

Grapes Of Wrath Or Harps Of God?

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An Exposition of Revelation 14:14-20 & 15:1-4.

Through the years, scholars have found the latter half of Revelation 14 to be difficult to interpret. We suggest that the verses involved in this exposition form a distinct chapter.

“I looked, and behold a white cloud. And upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown mid in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel cam out of the temple, crying with a loud voice unto Him that sat on the cloud: ‘Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for Thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.’ And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth and the earth was reaped.”

This section commences with the expression: “I looked and behold...” This denotes a new vision, as distinct from the previous vision of the three angels.

“Behold, a white cloud.”

As previously shown in Revelation 10, a cloud represents the presence of the Deity. Clouds are also associated with judgment. The above expression is culled from Daniel 7:13 where Jesus Christ, “the Son of man” is pictured being transported by “the clouds of heaven” into the judgment scene, into the presence of “the Ancient of Days” in the great heavenly temple.

Thus in verse 14 we have a representation of Jesus Christ, amid the angels, coming to this world at the Second Advent in judgment. John describes the cloud as a “white cloud”. This is the only time the cloud is described as white. The Spirit of Prophecy reveals that at the Second Advent the cloud first appears as a small dark cloud on the eastern horizon, but as it nears the earth it is transformed into glorious white. White denotes righteousness and justice and is also associated with judgment. The judgment scenes of Daniel 7:9, 10 and Revelation 20 are associated with white.

“Whose garment was white as snow and the hair of His head like pure wool” Daniel 7:9, 10. “I saw a great white throne.” Revelation 20:11. “Upon the cloud one sat.” How could Christ sit upon a cloud? The cloud here is composed of angels, or the cherubim, one of whose functions is to transport the deity when He moves in state. In Ezekiel, chapters 1 & 10, the Lord is shown upon His throne which is borne by a gigantic chariot formed of cherubim. The living chariot wheels are as high as the heavens and above the chariot was a firmament or platform, and on the platform, a throne, and on the throne the “appearance of a man.”

SON OF MAN

The One seated upon the cloud is described as “The Son of Man”. Why at the Second Advent is Jesus not referred to as the “Son of God”? We suggest that there are two reasons. The first is derived from the Old Testament. The term represents the Messiah, the great deliverer of the race who was promised in Eden to Adam and Eve. He appeared first at Bethlehem, but now “He appears the second time without sin unto salvation”.

The second reason for “Son of Man,” is that it represents Christ in His humanity. In the New Testament the term is used 88 times. The number 8 represents regeneration, newness of life or resurrection. The word

“Jesus” in Greek adds up to 888. (In Greek every letter represents a number). The 88th time that the term “Son of Man” is used in the New Testament is in Revelation 14:14 where Jesus is pictured as the great harvester, coming to gather the harvest of the earth which involves the mighty resurrection of His people.

AND ON HIS HEAD A GOLDEN CROWN

In the first description of Jesus in the heavenly temple (Revelation 13-14), nothing is said in regard to the covering of His head. Probably as high priest He would wear a miter, but now it is a golden crown. He is no longer a priest but King of Kings. He has received His kingdom. This world has been given to Christ, and now He is coming to take possession.

THE SICKLE

“And in His hand a sharp sickle.”

For two thousand years Jesus has had in His hand a smoking censer denoting his priestly intercession for his people, but now he holds a sickle denoting that He is about to reap the harvest of the earth.

“Thrust in Thy sickle and reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” (Verse 15)

What is the harvest? There are two harvests in this passage. Jesus said:

“The harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels.” Matthew 13:39

What does “the end of the world” mean? It is not the final destruction by fire; it means the period of the end of the world. The Spirit of Prophecy says that the “harvest is the end of probationary time.” (1)

The harvest commences at the close of probation and the reapers are the angels. In this scripture three angels are employed in the harvest. They probably represent the angelic host. In the previous passage of scripture (Verses 6-13) another three angels are represented as producing the crop. In this final passage or Revelation 14 three angels are pictured as reaping the crop. The expression, “another angel” is mentioned three times in this passage, (Verses 16-18).

THE HARVEST AND THE TEMPLE

“Another angel came out of the temple.”

Why is the temple involved in the reaping of the harvest? Jesus is now on the cloud. He has left the temple, His mediation is no more. However, it is in the temple that the sin question is resolved. It is in the temple that decisions are determined regarding the destiny of men. The reaping of the harvest involves destiny and judgment, rewards and penalties, and all this is resolved in the heavenly sanctuary.

“Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary.” Psalm 77:13.

“I went into the sanctuary of God. Then I understood their end.” Psalm 73:17.

David is here referring to the destiny of the wicked. He concluded that the wicked unfairly prospered until he went into the sanctuary. When he saw in the sanctuary service the fate of the unsaved he understood. God’s justice is revealed in the heavenly temple. That is why the heavenly temple is associated with the great harvest -the end of the world. Undoubtedly these three angels are symbolic, just as the three angels of verses 6-9 are symbolic. These represent the three final messages to the world before the coming of Christ. To be logical, this second trio of angels should also be symbolic. We will endeavor to discover what they represent.

THE CRY TO CHRIST ON THE CLOUD

Of the latter trio of angels, the first and the third cry with a loud voice. Likewise, the first and third angels of the first trio cry with a loud voice. The first angel of the latter trio (verse 5) cries to Christ on the cloud. Could this represent a message, an appeal from earth to Christ above? Will there be any cry after the close of probation? Will there be any appeal or message to God? Yes there will! There will be a mighty cry around the globe from the afflicted saints - a cry for deliverance from their persecutors and would-be

slayers. There will also be a cry from the afflicted saints for God's approval in the time of Jacob's trouble when they are mentally assailed by Satan. We suggest that this angel, crying with a loud voice to Christ on the cloud, represents the cry of the saints around the world.

In Revelation 18:1-4 before the close of probation, there will be a "loud cry" on the part of God's people while Jesus is still in the temple. This cry of Revelation 14:15, however, is after probation closes, when Jesus is on the cloud. We suggest that this cry is illustrated by the parable of the unjust judge of Luke 18:1-8.

"He spoke a parable to them ...that men ought always to pray, and not to faint: saying; 'There was in a city a judge which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came to him saying; 'Avenge me of mine adversary.' And he would not for a while, but afterward he said within himself; 'Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' And the Lord said; 'Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night to Him though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?'" Luke 18:1-8.

The widow represents the elect, God's remnant people. In this parable we have a parallel in the experience of God's people after the close of probation.

PARALLELS BETWEEN

The Widow

1. The Widow with no earthly support.
2. Her adversary.
3. The judge "would not for awhile."
4. Finally the judge responds and avenges the widow.

The Persecuted Saints After The Close of Probation.

1. The elect (Verse 7). The Remnant without earthly support - no mediator.
2. Satan, (which means adversary), opposes the Remnant through his earthly agents.
3. God prolongs the time of waiting and pleading by the saints in order to purify them from the last vestiges of earthliness. (The time of Jacob's trouble.)
4. "And shall not God avenge His own elect which cry night and day to Him. He will avenge them speedily."

It is interesting to note the comment from the Spirit of Prophecy on this angel's cry.

"This will not take place until Jesus has finished His priestly office in the heavenly sanctuary and lays off His priestly attire and puts on His kingly robes and crown, to ride forth on the cloudy chariot to thresh the heathen in anger, and deliver His people. Then Jesus will have the sharp sickle in His hand. Then the saints will cry day and night to Him to thrust in His sickle and reap. This will be the time of Jacob's trouble out of which the saints will be delivered by the voice of God. (2)

In response to the cry of the persecuted saints, Christ finally takes action.

"He thrust in his sickle on the earth and the earth was reaped." Verse 15

This represents a work of separation. The righteous are severed from the wicked, God turns the captivity of his persecuted, pursued saints and delivers them. This occurs under the sixth and seventh plagues. (See: "The Drying Up Of The Great River Euphrates.")

"Another angel came out of the temple, also carrying a sharp sickle." Verse 17.

This is the second reaper, denoting a second harvest.

“Another angel came out from the altar which had power over fire, and cried with a loud voice to Him that had the sickle: ‘Thrust in Thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.’ Verse 18

It appears that God delegates authority to angelic beings to control the various elements of the natural world. We read of the “angel of the waters” (chapter 15:5) and “angels controlling the winds” in Revelation 7:1 and Job 1:19.

The fire, over which this angel appears to preside, represents two processes - purification or punishment: cleansing or consuming. When fire and incense were mixed with the prayers of the saints, their prayers were purified; when fire is unmixed with incense it punishes. The fire in verse 18 undoubtedly represents punishment. In Revelation 8:5 a glimpse is given of the heavenly temple and how an angel takes fire from the altar and flings it to the earth. As a result, the judgments of God in the seven trumpets afflict the inhabitants of the earth. Likewise with this angel of verse 18. He has power over fire, or authority to administer punishment, and he gives the signal for the punishment of the unsaved to commence in the seven last plagues.

