

Revelation 15:1-8 "Prelude to the Plagues"

FALSE MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS CAUSED THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO BE ANGRY AT JESUS FOR NOT PURGING SINNERS FROM HIS RANKS. JESUS CONFIRMS THAT FOR NOW. . . SINNERS WILL COMINGLE WITH THE RIGHTEOUS. ONE DAY THERE WILL BE A SEPARATION OF THE SHEEP AND GOATS, WHEAT FROM THE TARES, GOOD FISH FROM THE BAD. **God will keep His word and will reward righteousness and punish wickedness.**

→ Revelation 14 is the perfect answer to Revelation 13. At the end of Revelation 13, it almost seemed like Satan and the Antichrist might win. But Revelation 14 shows who is really triumphant, powerful, and in control: God, His Messiah, and His people; not Satan, his messiah (the Antichrist) and his followers.

James 4:14 For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

**YOUR DASH: 70 years = 25,550 days... 613,200 hours
36,792,000 minutes.... 2,407,520,000 seconds**

1 year on the telephone (all during teen years)

2 years waiting for somebody

18 days of my life tying my shoes

3 years watching TV if you watch one hour a day

Asked Hannah about putting makeup on... if 20 minutes a day...

509,600 minutes... 8,493 hours ... 354 days (One year of your life painting your shell)

You get the point! "One life will soon be passed and only what was done for Christ will last" **What are you doing with your dash?**

'The Dash' by Linda Ellis I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend. He referred to the dates on her casket from beginning to the end. He noted that first came the date of her birth and spoke of the following date with tears, but he said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years. For that dash represents all the time that she spent alive on earth and now only those who loved her know what that little line is worth. For it matters not, how much we own, the cars, the house, the cash, What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash. So think about this long and hard; Are there things you would like to change? For you never

know how much time is left that can still be rearranged. If we could just slow down enough to consider what is true and real and always try to understand the way other people feel. And be less quick to anger and show appreciation more and love the people in our lives like we have never loved before. If we treat each other with respect and more often wear a smile, Remembering that this special dash might only last a little while. So when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to rehash... Would you be proud of the things they say about how you spent your dash? **PRAY**

Hamilton begins his commentary on Chapter 15 with these words, “Did you see the movie *The Family Man*? Nicholas Cage is a rich and successful single man and he is shown the beautiful life he could have had if he had chosen love instead of his career. The life he would have had was with a wife who truly loved him, children who respected him and delighted in playing with him, and friends who were genuinely involved in his life. The beauty of that life exposes his loneliness and emptiness.

There is a sense in which what we see in chapter 15 shows us what we might have been. But instead of taking us back in time to show us what could have been, this passage takes us forward in time to show us what can be. This passage is going to show us the buildup to the final outpouring of God’s wrath, and it will show us the redeemed who will worship God for his justice.” We know how good our future will be for God’s word reveals it to us. We also know how bad it will be for those during the tribulation who reject Him.

Revelation 15 introduces the final 7 plagues. The 7 bowls are brimming with divine wrath – these are the most intense of God's judgments.



John sees the temple in heaven filled with smoke, while the earth is about to get smoked.


May we all stand together and read God’s marvelous Word... Revelation **15 verse 1** Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. **2** And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. **3** They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true *are* Your ways, O King of the saints! **4** Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* alone *are* holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested.” **5** After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle

of the testimony in heaven was opened. **6** And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. **7** Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. **8** The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

The mounting tension in chapter 15 increases the magnitude of the display of God's wrath in Chapter 16.

John writes in 15:1, "Then I saw another sign in heaven." This reference to "another sign" seems to point us back to the two signs he described in 12:1-3. The first sign in 12:1 was the pregnant woman, "clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." The second sign in 12:3 was "a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems." These two signs seem to symbolize the cosmic conflict between the righteous and the wicked, the woman and the serpent. This third sign in 15:1 points to the outcome of the conflict. John tells us that he *"saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete"*. Like the plagues on Egypt, these plagues will visit God's justice on his enemies. Unlike the plagues on Egypt, these plagues will **finish** the wrath of God.

Revelation **15** Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, **This idea is also in Leviticus 26:21: Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins. These seven last plagues are God's judgment on a disobedient and contrary world.** for in them the wrath of God is complete. **Remember, we already "saw the end" in Revelation 6:12-17. Then John took us over the same material in greater detail again. This reminds us that Revelation is not strictly chronological in its arrangement.**

 **WRATH:** THE ANCIENT GREEK WORD FOR WRATH IS *THYMOS*. AS WAS THE CASE IN REVELATION 14:10, THERE ARE TWO WORDS FOR WRATH OR ANGER IN BIBLICAL GREEK: *THYMOS* (A VOLATILE, PASSIONATE ANGER) AND *ORGE* (ANGER FROM A SETTLED DISPOSITION). THIS IS A PLACE WHERE GOD'S ANGER "FLASHES" HOT.

COMPLETE (the ancient Greek word *etelesthe* means, "to reach an end or an aim." Here, the "hot" wrath of God will fulfill an eternal purpose. God isn't just blowing off steam.

What do you want – life or death? Joy or pain? Satisfaction or anguish? Holiness or defilement? "Well done" or "depart from me"?

These are the last of the plagues. When they are poured out, the conflict will be over. The serpent's head will be crushed. The seed of the woman will be triumphant. God's justice will be fulfilled, and through that display of justice his people will be delivered to praise him, which is what we see in verses 2-4. The display of God's justice saving his people and winning him praise is meant to make us want to be among the redeemed, not the condemned.

