

**What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of The Book of The Revelation. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

1. Last week I completed the introduction of Revelation Chapter 15 and then we began a review of the *Doctrine of Anger*.
2. Before we continue I want to provide "1Jo 1:9 time" as may be necessary.
3. I want to review some of that learned last week and then we will begin new material at point 15 on page three.
4. Before we resume our categorical study of Anger I want to provide an expanded translation of Rev 15:1-2

### **Expanded Translation**

**Rev 15:1 I, John then saw in the third heaven a third sign which was even greater than the first two, it was awesome; there before my eyes were the seven angels with the seven last plagues - I'm talking about the last seven vials, these bowl judgments represent God's final and complete wrath. I mean it is curtains for planet earth.**

**Rev 15:2 And then I saw what was like an earlier scene I had recorded, a sea of glass but this time the tranquil sea was mixed with fire and judgment; standing beside the sea were numerous saints martyred in the Great Tribulation; these were those special believers divinely selected to live, suffer and die in the Tribulation. They had been given harps by God the Father and they were ready to play and sing in praise of God.**

5. The phrase "filled up" in the KJV of Rev 15:1 is a translation from the Greek verb **Teleo**. It means to bring to conclusion or to an ultimate goal, i.e., in this case a fulfillment of God's divine purpose. The seven angels were ready to deliver God's final blow: the seven bowl judgments.
6. We are about to see all things fulfilled. John describes it as great and glorious, and we'll see that these seven angels administer the divine judgment of God upon his Satanic kingdom.
7. The seven plagues brought by the seven angels finish the wrath of God on earth. The Greek word **Teleo**, translated "finished" is the vocabulary form of **Tetelestai**; the word that Jesus shouted from the Cross: "It is finished!" John recorded it in his gospel writing in the perfect tense and passive voice. (Joh 19:30)

Joh 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

7.1 As this triumphant cry came from Jesus it meant that the debt of man's sin against God was finished. Here in our context, those who have rejected this finished work of Christ on their behalf find that God's patience is finished. Never forget the declaration: Vengeance is mine sayeth the Lord! (Rom 12:19)

8. It is now time to resume the study of anger.

9. Anger is a mental attitude precluding rational thought. It therefore makes difficult the application of doctrine. Anger is a fleeting emotion experienced by both believers and unbelievers. All people get angry. Anger often hangs around and when it does it becomes a sin.

10. Consequently, the believer must maintain an awareness of the need to rebound this sin as with all sins. We must not think we have to wait until we stop seething.

11. Etymology: Anger is defined by Webster as "a strong feeling of displeasure, hostility ... indignation, or ire."

12. The Greek **Thumos** describes a strong passion resulting in a manifestation of anger. (Mat 12:16; Luk 4:28; Acts 19:28; 2Co 12:20-21)

12.1 **Thumos**, often translated "wrath," is listed as a fruit of the flesh; it is listed alongside: idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, jealousy, strife, heresies etc. (Gal 5:20)

13. The Greek word **Orge** is the mental impulse of indignation and wrath. (Mat 3:4-5; Luk 21:23)

13.1 **Orge** can also mean judicial punishment or discipline, as found in Paul's admonishment to submit to the authorities of the land. (Rom 13:5)

13.2 **Orge** is an emotion common to the human race. The admonition of Eph 4:26 is to not let anger become a sin. In Eph 4:26 the word for wrath is **Paragismos**, meaning a wrath yielding "frustration and exasperation."

Eph 4:26 Be ye **angry**, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your *wrath*:

13.3 In Eph 4:31 and Col 3:8 we see how similar **Orge** and **Thumos** are in meaning and application.

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath (**Thumos**), and anger (**Orge**) and clamour (violent assertiveness), and evil speaking, let it be removed from you together with all evil:

Col 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger (**Orge**), wrath (**Thumos**), jealousy, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

13.4 With reference to the difference between **Thumos** and **Orge**: **Orge** signifies the spirit panting, as it were, in the body with rage, passion and heat.

13.5 On the other hand, **Thumos** can signify indignation which has arisen gradually and has become settled. **Orge** also means the “natural juices” that flow and seethe, as in the immediate emotional response to a precipitate situation.

