

Revelation 15: The Shortest Chapter in Revelation Chapter a prelude to Bowl judgments, is it unimportant. No. It is pivotal to the structure of the book but more importantly, critical to the purposes and plans of God.

First 3-1/2 years of the 7-year Tribulation (Seals & Trumpet judgments)

7 Bowls judgment are poured out on Satan's kingdom directly at the end of the 7-year Tribulation.

God allows The Beast to consolodate his worldwide reign in the first-half of the Tribulation and then rule as the false messiah throughout the second half – allowing all mankind to determine whether they will cling to Antichrist (and accept the Mark of the Beast) or repent and turn to God through the True Messiah, Jesus Christ, often being martyred for their faith.

First half of trib: Free-for-all of the nations: wars, rumors, 10 divisions (10 toes of Daniel, 10 horns of Rev.), the Beast consolodates power (Matthew 24:1-8)

Second-half Trib: Satan rules Earth thru a man The Beast (war, famine, pestilence, fear, death) (Matthew 24:9-14).

Millenial Kingdom: God rules the Earth thru The Son of Man, Jesus (perfect peace, justice, righteousness)

Chapter 6: Seal Judgments (seals = ownership)

Chapter 7 – parenthesis (Tribulation initiated by Jesus – witnesses sent out by and for Jesus)

Chapters 8-9 – Trumpet Judgments (Trumpets = a call to war)

(7th Trumpet = 3rd Woe – Read Rev. 8:13 – Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”

Why called “woes” - judgments proceed from the natural to the demonic (over view chapters 8-9).
God will actually allow the release of demons to execute judgment.

Chapter 10 (little scroll) – the 7 Bowl judgments (the conclusion)

Chapters 11-14 – parenthetical (Israel, Dragon, Man-child, Michael, Beast, False Prophet, 144,000)
God's witness to the world is over (3 angels, the the reapers)

If you want to follow a linear chronology of Revelation you would go from chapter 10 to chapter 15.

Chapter 16 – Bowl (cup/vials) Judgments

10:7 – Seventh Angel = the 7th trumpet (11:15-18) which initiates the 7 'Bowl' (vial) judgments.

1] And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

“7” last plagues: “7” used 8 times in chapter 15. Number of fulness/completeness

Last week we talked about the macro-theme of 'THE CUP' biblically. Jesus in Gethsemane ... Jesus on the cross – tetelisti: **it** is finished (WHAT IS THE **IT** IN JESUS STATEMENT?) Judgment of all sin of all human history. A holy, righteous God cannot simply overlook sin (or He would not be holy). Sin must be judged. It was judged in Christ on the cross of calvary.

“Another sign”: Connects this with the series of signs that began with Chapter 12.

“Sign”: ('semeion) – miracles revealing the unique power of God. Their purpose was able to teach a spiritual lesson suggested by the sign itself.

Genesis
3:15

1st sign: The women in travail (Israel)

2nd sign: Great Red Dragon

3rd sign: 7 Bowl judgments, human rebellion finally and fully judged

Alert: Structure of the Bible

God routinely “sealed” His revelation to prophets throughout Bible by 3-fold signs:

- 1) Joseph (Gen. 37:5-11; 40:8-22; 41:15-40)
 - 2) Moses (Exodus 3:2; 4:2-5; 4:6-7)
 - 3) Joshua 4:22-24; 6:20; 10:10-14)
 - 4) Gideon (Judges 6:36-40; 7:13-15)
 - 5) Saul (1 Samuel 10:1-7)
 - 6) Elijah (1 Kings 19:9-13)
 - 7) Elisha (2 Kings 2:14; 2:22; 2:24)
 - 8) Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:20; 19:29-35; 2 Kings 36:8-11)
 - 9) Ezekiel 1:1; 3:22-23; 8:4)
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wrath of God is finished:

Rev. 10:7 – but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets. {mystery of lawlessness }

Revelation 11:15-18 – *Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.” And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, “We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.” And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.*

The mystery of God: 'Mystery of Iniquity (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

Theodicy: why a good God permits the manifestation of evil (why do bad things happen to good people)

Eph. 6:10-12 – Our struggle is against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenlies

Purpose of Job: Satan’s accusation against Job was really an attack on God. We might paraphrase it like this: “The only reason Job fears You is because You pay him to do it. You two have made a contract: You protect him and prosper him as long as he obeys You and worships You. You are not a God worthy of worship! You have to pay people to honor You.” Job’s three friends said Job was suffering because he had sinned, and that was not true. Elihu said that God was chastening Job to make him a better man, and that was partly true. But the fundamental reason for Job’s suffering was to silence the blasphemous accusations of Satan and prove that a man would honor God even though he had lost everything. It was a battle “in the heavenlies” (Eph. 6:12), ***but Job did not know that aspect of the scenerio***. Job’s life was a battlefield where the forces of God and Satan were engaged in a spiritual struggle to decide the question, “Is Jehovah God worthy of man’s worship?” Now we can better understand why Job was so unyielding as he resisted the advice of his friends. They wanted him to repent of his sins so that God would remove the suffering and make him prosperous again. Job was not going to “invent” sin in his life just so he could repent and “earn” the blessing of God. To do that would be to play right into the hands of the accuser! Instead, Job held fast to his integrity

and blessed God *even though he did not understand what God was doing* (Luke 22:30-31) “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

The main purpose of the Book of Job is God exposing what happens in the unseen spiritual realm. From Job we not only recognize the redemptive value in suffering and trials but also understand that we have an ongoing witness within the spiritual realm.

1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 Peter 1:12; Ephesians 3:9-10

Job is not allegory – He is a real man

Oldest Book in the Bible: Contemporary of Noah and Abraham (Long before Moses)

Why has God allowed Satan and evil to continue to exist (Rev. 10:7). The answer to this is found in Scripture, it was preached to God's prophets. There are two key parts to this answer:

(a) To resolve the angelic warfare, to answer and demonstrate that Satan, the accuser and slanderer of God's character is wrong in his accusations and that he is worthy of God's judgment for his sin.

(b) To demonstrate God's patience and love, and to provide ample opportunity for men to come to Christ (2 Pet. 3:7-8).

When the angel of Revelation 10:7 says "time shall be no more" he means that once the seventh trumpet is sounded, this time of demonstrating God's character and of demonstrating man and Satan for what they are, this time of allowing Satan and rebellion to continue, will be over; God will act swiftly now to establish His rule of righteousness on earth. This period of the patience of God is over, there will be no more delay.

1 Timothy 3:16 – Great indeed, we confess, is **the mystery of godliness**: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

God's 'End Game' – these are now direct judgments on the kingdom of the beast (see verse 7)

God's Three Alternatives Regarding Sin

1) Allow it to go on forever, but in that case all the cruelty, injustice, hatred, pain, and death that continues on the earth will go on forever, too. God does not want that and neither do we,

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2) He can create and/or force man to become robotic. However, removing our free will would also take away our capacity to give our love to God freely. Love cannot be forced or it isn't genuine love. Our free will is our greatest blessing as well as curse. With it .. obey or disobey . Or..

3) He can withdraw Himself from those who refuse His love – the wrath of abandonment Paul talks about in Romans chapter 1 – turning man over to a depraved mind. He must let them have their own way forever. Since God is necessary for our existence, the decision to reject God is a decision to plunge ourselves into the most terrible sense of loneliness and isolation a human being can know—and to endure this eternally, without any hope.

2] And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

“Sea of glass”:

Rev. 4:1-6 – After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.” 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. 3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; 6 and before **the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal**; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.

“The sea is designed to reflect the glory of God. In chapter 4 its description ‘like unto crystal’ speaks of the holiness of God. Here the sea mingled with fire speaks of divine judgment proceeding from God’s holiness.” (Walvoord)

Ex. 24:9-10 – Moses & Elders of Israel “saw” God. Sea of glass there was like sapphire (blue=royalty)
Ezekiel 1:22 – Ezekiel saw the throne as “an expanse like crystal”
Rev. 21:21 – Street of gold like transparent glass (M-state gold = clear)

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

King of “Ages”: Jer 10:40; 1 Tim 1:17.

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“Song of Moses”: Ex 15:1-21; Deut 32:1-43. [Sung before the giving of the Law in Ex 19ff.]
“Song of the Lamb”: Rev 5:9-12.

Note that there never is any word about the *martyr*’s achievements [don't be a 'self-promoter']. The only pronouns refer to God. Remember: Revelation is the unveiling of Jesus Christ. Don't be distracted by the four horsemen, seven trumpets, et al: ***Who is being unveiled in this Book?***

To the only King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God (1 Tim 1:17).]

