

THE Sea OF Glass



"Let there be Light" – Gen 1:3

Compiled by: *Dr. Anton du Plessis*
TheLightTowers@gmail.com

The Sea of Glass

On November 25th 2016 (*this was my period of time where God personally dealt with all my hidden sin – it was as if He showed me every night something over 30 days – it impacted me so deep that I wrought it down the next morning and confessed it the next day*) the Lord showed me in a vision the “**sea of glass**”. It was right in front of me at first. Later on, the sun rises over it.

What made this even more special, that specific morning somebody forwarded a YouTube song to me by Urban Rescue: “**My Provider**”. When I played it, it displayed calm waters with the sun rising over it. Coincidence? Not in a million years.

From my Diary

Transparent presence of the throne of God’s peace in presence of God’s Throne Room – “**THE PROVIDER**”!

A very bright sun which arises over the waters “**The SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS**”

But unto you who revere and worshipfully fear My name shall the **Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings and His beams**, and you shall go forth and gambol like calves [*released*] from the stall and leap for joy. Mal 4:2

Out from the throne came flashes of lightning and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne **seven blazing torches burned, which are the seven Spirits of God** [the sevenfold Holy Spirit]; Rev 4:5



And in front of the throne there was also what looked like a **transparent glassy sea, as if of crystal**. And around the throne, in the center at each side of the throne, were four living creatures (beings) who were full of eyes in front and behind [with intelligence as to what is before and at the rear of them]. [Ezek. 1:5, 18.]
Rev 4:6

And day and night they never stop saying, **Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty (Omnipotent)**, Who was and Who is and Who is to come. [Isa. 6:1-3.] Rev 4:8

Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and dominion, for You created all things; by Your will they were [brought into being] and were created. [Ps. 19:1.] Rev 4:11

Dunamis: Anointing

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with **power**: who went about doing good, **and healing all that were oppressed of the devil**; for God was with him. Act 10:38

God is light

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light**, and in him is no darkness at all.
1 John 1:5

Who being the **brightness of his glory**, and the express image of his person, and **upholding all things by the word of his power**, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Heb 1:3



God's Glory - Symbolized by wings

Above [*the ark*] and overshadowing the mercy seat were the representations of the cherubim [**winged creatures which were the symbols**] of **glory**. We cannot now go into detail about these things.

Heb 9:5

On my own journey through life, it was an amazing experienced over time when I saw that Moses sang a new song of victory when they went through the red sea and God delivered them from the Pharoah.

The Song of Moses

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. 2 The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. 3 The LORD *is* a man of war: the LORD *is* his name.

Exodus 15:1-3 KJV



Then I was even more amazed when I saw that when we overcome the victory over the beast, his image, his mark and over the number of his name, that we too will likewise sing the song of Moses in front of the throne on the sea of glass mingled with fire.

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. 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. Rev 15:2

Who is standing on the sea of glass?

Many will immediately say the “church” – but Revelation is clear that the Lord is going to spit the church of Laodicea out of his mouth: “**Since you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth**” Rev 3:16 ISV.

- Rev 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that **overcometh** will I give to eat of the **tree of life**, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.
- Rev 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that **overcometh** shall not be hurt of the **second death**.
- Rev 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that **overcometh** will I give to eat of the **hidden**



manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

- Rev 2:26 And he that **overcometh**, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give **power over the nations**:
- Rev 3:5 He that **overcometh**, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will **not blot out his name out of the book of life**, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
- Rev 3:12 Him that **overcometh** will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is new Jerusalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him my new name*.
- Rev 3:21 To him that **overcometh** will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his **throne**.
- Rev 21:7 He that **overcometh** shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he **shall be my son**.

The message is clear – he who overcometh will receive a reward as we just read – overcometh and I will give you the tree of life, you will not die, you will get a new name, you will rule over nations, your name will stay in the book of life, you will sit with me on the throne and you shall be my son. Yes, one day – those who overcometh will stand on this sea of glass like unto crystal receiving our rewards of victory and fall before the throne worshipping Yahshua – Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty!



And before the throne there was a **sea of glass like unto crystal**: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. 8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, **Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty**, which was, and is, and is to come. 9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10 The **four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne**, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Rev 4:6-11

In contrast with our earthly sea, as a type of perpetual unrest and chaos, is the sea of glass, at God's throne, in sharp contrast to this earthly turbulence. It is not a raging, chaotic swirl or wave motion. God's throne is a visible symbol of His sovereign rule. In front of His throne is this crystal-clear sea of glass. Revelation 4:6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.



