

Revelation Chapter 15

Bible verses are from the New American Standard Bible and are highlighted in blue and italics.

It behooves us to be diligent and hungry disciples and students of the Lord's word – the scriptures. Here the scripture is speaking about events to take place on earth during that final 3 ½ years before the return of Christ.

Not the Rapture of the church, but the return of Christ in the Glory and power of God to crush His enemies at Armageddon and institute Himself by force as King of Kings on this earth. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

God has always been Lord over the affairs of men. The prophet Daniel said, *"It is he who changes the times and the Epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings. He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding. It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things....Dan 2:21, 22, and 28). There is a God in Heaven who reveals mysteries."*

In these scriptures in Revelation, God is revealing to us, among other things, the mystery of iniquity.

A mystery in scripture is an ordination of God, held in his mind but not revealed by Him until its proper time in His plan,

In this last 3 ½ years by the return of Christ, the mystery of iniquity reaches its consummation. The mystery of iniquity has its origin in Lucifer's desire to be like the Most High. His desire for wealth is involved in this mystery. We read those scriptures in Ezekiel 28:16, 18) previously.

- 16"By the abundance of your trade
You were internally filled with violence,
And you sinned;
Therefore I have cast you as profane
From the mountain of God.
And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,
From the midst of the stones of fire.*
- 17"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor
I cast you to the ground;
I put you before kings,
That they may see you.*
- 18"By the multitude of your iniquities,
In the unrighteousness of your trade
You profaned your sanctuaries.
Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you;
It has consumed you,
And I have turned you to ashes on the earth
In the eyes of all who see you.*

Lucifer's passion is to organize man as a whole into one political, economic and religious system ultimately centered on the glory of man and worship of himself.

His first attempt at this was at the tower of Babel. There have been 6 further attempts in the 6 empires of history, and now this world empire we're reading about now is the 7th, the last and a temporarily successful such attempt, the mystery of iniquity that spans the ages.

Paul said to the Thessalonians, it was at work in his day. It's always at work and is today, held in abeyance by the hand of the Lord until its proper time for full release.

Under this successful manifestation of the mystery of iniquity that we're reading about in Revelation:

1. 144,000 Hebrew/Christian men who have been specially commissioned witnesses for God to the world have been slaughtered.
2. 2 witnesses of Revelation Chapter 11. They'd been invulnerable until the time of their prophesying and their dead bodies lay in the streets of Jerusalem, for 3 ½ days while everybody gave gifts to each other like Christmas – overjoyed at the death of God's 2 witnesses. Everybody on earth will see their dead bodies (no doubt by satellite TV), and they will see it when God resurrects them and draws them up bodily into Heaven.
3. Jesus: The time will come when those who kill you will think they're doing God's service.
4. Jesus: Parents will turn in the children to the authorities because the children turn to Christ. Children will turn their parents into the authorities because the parents have turned to Christ.
5. "Difficult Times Will Come" 2 Timothy 3:1-4, 7

1But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

2For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,

4treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

Our own time – lots of learning, little knowledge of the truth.

6. It's the night Jesus spoke of when He said, "Work while it is yet day, the night comes when no man can work."

In Heaven those who've been martyred during this time cry out to God:

"How long, O Lord, Holy and True..." Do you do nothing and don't judge and avenge "our blood" on those who dwell on the earth?"

They were told to rest a little while longer until the number of all those to be martyred was complete.

God's judgment does fall – We read of the 7 trumpet judgments:

1. 1/3 earth, trees, green grass burned up
2. 1/3 of sea became blood and 1/3 seal life died
3. 1/3 of all fresh water was poisoned.
4. 1/3 of Heavenly bodies were struck so they didn't give their light.
5. The spiritual place called the Abyss, a prison house for some demons was opened so that demons torment men with stings like scorpions for 5 months. Men want to die and can't.
6. 1/3 of mankind is killed – that after ¼ of mankind had earlier been killed.

Revelations 9:20, 21 the rest of mankind...did not repent"

20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;

21 and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

Now in Chapters 15 & 16 come the 7 bowl judgments. They fall in quick succession, one right after another.

Verse 1

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.

Verse 2

2 And 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.

Sea of Glass

Some scholars: Symbolic shows set a part holiness of God.

Some scholars: Real, glory of God can refract through it so his glory is evident to the universe.