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.

Note the *decline* of the fear of God in our age... There is little reverential fear of God, even among believers....

“Nations shall come and worship...”: This will happen in the Millennial Kingdom... it is not true today. The immorality, godlessness, and injustice—even in our own country—is increasingly conspicuous (Ps 7:9; 11:7; 107:1, 40, 42; cf. Ps 2:8; Phil 2:9-11).

see also Zech 2:11; 8:20-23; 14:16

5] And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

The temple is mentioned 15X in this book, but not until Chapter 4, when the Church is removed. Before chapter 4 the temple is on Earth in the person of the church (you are a temple of the Holy Spirit). From then on, God is dealing with a people who have had a temple—a replica of things in heaven (Ex 25:40; Heb 9:23).

“**tabernacle**” means 'dwelling-place'

the testimony: the Ark of the Covenant: Aaron's staff that budded (judgment), two tablets of law (man guilty before God), jar of manna (Christ the Bread of life paid the price for man's disobedience).

Today we (the church) are the temple of His dwelling place by His Holy Spirit

1 Peter 2:5, 9-12: you also, as living stones, are ***being built up*** (sanctification) as ***a*** spiritual house (one house) for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But you are a ***chosen*** race, a ***royal*** (adopted by the King) priesthood, a ***holy*** (you have the righteousness of Christ) nation, a people for God's own possession (His seal of ownership is upon

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you), **so that you may proclaim** the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to **abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul**. 12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Everything constructed in the Tabernacle (and later) the temple pointed to Christ

One door: I am the door of the sheep

One source of light (Menorah): I am the light of the world

Table of Shewbread: I am the bread of life

The veil: No one comes to the Father but through me
and a hundred other ways

6] And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7] And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

Clothed in linen? Variant reading: precious stones!?! Bowls, vials: censer (Rev 5:8); flat saucers as used in worship.

8] And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

Shekinah: Old Testament

- **Wilderness** Ex 13:21,22 – And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.
- **Manna Ex 16:10** – And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.
- Giving of law Ex 19:9, 16, 18; 24:15-18
- 2nd time Ex 34:1-5
- Tabernacle Ex 40:34, 35

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- Mercy Seat Num 9:16-22
- 70 elders chosen Num 11:25
- Filled Temple 1 Kgs 8:10,11
- Departs Ezek 9:3; 10:4,18,19; 11:22, 23

Shekinah: New Testament

- Overshadows Mary Lk 1:35
- Flocks of Shepherds Lk 2:9
- Transfiguration Mt 17:5; 1 Pet 1:17-19
- Ascension Acts 1:9
- Rapture 1 Thess 4:17
- Return Mt 24:30; 26:64; Rev 1:7; Lk 21:27

These seven angels with these seven bowls make it clear that these judgments proceed from God, not man's mistakes or Satan's enmity. Beware the Wrath of the Lamb.

Open: Holiness

Are you trying to live the Christian life without Christ? (Col. 2:21, 23, 18)

John 14:4-5 – Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. (including live the Christian life).

We can become skillful in living the spiritual life without ever really growing closer to Christ!

Are we most fascinated by the practices or the person of the Christian life, (Jesus)

Colossians 3:1-11 – Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ (***resurrected from the dead spiritually***), keep seeking ***the things above (the Kingdom of God)***, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 ***Set your mind*** (the battlefield) on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died (dead men don't care about stuff) and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to ***idolatry*** (worshipping self). 6 For it is because of these things that ***the wrath of God will come*** upon the sons of disobedience, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another (that's the spirit of Satan), since you ***laid aside*** the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have ***put on*** the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

Closing: your purpose in life

1 Peter 2:5, 9-12: you also, as living stones, are ***being built up*** (sanctification) as ***a*** spiritual house (one house) for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But you are a ***chosen*** race, a ***royal*** (adopted by the King) priesthood, a ***holy*** (you have the righteousness of Christ) nation, a people for God's own possession (His seal of ownership is upon you), ***so that you may proclaim*** the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to ***abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul***. 12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

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Proverbs 8:34 – Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors.

Zeph 1:14-18 – The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring distress on mankind, so that they shall walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD; their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of the LORD. In the fire of his jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed; for a full and sudden end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.