QUALITIES OF GOD'S THRONE

By Martin G. Collins

<http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Audio.Details/ID/2286/Gods-Sea-Glass-pt.1.htm>

<http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Audio.Details/ID/2292/Gods-Sea-Glass-Part-2.htm>

The sea of glass, in front of the throne, reflects the **qualities of God's throne**. It is a throne room that is **holy, pure, glorious and eternal**. It is spectacularly dynamic, described in various scriptures as—**flaming with fire, glittering with sapphires, flashing and crashing with lightning and thunder, and dazzlingly white**.

Can you imagine what it will be like for you and me to be on the sea of glass, before God's throne. We will be bowing before Him, singing songs, and worshipping Him, with Jesus Christ at His right hand.

Jacob was given an opportunity to see God's abiding place in vision while sleeping. He saw angels going up and down what looked like a ladder to God's throne.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it.

Genesis 28:16-18



He anointed that stone that he slept on, and it has been handed down from generation to generation by the Israelites. It has been moved from the throne of England up into Scotland now. Jacob does not describe any details of what he saw; just that God's place is awesome! In other words: **overwhelming, grand, breathtaking, splendid, tremendous, and awe-inspiring**. Since he probably saw God's throne in this vision, then it stands to reason that he saw the sea of glass, and all or most of the other glorious elements of the throne room.

Moses describes a meeting with the Lord exactly three months after the Exodus from Egypt. The Israelites entered the Desert of Sinai and camped by the mountain, Mount Sinai. This is the same as the mountain of God, also called Horeb, where God appeared to Moses in a burning bush.

In Exodus 19:3-4, God compared His delivering the people out of Egypt, across the Red Sea, and to Sinai to His carrying them on eagles' wings.

It is worth noting that when young eagles are learning to fly, the mother eagle flies under them with her wings spread out to catch them. This is the analogy used to describe what God was doing for Israel as He delivered her out of Egypt. God delivers us out of this world, and sin, with just as much care. When the Israelites reached Mount Sinai, they were in for a demonstration of a minute amount of the power and glory of the Lord. Notice what the Israelites had to have happen to them before they were ready to meet God.



Exodus 19:10-25 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain." So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near your wives." Then it came to pass on the ***third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud***, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. ***And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke***, and God answered him by voice. Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. ***And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up***. And the Lord said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to



gaze at the Lord, and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near the Lord consecrate themselves, lest the Lord break out against them." But Moses said to the Lord, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it.'" Then the Lord said to him, "Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the Lord, lest He break out against them." So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

And God spoke all these words, saying: "***I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.***"

Exodus 20:1-3

So before the Israelites could come before God, He required that they wash their clothes as verses 10 and 14 tell us. They were to be physically clean and pure. No unclean or impure thing was allowed in God's presence. They did not have God's Holy Spirit, but for us in God's church it is quite a different story. Yes, we are to be physically clean, but the spiritual cleansing is of the utmost importance.



SANCTIFICATION

In Exodus 19:10, the Lord instructs Moses to 'consecrate' the people; and in verse 14, we see that Moses '**sanctified**' them. Consecrate and sanctify have the same basic meaning—they mean '**to set apart for a special and specific purpose.**' The same Hebrew word '**qadash**,' is translated both **consecrate and sanctify**, in verses 10, 14, 22, and 23. The meaning of that Hebrew word, is '**to be clean,**' '**to pronounce as clean ceremonially or morally,**' '**to be holy.**' That is what God expected of those Israelites before they appeared before Him, and He does us.

The Israelites were required to be clean as a condition of coming before God. How much more is expected of us, before we can bow before God on the sea of glass in front of His throne?

It stands to reason that no commandment breaker, that is a habitual commandment breaker, will stand before God on the sea of glass. Until we all have a full measure of the Holy Spirit, we slip into problems in our lives in that way. So to come before God requires cleanliness, it requires holiness. You have heard the saying, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." We see here why that is true. Members of God's church, the firstfruits of the kingdom, are required to be not just clean physically—not just clean on the outside, **but clean spiritually of heart and mind**—clean on the **inside**. We must be made holy by God! No human being can make something holy.



