

*“The Grapes of Wrath!”*

## 1. Intro:

- 1.1. Let's join John & his **agricultural images** as he tells us the time was “**ripe**” for judgment.
- 1.2. **Images of death:** Some cultures this personage is dressed in **white**, sometimes in **black**; In **Germanic/English** folklore he is **male**; in **Latin folklore** she is **female**; In Roman Catholicism, the archangel **Michael** is viewed as the angel of death (carrying the souls of the deceased to Heaven. Often see him w/balances); On one of the Tarot cards (The Tarot of Marseilles/*Mar-say*) skeleton with a scythe; In the Hindu scriptures known collectively as 'Vedas', the lord of death is called Yama, or Yamaraj (literally “*the lord of death*”)[He rides a black buffalo and carries a rope lasso to carry the soul back to his abode]; In Mexico, a popular Catholic “cult” regards the personification of death as a saint, known as **Santa Muerte**; You & I know him best as **the Grim Reaper** [hooded, black robed, sickle in hand].
  - 1.2.1. In 1976 Blue Oyster Cults biggest hit was **Don't Fear The Reaper**.
    - 1.2.1.1. I'll let you decide after this evenings teaching!
- 1.3. **Outline:** Primo Grapes; Poisonous Grapes; Peaceful Grapes; Packaged Grapes; & Pressed Grapes.

## 2. THE GRAPES OF WRATH! (1-20)

- 2.1. **PRIMO GRAPES!** (1-5) [Primo = 1<sup>st</sup> in a sequence]
- 2.2. (1) From the mark of the beast to the marked sealed servants from ch.7.
  - 2.2.1. These “*ever-ready saints*” still standing, still singing, still going strong!
- 2.3. The Important point...they're “w/the Lamb”!
- 2.4. (2,3) No one could learn **their** song.
  - 2.4.1. You probably have a song, because of what you've been through, that wouldn't make sense for others to sing.
- 2.5. **Q:** How's your song life? Joy songs? – Psalms of affliction?
- 2.6. (4,5) God takes the best for Himself before the harvest begins!
- 2.7. These are **model Believers** w/**unblemished character**.
  - 2.7.1. So thus identified by their **behavior** & not by their **appearance**.
- 2.8. **Virgins?** - 2 possibilities:
  - 2.8.1. **[1] Literal?** Never married, therefore undistracted in their work for God like Paul said, “**But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord--how he may please the Lord.**” (1 Cor. 7:32)

- 2.8.1.1. **Q: Are you dedicated & consecrated to Him!**
- 2.8.2. “Among the Franks whole armies were sometimes **baptized** at once. Many warriors went into the water w/their **rt. hands** held high(so that they didn't get wet). Then they could say, “This hand has never been baptized so they could swing their battle axes just as freely as ever!”  
**Q: What part of your life our you holding back for yourself?**
- 2.8.3. **[2] Figurative?** It can also mean, they were **completely separated** unto the God they served.
- 2.8.3.1. i.e. They didn't commit fornication by worshiping the beast or His image.
- 2.8.3.2. Virgin is used figuratively in 2 Cor.11:2 “For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a **chaste virgin** to Christ.”
- 2.9. **They follow the Lamb wherever He goes** - “Mary had a little Lamb His name I'm sure you know; & everywhere that Jesus went **this group** was sure to follow!”
- 2.9.1. Simplest def of a Christian is simply: *one who follows Jesus Christ!*
- 2.10. **Christ** was the **1<sup>st</sup> Fruits** of the **Resurrection Harvest!**  
**This group** was the **1<sup>st</sup> Fruits** of the **Tribulation Harvest!**
- 2.10.1. **1<sup>st</sup> Fruits** are the **Best of the crops.**
- 2.10.1.1. It was a symbol of the harvest to come.
- 2.10.2. **The Christian is to be the Best** that can be offered to God! - **Are you?**
- 2.11. They had **no deceit** (no fraud, no false message) - Peter applied these words to Jesus, “**Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth**”.
- 2.12. They were **w/o fault** - w/o blemish!
- 2.12.1. A sacrificial word. “It describes the animal which is w/o flaw, & so fit for an offering to God.”
- 2.12.2. This word is used often for the Christian, “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be **holy** and **without blame** before Him in love.”
- 2.13. **POISONOUS GRAPES!** (6-12)
- 2.14. *Triple Angelic Fly by's (Announcements):* telling everyone that the sovereign Creator is about to judge the world. [Heavenly Town Criers]
- 2.14.1. **Man's** day is over, & **God's** day has come.
- 2.14.2. Spanish Proverb, “*Dios tarda pero no olvida*” [God delays but doesn't forget]
- 2.15. **1<sup>st</sup> ANGEL– The World's Doom!** (6,7)
- 2.15.1. **Everlasting Gospel** - Eternal Good News!
- 2.15.1.1. It's God's last call of Grace, to a world that **persists** in rejecting & openly defying Him.

