

New Years 2024~2025 Revelation 15 Considering the
Smoke of the Glory of God in Judgement.

Rev. 15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who have seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. 2 Then I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who have overcome the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. 3 And they sang the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

*“Great and marvelous are Your works,
O Lord God, the Almighty;
Righteous and true are Your ways,
King of the nations!
4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy;
For all the nations will come and worship before You,
For Your righteous acts have been revealed.”*

*5 And after these things I looked, and the sanctuary of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, 6 and the seven angels who have the seven plagues came out of the sanctuary, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. 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 **And the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power;** and no one was able to enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.*

Wrath. God's wrath. Why? Why is God so angry?

Rebellion. Think about what is taking place in a rebellion. Those who are rebelling against authority want to overtake the one who is in authority, kill him, and install themselves. As God.

Rodney King said, *can't we all just get along?* Well, umm . . . **no**.

The earth, the men in it, and the evil spirits, and Satan, are in a rebellion against the God who created them, and who is sovereign King over them. He is rightful owner and ruler. Both of this world, and of all things in it, including those who are in full rebellion against Him.

The world wants to kill the landlord. We proved it once already. He sent His son. We killed him. We want to kill God and remove Him from reigning over us. We hate Him. We hate that he's righteous altogether. We love wickedness. We shake our fist at God and spit. We throw dirt into the air challenging the Almighty to battle.

Listen to Psalm 2; This is the Word of God. Hear it.

*1 Why are the nations in an uproar
And the peoples devising a vain thing?*

*2 The kings of the earth take their stand
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,*

*3 "Let us tear their fetters apart
And cast away their cords from us!"*

*4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,
The Lord scoffs at them.*

*5 Then He will speak to them in His anger
And terrify them in His fury, saying,*

*6 "But as for Me, I have installed My King
Upon Zion, My holy mountain."*

7 *"I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD:
He said to Me, 'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.*

8 *'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,
And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.*

9 *'You shall break them with a rod of iron,
You shall shatter them like earthenware. '"*

10 *Now therefore, O kings, show discernment;
Take warning, O judges of the earth.*

11 *Worship the LORD with reverence
And rejoice with trembling.*

12 *Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry,
and you perish in the way,
For His wrath may soon be kindled.
How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!*

Wrath! Note that the wrath that fell on Jesus in our place is the same wrath. The full wrath of God. Not less.

The rebellion has provoked God for 6,000 years. Since the fall of man in the garden when Adam and Eve sinned, all born of their seed have joined in their rebellion. We are literally born enemies of the Almighty.

He sent His son, we killed Him. We can't wait to get our hands on God and kill Him too. Bring it God! We want it so bad we've already published our victory on the cover of Time magazine. In 1966! **God Is Dead!**

God sits in His heaven and laughs. He patiently waits and calls His chosen elect ones out of this world to take refuge in His risen Son.

How long? This wrath that is stored up needs to be poured out! The rebellion needs to be crushed. Evil needs to be repaid.

That's what this little interlude chapter is about. God WILL repay. The scene here is a victory celebration in heaven in anticipation of the event. This is a big deal. Huge! God's wrath does not last forever. A day is coming when He will pour it out. This is IT.

Notice also in these verses that wrath and glory are mutually inclusive. When wrath is sent out, the glory is such that no one can enter the temple. God glorifies Himself in pouring out His righteous wrath upon those who have rebelled and warred against His rule and ownership.

15 Vs. 1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

In them the wrath of God is finished!

This is the grand finale. Like at the end of the fireworks show where they send up 2 or 3 dozen explosions all at the same time. Rapid fire. A weak illustration, but the idea is similar.

We've had seven 'seals'. Seven trumpets. The seventh trumpet are these 7 bowls, and this is the grand finale of the wrath of God on this earth and it's rebellion.

Listen to Isaiah 24. I don't know how much of this to read. Maybe all of it, because our passage in Revelation is short today. This is a marvelous parallel account to what we've been studying. Last fruits, right in the middle of this, then final final things, then the Glory of the reign of the real King after the rebellion is crushed.

Beloved, as I read, remember, these things are not hyperbole. This is to be taken quite literally.

Isa. 24:1 Behold, the LORD lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface and scatters its inhabitants. 2 And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor. 3 The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for the LORD has spoken this word.

In the previous chapter, in Revelation 14; the second angel who flew through the sky with the message; *Fallen Fallen is Babylon*. No difference between anyone now. Nothing matters. Everything is broken. No priest - people. No master - servant. No maid - mistress. No buyers. No sellers. No lenders. No borrowers. Nothing that anyone owes anyone else matters. Everything on earth is devastated. Broken. People are in a state of shock. The terror of God is what the earth experiences.

