

## **God's Wrath is Completed on Earth**

During the Revolutionary War, British forces seized the spacious home of Rebecca Motte on the Congaree River in South Carolina. She was forced to take up residence in a smaller house while about 175 British soldiers fortified her home, surrounding it with a trench and a parapet. Can you imagine what would happen to your house if 175 soldiers took it over, tramping mud in and out, eating every crumb you had in the house, trashing the place? That's exactly what was happening to Mrs. Motte's house!

From May 8 to May 12, 1781, a Patriot force led by Francis Marion and Lighthorse Harry Lee laid siege to Fort Motte, as the British called their compound. Marion and Lee called on Lt. Daniel McPherson, the British Commander, to surrender, but he refused. The Patriots soon concluded that to get the British out, they would have to set fire to the house. Lee was given the task of breaking the news to Mrs. Motte.

Can you imagine the conflicting feelings Rebecca Motte must have been feeling? What would your reaction be to Harry Lee? Well, we'll see how Mrs. Motte responded after a while!

**Today's passage reinforces something taught many times in the Bible: Earth as we've known it, degraded by sin, will cease to exist. But earth as it should have been, enlivened by God's presence, will be restored forever!**

Now this really is a breath of fresh air when we think of the doomsday scenarios for earth put before us by some!

Other scenarios, whether they involve global warming, Mayan calendars, Alien attacks, asteroid strikes, nuclear explosions, all involve life on earth as we've known it either ceasing to exist or never having the quality of life we had before.

**The Bible, including The Book of Revelation, is optimistic compared to other doomsday scenarios, letting us know that after God judges the world as we know it, the BEST days of earth are yet to come!**

Now if this is the first Sunday you have been to Wayne Hills, you are missing the context necessary to appreciate this message today. So let's take a moment and recap the things that brought us to this passage. Look at the chart you have...

The Bible describes a future seven year period called the tribulation that happens before Jesus' Second Coming. As we have studied the Bible, 3 purposes that God has for this time of tribulation emerge.

**The Three Purposes of the Seven Year Tribulation:**

- 1. Judge the satanic system that has filled the earth with sin**
- 2. Re-gather a spiritual Israel that will be ready for Christ's rule on earth**
- 3. Give everyone on earth several last chances to repent before it's too late**

The Tribulation itself needs to be understood as very brief compared to the thousands of years of history before it, including the age of grace we live in now, and the thousand year reign of Christ coming after His Second Coming.

Now if you have ever seen the show “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition,” you know when they come in, before they build anything up they first tear down the run down building that is there. They just completely take it away and then build a brand-new building where the run down one is!

**You might want to picture the judgments of the seals, the trumpet, and the bowls as the bulldozer on “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” that removes what should not be there before God makes earth Paradise again.**

During the seal judgments “God’s Wrath begins on Earth.”

During the trumpet judgments “God’s Wrath Intensifies on Earth.”

Today we learn that during the bowls, “God’s Wrath is Completed on Earth.”

Read Revelation 15 & 16      PRAY!

### **15:1-8      Heaven Rejoices in Anticipation of the Bowls being Poured Out**

Verse 1 tells us John the Revelator saw another great and awesome sign in Heaven.

**This great and awesome sign goes with the two signs John had seen in chapter twelve. There he saw the great sign of God’s protection and dealings with Israel. He also saw the sign of the havoc Satan would cause during the last three and a half years of the tribulation.**

This great and awesome sign will mean the end of the evil plans Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet have for God’s people! Verse 1 tells us the sign is 7 angels with 7 plagues that will complete the time of God’s wrath, the tribulation.

Now I love verses like verse two.

**During the days of the tribulation, many people will turn to Christ and then be killed for their faith. But far from being worse off, they’ll be very much alive in Heaven with God!**

Verse three tells us they are up there singing the song of Moses AND the song of the Lamb. What does that mean?

It means that many Jews will be among the saints in Heaven. The prophets in several places speak of many Jews coming to know God in the last days. The apostle Paul speaks emphatically about that in Romans 9-11.