- 2.15.2. **"Fear me! Glorify me! Worship me!"** is what the Beast was saying!  
 2.15.2.1. **No! Fear** the God who is about to judge! - **Glorify** Him for He is worthy! - **Worship** Him as creator of Heaven & Earth!!!
- 2.16. **2<sup>nd</sup> ANGEL– Babylon's Doom!** (8)  
 2.16.1. **Babylon** a symbol of **man's pride** & of **his fall**. [1<sup>st</sup> mention in Rev]  
 2.16.1.1. **Babylon** was 1 of the major enemies of **Israel**, & **destroyed** its Temple in 586 bc.  
 2.16.1.2. Ch.17,18 deal in detail with **Babylon**(*Political, Ecclesiastical, & Economic*).
- 2.17. **3<sup>rd</sup> ANGEL – Antichrist's Doom!** (9-12)  
 2.17.1. **Cup of Wrath** - Image from Jer.25:15,16 **"For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. And they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them."**  
 2.17.2. **Babylon** has given the world a **stupefying wine**, & they **got drunk** from its false teaching.
- 2.18. **Full Strength**(10) - Unmixed, not diluted down, "untempered by the Mercy & Grace of God!" (Mounce)  
 2.18.1. **Eternal judgment** is not a pretty picture however you approach it.  
 2.18.2. It is hard to imagine an **omnipotent God**, adding to His wrath, His **full-strength-fury!** :-0 [No longer, "*in wrath remember mercy*" Hab.3:2]
- 2.19. **Fire & Brimstone**(10) - or burning Sulfur {*preachin Fire & Brimstone*}
- 2.20. **Its nature?** - It's continuous, **no rest day & night!**  
 2.21. **It's extent?** - **Forever & Ever.**
- 2.22. They say the damned in hell will know one word...**FOREVER!** "It will be written everywhere. In their dirt & in their ashes, even as they peer up towards Gods throne there in bold letters will read 'FOREVER'! - It will be heard in the faintest of whispers & in the most hideous screams of torment - FOREVER? - It will be muttered day in & day out on all the lips Forever...Forever..... Forever!"  
**Their one prayer** would be to be turned to nothing, & forever cease to be, that they may escape the wrath of God!  
 2.22.1. **Other options?** Here's One..."Some Hindu Guru's rub **cremation** into their skin, & **cow dung** into their hair as an effort to attain salvation!"  
 2.22.2. "He who does not believe that God will cast unbelievers into Hell, will not be sure that he will take believers into Heaven!" (Spurg)
- 2.23. **PEACEFUL GRAPES!** (13)  
 2.24. May be applied to **all believers** who die, but it will have special meaning to the **martyrs** of that evil day.