The Psalm 11:4 The Lord is in His holy temple, The Lord's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. Therefore, God is in heaven. We do not know if the distance from us can even be stated in physical terms. But it is much closer than we realize. It is not tremendously far away as most people believe, because it is in a spiritual universe or realm, where distance has little impact.

Psalm 47:8 God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne. His throne is holy in its excellence. Everything having to do with the throne, whether in heaven or on earth, is of the most excellent quality, workmanship, and the very best of materials are used. God's throne and throne room are not something to be considered lightly.

The temple that David envisioned, and that Solomon built, was of the most excellent and highest quality and workmanship possible for human beings to build. No building in the history of man has ever been of that level of excellence. Let us take a moment to look at an aspect of Solomon's excellent and superb temple for God.

I Kings 7:13-14 Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a bronze worker; he was filled with wisdom, understanding, and skill in working with all kinds of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and did all his work. I Kings 7:23 And he made the ***Sea of cast bronze, ten cubits from one brim to the other; it was completely round.*** Its height was five cubits, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference.



The original Hebrew term for "**the Sea**" is "**yam**" [yawm]. It means "a sea" or "large body of water." The root of this word means, "**to roar**" [as the breaking in noisy surf]. **Solomon's bronze sea has some similar characteristics to the sea of glass at God's throne.** It is not totally the same, but there are certainly similarities to it. The sea greatly enlarged the basin for washing that was in the tabernacle. The sea of cast metal was a large metal basin designed to contain water (like the sea of glass), representing the **forces of chaos subdued and brought to order by the Lord**, who is Creator of the world. When the temple was completed, the presence of the Lord was so powerful that the priests lost even the strength to stand.

I Kings 7:24-26 Below its brim were ornamental buds encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, all the way around the Sea. The ornamental buds were cast in two rows when it was cast. It stood on twelve oxen: three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; the Sea was set upon them, and all their back parts pointed inward. It was a handbreadth thick; and its brim was shaped like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom. It contained two thousand baths. So what we have here is—to the left of the entrance, on the south side of the court, stood the huge "molten bronze sea," and that replaced the smaller laver that had stood in the tabernacle court. The tabernacle only had the laver that served the double purpose of washing the hands and feet of the priests, as well as the parts of the sacrifices. But in the temple there were separate vessels provided for



these purposes. Not only was the temple much larger than the tabernacle but also some items were actually added to that temple.

Solomon's molten sea was round and made of bronze, a handbreadth thick, with the image of lilies around the rim, and it could hold over seventeen thousand gallons of water. I have been in manufacturing plants where they have containers, or storage tanks, of twenty thousand gallons, which is close to what this is. This large basin measured fifteen feet across and was seven and a half feet high.

I Kings 7:27, 38-39 He also made ten carts of bronze; four cubits was the length of each cart, four cubits its width, and three cubits its height. Then he made ten lavers of bronze; each laver contained forty baths, and each laver was four cubits. On each of the ten carts was a laver. And he put five carts on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house. He set the Sea on the right side of the house, toward the southeast. The ten carts and lavers were beautifully decorated metal wagons, six feet square and four and a half feet high, with handles at each corner. Each stand could hold a basin that held two hundred and thirty gallons of water. The carts were kept in the court of the priests right next to the sanctuary, five on the north side and five on the south side. Since the carts were on wheels, they could easily be moved from place to place. They were used for the washing and preparing of the sacrifices and for the general cleanliness of the temple. The dirty water could then be wheeled away and disposed of in a proper place and the basins were then refilled with clean water from the molten bronze sea.



There must have been a system for removing small amounts of water, so that the priests could wash their hands and feet. There might have been spigots at the base of the basin. Cleanliness and purity were essential in the proper worship of God. The temple was kept immaculately clean and polished. This was the physical requirement to maintain its holy stature. If the priests did not keep their hands and feet clean as they ministered in the temple, they were in danger of death.



HOLY SPIRIT

In Scripture, water for drinking is a picture of the Spirit of God.

John 7:37-39 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "***If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.***" But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

In comparison, water for washing is a picture of the Word of God.

