

Saturday 31st October



I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe." The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath.

[Revelation 14: 14–19]

This passage from Revelation speaks of the final harvest of the world. The harvest is no longer wheat or barley; it's not fruit and vegetables; it's not tins for the food bank. Revelation speaks of the harvest of the earth, the harvest of people. Perhaps this image relates back to one of Jesus's parables, where the farmer sows the seed: some falls on the path, some on rocky ground, some among the weeds and some in the good soil.

The harvest in revelation is of those seeds planted by the farmer in the parable. The seed that landed on good soil and bore fruit is the harvest which is reaped by the first angel: God's harvest. Those which landed on the rest of the soils are likely to be those reaped the second time, the weeds that were destroyed.

The question is: which are we? Are we rooted in God, sharing the good news with others? Or are we the ones who've lost our way, been distracted, or ignored God? It's an uncomfortable image for us; our God is a God of love, yet also of justice and righteousness.

*God of the harvest,
your justice and righteousness overwhelm us;
your love for us beyond all understanding.
We long to be your harvest.
Help us to be fruitful,
to share you with others,
that your harvest will plentiful.
Amen*