- 2.24.1. The saints will **rest**...but only after their **death**!
- 2.24.2. "The Lord gets his best soldiers out of the highlands of affliction" Spurg
- 2.25. **Q: What happens at death?** - We will be **with the Lord**; We will be **at rest**; We will be **rewarded**; We will be **freed from pain & problems**.
- 2.25.1. **Mad at God for delivering us from this???**
- 2.25.2. Here is the **REAL "R & R" (Rest & Rewards!)**
- 2.26. **PACKAGED GRAPES!** (14-16)
- 2.27. Jesus also used other imagery:
- 2.27.1. Sheep & Goats(Mt.25:31,32) – "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, & all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. **All the nations** will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a **shepherd** separates the **sheep** from the **goats.**"
- 2.27.2. Fish caught in net (**read** Mt.13:47-50)
- 2.27.3. Wheat & Tares (**read** Mt.13:37-43)
- 2.28. **PRESSED GRAPES!** (17-20)
- 2.29. Here are the true **Grapes of Wrath!**
- 2.30. **The vine of the earth** is fast ripening, & 1 day God will apply the sickle.
- 2.30.1. **God still is allowing** the seeds of sin to grow & produce a harvest.
- 2.30.1.1. But one day He will reap what has been sown.
- 2.31. **Note: ripe**(15), & **fully ripe**(18).
- 2.31.1. Perfect ripeness **vs.** over-ripe.
- 2.32. People would trample the grapes in a winepress & the juice would flow out into a lower vat.
- 2.32.1. Here, about 184 miles, the length of Israel.
- 2.32.1.1. Too much time in literal calculations...it is a great bloody battle known as Armageddon.
- 2.32.2. **Both Isaiah & Joel** develop this very same imagery.
- 2.32.3. In this judgment **human blood** is replaced for **grape juice**.
- 2.33. Note: **3 Vines in Scripture!**
- 2.33.1. **Israel** was Gods original vine! - They brought forth wild grapes! (Is.5)
- 2.33.2. The True Vine is Jesus Christ! (Jn15) - Abide in me.
- 2.33.2.1. The **genuine** vine, all others are imitations.
- 2.33.3. Here, the unbelievers are the Vine of the earth!
- 2.34. **Q: Which Vine** are you connected to?
- 2.34.1. You're drawing your sap from **the world**, **from Jesus Christ**, **or** you are **just a sap?**
- 2.35. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear **much fruit**; apart from me you can do nothing."
- 2.35.1. **Fruit, more fruit, much fruit!** (9 Grapes!)

- 2.36. **Love is:** When we become *transparent* & Jesus shows thru very *apparent!*  
**Joy is:** An **attitude cultivated** when the **heart smiles!**  
**Peace is:** **Enjoyment of** Godliness & Contentment!  
**Patience is:** The discipline to **stop & pray** before any decision. Not feeling the world's pressure to **hurry through life.**  
**Kindness:** What is shown even to those who **bend us the wrong way!**  
**Goodness is:** So **general** a term it **spans every area** of our life, in which we strive for the highest Good in all things.  
**Faithfulness is:** **Trustworthy** in words spoken & deeds promised.  
**Gentleness is:** Not weak but **meek**; like a strong father picking up his new-born for the 1<sup>st</sup> time.  
**Self-Control is:** learning to say **no to me!** 😊
- 2.37. “Lord, may the fruit of our lives bust forth in ripening acts of *Christlikeness.*”
- 2.38. **Q:** So what about God's whole **judgment** thing? **Q:** How can a **merciful God** condemn people to **hell...**much less for **eternity?**
- 2.38.1. Look at our own judicial system! – We expect our local judges to do **their job.** What do you think of a judge who lets convicted criminals, murderers, sex offenders go free? [you expect justice in our earthly courts!]
- 2.39. Past generations weren't so quick to shy away from considering **the wrath of God.**
- 2.39.1. In 1861 **Julia Ward Howe** during **the Civil War** toured a **Union Army Camp** on the Potomac. There the soldiers were singing a song to **John Brown**, who had been hanged in 1859 for attempting to lead an insurrection of slaves at Harpers Ferry: “**John Brown's Body Lies a-mold'ring in the grave.**” The music was rousing, but the words needed improvement. Her pastor encouraged her to write new & better words for it. And she did. We know it as “**The Battle Hymn of the Republic.**”
- 2.39.2. *Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;  
 He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.  
 He hath loosed the fateful lightening of His terrible swift sword.  
 His truth is marching on.*