

When the Tables Are Turned

Revelations of Payback

You may have heard—or used—these clichés ultimately bear the same meaning:

- “What goes around, comes around.”
- “You do dirt, you get dirt.”
- “Live by the gun, die by the gun.”

These and other similar formulations are meant to represent what many people call “karma.” Now while karma is not a biblical term, many might be surprised that at its core, its concept is actually biblical. It was the apostle Paul who said, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). Even Jesus said, “they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matthew 26:52).

Herein is a principle that our Creator has interwoven into the fabric of the universe. It is akin to the law of gravity, the second law of thermodynamics, the law of relativity, and the like. I refer to it as “the law of sowing and reaping.” No farmer has ever reported a harvest of apples from his orange tree or figs from a grapevine. Yet, whatever you plant, in considerable time much more will come back to you.

Revelations and Real Reaping

The book of Revelation is, in many ways, harvest time. This concept is expressed on several different occasions through a myriad of ways within the book. As a matter of fact, Revelation ends with an example of the idea. In Revelation 22:12, Jesus announces, “Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be.” I could write an entire book about the rewards outlined in Revelation. Nevertheless, I’d like to focus on a couple of the significant examples of the law of sowing and reaping.

These examples appear to transpire in successive progression as the further you progress throughout the book, the plagues and punishments get worse. In Revelation 16 the wicked receive the seven last plagues. In this chapter, they tell of seven angels who are handed seven bowls. The bowls are described as golden bowls that contain “the wrath of God” which are reserved to be delivered to the earth; particularly upon those who rebel against God. Then, just as the seven plagues are being completed, the harvest of destruction continues. One of the angels, who helps to deliver the seven plagues escorts John the Revelator to a far away place to witness the destruction of an evil woman (Revelation 17:1). This woman represents the wicked confederation of rebellion against God in the form of deceptive religious leadership. Supporting her are an array of global, political, economic, and commercial institutions that help her maintain power, control, and terror over the innocent people of the earth (Revelation 17:2, 18; 18:3,9). Nevertheless, God ensures that her just reward will be meted out. “For her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. Give

back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done”(Revelations 18:5,6). “The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire” (Revelation 17:16).

Thousand-Year Earthbound Sentence

In Revelation 20, another angel appears to deliver punishment to the arch-enemy of all humanity. This angel descends from heaven with the tools of confinement.

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and a heavy chain in his hand. He seized the dragon—that old serpent, who is the devil, Satan—and bound him in chains for thousand years. The angel threw him into the bottomless pit, which he then shut and locked so Satan could not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were finished. Afterward he must be released for a little while” (Revelations 20:1-3, NLT). There is no firing squad, no electric chair, no lethal injection, but a prison of loneliness, in the strictest of solitary confinement. Since he was cast from heaven, Satan’s existence has focused on deception and destruction of earth’s inhabitants. Now in Revelation 20, everything has already been destroyed and there is no one left to be deceived. The enemies of God have been vanquished and God has rescued His saints, (See Revelation 19). Suddenly, Satan is not the oppressor, but the oppressed. In this moment, the great “slavedriver” of sin and sorrow shall suffer under the weight of the finality of his deceptive work.

End of The Line for Satan And His Followers

After the 1,000 years are finished, Satan makes one last attempt to marshal the forces of evil and take the Kingdom of God by force (Revelation 20:7, 8). It’s not clear how he does this. Perhaps he musters all of his dark and evil magic for one last great push. Who knows? What we do know, however, is that according to the scriptures, this last effort is allowed only for a very short moment. In conclusion, fire comes down from heaven to consume the evil insurrectionists (Revelation 20:9). This is the very end of the line for Satan and his agents. After fire falls from heaven this time, there will be no remaining mark of Satan’s rebellion.

Yes, in the here and now, the powerful seem to find new kinds of oppression with which to victimize powerless people. One day, however, the tables will be turned. The evil forces will soon become the recipients of the very same devastation they dished out upon planet Earth. The divine principle of sowing and reaping will finally need to be settled. We have waited, and God has promised, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back. In due time their feet will slip. Their day of disaster will arrive, and their destiny will overtake them” (Deuteronomy 32:25, NLT).

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October Issue
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