Isa 24:4 The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. 5 The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. 6 Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

Nuclear fall-out? It kind of sounds like it. Pollution that causes a curse. The earth is burned. Few men are left. Everything is broken.

*7 The new wine mourns,
The vine decays,
All the merry-hearted sigh.*

*8 The gaiety of tambourines ceases,
The noise of revelers stops,
The gaiety of the harp ceases.*

9 They do not drink wine with song;

Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

*10The city of chaos is broken down;
Every house is shut up so that none may enter.*

*11There is an outcry in the streets concerning the wine;
All joy turns to gloom.
The gaiety of the earth is banished.*

*12Desolation is left in the city
And the gate is battered to ruins.*

We'll see in Revelation 18 where the music ceases. And an outcry in the streets about the wine? Remember in Rev. 6:6, the third seal, the black horse; famine. What did the voice he heard say? *"A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."*

Now there's a most interesting interlude in Isaiah's prophecy. It sounds very much like the "last-fruits". There are first fruits, but there are also final fruits. The last bits that ripen late. Just before the cold of winter shuts summer fruits down. In Rev. 14, just before our chapter this morning; Remember, an angel flies through the air with a ***last call*** gospel.

See if this interlude in Isaiahs prophecy doesn't sound like this final harvest of 'last fruits', last call before the end, and then comes the 7 bowls of wrath in stacatto fire, and then the entrance of the King.

*13For thus it will be in the midst of the earth among the peoples,
As the shaking of an olive tree,
As the gleanings when the grape harvest is over.*

*14They raise their voices, they shout for joy;
They cry out from the west concerning the majesty of the LORD.*

*15Therefore glorify the LORD in the east,
The name of the LORD, the God of Israel,
In the coastlands of the sea.*

16From the ends of the earth we hear songs, "Glory to the Righteous One,"

That last little interlude of last fruits, and then we shift back to the grand finale.

*But I say, "Woe to me! Woe to me! Alas for me!
The treacherous deal treacherously,
And the treacherous deal very treacherously."*

*17Terror and pit and snare
Confront you, O inhabitant of the earth.*

*18Then it will be that he who flees the report of disaster will fall into the pit,
And he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare;
For the windows above are opened, and the foundations of the earth shake.*

No place now to escape these judgements. The windows above are opened. The bowls of God's final wrath poured out.

*19The earth is broken asunder,
The earth is split through,
The earth is shaken violently.*

*20The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard
And it totters like a shack,
For its transgression is heavy upon it,
And it will fall, never to rise again.*

21So it will happen in that day,

*That the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high,
And the kings of the earth on earth.*

*22 They will be gathered together
Like prisoners in the dungeon,
And will be confined in prison;
And after many days they will be punished.*

All of the demons above and all of the worshipers of the beast below, cast into prison.

The authority to Reign of Heaven. The Kingdom of God, has arrived!

*23 Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed,
For the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
And His glory will be before His elders.*

No more moon. No more sun. They pale in comparison to the Glory of King Jesus.

Rev. 15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

We hear lots of explanations about what is the 'day of the Lord'.

This is it. God's wrath is exhausted. Spent. Finished. The Kingdom is set up on earth. What Jesus instructed the church to pray for for centuries will finally come.

Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Mt 6:10

These events bring the fulfillment of that prayer. History has waited since the fall. Evil has been stored up since the fall. Wrath has been accumulated since the fall. This is the day! And it is huge. Before the

events start to roll out, here is the scene in heaven;

2And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

This is a victory celebration before the victory! That's how God rolls.

Ever think about who the rock star's in the Kingdom will be?

We all have our hero's here on earth. We sit around and watch America's got Talent where those 3 or 4 little king makers get to decide who our next rock star might be.

There's a dozen shows like that. America's next top model. Glee. The Batchelor. American Idol. Competitions that might end up in someone being a Star of something seem to sell on TV. We identify as if it were us up there battling to reach the pinnacle.

We read Isaiah 24 and realize earth's rock star's are going to be exactly nothing on this day. Everyone's equalized. Turned to nothing.

Q So who are the real hero's. Who gets to be on the sea of fiery glass in the celebration of the Glory of God's victory and the final pouring out of His wrath?

A The martyr's that refused to take the number of the beast and willingly lost their lives for the testimony of Jesus. All of a sudden, harps are pretty cool after-all.

Those are the real rock star's. Whoever loses his life for my sake . . shall find it.

3And they sang the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

*“Great and marvelous are Your works,
O Lord God, the Almighty;
Righteous and true are Your ways,
King of the nations!
4“Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy;
For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE
YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED.”*

The song of Moses is found in Exodus 15. After the children are delivered through the sea which closed up on Pharaoh's army. The song of the lamb is in Revelation 5.