Now sometimes down here we struggle to understand these intense judgments we are about to read about. But in Rev. 20-22 we see that God plans to make the New Earth His eternal home. That can't happen until there is no more sin down here.

**Interestingly, Heaven doesn't seem to struggle with God's righteous judgment the way we do down here with our sinfully divided hearts!**

They sing out, Great and awesome are your works, Lord God! Righteous and True are your ways! Look at verse four. In Heaven they can't imagine people being so hard hearted that these coming events won't cause them to fear God and glorify His name! Heaven understands we are to celebrate God's holiness!

**I hope you understand that the supreme attribute of God is His holiness! Every other attribute of God, including His love, is to be understood in terms of His holiness. The only proper response to His holiness is to glorify Him!**

Let me put it another way. The Westminster Confession got it right when it said the main purpose of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

But what is the main purpose of God? The main purpose of God is also to glorify God! He can not put anything before that, because there is nothing before that!

**When we live for less than His glory we engage in idolatry. God never engages in idolatry, so He is compelled by His very nature to live for His own glory!**

Some of you say, "Hunh, Danny?" Let me get to the point by asking a question...

**Is there something God is compelled to love more than people?  
Yes, His own glory (based on His holiness)!**

God went to extreme measures to show His love for the world by dying on the cross for sinners, so that those who repent and trust Him may be saved!

But to those who won't repent and give Him glory His holiness demands justice!

**God's holiness will not allow sinners to go on defiling earth. Heaven is out of the question for those who won't repent. That only leaves Hell for them, a place that should only have to be for the Devil and his demons.**

And so as Heaven rejoices at the Rightness of God in judging the earth because of it's failure to give Him glory, the angels prepare to pour out the bowls.

## **Chapter 16          The Bowl Judgments are Poured Out**

**Some believe these judgments will be spread out over the last three and a half years of the tribulation. We don't know! My guess is they happen in rapid succession, right at the very end of the tribulation, before Christ comes back.**

The first bowl is painful sores, the kind of boils that were poured out on the Egyptians during the 6<sup>th</sup> plague in Exodus. This is only for those who had worshipped the beast. Any followers of Christ alive on earth at that time will not undergo this judgment.

The Second bowl is like the second trumpet judgment. Except this time ALL life in the sea dies instead of just a third of it. At this point the earth as we've known it will be in very bad shape indeed.

Look at verse four. The third bowl will mean that the world's water supply will become undrinkable. No one can live very long without water. This resembles the first plague on Egypt.

Now there has been so much stuff to cover in Revelation, sometimes we have missed all that Revelation tells us about angels. Here we see there is an "angel of the waters!" That's kind of cool to think about.

Anyway, what's his response to this third plague? Verses 5-6 tell us---

The angel says, "They deserve it. Those left killed God's people, they deserve to be judged by God." And from Heaven comes the response, Yes, True and right are God's judgments!"

Now this really challenges us in our prayer life!

In this age of grace we are to love our enemies, and to pray and act for the gospel to get to everyone on earth. But we are also to pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. To pray for justice just like those in the Psalms do.

**We are called in this age of grace to love the sinner but hate the sin. I'm afraid too many of us love the sinner AND love the sin. May it never be!**

Moving on to verse eight we see that Al Gore is partially right – Intense Global Warming is coming to earth. Under the fourth trumpet the sun gave less light. But under this fourth bowl it will give more heat. This will lead to not only intense discomfort for people, but to lots of fires. And if it leads the polar ice to melt, major seaboard cities will experience flooding.

Verse nine is sobering – despite these things happening those dwelling on the earth don't repent, and they don't give God glory. How incredibly sad!

The fifth bowl is even more intense. In those days the world will be plunged into darkness, yet still they will not repent.

Now the sixth bowl takes a little longer. Read verses 12-16.

**The Euphrates is a key river in the Bible. When God told Abraham and later Moses the boundaries of the Promised Land, He had the Euphrates as the Eastern border, with Babylon being on the other side of it.**

When the Euphrates is dry, it will allow kings and armies from the east to travel right over it on their way to attack Israel.