13.6 In summary, these two words represent the emotion of anger or indignation which must be *nipped in the bud* at the mental attitude level. This is only done by rebound.

13.7 Notice how **Orge** is used to describe what a pastor-teacher should not be, i.e., “not soon angry.” (Tit 1:7)

14. **Anaph** in the Hebrew means to breathe through the nose, like the snorting of a bull; it also means anger as a strong feeling of indignation. It is an onomatopoeic word like *buzz*. In the case of **Anaph**, the bull or cow when angry and preparing to charge often makes a sound like **Anaph**. Notice how **Anaph** is used first with reference to Judah in Egypt when speaking to Joseph, and Jacob’s description of Simeon and Levi in their dealing with the men of Shechem. (Gen 44:18-21; 49:5 and 7)

15. In general, in the English Bible it distinguishes anger from wrath, the latter being the more explosive, as an active manifestation of displeasure.

16. Anger results in self-induced misery and failure and it also hurts others.

16.1 Both “overt and sneaky” anger needs to be named as sin if we are to maintain fellowship. By sneaky, or repressed anger, I mean that anger resident in your soul but never expressed, or that described by the axiom “Many an unkind word is said in jest.”

Pro 21:19 It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

Pro 22:24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

Pro 25:24 It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a quarrelsome wife and in a wide house.

Pro 29:22 An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins.

Ecc 7:9 Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

17. Now back to John's vision and the sea of glass:

NIV

Rev 15:2 And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God.

1. The scene in heaven is described thus by John: "as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire."

1.1 As John looks in awe at the seven mighty angels preparing to initiate things of such magnitude that they are without precedent in human history, his attention is shifted to a great crowd of people standing on a "sea of glass mingled with fire."

1.2 We encountered a "sea of glass" in Chapter 4, and we saw there that it symbolized the mass of believers who came through the Rapture and are now at rest before God's throne.

1.3 This seems to be an allusion to the same "sea of glass like unto crystal" described in Rev 4:6. The sea of glass both here in verse six and verse fifteen would certainly seem to be "in the midst of the throne room." But note the difference, there is fire mixed with the sea of glass in the chapter fifteen vision whereas a sea of glass like unto crystal is seen in the Rev 4:6 picture.

Rev 4:6 And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

2. Alford observes: "The fact, that the personages of the former heavenly vision are still present, Rev 15:7, seems to remove all doubt of this being the same sea of glass as that before described, Rev 4:6."

Rev 15:7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever.

3. In Revelation chapter fifteen the sea of glass has two variations. The sea of glass is said to be "mingled with fire vis-à-vis the chapter four sea said to be "smooth" like unto crystal.

3.1 The addition of fire would seem to add judgment to the scene - a time of final judgment has now come; the prayers of the saints from all ages are about to be answered.

3.2 Especially in view are the prayers of the Tribulation martyrs - vindication is on its way.

4. Let's review quickly some of what we saw in Heaven when I taught Rev 4:2-6:

4.1 Scriptures:

Rev 4:2 Immediately I found myself under the absolute control of the Holy Spirit. I was commanded to consider what I heard and saw. A throne had been placed right there in the middle of the Third Heaven. And there was One seated on the throne.

Rev 4:3 And He who was seated was in appearance like a jasper stone [Benjamin's] and a sardius [Reuben's]. And encircling the throne there was a ring of light which was like an emerald [Judah's] in appearance.

Rev 4:4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

Rev 4:5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.

Rev 4:6 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living beings, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.

#### 4.2 Principles:

1. In addition to the glory of the throne and the One who sat upon it, John's attention is next directed to twenty-four thrones upon which the twenty-four elders are seated. The term "seats" [KJV] is properly "thrones."

2. The elders are in a situation of repose, sitting on their thrones, clothed in white raiment and having on their heads crowns of gold. Considerable discussion has arisen concerning the identity of these twenty-four elders.

3. Some have thought they are angels, others Israel and still others "church age saints." The latter being not only my view but the view of teachers like Walvoord and Fruchtenbaum.