- Psalm 119:9 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.
- John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word, which I have spoken to you.
- Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the ***washing of water by the word***, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

As the priests labored for the Lord in the temple, they became defiled by their own sins and by the animals they handled, so they needed to be cleansed. We too can become defiled and need the "washing of water by the word." ***Jesus pictured this in John 1, when He washed the disciples' feet.*** It is interesting to recognize the contrast between the ***sanctified church*** and the ***unclean wicked world in biblical imagery*** of "***the sea.***" The ***wicked*** cannot, in and of ***themselves, choose to be***



cleansed, neither can they find peace. The **sea imagery expresses it well.** Isaiah contrasts this peace and calmness with a description of the wicked:

"I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near," Says the Lord, "And I will heal him." **But the wicked are like the troubled sea,** When it **cannot rest,** Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. **"There is no peace," Says my God, "for the wicked."**

Isaiah 57:19-21

So we see the direct contrast between the troubled sea and peace. They are opposites. The **troubled sea represents chaos and war,** the **sea of glass represents calm order and peace.** It is a sea of glass, perfectly flat and smooth. It is interesting that the Beast, in Revelation 13:1, rises up 'out of the sea.'

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

Revelation 13:1

BABYLONIAN

"The sea," in that context, represents the **Babylonian** world system of **politics, economics, education, and military campaigns; and symbolizes its continued threat and chaotic origin.**



In fact, one of its mottos is: "**Order out of Chaos.**" The World Government rises up out of the chaos of world crisis and confusion, and initiates what will seem like order and peace. Babylon will seem to solve many of the world's problems temporarily; but it will bring suffering and death unlike the world has ever seen, because Satan uses this counterfeit instrument to try to destroy mankind. We see such counterfeiting referred to in Jude 13, where wild **waves of the sea**, cast up their own shame like foam; this is a figurative description of **false teachers** who throw out their obscene teachings like wreckage on the shore. The vast earthly sea symbolizes the continued threat the forces of chaos and evil pose against God and creation. Job 38 and Jeremiah 5, describe the sea generally as pushing against the boundaries God established for it.

Job 38:8-11 Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; When I said, 'This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!'

This is both literal and figurative. **God sets the boundaries of** the oceans and the seas, and so also He has set the boundaries for **Babylon the false prophet, and the Beast power.**

To enclose "the sea with doors," is a symbolical expression for restraining, fixing a boundary to it.



Jeremiah 5:22-23 Do you not fear Me?' says the Lord. 'Will you not tremble at My presence, Who have placed the sand as the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss to and fro, yet they cannot prevail; Though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it. But this people has a defiant and rebellious heart; they have revolted and departed.

In this we see an inherent characteristic of defiance and rebelliousness in the earthly sea, and if that is not enough the sea tries to revolt and leave God's control. Here we see the symbolism of the **sea** representing **"people [who have] a defiant and rebellious heart."** As Creator, God controls the sea, both producing and calming its waves, and keeping it within its boundaries. *Nahum 3:8 mentions that God can dry up the sea at will, or unleash it to judge the world, as in the flood.* As a result, the threat of chaos and evil is ultimately hollow because God has the power and authority to control it. ***Jesus' symbolizes this same authority over the turbulence of the sea calming it when His disciples became terrified.***



Matthew records how Jesus rebuked the winds and the sea and there was great calm.

Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Matthew 8:23-27

So we see here that Christ has authority over God's Creation, and when He tells it to do or not do something, it obeys. We can take heart in this, **because we are in financial trouble in this world**, and this nation is in many other sinful types of trouble, but **God has control over His creation**, and everything that goes on in it. So, we should not be "O you of little faith," but we should have **great faith** in what God can do to protect us from anything.

Now let us get back to things directly related to God's throne.

Ezekiel saw a vision, obviously similar to the Revelation of Jesus Christ to the Apostle John. Ezekiel saw "**the likeness of a firmament**, shining like crystal... And above the firmament... there was the **likeness of a throne**, in appearance like sapphire." There is something here in Ezekiel 1 that is



very unusual and important. Things in heaven are made of spiritual things, not physical things. We have spent a lot of time looking at the physical things, like Solomon's temple, and the literal sea and the waves thereof.

Ezekiel 1:3-4, 13-14, 20-22 The word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was upon him there. Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning. Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, because there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When those went, these went; when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads.