Now the altar within the temple is the altar of incense, and the fire is associated with that altar. As Revelation 8:5 says; “The fire of the altar.” Why the fire from the altar in the harvesting of the wicked? The altar was associated with the record of sin.

“The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond: it is graven... upon the horns of your altars.” Jeremiah 17:1

In the Old Testament the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled upon the horns of the altar of incense. Thus the altar, we suggest, represents here the record of the sins of the unsaved, so from the incense altar comes the fire of God’s judgment or retribution.

“The angel took the censor and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth, and there were voices and thundering and lightning and an earthquake.” Revelation 8:5, 6.

HER GRAPES ARE FULLY RIPE

In scripture the unsaved are likened to grapes. What is meant by their being “fully ripe”? We suggest this represents two aspects.

1. It represents the fact that the unsaved are fully developed in their wickedness. Just as the saved, when fully ripe, reflect the image of Christ in character, so the unsaved, when they are fully ripe, fully reflect the image of the evil one.
2. It also represents the fact that the unsaved have reached the peak of rebellion. They have filled up the cup of their iniquity. In what way? Their cup overflows with wickedness when they determine to slay the saints of God.

We suggest that the cry of the altar angel represents Heaven’s response to the death decree against the saints and is a signal for the harvest of the wicked to commence. What is the harvest of the wicked? It is retribution, it is vengeance on the part of Heaven.

“The angel thrust in his sickle and gathered the vine and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden without [outside] the city.” Verses 19, 20.

In the Old Testament the punishment of the unsaved is likened to the treading of grapes in a wine press.

“The Lord hath trodden underfoot all the mighty men, the lord has trodden the daughter of Judah as in a wine press.” Lamentations 1:15.

In Isaiah’s portrayal of the punishment of the Edomites, the inveterate enemies of Israel, he wrote, “Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? Like him that treads in the wine vat? I have trodden the wine press alone. For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments ...for the day of vengeance is in mine heart-and I will tread down the people in mine anger and make them drunken in my fury and I will bring down their strength to the earth.” Isaiah 63:1-6

In the punishment and destruction of Edom, God likened Himself to treading the grapes in the winepress. This picture is drawn upon by the Revelator to describe the punishment of the unsaved, when they fill up their cup of iniquity, as they attempt to destroy the saints.

What and where is this wine press of Verses 19-20? Some claim it is the literal valley of Jehoshaphat, that steep little valley on the eastern side of Jerusalem, now called the valley of Kidron. If this were true, that valley is so small, it could not contain even a small part of an army. The wine press does not represent a battle field nor a military conflict. Others claim that the wine press represents the valley of Megiddo or the plain of Esdraelon, east of Mount Carmel. But when the wine press is trodden, the blood comes up to the horses’ bridles.

How could such depth of blood accumulate in the vast plain of Esdraelon? The answer is found in the Old Testament books of Joel and Ezekiel.

“Proclaim you this among the Gentiles. Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say; ‘I am strong.’ Assemble yourselves and come all you heathen, gather yourselves together round about, Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put you 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. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, [margin: concision or threshing]. For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon shall be darkened and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion and utter His voice from Jerusalem and the heavens and the earth shall shake. The Lord will be the hope of His people and the strength of Israel.” Joel 3:9-16.

This prediction had its initial application to literal Israel back in the Old Testament times, when Israel returned from Babylon if Israel had been faithful, Satan would have inspired the surrounding nations to unite and destroy Israel; but God would have intervened and destroyed them in the valley of Jehoshaphat. That steep valley was likened to a wine press, and Israel’s enemies were likened to grapes crushed in the press. This prediction was not fulfilled. Why? Because it was a conditional prophecy based on Israel’s faithfulness. Israel was not faithful, therefore the prediction was not fulfilled. Zechariah makes clear, the conditional nature of many of the Old testament predictions.

“This shall come to pass IF you will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.” Zechariah 6:15.

