing city, the one that Abraham looked for. Where have we come? Unto the knowledge of truth. I do not just mean having the understanding; it is one thing to receive the knowledge of truth and another thing to come unto it. The Word of God will get the message

to you of where you truly belong; then it is another thing for you to have the right attitude and be submissive enough to move according to the knowledge of truth which God has given you.

"In Her Was Found . . . Blood"

What came out of the winepress when the vine of the earth was pressed? Had they really been the fruit of the vine, there would have been juice come out, but when He put these professing Christians into the winepress, blood came out instead. According to Joel 3:13, the reason blood came out was because their wickedness was great. The second reason blood came out when the vine of the earth (Babylon) was put in the winepress of God's Word was because her sins had reached unto heaven (Revelation 18:5). Revelation 18:24 tells us, "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

False religion will not own that they are the same organization that killed the prophets. Roman Catholicism will not own the fact that she is the same organization that killed sixty to ninety million Christians, but she is the same. It all has been covered up, but all you have to do is put her in the winepress of God's eternal Word, and the guilt will show up. When He put this vine of earth in the winepress of the wrath of God, instead of the sweetness of the fruit of the vine coming out, blood came out: blood guiltiness, the guilt of killing the prophets, the guilt of slaying the saints.

There is much hypocrisy going on in religion today that is well covered up, but Jesus knows all about it. When you get around where the truth is declared, Jesus is going to tell you all about it. Whether it is in your individual life or in the organization you are in, you'll hear about it. In Matthew, the 23rd chapter, we have a picture of Jesus dealing with this very thing in the Scripture: "Woe unto you, scribes and Phari-

sees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets" (verses 29-30). False religion purports the same thing today, but what did Jesus say? "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets" (verse 31). Those people were garnishing the sepulchres of those of their past, saying they would not have killed them, yet they were witnesses to themselves because they had the same spirit their fathers possessed. It is the same spirit that exists yet today.

In the next verse He said, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." How were they witnessing against themselves? They were rising up against Him, and in a few days, they were going to kill Him, the Son of God. How does it go on today? I do not leave it all in Catholicism; it goes on right in the reformation movement. They garnish the sepulchres of past reformers, and fight God's ministers of today. They are witnesses against themselves.

You can always tell hypocrisy: it praises God's men of past ages, and has no use for God's men of today. Jesus, the Son of God, preached to these hypocrites, and they said, "Abraham is our father." Jesus answered them, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39). The hypocrisy of religion today is always supposedly praising the holy men of past ages, but they do not really love them; if they did, they would take them for an example and follow their teachings.

The Governing Power

Revelation 14:20 says, "... blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles" Oh, what a Scripture for millennialists to take off with. They tell us that in the battle of Armageddon, there will be

such a slaughter that the blood will run the streets clear up to the horse bridles. Friend, first of all, there is no such day coming. The battle of Armageddon is in a heated stage right now, in its most deceptive period. We are in that most deceptive time. Jesus said that if it were possible, the very elect will be deceived in these days (Matthew 24:24).

When John talks about the blood running up to the horse bridles, we must not go out of the Revelation. He is referring to the symbolic horses of the Revelation, the red, black, and gray horses. The Revelation shows the red horse symbolizing Paganism in another way that came against Christianity.

The true church is symbolized as going forth on a white horse. He that sat on him had a bow in His hand. That bow is a symbol of the new covenant. Just as God made a covenant with Noah when He hung the bow in the sky, He here is making a covenant with a lost-and-dying world: if you will repent and confess your sins, I will forgive you and save you. Then the red horse came against her, then the black horse and then the gray horse; death and hell followed that apostasy, or the gray horse.

Now, the blood came up to the horse bridles of the red, black, and gray horses. Why did it come up there? Rome said she did not kill the Christians, and Protestantism said she did not kill the Christians. Both of them say the empire, or the civil forces, did it. Yes, my friend, the civil forces carried it out, but just as the horse's bridle governs the horse, even so the church governed the civil powers and gave the dictation for the killing to be done.

James said, "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body" (James 3:3). Even so, when the blood ran out, the guiltiness of the blood which had been shed came up to the horse bridles, letting us know that the horse may have done the warfare, but the bri-

dle was the guiding force. Rome and false religion are hiding today. They say that the woman is just riding the beast. It is true that the eighth beast is ferocious, but the woman is riding, guiding, and controlling it.

Revelation 14:20 says that the blood flowed out for sixteen hundred furlongs. That is 150 miles in American language. When we think of 150 miles in length, and remember that even as it is long, it is immense, it takes in a wide area. This thing in the sight of God is terrible. This blood reaches from the time that martyrdom began all the way up to our day. It is not only long, but it is immense, or wide. God is not getting excited over some little thing.

I am not saying that everybody in Protestantism has that spirit; I am talking about the spirit of the system. The Bible says if you stay around there, according to Revelation 18, you will get that spirit. God has good people in some of those organizations, where there has been enough truth preached for a man to get saved. In Revelation 18:4 He called them "His people" and said, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." God not only would have all men to be saved, but He also would have all men to come to a knowledge of the truth. You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.

I want to say, again, as I said in the very beginning, We need to know who our enemies are. In the military, before we went overseas we had to study all kinds of airplanes so we wouldn't shoot at our own. The enemy would paint their planes just like ours; they wanted to come right in our area and make everybody think they were American planes, then bomb us. We had to study what our enemy looked like, what kind of uniforms he wore, and all about him.

Now, this is all God is doing. You may feel it is wasted time, but God is doing you a favor. Every-

body out there who claims to be a Christian is not a child of God. Some of them are deceived, and some of them are in darkness as to what the truth is. All of them need to be prayed for, treated right, loved, and helped. Reach every one you can, but friend, we need to understand what kind of a system is working against us. We need to take a look at it as God looks at it. For too long, we have formed our own conclusions about too many things. We can profess what we want, but it is how we stand up against the straight Word of God that determines what we really have or do not have.

Are You Bound or Free?

This Word of truth will loose you. When Jesus gave the disciples the keys to the kingdom, He said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). In the twentieth chapter of John He said, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (verse 23).

A lot of people say the disciples had a special power. No, sir. The Gospel is the power that remits man's sins or leaves him bound in them. He gave them the Gospel to preach. It binds and it looses; it remits or leaves you in the sad condition that you are in. I am glad to tell you that the Gospel can still loose you. It makes no difference how bound you are; the Gospel can still loose you if you are ready to meet His teachings and humble yourself before the Word of God, allowing it to work in your heart and life the way that God sees fit.

God is love, and there is no love like the love of God. But let me tell you something, there is no wrath to be felt or seen like there is when love turns to wrath. You can talk all you want, but God is stirred more

deeply with religious conditions than He is with the filth and corruption that is going on in the streets of our cities.

When Jesus walked here on earth, He met people bound with legions of devils and deep in sin; He had compassion on them and delivered them. On the other hand, when He confronted the hypocrites, fire

got in His eyes. He became so stirred one time that He took a whip and ran them clear out of His Father's house. There is another side to the story. May God help us to know that our lives are free from hypocrisy.

Make your commitment. Give up to God and let Him take over your life to the place that you have

power over fire where you can stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire. God expects you to reflect the truth of God's Word out from your life, as you stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire and rejoice in God's goodness.

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