

Storm Clouds Gathering

Revelation 15:1-8

I. Introduction:

A. Storm clouds

1. Story: Florida summer storms: These powerful storms bring torrential rain and sometimes damaging wind & lightening.
2. These storms pass through, uprooting trees, blowing over buildings, & causing flash floods in lower parts of town.
3. When the clouds form in the distance what's coming is known. Those dark clouds bring ominous warning of a storm on the way.

B. Storm Clouds of Judgment

1. The storm clouds of judgment are found in Revelation 15. Chapter 15 reveals the preparation that will be made in heaven for the final bowl judgments to take place.
2. The bowl judgments are the last of three sets of seven judgments.
3. The tribulation began with 7 seal judgments followed by seven trumpet judgments.
4. The final series of judgments are called the bowl judgments.
5. The bowl judgments will be the most rapid in succession and the most powerful.
6. The bowl judgments will bring the tribulation to a conclusion and are followed by the arrival of Jesus & the battle of Armageddon.

II. Another Sign in Heaven (Revelation 15:1)

A. Great and Marvelous

1. All the visions recorded in the Book of Revelation are of great importance, but this vision of the final bowl judgments is perhaps grander than any to this point.
2. It reveals & marks impending outpouring of God's wrath on a wicked & sinful world.

B. Seven angels

1. Once more the angels are involved in God's plan. 7 specific angels will serve as agents of this final judgment. They will pour out the final series of judgments upon the world.
2. Application: Angels are actively involved in the world today. They are active on behalf of God's redeemed, His church. (**Hebrews 1:14**)
3. Bible is somewhat silent on exactly what angels are doing on our behalf now, but we know they're active in bringing us through this life to the inheritance in Jesus awaiting us
4. It's no surprise they are active in the final judgments that usher in Christ' kingdom.

C. The wrath of God complete.

God's Wrath: There are a few things to understand about God's wrath.

1. – Based on a resolute hatred of sin

- a. Wrath is the word *Thumos* which is strong word that is often used to speak of rage or passionate anger, yet God's anger against sin isn't emotional or out of control.
- b. God's anger against sin is a measured response based on His holiness & perfection.

2. – Stored up

- a. God's wrath against sin is not being fully expressed today.
- b. God's wrath is being stored up. (**Romans 2:5**) God's wrath is not fully falling on the world today because God desires all men to be saved.
- c. God is reserving His wrath, holding it back, so lost men & women might have an opportunity to confess their sin, accept Jesus by faith, and be saved.

- d. God loves the world so much that He is withholding what we deserve right now so we might have opportunity to be saved.
- 3. – The wrath of God is complete.
 - a. That means when we get to the bowl judgments at the end of the tribulation, the patience and long suffering of God have come to an end.
 - b. This judgment will be poured out without measure or mitigation.
 - c. Application: Don't waste the grace of God as He withholds His wrath and is right now giving you the opportunity to be saved.

III. Worship of the Tribulation Saints (Revelation 15:2-4)

A. Sea of glass

1. This same description was given back in **Revelation 4:6**.
2. This isn't an actual sea of water; it's like pure crystal platform around God's throne.
3. It is so clear that it looks like water when it is absolutely calm.
4. The purity of this crystal platform is in keeping with the purity and holiness of God.
5. Mingled with Fire: Difference in this scene is the crystal platform is mingled with fire.
6. This is the fire of God's judgment that is about to fall upon the world in the form of the final bowl judgments.

B. Saints of the Tribulation

- There are two interesting things about these saints.
 1. – They have the victory over the beast.
 - a. They won the victory over antichrist and his evil regime by their faith. (**1 Jn. 5:4-5**)
 - b. These saints refuse to take the mark of the beast or worship the antichrist as a god.
 - c. These saints were willing to surrender their lives to be faithful to our Lord & Savior.
 - d. In physical death they were delivered from the hand of the antichrist.
 - e. Application: In Jesus Christ we have same victory over the world. Jesus conquered sin, death, and the grave. The apostle Paul said, (**Romans 8:31-37**)
 2. – They are worshipping.

These saints are singing two songs, the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.

 - (1) Song of Moses
 - a. This is the song Hebrews sang when God delivered them from Egyptian bondage.
 - b. Specifically it's the song they sang after God opened the Red Sea for them and then destroyed Pharaoh's army. (**Exodus 15:2-18**)
 - (2) The song of the Lamb
 - a. This song was 1st heard in Revelation **5:8-10** when the living creatures & the 24 elders (the raptured church) fell down before God's throne & worshipped our Lord.
 - b. It's a praise song that Jesus has saved people, by His blood, out of every tongue, tribe, & nation. It is a praise song for our salvation.

C. Character of their worship

1. The overarching character of this worship in heaven is that it is God centric.
2. No part of this praise draws the slightest attention to themselves as overcomers.
3. This praise is all about God and nothing else! Worship is not about entertainment.

IV. The Justice of God (Revelation 15:5-8)

A. The justice of God

1. The bowls are full of the wrath of God. God is today storing up His wrath against sin.
2. By the end of the tribulation the cups are full & it's time for the wrath to be poured out.
3. God settles score w/ all who've rejected Him, broken His laws, & abused His people.