There we have something like a rainbow over them like a crystal. I am pretty sure that this is not the sea of glass being described here. I mention this to show you that these things are composed of spirit. I do not want to get into the details for the description for this, because it is not applicable to the sermon.

Ezekiel 1:23-28 And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings. And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne [a replica of God's Throne], in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.



Then Ezekiel receives his commission, as a prophet of God, in chapter 2. He is to go to the rebellious house of Israel, and warn them to turn back to God. God says they would not listen, but they would know after the fact that a prophet of God was warning them. This vision that he saw was awesome in nature, and terrifying as well. How much greater is the actual throne of God, and the sea of glass before it? It is beyond our comprehension, I am sure.

Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: "Blessed is the glory of the Lord from His place!" I also heard the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, and a great thunderous noise. So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.

Ezekiel 3:12-14

So it seems that Ezekiel had a ride on a cherubim. This is probably very similar to what happened to Enoch when he was carried away, and Elisha when he was carried away. They were carried away to a separate place, and the chariot of God took them away. Now let us go to Isaiah 6, and see where Isaiah was also before the throne of God. No one should ever want to set himself up as a prophet. That is a key to recognizing false prophets—they all set themselves up. Look at how Ezekiel was set up, or commissioned. Look at how Jeremiah was set up. Let us look at how Isaiah was set up. God always did it directly.



Isaiah 6:1-10 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!" And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I **am a man of unclean lips**, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "**Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.**" Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "**Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?**" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' " Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return and be healed."



So we see that Isaiah was set up by God after **He cleansed and sanctified** him. It seems that maybe God has closed the eyes and ears of the people of this nation, and the people of Israel around the world. There certainly is not any wisdom in what is going on. Let us continue with something related to the throne of God. Acts 7 records the martyrdom of the first century Christian, Stephen. Stephen was a sanctified member of God's church, one of the last profound witnesses to the leaders of Judaism. In addition, in a sense, with this incident the doom of Jerusalem and the temple, and everything there, was sealed.

"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it." When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, **"Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"** Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Acts 7:51-56



So again, how close is the throne of God to the earth?

We do not know. But Stephen looked up (probably in a vision) and saw it, and Christ standing at the right hand of God. What does it mean to be at the right hand of someone? When someone is at the right hand of someone else of authority, it is a sign of honor. It represents dignity and majesty. It is the most important place of honor. Notice He was not sitting there.

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Revelation 3:21

But when Stephen looked up unto heaven Christ was standing at the right hand of God. **So this time Christ was standing.** He was standing there looking at what was going on, **not just sitting viewing.** He was not a passive participant in this, but active. **God and Christ were thrilled and excited at Stephen's victory over sin,** Satan, the world and human nature. Stephen was cleansed, sanctified and completed in preparation for God's kingdom. He will be bowing on the sea of glass in front of God the Father, with Jesus Christ at God's right hand when all the saints appear before God following the resurrection of the firstfruits. We certainly hope that we will be there with him.

Now let us continue looking at the throne of God.

Let us go to Revelation 4. What I want to do here is to look at the whole scene concerning the throne of God, and the sea of glass. When the church age is coming to a close, we see Revelation 4 in the timeline. This is, in a sense, parallel to Isaiah 6:1-3:



Revelation 4:1-5 After these things I looked, and behold, a **door standing open in heaven**. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." Immediately I was in the Spirit [It sounds like he was experiencing this in a vision]; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

This is very similar to the account that we read earlier, about when God came down on Mt. Sinai, in Exodus 19 and 20, and brought the Ten Commandments, when there was lightning and thundering and there was the great sound of a loud trumpet. ***The sea of glass at God's throne points to a fixed state of holiness***, both inward and outward, and its being "***before the throne***," would indicate that the ***purity*** is mirrored with the holy excellence of God and His throne.

Revelation 4:6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.



The crystal appearance describes the splendor and beauty of that scene of holiness, spread out before the throne. The two symbols of glass and crystal, are closely allied, but are not quite the same. Glass is a manufactured article, whereas, crystal is a natural substance. There is an inherent beauty in crystal that is not found in glass. ***The sea of glass is expressive of smoothness, and this sea of crystal, demonstrates that the peace of heaven is not like earthly seas, disturbed by winds, but is crystallized into an eternal peace and inherent sparkle. His throne is eternal in its quality and duration.*** The 'glass' and 'crystal' are stationary, representing peace and calmness. The peace and calmness of the sea of glass symbolizes the absence of evil and chaos in heaven.

