

02.28.21

## Revelation

### Chapter 15 - Revealing the Heart of Divine Wrath

#### God's Wrath Reveals the Truth (vs. 2-4)

**Revelation 15:2-4:** 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. 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!

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.”

Did you pick up on that phrase, “You alone are holy,” and “Your righteous acts have been revealed”? “*Apokaluptó*,” Revelation, revealing. God is revealing to us wonderful things in this book. And you know, I have to admit that when I come to passages like Chapter 15 and going into 16, which is dealing with the seven bowls of wrath of God, you come with some trepidation in that, because wrath is not one of the greatest subjects that you choose to embrace. In fact, it's one of the things we want to run from, which is a good thing. But as you come into this, God wants to explain to you why He's angry. And I think that's one of the wonderful things about the Book of Revelation, because it is an unveiling book; it is revealing things to us. He is revealing to us the heart, His heart, in His wrath. And if you and I were to understand what His heart is all about, then we would understand what the wrath is all about. One of the reasons why there's so much confusion about it is because we've just never understood how much He loves us. And so, it comes into

play with this particular passage that we begin to see clearly the love of God.

Now, as we looked at last week, if you look with me in Revelation 15:1, we understood that there was a sign that was given, and the sign is in the heavens, and this sign is really displaying something great and marvelous, and it begins to reveal the seven plagues, which we're going to see in Chapter 16, the seven bowls of God's wrath.

But if you look, it says,

(Revelation 15:1) “... which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.”

It is telling us some wonderful things within this passage. And first of all, let me just say this at the onset, that when we see the wrath of God, and as we're going to be looking specifically in verse 2, where we begin to see the passion, of course, that's one of the things that we've seen throughout the Book of Revelation, that when God is upset, there's a passion behind it, a love behind it, that He cares. And I think when people say, “I don't know why God has this whole wrath thing going,” they don't really understand what it means to love. Because quite frankly, I

would think it would be an unloving thing if somebody didn't care if somebody was hurting somebody that you love. Don't you think that would be uncaring? I mean, the very fact that somebody gets angry about that. Have you ever had something happen to you and the people around you that supposedly were your friends sat back passively and did nothing? And they weren't infuriated by the things that were happening to you? How did that make you feel? And so, Scripture is going to reveal to us that we have somebody that is touched with our problems and cares about it. Of course, as we go all the way back to Revelation 12, we see this woman that God loves, the symbol of Israel, and how she's being attacked, and then she has a child, i.e. the Messiah is born, and how the serpent wants to destroy, and you don't think He should be upset about that? So, He puts it in those terms, and we begin to see the picture, and that's what Revelation does. It's very graphic, and it gives these marvelous pictures of who God is and how He feels and the depth of His love. And we just realize that God is angry simply because He cares. I mean, if He didn't care, He wouldn't be angry. And He sees the weak and the

burdened, and He sees the people that are being mistreated, and God says, "I care about this. I'm not going to let it continue." Now, the wonderful thing, as you see at the end of verse 1, is, but there is an end to it. And that's also revealing to us the heart of God.

Listen, first of all, God is not an angry God. The anger is but for a moment. And what Scripture reveals to us over and over again, and if I can just give you a few verses that make reference to this, one is found in Psalm 103:8.

It starts off this way,

(Psalm 103:8) "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger..."

Which means that anger isn't His motivating force; that anger is not His makeup; that the anger is coming out of a caring, but it's not the anger that moves Him.

In fact, Psalm 145:8 reads this way,

"The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness."

Great in mercy; full of compassion. I love all those tag-  
ons, don't you? I mean, it really is describing who God is,  
and it's showing His character.

Joel 2:13 says,

“... Slow to anger...”

Do you notice how many times it's repeated?

“... For He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger,  
abounding in lovingkindness...”

(Jonah 4:2) “... slow to anger and abundant in  
lovingkindness...”

