

Born to Win

Revelation #21

by: Ronald L. Dart

² And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.

³ They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb[.]

This is the 15th chapter of the Book of Revelation. We've made our way through chapters 12, 13, and 14 in which we got the background, and it was all laid out for us, of the persecution of the saints (that is, of the people of God) by the Devil, by the old dragon himself, and then by the agency called the Beast and the Beast Power in Revelation 13, and how the whole thing is designed to destroy God's people, to destroy his work, to destroy everything God has had to do with. And in the 14th chapter where we have it shown to us that God is going to set aside the whole number of his people that he intends to set aside and protect, that when the seventh trumpet is blown, the resurrection takes place, and the saints are caught up to meet God in the air. And then they come back to this Earth, where they see the seven last plagues poured out upon those people who have opposed God.

At this moment in time, before the wrath of God is poured out, two songs are sung. The first is the "Song of the Lamb".

³ [G]reat and marvelous are Your works,
Lord God Almighty!
Just and true are Your ways,
O King of the saints!

⁴ Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy.
For all nations shall come and worship before You,
For Your judgments have been manifested.

This is the Song of the Lamb. I don't know if someone's actually set that to music somewhere, but I dare say they have. In all my church music, I have never run across that particular one. But there's another song here mentioned, which is really quite relevant to this and one which I don't think that many people pay that much attention to. It's the Song of Moses. Now what could that be?

Now, it's possible there is some song of Moses that none of us know that is going to be revealed to us, but I would say that if you were a 1st century Christian sitting in a church in Ephesus and someone reads this to you... You know about Judaism, you know about the Old Testament, you have read parts of it, you've heard it read in synagogue because you have attended there. And certainly if you are a Jewish Christian, you will know immediately that this is a reference to the Song of Moses that is found in Deuteronomy. The 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy.

When you go back and read it, right at the end of chapter 31 it tells us this:

³⁰ Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:

Now what I want to read to you is not the whole Song of Moses. It is rather lengthy, and quite poetic, with a lot of imagery to found in it. I want to read excerpts from it, because portions of it seem to be very relevant to what we are ready about and will be reading about in the Book of Revelation. The song begins:

Deuteronomy 32

¹ Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

² My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

³ Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

There is this comparable theme to the Song of the Lamb, ascribing greatness to God and speaking of his greatness.

⁴ He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

They have corrupted themselves, though. And this is really a prophetic statement that Moses makes, although by the time Moses sings this song, Israel had corrupted themselves. They had started out well, but they had not hung on to the truth. They had not stayed with their God. They had not remained faithful, and he says:

⁵ They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

Well now, this is kind of a strange expression, "their spot." The Hebrew word means like a blot or splotch or something of that nature which one might have upon him, but it kind of calls to mind the mark made by the writer's inkhorn, or the mark or sign of kind and its contrast with the mark of the beast because it says their spot is not the spot of his children as though his children might have a spot. Not a blemish spot, but a spot upon them which marks or designates them as his children.

⁶ Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

The expression that he has “bought” you is a reference to being redeemed. As we explained earlier, when you committed a crime in the Old Testament, you either paid it back (and you paid it back in multiples) or you were sold on the auction block as a slave and you paid it off that way, but your near-kinsmen could redeem you, that is, he could buy you back. So God speaks to Israel and says, “I have bought you. I have redeemed you.”

¹² So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

¹³ He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock[.]

It’s talking about Israel and all the wonderful things that God had done for Israel. But then Israel forsook God, which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. Oh, he believed God existed, but there was no particular reason to follow him. There’s no reason to take him terribly seriously.

¹⁵ [...] then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

¹⁶ They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

And here the echoes of Revelation, the echoes of the Beast and of the powers that lead God to judge Israel of old, and then once again at the very end time.

¹⁷ They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

¹⁸ Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

¹⁹ And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

Yeah, I guess he would. Though when you consider all the things that God had done for Israel: how he had brought them out of slavery, had given them a new life, given them a new hope, fed them in the wilderness, and how they still rebelled and provoked them, how he would come to almost hate them. And the suggestion, though, is we are now singing the Song of Moses in a new context; in the context of the Book of Revelation, and of an Israel approaching the end time who has once again forsaken, has once again turned their back upon him. And then when God sees it, he will abhor them because of the provoking of his sons and daughters.

²⁰ And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be[.]

You know, there are times when a person, in his life, forgets God one time too many. Oh yeah, we pray. We consult God. We pray and we ask God to intervene in our lives. We ask for his guidance in the hard decisions we make, but it is so hard sometimes to maintain the prayer habit. It is so hard to stay constant in prayer, and there comes a time, I believe, in the life of every Christian when God says, “Well. He’s not paying any attention to me. I’ll just hide my face from him and I’ll see how well he can do without me.”