Revelation 4:6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

Wherever the throne of God is there is a sea of glass, there is a rainbow, in the case of the cherubim this throne is a temporary moveable throne, and it goes where God goes.

Revelation 4:7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. Revelation 4:8-11 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four



elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

This is tremendously encouraging for us, because we were, and are, created for God's pleasure, and we understand that salvation is creation right now in us—a spiritual creation that is taking place in us.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

Ephesians 1:3-5

One spiritual blessing, we are going to receive, is the opportunity to be on that sea of glass, before the throne of God. That experience alone is worth it, but so many other wonderful blessings will come with it. **Therefore, we have to let God do His good pleasure in us.** We have to let Him create in us the spiritual character and strength, which comes only from God, because that is why we have been called into God's church. We have been called so that we can be cleansed and prepared for His kingdom now. We are already sanctified, but we have to continue to do our part in



that cleansing process. We are cleansed by the Word, which Word gives us instructions of what we should do to be righteous in His eyes. And He declares us righteous; we cannot declare ourselves righteous. We have been placed in God's church to worship Him, and to work with Him to produce good fruit as He develops us toward the condition of perfection or completion.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Now let us go to Revelation 7, where it describes a great multitude from the Great Tribulation.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great ***multitude which no one could number***, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, ***standing before the throne*** and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Revelation 7:9-10

When they are resurrected, a great multitude is standing right in front of the throne of God. When the 144,000, and the great multitude are resurrected, they come before the throne of God, and spreading out before the throne of God is the sea of glass.



All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen." Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, ***"These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."***

Revelation 7:11-14

Therefore, we see that initially, and in the ultimate sense, we can only be washed completely by the blood of the Lamb, and He is also referred to as the Word.

They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Revelation 7:16-17



So there is the throne, the sea of glass, and everything else in the throne room. What is the reaction of humans in the presence of God? What do spirit beings do in His presence?

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "***The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!***" And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,

Revelation 11:15-16

So the Apostle John is looking again at the throne of God. Moreover, the throne of God has the sea of glass in front of it. All those who are going to be resurrected will come before the throne of God. And there is a sea of glass for us to stand or kneel on. Our initial reaction will be to prostrate ourselves before the glory of God. His throne is glorious in its appearance. It was awesome, as Jacob described. The power, glory and majesty of God are a very fearful thing, at first contact. The prophet Isaiah describes his reaction to appearing before God in a vision when he received his commission as a prophet of God.

And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts."

Isaiah 6:3-5



Isaiah felt like his body was falling apart right there on the spot; and no doubt he was unable to remain standing. The effect described here, is one that often occurred to those who had a vision of God. The prophet Ezekiel describes his reaction to appearing before God in a vision.

Ezekiel 1:28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

Ezekiel 2:1-2 And He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you." Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me.

The Spirit had to pick him up, and hold him there on his feet, because his legs had become like gelatin, from fear and awe at being in the presence of God. The prophet Daniel describes his reaction to a meeting in a vision with the Lord.

Daniel 8:15-18, 27 Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end." Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. And I,



Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

This fainting that he had was, at least in part, from the vision that he saw of what was going to happen on earth to man. No doubt, what he saw there was enough to make him faint, but it was still part of the reaction of having stood before the presence of the Lord.

The Apostle John describes his reaction to the appearance of "One like the Son of Man" in vision.

Revelation 1:9-17 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands ***One like the Son of Man, [like Christ] clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of***



many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp **two-edged sword**, and His countenance was **like the sun shining in its strength**. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

Whether in the presence of God the Father, or Jesus Christ, even in vision, Their power and glory is more than a mere human can withstand. "Woe is me, for I am undone!"—"I was afraid and fell on my face"—"I fell at His feet as dead." These are some of the reactions of those who have had the opportunity to appear before God in vision.

Revelation 11:16-18 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."



So all the saints have to be individually given their reward.