That was one of the things that bothered Jonah. I mean,  
he knew that God was going to be gracious to the  
Assyrians and he just hated that because he really wanted  
these guys dead because of, course, what they're doing to  
his own countrymen. And he says, “The big problem with  
You, God, is that You're slow to anger and You're great in  
lovingkindness.” How would you like those accusations  
thrown at you?

Nahum 1:3 says,

“The LORD is slow to anger...”

And then it uses an interesting mix,

“... and great in power...”

I mean, think, in fact, if you had the power to do something. Wouldn't you use it to destroy certain people and certain things almost instantly? Wipe them off the face of the earth just to take care of the problem. “You have great power, but You're slow to anger.” What an interesting combination that is. God is declaring literally within His anger that He refuses to be cavalier, He refuses to be apathetic about the things that are happening that are wrong. He's not going to stand back passively and say, “Not a big deal.” He's not going to do that. And so, His anger is going to come up.

But Psalm 30:5 reads this way,

“For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime...”

That's an interesting contrast, isn't it? Let's put it another way, His favor is forever.

Isaiah says something very similar,

(Isaiah 54:7) “For a brief moment I forsook you, But with great compassion I will gather you.

(Isaiah 54:8) In an outburst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, But with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,” Says the LORD your Redeemer.”

It is really displaying the heart of God. And yes, God is declaring, “I refuse to be cavalier and apathetic about destructive behavior and sorrowful happenings. I'm not going to sit back and not care about that. But I also refuse,” and to me this is a wonderful thing where it says, “wrath is now finished.” To me the wonderful thing is that God is saying, “But I refuse to allow My anger to be the ruling and abiding force in heaven forever.” I mean, that's very comforting to me. In other words, God says, “I will care and I will care deeply and we're going to get this thing fixed, but I'm not going to allow anger to rule My heart.” In a way, Scripture says that very same thing to you and me. Ephesians 4 is taken out of Psalm 4, where it says, “Be angry and sin not. Don't let the sun go down on your anger.” What is God saying? He's saying, “Listen, if

you're not angry about it, there's something wrong with you. You need to be angry about things that are wrong, but don't let it be the ruling force in your life." It's easy to allow that anger to become, as Hebrews tells us, a root of bitterness. And before long, it begins to, it's all your thinking and it's the way that you live your life. And you live your whole life hating things and being after things rather than loving and demonstrating the kindness of God. Remember, His loving kindness and His favor are forever. And so, Scripture is really revealing to us that anger has a place, but for a short time. And don't let that run your life. And God has given us that wonderful principle in the passage. So, don't let anger run your life.

Well, the end of verse 1 is telling us after this is done, finished, done, complete. And I'm so thankful for that because we're going to live eternity in heaven with no wrath of God. And that's a wonderful thing. As you come to verses 2, 3, and 4, I believe that there are very few verses that clarify to us what the anger of God is about better than these.

As you look at this with me, and we'll begin with verse 2, he says,

(Revelation 15:2) “And I saw something...”

Now, the picture that he's seeing is not unlike what we saw at the very beginning there in Revelation 4. And as you get to, say, even verse 6, it begins to be very descriptive. And we say, “Wow, that's almost the same picture that we saw in Revelation chapter...” All of you are saying that, right? But if you were to go back to Revelation 4 and you were to read in verse 6, you would see this picture of glassy sea. We even have a song, “around the glassy sea.” The question is, what exactly does he mean by that and what is he trying to convey? Well, once again, as Revelation does, it paints a picture. And that picture begins to stir in our emotions to cause us to see the heart of God in these things.

So, if you pick up with me, it reads this way,

“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...”

So, you will be able to walk on water, won't you? By the way, if that's the next question, I already got it.

“... standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.”

Josephus makes a particular reference to the harps.