Joel’s prediction now has a spiritual application to spiritual Israel - the remnant - in the final conflict of Armageddon. Notice the twelve parallels between Joel’s prophecy and the final conflict:

12 PARALLELS OF

Joel 3:9-16

1. "Proclaim you this among the Gentiles." Verse 9.
2. "Prepare [sanctify] war."
3. "Wake up the mighty men. All men of war draw near and come up."
4. "Beat your plough shares into swords."
5. "Assemble yourselves and come, all you heathen, gather yourselves together." Verse 11.
6. "Let the heathen be awakened and come up to the valley Jehoshaphat [punishment]."
7. "There will I sit to judge [punish] all the heathen round about." (Literal Jerusalem).
8. "Put you in the sickle for the harvest is ripe, get you down (into the wine press) the press is full."
9. "The fats [vats] overflow; for their wickedness is great." Verse 9.
10. "Multitudes in the valley of decision." (Concison or threshing).
11. "The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. (Concison or threshing).
12. "The Lord shall utter His voice from Jerusalem and will be the hope and the strength of Israel." Verse 16.

The Battle Of Armageddon

1. The unsaved - the enemies of God.
2. Proclamation of a holy war against dissenters.
3. A call to the unsaved for action.
4. Preparation for the conflict.
5. The union of all the unsaved against spiritual Jerusalem - the church of God.
6. The unsaved resolve to attack the saints and thereby become worthy of punishment.
7. A symbol of Jesus Christ sitting in judgment, in the valley of this world, to punish the unsaved.
8. A call to the army of heaven to punish and destroy the unsaved. (Revelation 19:14-15)
9. The cup of iniquity of the unsaved overflows - in their attempt to slay the saints.
10. Millions of the unsaved about to receive the wrath of God.
11. Day of the Lord commences at the close of probation. Then the wrath of God comes.
12. Christ will be in the midst of spiritual Jerusalem, i.e. His people, and will deliver them.

"The wine press was trodden without [outside] the city." Revelation 14:20.

The city is spiritual Jerusalem, the church of God, the Remnant. The wine press is trodden outside the Remnant church. In Revelation 11:2 it declares that the holy city (Jerusalem), "shall they tread underfoot; forty two months." This was fulfilled by the Papacy, which for forty two prophetic months, or 1260 years, trod down the church of God. In the final conflict, the combined powers of the unsaved, led by the Papacy, endeavor to tread down the church of God once again, but this time God intervenes and treads them down outside the spiritual city of the church. When the saints are surrounded by the unsaved, who determine to slay them, then it is that God intervenes and treads the unsaved down instead.

THE WINE PRESS OF THE WRATH OF GOD

The wrath of God is exhibited in the seven last plagues.

"I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God." Revelation 15:1.

The church in the last days will be world-wide, so the wrath of God in the seven last plagues will be worldwide in extent. (3) The winepress represents the world.

"Blood came out of the wine press, even to the horses' bridles." Verse 20.

In Old Testament times it was not uncommon, in treading down the grapes in the winepress to use horses. In Revelation this practice is drawn upon to symbolize the destruction of the unsaved.

“I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and He that sat upon it was called faithful and true, in righteousness doth He judge [punish] and make war-and the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, and He treads the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of the almighty, God.” Revelation 19:11, 14, 15.

In Revelation 14:20 these angelic horsemen are pictured treading down the unsaved in the great worldwide wine press of God’s wrath. So terrific is the slaughter that the blood is symbolized as being so deep that it reaches the bridles of the angelic horses. What a picture:

“By the space of a thousand and six hundred furloughs.” Verse 20.

This appears to be the measurement of the wine press. The word furlough is “Stadia” in the Greek, and the total circumference adds up to about two hundred miles. What is the significance of this measurement? Undoubtedly it is symbolic. This symbol is drawn from the latter chapters of the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament where the drama of Gog and Magog is presented. This ancient power was predicted to invade Israel and attempt to destroy the city and the temple. If Israel had been faithful, God would have transformed the land of Israel into a purified, elevated plateau. On it he would have created a superlative city and temple. The Temple and city area, called the oblation, would have been approximately two hundred miles in circumference. Satan would have inspired Israel’s enemies to invade Israel, and around the circumference of the oblation they would have been totally destroyed by God. The Revelator borrows this picture in Ezekiel and uses it to represent the complete destruction of the enemies of the saints in the final conflict.

There is no break in the original so we continue.

“I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” Revelation 15:1

What is this sign that is great and marvelous? It is the exhibition of God’s wrath, the seven last plagues. If this is great and marvelous, why then do we tend to shun, even to shift the responsibility of the plagues onto Satan or upon natural causes? To the sinner the wrath of God is certainly something to be afraid of. “Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men.” “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” But the prophet says that it is “great and marvelous”.

