

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

"Harvest and Vintage" Revelation 14:14-20

Introduction

1. The tribulation is a seven year period in which the Lord will bring a variety of judgments upon Israel and the Gentiles (the church will be raptured prior to this period) in order to usher in His kingdom on earth (Dan. 9:24-27). This chapter records events in this period.
2. While judgment is being meted out generally, God is drawing to Himself many in mercy through a divine seal (vv. 1-5). Others He seeks to save through the preaching of the everlasting gospel (vv. 6, 7).
3. Political and religious Babylon (ecumenicalism) are predicted to fall (v. 8). Worshipers of the beast are promised horrible judgment (vv. 9-11). Meanwhile, the true saints (Gentiles and Jews) of the tribulation time are patient and continue to obey the Lord and have faith on Christ (v. 12). Many suffer martyrdom, but they enter into their eternal rest (v. 13).
4. Some of the final events of the tribulation include further judgments. These are described in summary fashion:

1. HARVEST JUDGMENT OF EARTH vv. 14-16.

This is a discriminating judgment. It is judgment prior to the millennium. It is effected by:

a. The Son of Man.

1) His seat -- a cloud. The cloud speaks of divine presence and the white of purity and righteousness. Note white throne (20:10). Sitting marks deliberate judgment (John 5:25-27).

2) His head -- a crown. This is the sign of royal dignity (4:4; 6:2).

3) His hand -- a sickle. This indicates a separating process. It is needed to reap a harvest! No sword.

b. The angel from the temple vv. 15, 16.

The employment of an angel for such a ministry is indeed spectacular. He is a tool in God the Father's hand (cf. Psa. 2:7-9; Heb. 10:12, 13). Two items about him:

1) His word It is really twofold: send forth

(thrust) and reap. These are both imperatival forms. The job must be done!

2) His concern Time had come to reap and the harvest was ripe. Study with the parallel Word of God (Joel 3: 13; Matt. 13:36-43). This is judgment and concerns the same time period as Matthew 25. What the angel says is done (v. 16). The words noting the reaping of the earth affirm that everything that man boasts about it is now ended!

2. VINTAGE JUDGMENT OF EARTH vv. 17-20.

It should be noted that judgments were centered in the throne (11:18), but from that point on the focal point is the temple (11:19). The former urges God's government while the latter His presence. While the harvest judgment was discriminating, this one is unsparing judgment. Note:

a. Angels involved

Two are mentioned: one with a sickle and the other with power over fire. The latter is probably related to the brazen altar of judgment. Divine judgment comes to the earth without qualification.

b. Action performed

The vine mentioned here probably speaks of the religio-political system under the Antichrist (cf. Deut. 32: 31-35). This is to be gathered and cast into the winepress of God's wrath. Entire portions of Old Testament prophecy are noted here (Joel 3:10-14; Psa. 2; Isa. 63:1-6; Zech. 14: 1-4). Things have reached the climax of history in earthly judgment.

c. Results accomplished

All the events here take place outside the city of Jerusalem in the valley of Megiddo (Armageddon, Rev. 16:13-16). So enormous will be the slaughter that the blood runs about four feet deep for 200 miles! It is beyond anything ever known.

Conclusion There are optimists who preach that the world is growing better and safer and things are bright. This is high-sounding nonsense. If you are honest, you acknowledge that the earth is winding down to a cataclysmic end. What should you do? Turn now to Christ as Saviour and find yourself under the blood of the Lamb--safe forever!