2 And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, **The sea of glass is mingled with fire. This may be a reminder of the "fires" of judgment.**



Walvoord The sea is designed to reflect the glory of God. In chapter 4 its description 'like unto crystal' speaks of the holiness of God. Here the sea mingled with fire speaks of divine judgment proceeding from God's holiness.

and those who have the victory over the beast, **even though the Antichrist kills them, they have victory over the beast - they are *not* losers. The early church consistently described the day of martyrdom as "A DAY OF VICTORY."**

and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.

STANDING ON THE SEA OF GLASS... The ancient Greek word for on (*epi*) can mean *on, over or beside*. Many believe that in the "architecture" of heaven, the sea of glass is a physical representation of the Word of God, connecting to the idea of the tabernacle's laver and the *washing of water by the word* (Ephesians 5:26). Perhaps we could say that these saints are **"standing on the Word."**

3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb,

*This recalls the song that Israel sang after God brought them through the waters of the Red Sea only to close the sea on the Egyptians. God saved Israel **by judging Egypt**. So also God's people here are going to be finally delivered when God visits **wrath on the world**.*

NOTE: Only one song is sung, but this song goes by two titles (the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb). The two titles refer to a single song. Here is a perfect union between law and love, between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

This song, deeply rooted in the Old Testament, gives praise to:

- **God's works** (Great and marvelous are Your works)
- **God's ways** (Just and true are Your ways)
- **God's worthiness** (Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy)
- **God's worship** (For all nations shall come and worship before You)

Your ... Your ... You ... Your ... You ... Your ... You ... You ... Your: These martyrs are only focused on God. They don't even focus on their own costly and glorious victory. They have the heart of true worship: It's all about **God**, not about us.

Again verse 3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: **REPEAT AFTER ME**, "Great and marvelous *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true *are* Your ways, O King of the saints! **4** Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? **NOTE THE DECLINE OF THE FEAR OF GOD IN OUR AGE... THERE IS LITTLE REVERENTIAL FEAR OF GOD, EVEN AMONG BELIEVERS....** **If you understand the severity of the completion of God's wrath, the gospel will be more precious to you than life.**

CONTINUE REPEATING AFTER ME... For *You* alone *are* holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested."

For all nations shall come and worship before You! IMAGINE THAT FOR A MOMENT. PICTURE IN YOUR MIND'S EYE THE GATHERED MULTITUDES BEFORE THE GREAT THRONE. IT WILL BE LIKE NO CROWD THAT HAS EVER GATHERED.

A bigger crowd than Obama or Trump had!

As one author noted, “These are not bland truths. God is “great and amazing,” but this statement isn’t smoke and mirrors. It isn’t special effects. It isn’t a big charade. It isn’t corrupt. It isn’t bribed or partial or crooked. It is *“just and true.”* He is the only one who can be called “Lord God Almighty,” and he is the only “King of the nations.” Those titles belong to God alone.

To verse 5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. **Exodus 25:8-9 and Hebrews 8:9 remind us that the tabernacle of meeting God told Moses to build was based on the pattern of heaven. This refers to the heavenly reality of the tabernacle, not the earthly copy.** The temple is mentioned 15X in this book, but not until Chapter 4, when the Church is removed. From then on, God is dealing with a people who have had a temple—a replica of things in heaven (Ex 25:40; Heb 9:23).

6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, **These angels bring Gods judgment. It is significant that they come directly from heavenly temple, from the presence and throne of God. They do not act on their own authority, but Gods.** clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. *These angles are described that way John described Jesus in 1:13. They look like him because they represent him. Their task is holy. Their errand is righteous. So they wear pure, bright linen, and sashes adorn their chests. THIS IS A REMINDER THAT GOD’S JUDGMENT IS ALWAYS COMPLETELY PURE AND RIGHTEOUS. THEY ARE NOT LIKE THE MODERN ANTI-HERO OR VIGILANTE, WHO SINK TO THE LEVEL OF THE CRIMINALS THEY*

FIGHT. **7** Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls **These bowls are broad, flat bowls or saucers used ritually for drinking or for pouring libations in sacrifice. The contents of such a shallow bowl were quickly, easily, and completely poured out.** full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.

A great cliff note on what’s happening... Thank you R Kent for this summation, “These seven angels are commissioned by God, who commissioned the four living creatures to summon the events of history in chapter 6 (see vv. 1, 3, 5, 7). Now we read in 15:7, “And

one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.” It seems that in the flow of events in Revelation, these bowls of wrath are full of “the wine of God’s wrath” (14:10), which was made from the grapes of wrath trodden in “the great winepress of the wrath of God” after the “harvest of the earth” (14:19, 20). These seven angles are given seven bowls, and the use of the number seven points to completion. This will be a full outpouring of wrath.”

8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, *When the cloud of glory fills the temple in heaven, no one can enter. It was the same when Moses could not enter the Tabernacle when the smoke of the cloud of God's glory, sometimes called the Shekinah filled the tent (Exodus 40:34-35).*

Both the bowls and the cloud come from the glory of God and from His power.

This is a reminder of God's special presence and glory, even in the midst of devastating judgment.

and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

What could be better than the Heisman Trophy, better than being the World Series MVP, better than finding a cure for cancer, and better than winning the Medal of Honor? I'll tell you what's better. One day the dead will be raised, and the multitudes will stand before Almighty God. On that day King Jesus will say to those who trusted him and lived for him, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” and on that day no Heisman Trophy, no World Series MVP, no medical or military achievement will be worth more than those words.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news. The world's true King has come as a noble prince born to die. The one who was rich became poor, so that we by his poverty might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). The one offended sympathized with those who were offensive. He took our transgressions on himself, and he endured the wrath of God to the very end. God's wrath has been propitiated by his gift of love. Behold the paradoxical display of almighty wrath quenched by everlasting love as Christ bore our sins in his body on the tree. Everyone who trusts him will be saved.