For example, Fruchtenbaum writes of the identification of the elders: "... the 24 elders must represent the Church Age saints ... The Church is already in heaven ... The fact that these 24 elders are wearing these *stephanos* crowns also shows that the events described in chapters four and five occur after the Judgment Seat of Messiah-*Bema* but before the Marriage of the Lamb.

4. That they represent a group seems clear. From parallel Old Testament passages the priesthood was represented by twenty-four orders of priests.

4.1 There were actually thousands of priests in Israel's day of ascendancy under David and Solomon, but they all could not minister at the same time.

5. Accordingly, they were divided into twenty-four orders. When these priests met together, even though there were only twenty-four, they represented the whole priesthood and at the same time the whole of the nation.

5.1 In a similar way the twenty-four elders mentioned in Rev 4:4 may be regarded as representative, but of what?

6. The text itself does not give a specific statement concerning the identity of these elders. Some help, however, is afforded in the description given here and in Rev 15:1. Walvoord in his book *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* has written:

“The elders are described as being clothed in white raiment and having on their heads crowns of gold. There are two kinds of crowns in the book of The Revelation involving two different Greek words. One is the crown of a ruler or a sovereign (Greek “**Diadem**”), which is a crown of governmental authority. The other is the crown of a victor (Greek, “**Stephanos**”), such as was awarded in the Greek games when a person won a race or some contest. This crown was usually made of leaves, therefore as we have noted, it is better translated a “wreath. The word here is the crown of a victor rather than that of a sovereign. It is significant that the passage states the twenty-four elders already have their crowns of gold as victors. It would seem the crowns were those tried by fire and awarded at the **Bema**.”

7. If that described in Rev 4:2-6 is regarded as chronologically before the time of the tribulation, it would seem reasonable to eliminate the angels, at this point the angels have not "exhausted their final appeal."

8. Recall the angelic conflict is now in its appeal phase.

9. For the same reason the elders do not seem to be a proper representation of Israel, for Israel's judgment also comes at the end of the tribulation, and not before.

10. In both the Revelation four and Revelation fifteen visions, it is obvious that John does not see an ordinary sea because there are martyrs standing upon it. The symbolism is rich.

11. The sea is designed to reflect the glory of God and His sovereign rule over the planet and all that is therein. In chapter four its description "like unto crystal" spoke of the holiness and triumphant reign of God.

12. As earlier pointed out, the sea mingled with fire speaks of divine judgment proceeding from God's holiness. The roiling sea of Daniel seven from which the gentile powers arose has now become smooth and tranquil; a base upon which Tribulation martyrs stand triumphantly.

13. The fact that the saints are able to stand upon it reflects the faithfulness of God in upholding His own in keeping with His divine character.

14. Upon this sea stand an innumerable company of those who "had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." **THEY HAVE BEEN DELIVERED!**

15. These unmistakably are the martyred dead destroyed by the beast of Rev 13:1-8 whose number is given in Rev 13:18.

Rev 13:1 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

Rev 13:2 The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.

Rev 13:3 One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.

Rev 13:4 Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?"

Rev 13:5 The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.

Rev 13:6 He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven.

Rev 13:7 He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.

Rev 13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world ...

Rev 13:18 This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.

16. The martyred saints of the Tribulation have been delivered and have their resurrection and reward. The marvelous event/s is described in Rev 20:4-6.

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Rev 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

17. These saints in Rev 15:2 are said to have "harps given to them by God."

18. The harp (a Lyre) and the trumpet are the only musical instruments mentioned in the book of the Revelation.

18.1 The harps signal music to soothe the savage beast; music to relax with; the sound of pleasant victory over all that is unholy.

19. The trumpet on the other hand seems to be used when action is required; a call to battle signals the sound of the trumpet, a call to action and often judgment.

20. John Walvoord has also written:

"The harpers' privileged position before the throne contributing to the heavenly harmony of the chorus of the redeemed is their reward for refusing to worship the beast, receive his mark, bow to his image, or be identified with his number. They clearly belong to saints martyred during the time of great tribulation, confirming that the time schedule is near the end of the period and contrasting them to saints of other ages."