We also know from Revelation 2 and 3 that they have to be given a new name. They have to be given the name of the Father, the name of the New Jerusalem, and they have to be given Christ's new name. All of that has to take place after the saints, the spiritual firstfruits, are resurrected. It may be that this receiving of **new names** happens **on the sea of glass before God's throne**. I certainly expect that it will. It does not say that anywhere, but that seems like a logical place for it to happen. What an exciting ceremony that will be! Words just cannot express how awesome that will be. **May we all be cleansed by the water of the Word, and do our part to be able to cleanse ourselves of our problems, and the things that we have to overcome, so that we can be, in a sense, qualified to be given that gift of salvation from God and eternal life.**



Part II

The first part described how the sea of glass represents and reflects God's ***holiness, purity, peace, calmness, cleanness, and clarity***. God is a God of righteousness who demands righteous living from His people.

In this second part on the sea of glass, we will continue with that and add more about what is required of us, if we want to be worthy to stand on that sea.

Also, what is the meaning of the fire mingled with the sea of glass?

Let us look at the scene of Moses' vision of the throne of God.

Exodus 24:1-8 Now He said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him." So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do." And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said,



"All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient." And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words."

It is interesting that, four times in this context, "all these words" is mentioned. We see there the importance of the **Word of God** and how it impacts us. We have here a **description of the marriage covenant of Israel to God**. The people agree to live according to "**all these words**." **They promised to live by the word of God.**

When the church is resurrected, there will be the **marriage of Christ and the church**, and there will be a new covenant at that time. It will be a marriage covenant for all eternity. The ratification of this covenant with Moses, the Israelites with God, was a **type of that future marriage covenant between the church and Jesus Christ**.

The covenant that we are under now we renew every year with the bread and wine and foot-washing during Passover services.

Christ does not have to renew it because He gave His life. That is why He said that He would not eat of the bread or drink of the wine. He referred to the bread of Passover. He may have eaten bread later, but that was not in the covenant ceremony of the Passover. He is described as eating bread and fish for breakfast with His disciples, but that is in the way of physical sustenance. He is not going to drink of the fruit of the vine until in the Kingdom. He will drink the wine of the marriage ceremony when the



church is married to Christ. Moses, Aaron and his sons, and seventy of the elders partake in what the peace offering (mentioned in verse 5) signifies: fellowship and spiritual union in the presence of God.

Let us look at what is called "the sea of glass."

On Mount Sinai, the elders of Israel saw a vision of the God of Israel, and there was something interesting under his feet: a clear pavement.

Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under ***His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone***, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity.

Exodus 24:9-10

The description focuses on the fact that the men saw the God of Israel and remained unharmed. Why is this so important? Because according to Exodus 33:20, "no man shall see Me and live."

But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

Exodus 33:20-23



The "seeing" in Exodus 24:10 was something different from that of Exodus 33:20 and 23, which may denote a partial, as opposed to a full and complete, vision of God. The description of the clear surface that they saw under his feet, in Exodus 24:10, may indicate that this is all they saw of God. It may be that all they saw was a reflection of the image of God, or it may be that this was just a vision in their minds only and not literal. When Exodus 24:10 says that the four leaders and the seventy elders "saw God," this does not mean that they beheld God in His essential being or the way that He is in His fullest, because this is not possible for humans. John 1:18 says, "**No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.**" The knowledge of God that we have in Jesus Christ is real just as sight is real. It is not complete, but it is genuine and true knowledge. Therefore, in one sense, we see the Father by observing the way and teachings of Jesus Christ who represents and is one with the Father. The seventy-four men saw some of God's glory, and they probably saw the throne of God on the sapphire pavement, but the true glory of God was hidden from them. You may remember, from my last sermon, that we read a similar description in Ezekiel 1:26: "And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it."

Exodus 24:10 And they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity.



Clarity is translated from the Hebrew word **tohar** (to'-har) which signifies, literally, "**brightness or purity.**" Thus, there is a sea of glass or a pavement of a blue color that has the appearance of glass. **Moses probably saw God's reflection in the sea of glass. He would certainly have been in a position of bowing.**

God came down to the mountain so that they could see a muted likeness, or reflection, of His glory but not look directly at Him. They saw the outline of Him, but they could not see Him clearly. Verse 17 tells us that the glory of the Lord seemed like a consuming fire in a cloud that covered the mountain. Then, they had a special ceremony and a meal, there commemorating the marriage of Israel to God. This covenant between God and ancient Israel was only a shadow of what was to come. It was only an inferior covenant that Israel was unable to keep, because of her human nature and the enmity that exists between man and God.