Yeah. It happens from time to time. It’s like a child who, when you’re helping him walk, gets frustrated and angry with you or tells you, by his body language, “Take your hands off me!” and falls down. Fine, you want to see how you can do without me, let’s see how you can do without me. And like children we have turned our back on God, and God hides his face and says, “Fine. You want to do it without me. Go right ahead. Let’s see what your end shall be.”

²⁰ [...] for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

²¹ They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

²² For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

That’s enough to make the hair stand up on the back of your neck. I wonder where you and I are going to be when the mountains are set on fire.

²² For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

No this isn’t Revelation. This is out of the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32. It’s Old Testament, but it’s a prophecy and here we have the saints at the very end standing on the sea of glass before the throne of God singing the Song of Moses because it is so relevant to what is about to take place right on the face of this planet, right around our ears if we are among those still living when Christ is ready to return. God said of his people at that time, who had rebelled against him and were disobedient:

²³ I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

²⁴ They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

All this stuff has been talked about all through Revelation as we’ve come to this point. All kinds of things like this have been taking place in the visions of John of the time of the end. Moses’ song says:

²⁵ The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.

Now why should this happen? Now remember, all this stuff is in imagery. It's sort of painted in impressionistic terms upon a canvas that we look at and try to understand what it might mean. He uses this poetic language. He says:

³² For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:

³³ Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

The imagery here is of a vineyard, and of grapes, and of vines. And he says their vine, the vintage, the wine that they produce, is the fruit of Sodom and Gomorrah. These are the two cities of total corruption, the one that gave its name to sodomy. And he says, "What you have become to me is like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah." And more than one place in the Old Testament prophecies Israel is compared to Sodom and Gomorrah, and Jesus actually suggests that Sodom and Gomorrah might have more toleration in the day of judgement than some cities in Israel of his day. He basically says that "If Sodom and Gomorrah had heard what you have heard, and seen what you have seen, they would have repented, and you haven't repented." It's strange how often Jerusalem and Israel are compared to Sodom and Gomorrah.

³⁴ Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?

³⁵ To me belongeth vengeance and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

My...you would have thought that this was transposed right into the Book of Revelation, right where we've been reading. Well, it is. As these saints sing this song before God, it's the day of vengeance and recompence. The day of their calamity is at hand, the seven last plagues are about to be poured out. There's no surprise at all, I guess, that the Song of Moses would be sung here for it's a prophecy as much as any other that seems to point to the very end time and to the final judgement of God.

In Deuteronomy 32, where we are, in verse 36 he continues to say this:

³⁶ For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

³⁷ And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted[.]

Where is their defense?

³⁹ See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

You can save up all the money you want. You can do all the works you want. But when all is said and done, there's not a thing in the world you can do to deliver yourself out of God's hand. He is God. He is sovereign. He does what he wants. He kills whom he wishes. He makes alive whom he wishes. He would whom he wants and heals whom he wants. So who are you and who am I to argue with him?

⁴⁰ For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

⁴¹ If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

Well I don't hate God and neither do you, but it's bone-chilling to consider that there will come a time when God will render judgement finally. Keep it in mind.

⁴² I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

⁴³ Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

What a story, and what a song. What a song to be sung and then to understand that here are all the saints redeemed from the Earth, the ones just resurrected, the ones just caught up to meet Christ in the air, and they're all gathered before God on the throne, and they sing this song. Why this song? Because this song is about this time. The Song of Moses belongs right here in Revelation because it is the theme of what God is doing. He is punishing Israel, but he will save them. And he will wreak vengeance upon those who fought against him. That vengeance will be described in terrible terms, with the pouring out of the seven last plagues in the very next chapter of Revelation.

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

That's verse 5 of Revelation 15. Now a little aside here: when the tabernacle was originally created, Moses was told to make it after the pattern he had been shown. And the pattern he had been shown was of another tabernacle, the real tabernacle according to the writer of Hebrews, who also tells us that when Moses was told to make this tabernacle, he was told to make it after a heavenly pattern, that is, the real tabernacle that is in heaven in the presence of God, not the one that is down here on the Earth.

Now the centerpiece of the tabernacle that Moses had made was a box. Just this little box that had a cover on it, and the box is called the Ark of the Testimony. I know you probably think of it as the "Ark of the Covenant", but it is a later custom to refer to it that way. All the time, in the earliest times, it is referred to again and again as the "Ark of the Testament", or rather the "Ark of the Testimony". Why the Ark of the Testimony? Well, that's not too difficult. It's because it contained the testimony of God. What's the testimony of God?