It is a real structure and not just symbolic. Ezekiel saw it and said it has "*the awesome gleam of crystal*" (Ezekiel 1:22)

John saw it in Rev 4:6 – "Sea of glass, like crystal."

It's part of the other-worldly splendor of God's throne room.

It exists before the throne of God (Rev 4:6)

Mixed with fire

God's judgment to burn away – consume – the chaff.

Victorious

They'd kept their eyes on the author and finisher of their faith. They'd been faithful unto death, and have received the crown of life, as Jesus said to the church at Smyrna (Rev 2:10)

"They'd come out of the great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white on blood the blood of the lamb." (Rev. 7:14)

You've heard the phrase, "The victorious Christian life." That has nothing to do with being some kind of super-Christian. The person who, like a little child, humbly keeps his eyes on the author and finisher of his faith and preserves in that despite his own weakness, dears, sins, or external resistance is the one of "victorious Christian life.

The saved person will be delivered to perfection some day – not yet in this body of flesh and that is when our savior becomes not only the author of our faith, but also the finisher/perfecter of it.

Hymn: "Victory in Jesus, my Savior forever, He sought me and He bought me with His redeeming love. He loved me 'ere I knew Him and all my love is due Him, He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood."

Harps of God

To make music and sing praise and worship to the Lord.

Verse 3

3 And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant 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!"*

Song of Moses

The exodus, the crossing of the Red Sea by God's people to escape Pharaoh's armies, the scripture records that:

"At the blast of your nostrils the waters were piled up, the flowing waters stood up like a heap." (Exodus 15:8)

"The waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left." (Exodus 14:22)

Exodus 15 records the song of Moses. It's a song of awe, thankfulness and worship to the God who delivers. It ends with the words: *"The Lord shall reign forever and ever."* (Exodus 15:18)

These people of God murdered in the great trip and now delivered to the Throne of God, can sing that same song of deliverance. It ends with: *"All nations will come and worship before you..."* which occurs during the millennial and eternal reign of Christ on earth.

It's fitting that the song of Moses was sung after deliverance from the 1st empire (Egypt) of the 7 empires that manifest Lucifer's "mystery of iniquity" civilization, and this song in Revelation 15 was sung after deliverance from the 7th and last such empire. 7 heads of one great, red dragon.

The Song of the Lamb is recorded In Revelation 5:4-19

9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

10 "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

Angels Exalt the Lamb

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,

12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

14 And the four living creatures kept saying, Amen "And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Like the song of Moses and the song of the victorious here in Revelation 15, it ends with praise to God and to the Lamb who dominion on earth is forever and ever.

Verse 4

*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."*

"All nations will come to worship before you..."

During the 1000 year reign of Christ upon the earth and during His eternal reign upon it after the re-creation of the new Heaven and new earth, scripture says:

"...at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2: 10, 11 – quoting Isaiah 45)

Righteous Acts revealed

Whatever Lucifer's persuasion was in his desire to be like the most high, it was persuasive; 1/3 of angels followed him and all mankind fell.

God's purpose in allowing this terrible end-time scenario is to give full exposition of what are Lucifer's was, his motivations and what are the results of them – in the full light of real historical events of the last days. And compare those with God's ways, motivations and results in the full light of historical events during the same period, after during millennial reign of Christ.

"Your righteous acts have been revealed."

Verse 5

5 After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened

Temple is Sanctuary

This does not refer to the temple in Jerusalem; it refers to the tabernacle in the wilderness. The "sanctuary" of that tabernacle refers to the Holy of Holies in it, where the Ark of the Covenant holding the actual stone tablets upon which God wrote the 10 commandments.

These earth-dwellers who so blatantly break those commandments are not to be judged by them.

Verse 6

6 and 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.

Linen, Clean and Bright, is always representative of perfect righteousness. The description of these angels is much like the description of the glorified Jesus Christ in Revelation chapter 1.

Verse 7

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.

We saw in Revelation chapter 4 how these 4 living ones has great insight into God's creation and authority over it, especially regarding the animate creation.

It's fitting that they deliver the articles of God's wrath to these 7 angels who will deliver it on God's created earth.

Verse 8

8 And 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.

God's wrath and anger have some up before His face. He is not to be approached until these 7 plagues have ended. It's for much the same reason that there was "silence in Heaven for about a half an hour" (Rev. 8:1) just before the 7 trumpet judgments were delivered.