These plagues are described as the “seven last” or as the Greek renders it “seven, which were the last...” There have been, and will be other plagues, and they will increase in their number and intensity. The seven trumpets were classed as plagues, (Revelation 9), but the trumpets are not the seven LAST plagues. Here is revealed the difference between the plagues and the trumpets. The purpose of the trumpets’ was to bring apostates to repentance and reformation, but the purpose of the plagues is to punish the impenitent. They are an exhibition of the justice of God and no doubt this is what is “great and marvelous.”

IN THEM IS FILLED UP THE WRATH OF GOD

In the plagues God’s wrath is consummated. God’s wrath is spent. Never again will be witnessed the display of his wrath as in the seven last plagues. Thank God for that.

Why is this verse (15:1) inserted between the winepress of Revelation 14:20 and “the sea of glass” of Revelation 15:2? It is the culmination of the scene of punishment of chapter 14:17-20. It shows what the treading of the wine press really is - the visitation of the last plagues in which God’s wrath overflows. In chapter 15:1-4 is revealed the culmination of the harvest; the destiny of the wheat and the tares. In the parable of the harvest Jesus declares of the tares,

“The angels shall cast them into a furnace of fire, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 13:41, 42.

This will be fulfilled, first in the seven last plagues, and finally in the lake of fire. (Revelation 20.) Chapter 15:2-4 reveals the destiny of the righteous remnant. In the harvest parable Jesus says:

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father.” Matthew 13:43.

Here is the fulfillment of this promise:

“I saw, as it were, a sea of glass, mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast and his image and his mark and the number of his name.” Verse 2.

These are they that have come through the final conflict and now receive their due reward. They stand on the sea of glass. What is the sea of glass? It appears to be a vast and colorful assembly area where the heavenly host assemble before the eternal throne.

According to Revelation 4, it is in the holy place, the apartment of the heavenly temple. If so, it tells us how vast and awesome the heavenly temple must be.

MINGLED WITH FIRE

The sea of glass no doubt reflects the glory of God. In the Old Testament the Lord is pictured as being bathed in fire. (4) This is the fire that issues forth and devours the unsaved in the final judgment. It is “everlasting fire”. This is because it is associated with Him “who is from everlasting to everlasting”. (Psalm 40:2)

“Them that had gotten the victory over the beast and his image.”

This is the same group which was revealed in Revelation 14:1-5, and which are symbolized by the number 144,000. This group exists only in the end time, for only then is the conflict of the beast and his image an issue.

GOTTEN THE VICTORY

How much is involved in that expression? What an ordeal! What a conflict! The generation that goes through this will probably have experienced the greatest contest ever known to man, a contest similar in some ways to what Jesus went through in the garden of Gethsemane. This group will have faced adverse public opinion. They have been compelled to disobey the laws of the land, to endure public ridicule and universal contempt. They have been boycotted, and threatened with starvation. They have lost family, friends, every thing. Finally, they have faced the death decree, forced to forsake everything and flee to the mountains or be imprisoned. The only item they retain is their implicit faith in God and their confidence in His promises. What a conflict! What a victory! They stand on the sea of glass.

“Having the harps of God and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb.”

This portrayal is likewise drawn from the Old Testament, from the Exodus of Israel from Egypt under Moses. Israel was then pursued by Pharaoh and cut off between the mountains and the sea, but God divided the sea, the waters of which were congealed (perhaps like glass) and Israel marched through the divided sea to safety on the eastern shore. When the Egyptians attempted to follow Israel, the sea became a trap and destroyed them. (5)

8 PARALLELS BETWEEN THE EXODUS AND THE REMNANT

This experience of Israel's deliverance is typical of spiritual Israel in the final conflict.

The Exodus From Literal Egypt

1. Egypt rejected the witness of Israel to the truth of God.
2. The result was the oppression of Israel.
3. Egypt was visited with the judgments of God in the ten plagues.
4. Israel was delivered from the effects of the plagues.
5. The threat of death from the Egyptians - Israel pursued.
6. Israel cut off - they cry to God for deliverance.
7. The sea opens - Israel pass through it to safety.
8. Israel, on the other side of the sea, witness the destruction of their enemies and sing the song of deliverance.