Josephus is a historian, not necessarily a Christian, during the times of the Romans. And he writes of the histories and describes many of the things that the Jews would use, himself being a Jew, but really being paid by the Romans to write history. But he writes about the harps. And one of the things he says about the harps is this particular word that is used in the Greek, that it's a harp that has 10 strings. Now, what we're going to see in the passage is that the children of God, more specifically the Israelites, the 144,000 we've already seen in Chapter 14, are standing with the Lamb singing. And the picture is very strong about their participation in this. And I'm not going to go too far into this because I'm going to go into speculation. I don't want to do that. But what we're seeing is the Jews playing the harp. Now, the question is, why the 10 strings? And the answer is very obvious if you're a Jew. It represents the Ten Commandments. And

their representation is that they're harmonizing with the laws of God. It's a wonderful picture. You see it in the Psalms as well, and it'll make mention of this particular harp. What it's conveying is, and one of the reasons why the word “harp” is being used, is because “harp” by itself in the Old Testament conveys a sense of vibration. And the emphasis of the word is that you're intense, and you're moving intensely. In other words, it's a picture of intensity. So that as you begin to proclaim your love for God's love, for God's law, you're not just saying, “I love God's law.” You're intensely saying, “**There's nothing I love more than the law of God.**” So, that's why the use of the harp.

So, as you see the passage, what we have are these that are proclaiming this. And how do we know they're proclaiming this so intensely? Well, we know this because they refused to take the mark of the beast and they had been slain because of this. They would die for this. These are intense people. I mean, people say all the time what they believe. But these are people that actually believe it, were willing to die for it. Now, the picture that we see in

heaven has this glass sea. Actually, the phrase is more descriptive, "glassy sea." And the picture is this wonderful picture of calm. Just a perfect calm. Well, I mean, if you've ever been on a glassy sea, it's an amazing scene to see. If you've ever been in a tumultuous sea, that's an amazing thing to see too, and a pretty scary thing. How can this thing that at one time was so tumultuous and threatening lives be so inviting and so calming? But here it is. And then you have this fire mixed with it. You notice this? The fire is always a sense of the passion of God. Scripture tells us that our God is a consuming fire. And it really is revealing that He feels passionate. Now, the question is, what does He feel passionate about? And the answer is very clear within the passage. He feels very passionate about giving your life peace. And those that had been mistreated and those that had been victims of the world and their hatred and their turmoil and their tumultuous lives are now standing where? In a place of perfect peace where God has passionately longed for them to be. What a great picture this is.

So, in many respects, what you see in Psalm 65, if you turn there with me, is this kind of personified by that word “sea”. I mean, throughout Scripture, we know that the parallel of sea and humanity has oftentimes been used. And we know that in Revelation in particular, it's going to be used. He says, “You saw the sea. What do you think the sea is?” And of course, he says, “I don't know.” He says, “Well, the sea of the nations, the peoples.”

And in Psalm 65, you see that similar point that is being brought out within this particular passage. Now, let me just say this about the seas. Isaiah 57, we oftentimes quote it.

Isaiah 57 reads,

(Isaiah 57:20) “But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet...”

Because as Paul might say in Ephesians, they're being moved and swayed by every wind and wave of doctrine. I mean, there's a lot of winds out there and there's a lot of people that are upsetting other people. It's kind of like when Paul's writing to Titus and he goes, “There are people in your midst that are upsetting whole

households.” And you can feel the turmoil that people are doing just by virtue of opening their mouths. And the wind starts coming out and you walk away in great turmoil in your own life because you had a conversation with somebody. So, just multiply that by humanity and we've got some waves. We've got some problems.

What's interesting is, you go to the Book of Ezekiel, and I don't want you to turn there because we're in Psalm, right? But as you go to Ezekiel 27, he begins to talk about this nation, the nation of Tyre and Sidon. Well, you begin to read about it and they become a picture of Satan himself. If you remember reading as you go on into Ezekiel, you begin to see Satan and his glory. Well, what's interesting is the direct tie is with the sea. And so, it says, “Your entrance is at the sea.” And goes on to say, “And your heart is in the sea.” It then goes on and says ultimately to Tyre and Sidon, “But the sea will destroy you.” So, it's interesting how man will cater to man, and he doesn't know that he's catering to turmoil. And the very thing that he caters to is the very thing that will destroy him, the pleasing of man. But as we come into

this, what we understand is that God, by His awesome deeds, is going to calm all of that.

