

32. The Announcement of the Coming Bowl Judgments

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the judgment that will come upon those in rebellion against God. We saw that this judgment will happen in the Valley of Armageddon. In this topic, we will learn about the bowl judgments that will come while preparing for the Battle of Armageddon.

We see that the Lord will bring seven final judgments to prepare for His coming. These are announced in Revelation 15:1-2, where we read: “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. 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.” Here, we see that this sign is first announced in heaven. We will see, in the next group of verses, that this will bring great joy in heaven. We see that this sign is described as great and marvelous. These plagues will come rapidly and complete all of the judgments that are in the seventh seal. That is why we read that, in them, the wrath of God will be complete.

John helps us to see that this series of seven final judgments is announced in front of the throne of God. Revelation 4:6 says, “Before the throne *there was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.” In this verse, we see that the sea of glass is in front of the throne of God. In Revelation 4:9-10, we see that the twenty-four elders are the saints who are taken to heaven at the rapture and worship Christ. On this sea of glass a large group of people are gathered. Then, in Revelation 5:8, we read, “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” The harps, in that chapter, provided music as the saints sang about the One who was worthy to open the scroll, while the bowls of incense are the prayers of the saints.

The saints are the group who celebrate the coming victory over the beast, over his image, over his mark, and over the number of his name. We saw, in Revelation 13, that the beast is the antichrist. Here, we see that the saints, gathered in front of the throne, will celebrate the announcement of the coming victory over the antichrist and his entire system. Revelation 15:3-4 says, “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! 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.” The first song the saints will sing is the song of Moses. The song of Moses is found in Exodus 15:1-21 and Deuteronomy 32:1-43. At that time, Israel had been delivered from Egypt. That song spoke of the judgment of the enemies of God and their followers. The saints will rejoice because the antichrist and his followers will experience a similar judgment.

The second song the saints will sing is the song of the Lamb. Christ is the One who is the Lamb of God. John 1:29 says, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold!

The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” He is the One who has delivered all saints from the penalty of sin through His payment, in full, on the cross. This song speaks of the greatness of Christ. We see that the works of Christ are great and marvelous. John 1:1-3 tells us that He is the Creator of all things, when those verses say, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” He is also the One who made each one of us personally, as Psalm 139:14 says, “I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and *that* my soul knows very well.”

Second, this song says that Christ is the Lord God Almighty! Isaiah spoke of this fact when he said, in Isaiah 9:6-7, “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there will be* no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Third, this song says that just and true are the ways of Christ. For the saints, 1 John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” In this verse, we see that the ways of Christ in the forgiveness and cleansing of the saints are faithful and just. For those who continue to reject Christ and rebel against Him, Revelation 16:7 says, “And I heard another from the altar saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* Your judgments.” Then, Revelation 19:1-2 adds, “After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God! For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.’” This statement is made just before heaven is opened and Christ returns to judge all who have rejected Him.

Fourth, this song says that Christ is the King of the saints! In the verses quoted above, from Isaiah, we see that Christ will be the Eternal King who will rule. Revelation 20:4-6 says that He will rule on the earth for a thousand years, and then, He will rule throughout eternity. Then, this song asks a question, “Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?” We are reminded that the Lord is the only One who is holy. That is why all nations will come and worship before Him. The saints will rejoice as they come and worship before Christ. Even those who are judged will have to admit that Jesus is righteous to judge them, and will bow their knees before Him. Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

We go on to read, in Revelation 15:5-8, “After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. 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. 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. 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.” In these verses, we see that, when the saints have sung the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven will be opened. At that time, seven angels will come out of the temple.

These are the seven angels that will bring the seven last plagues to the earth. These seven plagues will bring about the complete destruction of religious and commercial Babylon and prepare the way for Christ to come to judge all of the people of the nations that are still in rebellion against Him. We see that these seven angels are clothed in pure white linen. We see, in Revelation 19:14, that all of the angels, in the armies following Christ as He comes to judge the people, will be dressed in this same way when that verse says, “And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.” This white linen speaks of purity and holiness. The seven angels will also have their chests girded with golden bands. These golden bands or belts will be worn over the white linen robes and will reach from the shoulders to the waist of the seven angels. These bands will speak of the perfect glory of the judgments of God.

One of the four living creatures will give a golden bowl to each of these angels. Each bowl will be filled with the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. These will be the final seven judgments that will come on the earth to judge the earth. The wrath of God speaks of the anger of God against sin. Romans 12:19 quotes Deuteronomy 32:35, when Romans says, “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’” The Lord tells us to love our enemies and to leave all judgment to Him, because He is the only One who can judge in righteousness.

We see that once the seven angels have been given the seven bowls of judgment that will complete the judgment of the earth, the temple in heaven will be filled with smoke. However, this is not smoke from a fire. Instead, this is smoke from the glory and power of God. This same glory filled the earthly tabernacle in Exodus 40:34-35, where we read: “Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.” Once this glory fills the heavenly temple, no one will be able to enter the temple until the seven plagues are completed. In the time of Noah, mercy was available throughout the time Noah was building the ark. However, once Noah and his family went into the ark, Genesis 7:16 says that God shut them in. In the same way, once this final judgment begins, it will be too late for people on the earth to repent. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain this fact as they explain what Revelation teaches about the future. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.