The Final Remnant

1. This world - spiritual Egypt will reject the witness of spiritual Israel - the Remnant - to the truth of God.
2. The result will be the oppression of the Remnant.
3. The world will be visited with the judgments of God in the seven last plagues.
4. Spiritual Israel - The Remnant - will be delivered from the seven last plagues.
5. The threat of death from the unsaved world - the Remnant pursued.
6. The Remnant cut off - they cry to God - day and nights, for deliverance.
7. Heaven opens - Christ appears. The Remnant pass through the heavens to safety.
8. The Remnant witness the destruction of their enemies and on the "other side" - sing the song of their deliverance.

HAVING THE HARPS OF GOD

Three times the harps of God are mentioned in Revelation. The 24 elders have harps (Revelation 5:8), the 144 000 have harps (Revelation 14:2), the remnant, (whom the 144,000 represent) also have harps. (Revelation 15:2) There must be special qualities about these harps. No laborious learning process is involved; at a single touch they respond with inspiring and entralling tones. We suggest that there will be special qualities possessed by the saints. They will have restored to them, gifts and abilities which through sin, have been lost to mankind. In the kingdom, for example, they will take the harps of God, and without any learning, perfectly produce the tunes of heaven. But more!

They have first learned to spiritually sing on earth before they can sing in heaven. In the kingdom of grace on earth they have learned to praise God, to rejoice amid persecution. As Jesus said:

"Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: For so persecuted they the prophets which were sent before you." Matthew 5:10-12.

Persecution awaits the remnant in the near future, and those who learn to sing amidst conflict and suffering will receive the harps of God and sing on the sea of glass, "the song of Moses and the lamb." What is the significance of this song? It is a song of deliverance. The deliverance of the Remnant will be a twofold deliverance. First, it will be a deliverance from earthly foes; from the beast, from the death decree, from pursuit. Secondly, it will be deliverance from spiritual foes; from the power of Satan, from the slavery of sin and self. Those who sing this song are overcomers, they are without fault. There is no guile in their mouths. What a wonderful deliverance!

It is significant to note a section of the song that the Remnant sings: "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty." (Verse 3)

The seven last plagues are also said to be great and marvelous. Undoubtedly this refers to the exhibition of justice of God in the destruction of the enemies of the saints. This song approves of God's dealings with the beast: "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou king of saints". This is an acknowledgment of God's justice and righteousness. It is a vindication of His character, His law, and His ways.

"Who shall not fear Thee and glorify Thy name, for Thou only [alone] art holy." Verse 4.

The word "holy" is a different word from the usual. It denotes that which is right. It involves the vindication of God, especially in His dealings with others. It is a recognition of moral obligations. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25) When God metes out His judgments, it will be a revelation of His righteousness and justice in the great controversy between Christ and Satan and in which the Remnant have played a vital part. Before the universe, the Remnant will proclaim the righteousness and justice of God's dealings. On earth, under the severest test, the Remnant have displayed their loyalty and obedience. They prove that God's law can be kept even by those from earth's weakest and most corrupt generation. Now before the illimitable universe of sinless worlds they celebrate the character of the Creator. What a privilege! What a reward!

Finally: "All nations shall come and worship before Thee, for Thy judgments are made manifest." The word for judgment in this verse means righteousness. Is this a prediction of the universal acknowledgement of God's righteousness! Will all nations, will all the unsaved finally worship before God? Yes! In the final judgment before the great white throne, when all nations, all men, stand before the judgment seat of Christ, then all nations will acknowledge God's justice and righteousness.

"For we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written; 'As I live, said the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue confess to God, so then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.'" Romans 14:10-12.

What a statement! So far only a few knees have bowed to God, only a few tongues have confessed, but when all nations return to life, when "all that are in the grave shall hear His voice and come forth, they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation," this will be fulfilled. The only time that all nations will be in existence together, will be in the final judgment. Then all men, from Adam to the last born on the earth, are together, facing the Most High in judgment. Then all nations, all the unsaved, will bow in acknowledgement of God's justice. (6) All will bend the knee and confess that God indeed, is a God of love and justice.

REFERENCES

1. Ellen G. White, Christ's Object Lessons, page 72.
2. Ellen G. White, A Word To The Little Flock, page 12
3. For further evidence that the last 7 plagues are world-wide but not universal, see "God's Strange Act," Revelation 16, by the author.
4. Exodus 19:18; 24:17; Deuteronomy 4:11-12, 24; 5:22; 33:2; Daniel 7:9-10; Hebrews 12:29.
5. Exodus 14-15.
6. See the topic: "The Final Windup of History," by the author.

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