

September 17, 2023 - Revelation 15: 1-8 - “The Imminent Wrath of God”

Introduction:

On Friday a church group of members along with family and friends saw the Sight and Sound production of Moses. It was a spectacular performance. We had a good time of fellowship and discussions about the Biblical exhibitions. There were 22 songs in this musical that enhanced the storyline and heighten the entertainment. My favorite was “The God who is” and “Not one brick less”. I got to thinking that in a Musical of Moses we ought to hear the song of Moses referred to in our passage.

The song of Moses in Exodus 15 is characterized by praise and celebration for God’s delivery of His people from the army of Pharaoh which God swallowed up in the Red Sea. The first verse tells us that it was sung by Moses and all of the people of Israel. The women of Israel also join in the singing and praise. The very first thing Moses praises God for is that He has triumphed gloriously. The triumph was over Pharaoh and his army, prefigures the praise we read about in the Rev. 15:3-4 for the victory of the Lamb, our Lord Jesus over all that is evil and wicked once for all.

I. The Vengeance of God is Fulfilled vv. 1-3

1. This chapter gives us the motives for the revealing of the wrath of God and they are implied in this text. Starting in verse 2 and running through verse 8. I find three reasons for God's final wrath, three realities that trigger this final destruction. The first is the vengeance of God. So, this chapter introduces the seven-bowl judgments, the seven last plagues of the Tribulation period that are immediately followed by the return of Christ.

2. God’s angels wait in the wing of His Tabernacle for the Final Imminent Wrath to be poured out. You will notice in verse 1 it says that these seven plagues are the last. They are the last and this is a good indication that this is not reiteration but progression. Here comes the harshest and deadliest of all judgments the world has ever experienced.

John says in 15:1, And I saw ... seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. As with the trumpet judgments, angels are used in the execution of the seven bowls of wrath. The stage is being set for the outpouring of these bowls in chapter 16. This is the wrath of God waiting in the wings. God waits for He is longsuffering, not willing than any should perish. The Prophet Ezekiel declares this truth too.

Eze 18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn [yourselves], and live ye. 33:11 Say unto them, [As] I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; ...

3. This phrase in verse one that follows: ...is filled up; teleo—literally means, "to bring to a close, to finish, to end": (*Aorist Passive Indicative*) The angels do not actually receive the vials till Rev 15:7; but here, in verse 1 by anticipation they are spoken of as having them.

We see then implied in this text the vengeance of God. He will bring about His vengeance on those who have mistreated His beloved. That's one of the reasons for His final wrath. (Hebrews 10:26- 27)

Application:

It is possible for you to overcome and to have victory over sin, the flesh and Satan as a believer in Jesus Christ. It is not we who overcome the world, but it is he in us. All that we contribute is simply the fact that we believe in his life at work in us.

As Christians, we are not helpless victims of sin. There is no sinful habit or hurt that is beyond the healing touch and power of the Lord. God is capable of freeing you from your prison. The question is do you want the freedom and the victory He can give. Or are you comfortable living in your sin? If you really want spiritual victory it is your, God can give it today you must ask. - Proverbs 2:6-8

1John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Illustration:

One day a young minister was being escorted through a coal mine. At the entrance of one of the dim passageways, he saw a beautiful white flower growing out of the black earth. "How can it blossom in such radiance in this dirty mine?" the preacher asked. "Throw some coal dust on it and see for yourself," his guide replied. When he did, he was surprised that the fine, sooty particles slid right off the snowy petals, leaving the plant just as beautiful and unstained as before. Its surface was so smooth that the grit and grime could not adhere to it.

Just as that flower could not control its surroundings, so we cannot help it that we have to live in a world filled with evil. However, our lives should have the same characteristic after salvation as that flower. Remember it is God's grace that keeps us clean and unspotted from the world that it should not cling to us. If these Saints live victorious we can too. Jesus said... John 16:[33] These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

4. In chapter 15: vv. 2 John saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire. This is perhaps the sea of glass like unto crystal that is before God's throne. Standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God were the tribulation believers who had refused to worship the antichrist or receive his mark, and ... the number of his name. The key thing to notice is they had gotten the victory over the beast. God promise of vengeance was fulfilled. This chapter we said gives us the motives for the revealing of the wrath of God. The first is the vengeance of God the second is...