Singing is a gift from God. I look back and do an inventory of some of the high points of worship experience in my life and there is singing involved. 10,000 saints singing praises at a conference. 4,000 at Grace Church. There is that longing, deep inside, to never stop singing, to just go up to heaven.

I'll be there to see this day first hand. Way out in the cheap seats, but I'll be there. I love singing with you guys, but Oh, how I long for this day and these songs.

How Great and Marvelous are your works! I want to sing that. I get sad when I think of our secular society that no longer recognizes that the beauty around them came from a God who is Marvelous and Great! Creation is Marvelous.

Oh Lord God the Almighty. Oh Sovereign King of Everything God, All Powerful, All knowing, Almighty.

Righteous and True are Your Ways, King of the Nations.

Righteous to crush your enemies who hate you. His ways are Just. True.

He is the Sovereign King of the nations. Every knee will bow.

*4a Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy;*

Maybe in life, maybe after death, but every heart will fear our God and every mouth will Glorify His name. Even the ones who perish will do this. Every one created will bow the knee to King Jesus and realize that He is Holy, and they are ruined.

4b For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."

And with that, the final preparation for the Day of the Lord is made in heaven;

5After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, 6and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes.

The temple of the tabernacle of testimony is where we were just at. Now we've moved outside and we see the temple opened and the 7 angels with the seven plagues we saw in vs. 1 come out.

Clothed in linen, pure and white. Perfect in purity. Golden sashes. They are glorious perfect beings.

7Then 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.

They already had the plagues. Here they receive bowls of wrath. God's wrath. Fury from the God who lives forever and ever. Plagues and Fury. Fearful.

8And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

Since we have time, let me give you a 5 minute history of the shekhina glory of God. It was manifested to Israel as a sort of brilliant smoke.

At the Abrahamic covenant, after sunset, when Abraham was in a deep sleep, God passed between the covenantal animals set forth as a smoking oven and a flaming torch. Gen. 15:17 *When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces.*

Fire and smoke were present at the ratifying of God's covenant promise with Abraham. Then, on Mt. Sinai at the receiving of the Law; Smoke is always present when the glory of God is in the midst of men.

Ex. 19:16 So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.

Then as He traveled with them through the wilderness and led them to their promised land; Exodus 40;

40:34Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 36Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; 37but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day

when it was taken up. 38For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.

Then, at the dedication of Solomon's temple;

1Kgs8:10 It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

Witnessed by Isaiah at his calling and commissioning as prophet during Israel's idolatry;

Isaiah 6 1In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. 2Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

*3And one called out to another and said,
"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts,
The whole earth is full of His glory."*

4And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

*5Then I said,
"Woe is me, for I am ruined!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I live among a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."*

And finally, the heartbreaking account of Ezekiel 8_11 which is the story of the Glory departing Israel.

It's too long of an account to read, but it happens in 2 parts, the glory departs the temple and hovers over the portico of women, then it rises and hovers over the mount of olives, then it departs.

Here we see it in heaven. The wrath of God, and the Glory of God are all mixed up together. Without wrath, God is not righteous.

The end of the book is connected to the beginning of the book. I'll finish our thoughts tonight with a passage from Exodus, 34. Same God. All of the same ideas. Unbroken, unchanged throughout all the centuries and different dispensations.

This is Moses, receiving the law for the second time as the first tablets were shattered at the golden calf incident.

Ex. 34:5 The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD. 6Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." 8Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. 9He said, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession."

Pardon and punishment, favor and wrath. All possible because of the Lamb.

Ps.2:12His wrath may soon be kindled.

How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

This morning as we contemplate 2025 which will be here in 3 days, I have

a few remarks.;

A few days ago, Miss Pam was remarking to me that everywhere she goes she keeps encountering a sense of foreboding. She said everyone is talking talking about the end times.

There is a sense that, if there is a God who made all of this, and logical people understand there is no reasonable alternative to that understanding, if there is a God, we have provoked Him way beyond any reasonable patience.

I mean, stuff like taking God's rainbow, His own promise never to destroy the world with water again, and turning that promise into the symbol of what God describes as abomination.

We have provoked Him with our arrogance far beyond any previous provoking that drew a righteous response in history. FAR beyond, and there is this sense that we are on an unsustainable collision course and we see the concrete wall approaching. At speed.

What do we who wait for Jesus do in that situation. We need to get our gospel shoes on. We need to be ready to provide answers to frightened people. We need to be ready if God harvests and gleens last fruits here where we live.