

Revelation 30

Summary Analysis of Revelation 14-16

1. Our progress in Revelation has allowed us to see the reality of John's vision, the messages to the churches, and the portrait of the Lamb about to open the scroll of the universe. Following this the seals were opened announcing a series of judgments and the trumpets of doom were blown. With the blowing of the 7th trumpet (Rev. 11) there was a stoppage of the continuing narration while we saw the forces of the devil and what they were up to on the earth. This involved the revelation concerning the Antichrist and all his allies. Chapters 14-16 now look at the other side of the coin. In effect they show us what God is doing from heaven while His foes are doing all of these things in the earth.
2. The Lamb on Mount Zion is a segment that indicates the role Christ will play in the final enactments. The 144,000 with him are, I think, the same company seen in chapter 7...I think they are here seen as being his to reassure us that no matter what trials fall on the earth, God knows whom He has sealed and will protect that group. The group is remarkable in its identity with the Lamb and the picture shows the fulfillment of the care promised by God.
3. The everlasting Gospel (14:7) is the good news of God's sovereignty and control and the challenge to worship Him as creator and governor of the universe. The world is never left without witness of the Divine grace and in this connexion a special messenger heralds the news.
4. The three angels (14:6-9) prepare the way for the coming announcement of doom...there is first the everlasting Gospel, second a warning to stay away from false religious practices and third a denunciation of those who have received the mark of the beast or who have bowed to his name. We are told in vs. 12 that this is the patience of the saints (see 13:9) the sure knowledge that the blaspheming forces will be dealt with by God. A great trial is about to break forth on the earth...the beast will be demanding submission and judgments will be on all sides...thus those who die in the Lord (14:13) are especially blessed to be delivered from the scene and to be free from the dreadful earth events.
5. The shift to the clouds of heaven, I think, is to remove the view from Jerusalem and the 144,000 in particular and to bring it to see the entire universe. Hence the declarations that follow tell us that the time is ripe for judgment. In terms of a revelation chronology we are still at about the time of 11:15.
6. Chapter 15 shows two things: the rejoicing of those who have gotten the victory over the beast even though they have (apparently) been martyred for it, and the enactments that precede the vials...the seven "dooms" so-called.
7. Chapter 16 sees the pouring of the vials (bowls, etc.) in rapid sequence. It seems that the frequency of these judgments is much more rapid than was true of the seals. There is still a pause between the sixth and seventh (a characteristic of Revelation) and a change in pace between the fourth and fifth vials just as with the other series arrangements. The most unhappy note comes in chapter 16:21.