21. Hal Lindsey holds a minority view that the sea of glass holds not only the martyred saints of the Tribulation but also the raptured saints of the church age. He writes: "John says that he saw a multitude who had obviously come out of the Tribulation by martyrdom, and that they were standing on the sea of glass ... have you ever seen a mob of deliriously happy fans carry a coach and team off the field on their shoulders after they have just won the big game of the year?"

"That's what I see here the Church-age saints carrying the Tribulation martyrs on their shoulders in triumph ... they're the winners! All the believers who died during the Tribulation ... no doubt suffered ... But no one standing in this crowd before the throne bears any semblance of defeat or bitterness. There's nothing here but praise and worship and victory! Perhaps nothing is more difficult for the natural mind to understand than how death can really mean victory, how submitting to injustice can ultimately produce triumph ... Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mat 16:26)

"Real victory is not found in seeking to avoid conflicts and living a don't-rock-the-boat kind of life. The cemetery is full of people who fit that category. The kind of triumph these martyrs of the Tribulation will experience will be deliverance through fire, not out of it. There's no guarantee that any of us are going to be spared some fiery trials before we go to meet the Lord."

22. I "can neither confirm or deny" the validity of Mr. Lindsey's position that there are also raptured saints standing and celebrating on the Revelation chapter fifteen sea of glass; though certainly such may be the case.

23. Let me again give you an expanded translation of Rev 15:1-2:

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24. So we don't lose sight of what is coming, I want to once again provide a list of the seven vial judgments:

- (1) sores appear on the bodies of all unbelievers
- (2) the ocean becomes blood
- (3) rivers and streams become blood
- (4) the heat from the sun intensifies burning the skin of unbelievers
- (5) the pain of unbelievers intensifies as darkness pervades
- (6) the Euphrates dries up and a vast armada of Orientals appear
- (7) unprecedented earthquakes appear destroying city after city

25. Now let's take a look at Revelation 15:3-4:

KJV

Rev 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

Rev 15:4 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.

NIV

Rev 15:3 and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages.

Rev 15:4 Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."

1. It would seem all heaven echoes with the spontaneous singing of the martyrs as they praise the Lord, God has just made them victors over sorrow, pain and death.
2. All the heartache is behind them now, and they are just beginning to grasp the reality of what it is going to be like to spend eternity with all their expanded family in praise of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

3. The changes in their friends, their family and themselves is in itself breathtaking; there is a unity of perfection and therefore appreciation of one another. Texas Aggie fans will like U.T. fans, Red Sox fans will like Yankee fans and Texas Ranger fans will like Astro fans ... etc. etc. etc.

4. The hymns of praise sung by the martyred saints in glory are identified as "the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

5. The fact that the word "song" is repeated with a definite article in both cases would lead to the conclusion that two songs are in view rather than one, both being sung by the martyred throng.

6. The former, the song of Moses, recounts the faithfulness of God to Israel in recognition that a large number of Israelites in this time of Jacob's trouble are among these martyred dead.

7. How fitting for them to sing the "song of Moses." This is a song the Jews have sung for thousands of years, and commemorates their great deliverance from Pharaohs' army at the Red Sea.

7.1 The words are recorded in Exo 15:1-19.

Exo 15:1 Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Exo 15:2 The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Exo 15:3 The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.

Exo 15:4 Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.

Exo 15:5 The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.

Exo 15:6 Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

Exo 15:7 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.

Exo 15:8 And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

Exo 15:9 The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

Exo 15:10 Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Exo 15:11 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Exo 15:12 Thou stretched out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

Exo 15:13 Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

Exo 15:14 The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestine.

Exo 15:15 Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

Exo 15:16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

Exo 15:17 Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O LORD, which thy hands have established.

Exo 15:18 The LORD shall reign for ever and ever.

Exo 15:19 For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

8. Just as the Israelites looked back toward Egypt and realized that they were forever delivered from slavery, so these people will look back to their experiences of horror on earth and realize that they are forever delivered from the grasp of suffering, defeat and death.

9. In this regard their song also becomes a song of praise and victory.

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