

## Preparations for the End (Message # 36)

### Revelation 15: 1-8

Tonight our focus has returned to a scene in heaven. The book of Revelation is a book of contrasts. In it we find shouting in heaven and suffering upon the earth. We find the rewards and rest of the saved and the judgment and condemnation of the sinner. Many have given their lives for Christ, but they have made it home. The redeemed are found enjoying the glories of heaven while the lost are left to endure the horrific torments of the wrath of God.

In our text tonight we will discover that preparations are being made to resume judgment upon the earth. The Lord had offered a measure of mercy and grace in the former judgments, but here His mercy has been withdrawn. Man has rejected the Lord for the last time and final judgment is about to begin. Let's take a few moments to explore this portion of Revelation as we think on the thought: [Preparations for the End](#).

**I. A Scene of Revelation** (1, 7) – Here we find that John saw [another sign](#). The Lord has pulled back the veil of mystery once again to reveal His sovereign plan. The word [sign](#) is the same word we encountered in [Chp.12](#) translated [wonder](#). It was there that John saw the woman and the great red dragon. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> “sign” John has seen and this one deals with the seven last plagues. What can we discover about this sign and the judgment it reveals? First we see it reveals:

**A. The Fulfillment of Judgment** (1) – [And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God](#). The angels are given seven golden vials containing the seven last plagues. The word [plagues](#) speak of “*a wound received by a blow or stripe, a heavy calamity.*” In these God will pour out His undiluted wrath, fulfilling His judgment.

- In these plagues the wrath of God is [filled up](#). This is an interesting phrase; it is actually the Greek word *Tetelestai*. This is the same word that Jesus spoke on the cross as He cried, [It is finished](#). It is a word that was used in a variety of ways. When a servant completed a task, he would say tetelestai- I have finished my work. After examining a sacrifice, the priest would declare tetelestai- the sacrifice is perfect. It was a word used in business transactions. Often tetelestai would be inscribed on a receipt revealing the debt was paid in full. Tetelestai was always used to speak of completeness, perfection, and satisfaction.

- Are you beginning to get the picture? It is clear that the 7 last plagues will fulfill and complete God's plan of judgment. Also the plagues reveal:

**B. The Fullness of Judgment** (7) – *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.* Here we find the golden vials are *full of the wrath of God*. At first glance this seems repetitive of *V.1*, but it actually reveals a separate, significant truth in regard to God’s final judgment. The word *full* means “*to swell out, almost to the point of bursting.*” It paints a picture of God’s wrath being so full that it cannot be contained any longer.

- The fullness of His wrath has been withheld in mercy, but here judgment will burst forth, rushing out in all of God’s fury. What a dreadful time awaits those who are left to face God in that day. It won’t be simply letting a little come through the spillway, but the dam of God’s wrath will burst!

## **I. A Scene of Revelation** (1, 7)

**II. A Scene of Rejoicing** (2-4) – John’s attention has now been drawn to a scene of rejoicing. This will be a constant for the redeemed in heaven. We will all celebrate God’s goodness and worship His glory. Notice:

**A. The Place Described** (2a) – *And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire:* If you remember we encountered the sea of glass in *Chp.4*. There we found that it speaks of God’s “*holiness and righteous nature.*” There are no waves in this sea, just a fixed, transparent sea. God never changes!

- There is a significant difference however in the sea now. The crystal sea is now *mingled with fire*. The holiness of God is about to be revealed as He pronounces final judgment upon this sinful world. The time has come to deal fully and finally with sinful men. The door of opportunity is about to be slammed shut as it was in the days of Noah!

**B. The People Defined** (2b) – *and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.* These are they which have come out of great tribulation. They reveal that it always pays to give your heart to Christ. To the world they were foolish, enduring the difficulties of life by refusing the mark of the beast. Many of them died a horrible death at the hands of the Antichrist.

- They are not seen as those who were foolish and defeated, but those who are victorious in the Lord. They may have given all they had as far as worldly possessions, but look at what they have gained now! They are seen rejoicing around the glassy sea while their persecutors are left to face the wrath of God. It will be worth it all child of God!