And if you look with me in Psalm 65, it reads this way,

(Psalm 65:5) “By awesome deeds You answer us in righteousness, O God of our salvation,

You who are the trust of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest sea;

(Psalm 65:6) Who establishes the mountains by His strength, Being girded with might;

(Psalm 65:7) Who stills the roaring of the seas, The roaring of their waves, And the tumult of the peoples.”

You see how he brings that parallel right in within the passage?

Isaiah 17:12 reads this way,

“Alas, the uproar of many peoples Who roar like the roaring of the seas, And the rumbling of nations

Who rush on like the rumbling of mighty waters!”

Very descriptive, isn't it? Because once that water starts coming, you're not going to stop it. And you realize that there's a force that is coming into play that is very

destructive. And he pictures this as the nations and how it begins to stir up in our lives. And the sad thing about all of this is that man exalts the seas. It's the whole thing about Tyre and Sidon, because it's the place where they get rich; it's the place where they make their money. This is the place where there's rivalry, greed and jealousy and war. This is where they're fighting. I mean, God says, "Why do you have to do that?" But, you know, man is not satisfied with just conquering his little neighborhood. He's got to go overseas to do it. And it really shows the insatiable desire of man that just can't be calmed, but how that longing to produce those things in his life, that is that avarice and greed and the things of what he wants, in the pursuit of his desires is so tumultuous. I mean, what is it that causes people to be so anxious-ridden? And Scripture would say it's the pursuit of these things. I mean, read James. What does he say? "What's the source of your quarrels? Why are you so angry with each other? What's your greed? You long for things you can't have, so you go kill somebody." And it's the very thing that's stirring up the hearts of man because he's longing for the things of the world. And look, enough is never enough. You just

have to keep going. And so, the seas is this picture of, “I need more.” And this insatiable desire of going after more, and that causing turmoil, and God says, “We're going to calm this.” Well, I'm going to go back to that later.

But as we come to the next verse, if you look with me in Revelation 15, not only are they singing, but we actually understand that they're singing a song. And this is a great text because there's a combination of songs that are going on in the passage. There's the song of Moses and there's a song of the Lamb, and they're both kind of simultaneously being played. And what a great passage because what we're seeing is a singing of something that is caused, and here's the point, a calming. In other words, what has caused the glassy sea? Why are they playing this song? You know, man praises his own efforts. He praises the things that he builds. He praises the pursuits that he has. And what does it do? It creates turmoil. We praise God, and what does it produce? Peace. That's a wonderful thing about our faith. The more we praise God, the more

peaceful we become. Did you know that? How wonderful that is.

So, if you look in this passage, we read, if you look with me in verse 3,

(Revelation 15:3) “And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb...”

There's a combination in the passage. One is the song of Moses, which we understand and we know of a song of Moses in the Old Testament. You're familiar with it in Deuteronomy 32. We kind of glanced at it this morning earlier, but take a moment, just look at it a little bit more detailed. And it's a pretty long song, so we won't be too detailed.

But if you look at the end of Deuteronomy 31 and it goes into verse 21, it's basically Moses reminding his people, “You're going in the promised land and there are going to be a lot of troubles. And so, I'm going to write this song to remind you when you go into the promised land, don't forget God,” and then he turns to them and he says, “But you're going to do so. But I'll write the song anyway.”

But he says,

(Deuteronomy 31:27) “For I know your rebellion and your stubbornness; behold, while I am still alive with you today, you have been rebellious against the LORD; how much more, then, after my death?”

“I mean, you're not going to have anybody shaking their finger at you.”

(Deuteronomy 31:29) “For I know that after my death you will act corruptly...”