Well, let me just give you a few scriptural references to fill in a little background for you here. In the 25th chapter of Exodus, verse 16, there is this short statement. Moses is told by God:

¹⁶ And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

Well, what's that? In Exodus 25:21, he says this:

²¹ And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark;

(Actually the Hebrew word is cover. "You shall put the mercy *cover* above...")

and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

Again, what is this testimony that God gave to him?

Well, later, Exodus 31:18:

¹⁸ And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

Now of all the things that God might testify to Israel, of all the testimony that he might give them, what is the one thing that is called the "testimony of God"? Well, it's the Ten Commandments. Everybody knows, if you've ever watched the movie *The Ten Commandments* with Charlton Heston, you know that the two tablets of testimony, written with the finger of God, are the Ten Commandments. There's another passage, just a little later, Exodus 32:15:

¹⁵ And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.

¹⁶ And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

Well, was there anything else that might be involved in this? Well, there's another passage of scripture: 1 Kings 8:9:

⁹ There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

Ok, it's the Ark of the Testimony. It's also called, in Revelation, the "Tabernacle of the

Testimony”. Now, lest we overlook the connection, we have already seen earlier in this series that the Ark of the Testimony was seen in the temple in heaven in one of these visions. The whole thing was opened up and John is allowed to look straight into it, and he sees in the inside of it the Ark of the Testimony. What do you suppose is in the Ark that’s in heaven? Well, if we can believe this, it’s the testimony of God. And what is that? It’s the Ten Commandments of God. All ten of them. No exceptions. I don’t think that they carved out or erased one of those commandments somewhere down through time, so that whenever in Revelation it opens up and you see the temple in heaven and you see inside of it the Ark of the Testimony...I don’t think there are nine commandments on it. I think there are ten.

All this is in the Book of Revelation, pointing to the last days, and the Ten Commandments are still, at that late date, the standard of conduct and judgement. It’s that thing by which God will judge mankind. That’s why it’s so important; that there is a judgement about to be performed upon mankind. The ten last plagues that are about to be poured out are not just arbitrary. It’s not just that god got personally angry and is going to stomp all kinds of people down. It’s because they have been judged and found to be sinners, and the standard by which they have been judged is the Ten Commandments. In Revelation 11:19 it says:

¹⁹ And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

Now there’s something else you might want to know about this tabernacle. It’s called in Hebrew, the “tent of meeting.” It is the place where God came to meet with Moses and to meet with the children of Israel. There are also, in the Old Testament, certain festivals which are called “appointed times.” In other words, they are appointments with God. Now, you make an appointment with your dentist and you don’t show up, they’re going to give you a call because you didn’t make your appointment. It’s sobering to think that we have appointments with God. I’m very bad about appointments. I have to have someone remind me of them. I put little stickers on the wall, and on my desk, and different places to remind myself. I have to remind myself many times about a dental appointment. I don’t know why, but I think it’s easier to forget an appointment with the dentist than an appointment for lunch, shall we say.

But to have an appointment with God, there is a time when we meet God. And I presume, that being the case, that he’s going to be there to meet us and...we don’t show up. Well, the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle of meeting with God, in heaven, has within it a set of standards, the Ten Commandments, that we’re supposed to live by, including the 4th: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”

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 vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

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.

Now, what to make of that last statement is not altogether clear. But entering into the temple may suggest fleeing there for refuge. In other words, you have your time now when you can approach God. You have your time that you can go to him, that you can meet him, that you can approach him. But the time may come (and the prophets tell us this over and over again) when that door is closed, and you can't do it anymore. The time to seek refuge is *before* the seven angels start pouring out the wrath of God. Once this is started, those left on Earth will have to drink the whole cup. And it is a bitter cup, indeed.

The 16th chapter of the Book of Revelation is the record, written in advance, of what the wrath of God is going to consist, of what he is going to do, how it's going to affect man, how they're going to respond to it. And it is terrifying, totally terrifying. The operative question, the important question, is "Why?" Because God is not evil, God is not wicked. God does not enjoy hurting. God does not take any pleasure in the death of the wicked or the affliction of the wicked. But, you know, in order to be just, in order to be seen as just, God cannot allow corruption to go unrecognized. God cannot allow violence to go un-avenged. He must step in, in world affairs, and do something about the corruption that is here. Violence has to be answered with violence. Otherwise, to call him just and a fair God has no meaning.

And so we come to the 16th chapter of the Book of Revelation, verse 1:

¹ And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

² And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

But the rest will have to wait until next time. Until then, remember **you** were *born to Win*.

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