II The Holy Character of God vv 3-4

1. This host of martyrs sings two songs, the Song of Moses that is recorded in Exodus 15 as the Israelites came out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea. Moses wrote another in Deuteronomy 32. The Song of the Lamb is in Revelation 5: 9-13. These songs are the first and last songs, as described in Scripture, and both of them are a description of the deliverance of God's people by divine power, based upon a blood redemption.

Note the song of the Lamb, this is not included in the Jewish traditional list which includes about ten different songs. Here are the saints redeemed out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation as well as from Israel. They're gathered around the throne of God in heaven. They sing that, "for [thou] only [art] holy: It is a foolish person who will not repent and turn to God. God must judge sin!

2. In heaven they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb (15:3), which ascribes praise to God for His works, His power as well as His holiness. What an incredible song. The elements of this song are the devastation of the ungodly and the triumph of the righteous. It is a song of victory. The song of Moses was sung at the Red Sea. The song of the Lamb is sung at the crystal sea.

The song of Moses was a song of triumph over Egypt. The song of the Lamb is a song of triumph over Babylon. The song of Moses told how God brought His people out. The song of the Lamb tells how God brings His people in. The song of Moses was the first song in Scripture. The song of the Lamb is the last. This chapter we said gives us the motives for the revealing of the wrath of God. The first is the vengeance of God the second is His holiness and the third is..

III The Testimony of God vv.5-8

1. In verse 5. "After these things I looked and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened." This marks a change in the vision John saw. After having looked through the transparent platform beneath the throne of God and seeing the saints, hearing them sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, praising and extolling the character and purpose of God, something shifts. And after this he looks to see something else. The temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened. That's just another name for the Ark of the Covenant as first mentioned in Numbers chapter 10 and verse 11.

2. Tabernacle just means container, it can mean tent it can mean anything that contains something. The ark of the covenant contained the testimony. What testimony? The testimony of God, His revelation. So John looks into heaven and he looks right in to the *naos*, right into the Holy of Holies, that's the temple, right into the sanctuary, right into the inner chamber where God dwells, where the ark of the covenant is placed. That's what he's trying to say. I saw right into where God dwells.

3. Revelation 15:5 gives us the exact location of this scene, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven. One of the four beasts described so uniquely back in chapter 4, gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever (verse 7). These angels have the solemn responsibility of pouring out vials full of the wrath of God. The Greek for "wrath" is the word "*thumou*" it is boiling indignation or wrath. The word full indicates the immensity of these final judgments. Right out from the very presence of God, they are the executioners of the plan.

Time for them to execute the Final Imminent Wrath of God! This is the third reason the fulfilling of God's testimony, His divine plan.

We have reached a turning point of history when we come to these seven bowls of God's wrath. God will then begin to set up his kingdom upon the earth.

4. After the angels receive their bowls filled with the wrath of God, the temple in heaven was filled with smoke from the glory of God. Smoke was symbolic for God's glorious presence in the Old Testament tabernacle or temple (Ex 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Isa 6:1-4). This smoke also symbolize God's wrath.

The glory cloud will remain in the heavenly temple unto the earth is completely purged, cleansed and prepared for the King and His Kingdom. The key to the third point is that our eternal God will not have sin and sinners destroying His universe forever. He is going to live forever, but He's not going to allow sin to live forever. And so this is the unfolding of His plan.

4. At any rate it fills the great temple so no one can enter until the work of the angels is completed. Again, that is symbolic. What does it mean? I am afraid what it means is that it is too late to pray! By faith and by prayer we can enter into the presence of God in his temple, but here it has become impossible. The time has come when men can no longer repent. It is too late to pray when this judgment scene begins. Right now it is not too late. What about you?

Conclusion:

Remember, this doesn't happen until the world has been warned and warned and warned and warned every imaginable, conceivable way. This proves the fact that for those who reject God's grace only the final fury of fire which will consume His adversaries will be available to them, for there is no more grace to be offered.