It's not really encouraging words.

“For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands.”

(Deuteronomy 31:30) Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete:”

So, under what grounds is he writing the song? Well, as a reminder of, “You're going to forsake the Lord.” But this is

a song that is to be sung at the end of days when you remember, “Okay, I ran from God, I didn't do the right thing,” and you have no place to go but look up. And He says, “Remember this song.”

Now, what's interesting is, in verse 3 and 4,

(Deuteronomy 32:3) “For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God!

(Deuteronomy 32:4) The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just;

A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.”

What does the law love to happen? Justice. It proclaims this: Listen to the beautiful music of justice is served. How wonderful that is. Finally, right has won. Isn't that a great song? I mean, you go through this song and clearly it begins to point out, “God's been good to you, but you haven't been good to God.” And that's one of the first things he starts going through. I mean, God's faithfully carried you, He picked you up, He rescued you. He did all these things, but you haven't been good to Him. I mean, everything you've done. And because of that, misfortunes

are going to come upon you. “But the day is coming when I'm going to rescue you and I'm going to vindicate you and I'm going to save you from all of the bad guys that's starting to converge on you.” Because we know that in the end days, and we're going to see that in Revelation, all the nations of the earth will converge just like they did with Babylon, just like they did with Assyria on little Jerusalem. And it's going to be played all over again, and God's going to come and save them personally. That's a great scene.

So, he ends this way, if you look with me in Chapter 32, as he begins to say,

(Deuteronomy 32:36) “For the LORD will vindicate His people, And will have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their strength is gone, And there is none remaining, bond or free.”

In other words, there's no other hope; so that they're going to turn to their other gods and He's going to say, “Where are your gods?” He's going to turn to His people, “Where are they?” And they're going to say, “They're

gone. Money can't save me. All the technology can't save me. They're gone.” He says, “Okay, now I'll come.”

So, the passage reads this way,

(Deuteronomy 32:37) “And He will say, ‘Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge?’”

But we know this, according to verse 39,

(Deuteronomy 32:39) “See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me;

It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal,

And there is no one who can deliver from My hand.”

Now, the point clearly is, “I alone control your destiny.”

Unfortunately, man doesn't get that until he comes to the end of his rope. But only God controls your destiny. So, who should you be turning to? Well, this is a moment of justice. This is a moment of clarity. This is a moment in which people go, “I get it.”

And Moses is proclaiming in verse 43, what?

(Deuteronomy 32:43) “Rejoice, O nations, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants...”

Justice is going to be served. So, the song of Moses at this time is going to be the proclamation, “God has made everything right.”

We read earlier in Revelation in which these saints died for their faith. And we go, “I wonder what happened to them.” Well, the next picture is that they're on the glassy sea. And what we realize is that justice has been done. God has elevated His people that put their trust in Him. And so, from the perspective of the law, praise is being proclaimed, “Righteousness has been upheld. You have avenged Your people. Truth is done.”

Now, you have another song that's being sung, if you go back to Revelation 15, and it says it's the song of the Lamb. Now, we saw that at the beginning of Chapter 14 in which the 144,000 are standing with the Lamb. But the ultimate crux of the song is that we are proclaiming mercy. So, what's interesting is that you're hearing this harmony of the song in which justice has been served and mercy has reigned. What an interesting song that is. And really, when you consider the Book of Romans, that's the message of Romans 3, that God has demonstrated His

righteousness on the cross; that Christ has become the propitiation or the atoning victim for our sins. And justice was served and mercy reigns. Can you imagine the harmony of that song? So, the song and some of the words that are being conjured up, what's interesting about this song is that it's pulled from Deuteronomy 32, Psalm 11, 139, and Hosea. I mean, it's pulled through so many different passages.

But if you read it with me, it reads this way,

(Revelation 15:3) “... “Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!”

(Revelation 15:4) Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy...”

“Holy” means, “There's nobody like You.” “You alone. You stand unique because what You do, well, there's nothing to compare.”

