

THE BOOK OF REVELATION
"A Harvest of Woe and Judgment"
Revelation 14:14-20

Introduction

1. The Tribulation Period is seven years during which the Lord will bring a variety of judgments upon Israel and the Gentiles before He ushers in the Millennial Kingdom (Dan. 9:24-27; Rev. 20:1-6).

2. At this time of horrific judgment, God draws to Himself in mercy many through a divine seal (7:1-8; 14:1-5). Others the Lord seeks to save through the preaching of the everlasting Gospel (7:13-17; 14:6, 7).

3. Political and religious Babylon (ecumenicalism) are predicted to fall (v. 8 cf. Rev. 17, 18). Worshipers of the Beast (Antichrist) who bear his mark (13:15-18; 14:9-11) are promised dreadful judgment. Meanwhile, the true saints (Gentiles and Jews) from the Tribulation Period are commended for their patience and obedience to God's commandments and faith on Jesus Christ (v. 12). Many will 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 as:

1. HARVEST JUDGMENT OF EARTH vv. 14-16

This is a discriminating judgment. It is prior to the millennium and not postmillennial as the Great White Throne (20:11-15). It is effected by:

a. Son of Man v. 14

Note: This title is anathrous. It points to our Lord as "Son of Man" showing His connection with the race, but in very character He bears the attributes and moral glories of the Ancient of Days (cf. Dan. 7:13; Rev. 14:14; 1:13, 14). Consider "behold" (vv. 1, 14).

1) His Seat – a cloud. The present tense verb denotes deliberate judgment (John 5:25-27). White connotes absolutely pure righteousness. The idea conveyed by "cloud" is the divine Presence (Ex. 13:21, 22; Rev. 10:1; Mt. 17:5; Ezek. 10:4).

2) His Head – A crown. This is a victor's crown (στέφανον stephanon). Here is the golden sign of God's appointed King. He has royal right and dignity (cf. 4:4; 6:2).

3) His Hand – A sickle. This is a unique matter emphasized here. The glory of His Person is not the issue nor the process and manner of His coming, but His rights over the harvest are manifest. The sickle is for a separating process and it is sharp so as to do its work thoroughly. All is in His hand as the Reaper.

b. Another Angel vv. 15, 16

The "temple" is evidently in heaven (cf. v. 17), hence the angel is from the presence of God the Father. He alone has set within His own authority times and seasons (Acts 1:7; Mt. 24, 36). The employment of an angel, distinct from previous ones, for such a ministry as described here is indeed spectacular (cf. Gen. 18, 19; 1 Kgs 22). He is a tool in the Father's hand communicating to the Son (cf. Ps 2:7-9; Heb. 10:12, 13). The message of the angel is:

1) About Action

a) Thrust This is an aorist imperatival verb (πέμψον pempson) meaning to "send" or "put forth." The "sickle" belongs to the Lord – "your."

b) Reap The action of "thrust" has a worthy object i.e. "reap." Interestingly, "angels" are involved in this activity (Mt. 13:39).

2) About Consideration

a) Time The noun here is "hour" (ὥρα wra) and it belongs to Him ("your"). The aorist indicative verb is clear that reaping time has come.

b) Harvest Use of the aorist passive verb (ἐξηράνθη exeranthe) is an ominous announcement. Harvest time has come and the grain is ripe to be reaped. Think of it. This is for the "earth" (γῆς ges). Everything that man boasts in pride and ambitions has now come to an end (cf. Joel 3:13; Mt. 13:36-43; 25). What the angel cries is accomplished in full (v. 16).

2. VINTAGE JUDGMENT ON EARTH vv. 17-20

Note: It appears there are "throne" judgments which are characteristic of the first part of the book up to 11:18. From that point there are "temple" judgments right up to the seventh Vial (16:12). Then at the seventh Vial the temple and throne judgments combine (16:17). The judgment recorded here is unsparing. Read:

a. About Angels Involved vv. 17, 18

Angels are frequently mentioned here (vv. 6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 18). The fourth and fifth come out of the temple (vv. 15, 17) from whence come Vials (16:1). Two angels here are mentioned: one has a sickle and the other has power (authority) over fire. The later cries to the former.

b. About Action Stated v. 18

The same command of v. 15 is repeated – "thrust," but "reap" is replaced by "gather" (τρύγησον trugeson). The "bunches of the vine" of the "earth" indicate divine judgment without qualification upon all who are joined to Satan and Antichrist.

c. About Results Accomplished vv. 19, 20

Here is the "vine of the earth." What does God do with this vine and its clusters? There is nothing but unmixed divine judgment. There is no mercy to mitigate it. The text records – the fruit is cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Entire portions of the O.T. prophecy are noted here (cf. Ps 2; Isa. 63:1-6; Joel 3:10-14; Zech. 14:1-4). All the events 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 (v. 20).

Conclusion There are optimists who preach that the world is getting 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! Amen.