My guess is that those left on earth will resent God's protection of a significant number of Jews in the wilderness, something we read about in Revelation chapter twelve.

Much speculation has been made about the frogs coming out of the unholy trinity's mouths, but verse fourteen lets us know they are powerful demons who will convince rulers of the world to join this effort to rid the world of God's people.

**This brings us to a point that has been proven many times over the centuries: You'd have to be either drunk or a dunce or demon-possessed to try and do Israel harm, because it puts you on God's to-do list!**

These forces will gather at Armageddon.

In chapter 19 we'll see what happens at that battle.

**Armageddon is the same Greek word for the Hebrew word Megiddo.**

Now look at verse 15. Injected into this sobering reality is "I am coming like a thief." Several other times that phrase occurs in the New Testament.

**"The unifying factor in all these passages is that the coming in view results in a loss for those who are not ready."** -John Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* p 238

God is so good, He stops and warns all who will read this that there can be another way for them if they'll repent and turn to Jesus! But if not, judgment awaits.

And that brings us to the last bowl, where a severe earthquake happens that cause the cities of the nations to fall. I believe 100 pound hailstones will flatten down beer joints and casinos and adult bookstores. It says islands will disappear and mountains will be flattened. Perhaps all that will be left after this is the original area that included the Garden of Eden.

Maybe you have seen on maps how it looks like the continents were all one giant land mass. Some Christian geologists agree in part with the theory of plate tectonics, and at Noah's flood they believe the world was separated into the present continents. Maybe during this flood of bowl judgment the continents will be brought back together in preparation for Christ's millennial rule.

Verse 19 makes clear this seventh bowl is the end of Babylon. The city, perhaps, but also clearly referring to the godless world system. The next two chapters will go into greater detail about this fall of Babylon forever.

That's a lot to think about. But there is one key thing yet to see.

Look at verse 17. When the seventh bowl is poured out, a loud voice from the throne says, "It is done!"

What's done? Well, it reminds us of Jesus on the cross saying, It is finished!  
 What was finished? Everything it would take for a person to go to Heaven!

Heaven calls them the elect, the ones who repent, believe, and follow Jesus.

For them, Christ's death has finished what it takes to be accepted by God!

But for those who never turn to Christ, it's not done until the seventh bowl.

When it says here "It is done," now it means the Tribulation is complete and the reign of Christ on earth will shortly begin.

**"Every sin will be pardoned by Christ or punished in Hell, but it will never be overlooked. Nobody's sin is ever overlooked. All sin is dealt with!" -Adrian Rogers, Unveiling the End Times in Our Times, p 185**

What a shame for those who refused to repent...

Now earlier I told you about the dilemma that Rebecca Motte had. The British were occupying and trashing her house, and they wouldn't leave, despite being surrounded by American troops. Harry Lee came to Mrs. Motte and told her it looked like the only way to get the British out would be to burn the house.

When he came to her, Mrs. Motte responded that she was "gratified with contributing to the good of her country, and should view the approaching scene with delight."

In fact, Rebecca Motte produced a bow and a set of arrows and told Lee to put them to use! The Patriots shot burning arrows at the roof, setting it on fire and forcing a surrender. Then they quickly climbed to the top of the house and managed to put out the flames! That evening in the tradition of true Southern hospitality, Rebecca Motte served dinner to both the American and British officers in her dining room! -Bill Bennet, Patriots Almanac, p. 162

Isn't that great?!

There will come a day when God razes the earth as we know it, so He can restore it to Garden of Eden type conditions.

Just as Mrs. Motte viewed her similar circumstances with delight, Heaven looks on and exclaims, "True and Righteous are your ways, O God!"

The call is for us to embrace Heaven's perspective about the end of earth as we know it, so earth as it should be can begin!

And so I hope you'll exclaim with me, "True and Righteous are your ways, O God! To you be the glory now and forevermore!"

Let's Pray!