

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The Harvest of the Earth

Revelation 14:14-20

Main Idea: God reigns over all things and His victory is forever secured.

At the end of a harvest, everything in the field is harvested in some form or another. The outcome a harvest is largely dependent on what identity the thing being harvested holds. For harvesting, there is the physical act of removing everything from where it is and then the sorting by its identity. As the elders and angels declare the victory of God over all the world, they mark the beginning of the season of harvest. The angels herald the coming of the harvest as it passes over all the earth. First, the wheat are harvested and then the grapes. While both are harvested, their fates could not be more different, each facing a different outcome than the other. One thing becomes clear from chapter 14; everyone will face the harvest in some capacity. Up until this point, God reveals his sovereignty as the King of Heaven, the ruler of creation, and even dictating what the dragon and demons can and cannot do. At the end of human kind, everyone will experience the fullness of God. Some will experience the fullness of God's eternal presence and blessing. Others will experience the fullness of the God's wrath. The difference comes from who the son of man claims as His own.

Harvesting The Wheat

Throughout the course of verses 14-20 comes many proclamations from angels either declaring the unfolding events. Yet, the focal point of the John's vision in verses 14-20 is not the angels, or even the reaping of the harvest for that matter. Instead, John's vision in these verses centralizes on the Man in verse 14. The description of the man seated on a white cloud, with a golden crown denotes a sense of Heavenly, angelic ruling. Furthermore, the description of one like the son of man, is an often used connotation for Jesus Christ. He is both fully divine and fully human ruling in both realms having experienced the fullness of one without caving to its temptations while simultaneously wearing the crown

of the other. Jesus Christ reigns over all creation and His sickle reaps the first harvest of the wheat.

The angel that appears pronounces the coming of the one like the Son of Man, declaring the time is ripe for the harvest. With a sweep of the sickle, the wheat is thrashed up into the safety and protection of the Son of Man. The one who were reaped dedicated their lives to following Jesus Christ, identifying with Him in His death burial and resurrection. By faith, they believed that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross counted for them. While we have been able to grow with the non-wheat now Christ is consummating the relationship between Him and His bride. The angels from the first part of this chapter declared victory in the face of opposition, trial, and persecution. The harvesting expresses that victory as those who have remained faithful come to their final rest in Jesus Christ.

Harvesting The Wine

Not everyone, however, will experience the same fate from the harvesting. The angel from the altar, who held authority over the fire, declared the time right to also reap the remainder of the world. People sacrificed animals in order that the blood could atone for their sins. Christ offered himself up as the perfect sacrifice, His blood spilling once and for all who put their hope in Him as a propitiation of their sins. Yet, for others, the consequences of sin and rebellion against God remain that blood must be shed. This is the nature of the harvest of the grapes which have swollen with the indulgence of sin. Grapes, throughout scripture, have represented an indulgence of sin that swells until it must be reaped and pressed, shedding the consequences of that same indulgence. Furthermore, this harvest is brutal. As those who are trodden by the winepress will be enough to flood cities. The dragon sought to discourage worship of the One, True King by providing distractions and persecuting those who remain faithful. However, the consequence of abandoning the one true King are the same

Sin is nothing short of rebellion against God. Too often we attempt to make God not a cold deity only judges people heart-

lessly. Yet, we forget every circumstance in which the Lord gives people to repent and turn. Everything before the moment of harvest provides an opportunity to return to the Lord. God miraculously provides for the church during her persecution. Christ died on the cross as both the Lion of the Tribe of Judah and the Lamb of sacrifice for the sins of mankind, even coming to lovingly reap those who put their faith in Him. Even more, the Holy Spirit, residing in our hearts, provides the wisdom, strength, and discernment to endure anything the world can throw at us.

Discussion Questions

- What is the difference between the wheat and the grapes?
- How does the Bible describe each of their fates? What happens to the wheat? What happens to the grapes?
- Why do you think the punishment for the grapes is so severe?
- How does the message of Christ's victory give us hope during difficult times?
- Where have you experienced trial or waiting on the Lord? How does this passage provide hope for whatever circumstance you find yourself in?



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