Now, this is in the context specifically of wrath. So, what the song is declaring is, God has been just and merciful in His wrath. You understand that?

“... For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED.”

We have seen that You can be just and merciful, much like Habakkuk, right? As Scripture tells us. “In Your wrath, remember mercy.” God has done this in this moment. And man stands back and he goes, “I've never seen anything like this.” I mean, whatever your picture is of that end time, get this picture in your head: It'll be a moment in which **mercy and justice** will meet. It'll be a wonderful moment. So, I don't know how it's all going to come out, but it's a picture of who God is.

Now, the best way I can describe the picture is if you go with me to a passage in the gospel. If you turn with me to Mark 4, we'll just hopefully summarize it within this particular passage. Mark 4, interesting how it starts off, isn't it? Verse 1, where is Jesus? By the seashore. That's pretty interesting. Yeah. And He puts his boat on the sea. So, it's going to have to be kind of calm in order for Him to be on the boat and talking to people. So, things are calm because, of course, obviously the word of God and Christ

is there. In the context of this, He begins to give parables to the people. And one of the parables that He gives, of course, is the parable of soils and how the word of God is proclaimed and yet certain soil doesn't really embrace it. And He begins to describe that.

He says this, after talking about the word of God being proclaimed,

(Mark 4:24) “And He was saying to them, “Take care what you listen to....””

Just stop there for just a second. He's really saying, “Take care of what you value. Because the point of the matter is that, well, we know there is a lot of rhetoric that's going on all over the world. What is it you're listening to? He says, “Take care what you listen to because what you love is what you're going to be listening to, the thing that's drawing you. So, take care.”

And He goes on and says this,

“... “Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides.””

In other words, by what standards do you measure by? It's an interesting point that He's putting in here. And He's really talking about, once again, your value system. In other words, you hear something and you go, "Well, it's just that old pastor, he doesn't know what he's talking about." And that may be true, but if I'm quoting Scripture, you ought to be listening to it because the power of God is speaking and the Spirit of God is going to use that. And so, what we understand is that you won't really embrace that if it's not valuable to you. He says, "Be careful. Be careful how you listen." Okay, so He established that. He goes on and He begins to talk about the crops and all this within the passage.

(Mark 4:30) "And He said, "How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it?"

And then he interjects, and we were talking earlier today about mixed metaphors. We're going from one thing to another, but in this text, He's still applying the whole seed thing, but He's going into the mustard seed.

And if you look with me specifically, He says this,

(Mark 4:31) “It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil,

(Mark 4:32) yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR can NEST UNDER ITS SHADE.””

Now, His point is that the mustard seed is the smallest seed. Now, if we were talking in terms of just visual rhetoric, we would say something like, “Okay, pick a seed so you can have something great in your garden.” So, you're looking at all these seeds on the table, and you look at the little mustard seed, and you go, “Okay, I'm not going to put that in there. It's not going to grow up to be anything.” But it is the greatest. And what He's conveying is, you have to work through your value system. You come into perhaps a small church, and you say, “They don't have anything here. They're not grand, they're not glorious, they don't have a Coliseum.” And that's true, I don't have a Coliseum. But does that mean that the message is insignificant? Don't judge the book by its

cover. And the passage is saying, be careful, because really the fundamental parable of the mustard seed is, “If you’ll humble yourself, I’m going to make you great, but you have to be small in order for Me to make you great.” Now, that's the fundamental principle of the parable of the mustard seed.

In the context of this, guess what God does? He takes them on the water. They go on the water. And guess what happens to the sea? It begins to get tumultuous.

So, if you pick up with me, it reads this way,

(Mark 4:35) “On that day, when evening came, He said to them, “Let us go over to the other side.””

(Mark 4:36) Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.

(Mark 4:37) And there arose a fierce gale of wind...”

What a great picture of the turmoil of the world.

“... and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.”

(Mark 4:38) Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?””