**C. The Praise Delivered** (3-4) – And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. [4] Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. Heaven will be a place of song and praise. These will offer their praise unto the Lord, v.3a. The [song of Moses](#) was sung by the children of Israel when they were delivered at the Red Sea. These will sing that song of deliverance by the glassy sea. They will sing the [song of the Lamb](#). What a song for men to sing, a song of praise to the One who has purchased their redemption. As their song unfolds they sing of:

**1. God's Works** (3b) – [Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty](#). They sing of sovereign God of power whose works are unlimited and unhindered by the devices of man. They also sing of:

**2. God's Ways** (3c) – [just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints](#). They praise the God whose ways are always just and true. They may have faced many difficulties and harsh persecution, but God always deals justly with His people. It would do us well to learn this great truth. Life is hard at times, but God is always just in His dealings with us. They sing of:

**3. God's Worship** (4a) – [Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee](#). God alone is worthy to receive the worship of men. Heaven will be a place of unending worship to the Lord. Lastly, they sing of:

**4. God's Wrath** (4b) – [for thy judgments are made manifest](#). God is able to judge sinners and vindicate their blood shed due to the wickedness of Satan. I feel for those who will face the wrath of God, but we can rejoice that sin and Satan will one day be dealt with. These saints are simply lifting their voices in praise to the Lord for all His marvelous works! We too shall sing a song of praise unto the Lord. It will be a song unlike any we've ever heard.

**I. A Scene of Revelation** (1, 7)

**II. A Scene of Rejoicing** (2-4)

**III. A Scene of Righteousness (5-8) – V.5 – And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:** John's focus is changed once again to the Temple of heaven. He speaks of [the tabernacle of the testimony](#). This is referring to the law of God, the Lord's demands for men. The law did not bring salvation to men, but served as a testimony to the holiness of God and revealed His standard for men.

- Things have not changed since Moses received the law and things will not change during the Tribulation. God will always hold men to a standard of holiness that can only be achieved through the cleansing blood of Jesus. Consider what John saw concerning the Temple in heaven. Notice:

**A. The Mention of the Angels (6) – And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.** The seven angels have come forth from the Temple. We find that they are clothed in [pure and white linen](#). They are the servants of God and their garments stand as a reflection of His holiness and purity.

- They are also wearing [golden girdles](#) which testify to the majesty and glory of God. His creation will reveal His glory!

**B. The Mission of the Angels (7) – And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.** As the angels emerge, one of the four beasts hands them a golden vial full of God's wrath to be poured out upon the earth. The angels will deliver God's final judgment. We will look at these vials in detail in [Chp.16](#). For now we need to understand that the Lord has chosen seven of the heavenly hosts to fulfill His plan of judgment upon the earth. They will carry out His plan without delay.

**C. The Majesty of the Almighty (8) – And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.** John has experienced a scene where the Shekinah glory of God filled the Temple. This isn't the 1<sup>st</sup> time this has happened. [2 Chron.7:2 – And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.](#)

- It is interesting to note that the Temple was open in [V.5](#), but now it has been closed so that no man could enter until the plagues were complete. In this we see that the tender mercies of God have been withdrawn. The door of salvation has been closed and the time of opportunity has ended. All who remain upon the earth, lost in sin, will meet God in their sinful condition. There will not be another opportunity for the earth dwellers.

- Time and time again throughout the tribulation God has extended mercy and offered salvation. They are now left hopeless to face the wrath of God. It is too late to cry out for mercy and confess their sins. Those who are left will find themselves in the torments of hell for eternity. What a dreadful state countless souls will find themselves in as God begins to pour out His final wrath upon the earth.

Let me say in closing, the door of salvation is open today; the time of opportunity has not yet ended. All will stand before God and be measured according to His holy standard. Man's only hope to find himself acceptable under such a righteous standard is having the righteousness of Christ applied to his account. Have you been saved? Are you cleansed by His blood? If not you will not meet God's standard of holiness. Why not come?