You know what they were looking for, a kind of passion that Jesus cares. “Oh, I don't like God getting angry.”

Really? What if you're dying, and nobody's helping you?

Do you want Him to get angry at who's trying to kill you?

Yeah. Do you want Him to be cavalier, complacent, and apathetic about the things that are happening to you?

“Wake up. Aren't You upset about this?”

(Mark 4:39) “And He got up...”

What's the next phrase? Did you know “rebuke” has a connotation of anger?

“... and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush...””

The Greek word actually has that feel of what you would say when you were trying to calm somebody down. I mean, the seas are in turmoil because of the wind. We know that Satan is the prince of the power of the air and he's stirring up those winds and that sea is just really going bad. I mean, why do the nations rage? Why do they

devise a futile thing? Why are they so upset, as Psalm 2 says? I can tell you why they're so upset. Because they're pursuing all the wrong things. And they're trying to get you upset. They're trying to get you to long for and love the wrong things and in so doing you can be anxious-ridden and they're trying to put fear in your life and they're trying to stir you up. Do you know what Jesus says? "I'm angry at them." And He says, "Stop it!" Now, I want you to understand what you're witnessing here. You just witnessed the anger of God.

Do you understand what the anger of God is about? When God gets angry, it's to calm the storm. And that's a wonderful picture there in Revelation. Where are they? On the sea of glass. Why are they praising God? Not only has God eradicated unrighteousness, but He has also demonstrated His mercy and His lovingkindness, which never fails. You don't think that can give you peace? Listen, when I begin to realize all the things that God has done for me, and He turns to me and He goes, "Be anxious for nothing." I go, "What am I anxious for?" I mean, He didn't spare His own Son. He's going to give to

me everything because of that. There's not one good thing that He's going to withhold from me as I begin to sing the praises of God. If you'll just stop listening to the world and start singing the praises of God, you're not going to be afraid anymore. And God will literally give to you the calming because you're going to feel two things. You're going to feel His fire of His passion, "I'm not going to let them touch you." And you're going to feel the calmness of His presence and the peace that He has and will give to you. That's why Philippians 4 tells us that the peace of God was going to come upon you and He's not going to leave you. He's going to literally abide with you as you begin to think upon His glory and His grace. Simple song, isn't it? "Turn your eyes upon Jesus/ look full in His wonderful face. The things of earth will grow strangely dim/ in the light of His glory and grace." And what a calming effect that is when you consider He loves me. You want Him not to get angry? No, I want Him to get angry. But I want Him to get angry to make everything peaceful. And only God can do that. I mean, James says, "The anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God." I mean, when I get angry, it's anything but peaceful. But

when God gets angry, you know what? I love the wrath of God. And it was the very wrath of God and His hatred for sin that nailed His Son on the cross to save you. And I could never thank Him enough for that. Let's bow for prayer.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we give You thanks for Your love for us, demonstrated it in Your wrath. And thank You for giving us this picture because we would have missed it. We wouldn't have seen the glassy sea. We wouldn't have seen the rejoicing and the singing. The declaration that justice had been served is such a comforting declaration, but without mercy, how could we live with that? Your goodness is somehow met together in Your wrath, and only You could do that.

Dearly beloved, with your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I'm asking you to put your trust in Jesus Christ. Why? Because when He gets angry, it's for you. It's His love being demonstrated. Everything He does is for you. He's rescued you. And it was the will of the Father that He would do this. I can't fathom that. But I can tell you this,

that you don't have anything to be afraid of. And there's no reason why you should be worrying. I know the world's trying to stir you up. I know there's a lot of anxiety out there. But I can just hear His voice, "Stop it. Stop messing with My people." And I am comforted by that. I never thought I'd be comforted by hearing God being angry. But I am. Because He's angry for me. And God is angry when you're hurting, and God is angry when you're overwhelmed, and God is angry when you're burdened, and He's so angry that He's going to die for you. Now, why would you not love Him and give Him your life?