However, under the **New Covenant**, we have been given the means, through the **indwelling of God's Spirit**, to keep this covenant on a spiritual level. **If we are faithful to this spiritual marriage covenant, we will be taken by the angels to the sea of glass before the throne of God.** I am pretty certain that this will happen soon after our resurrection. Where else would we go but to God's throne to worship Him as soon as we are made into spirit beings? That will probably be one of the first things that we do after being resurrected as spirit beings.



Matthew 24:31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

What is going to happen to us when the trumpet sounds?

Behold, *I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

I Corinthians 15:51-52

This will be an exciting and overwhelming moment for every one of us. I Thessalonians 4 and I Corinthians 15 talk about the first resurrection. We ***will be caught up in the air to meet Christ.***

We will be raised and brought to the sea of glass in front of God.

Revelation 19 describes what is most important about our attire at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Revelation 19:6-9 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine



linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

What is required of each Christian before he is allowed to stand on the sea of glass before God's throne?

Righteousness! Right living! It will be the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are given the Holy Spirit so that we can do our part in developing that righteous life.

Matthew 19:16-22, has been called the story of the "rich young ruler." He may have been a religious lay leader, quite possibly a Pharisee (because of the diligence he displays in following the law). Matthew 19:16-17 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

We could add to that, if you want to stand on the sea of glass, keep all of God's commandments. It is not that we earn that right or that opportunity to stand on the sea of glass; **it is a complete gift.** We do have to do our part, and that is to keep all of God's commandments.

Matthew 19:20 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother,' and,



'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

Most likely he was only keeping the letter of the law, because you need God's Holy Spirit to keep the spirit of the law.

Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Jesus is basically telling him, "**Get rid of all your idols**, all of those things that are distracting your worship of Me."

Matthew 19:22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

There was nothing wrong with the possessions themselves, but apparently, he had accumulated more than he should have. After addressing Jesus as Teacher, a title of respect, he asks what good deed he must do to have eternal life. *Eternal life* is virtually synonymous with the expression *entering the kingdom of heaven*, and this is the first occurrence of this expression in Matthew. Obedience to the law is an expression of belief in the truly good God, who is the source of all good, including eternal life. **Salvation is a gift of God's grace**, not something earned. There are minimum requirements in fulfilling God's law that we must do if we want to meet the criteria for God's kingdom. As human beings, we all have our moments of sin, and we are forgiven through genuine repentance. It is the habitual sins, the ones that we keep doing



over and over again, that we should be worried about and work to overcome. We have to love God first and foremost, and then we have to love our family, friends, acquaintances, and even our enemies by keeping God's commands, statutes and ordinances. This requirement must be known and should be understood by all members of God's church. As members of God's church, we spend a lifetime learning what we should be doing and trying to overcome what we should not be doing. The rich young ruler implies that he has kept not only the commandments mentioned but also the entire law, which they represent. He views his obedience to the law as complete, but he still senses that something is lacking, and that is why he asks Christ, "**What else is there that I need to do?**"

Jesus knows that the man's wealth has become his means to personal identity, power, and a sense of meaning in his life. This has become the idolatrous god of his life. Jesus' approach is to turn this man from focusing on external conformity to the law to examining his heart, revealing what truly is the ruling god in his life. The man had no doubt given some money to the poor, since the giving of alms was considered a moral duty, especially among the Pharisees. However, Jesus calls him to give everything away, exchanging the god of wealth for the eternal treasure found in following Christ. Even though he wants "eternal life," the young man cannot bring himself to stop worshiping the ruling force in his life, his great possessions. **Wealth is both deceptive and intoxicating: it fools a person into thinking that he or she is self-sufficient apart from God,** and the rich person wants desperately to hold on to that supposed self-sufficiency.



We are in very tough economic times and certainly we want to do our part preparing for what is coming, but we cannot put our reliance on the things that we put aside to protect or feed our family. We have to understand that we can do our part, but God is the one who is going to ultimately protect and provide for us. For the wealthy to shift their primary allegiance to God is humanly impossible, but with God all things are possible, as evidenced by the conversions of rich men like Joseph of Arimathea and Zacchaeus.

Matthew 19:18 commands, "You shall not steal," if you want eternal life. Let us take some time to look at this requirement of God's law regarding "not stealing." In his temple sermon, the prophet Jeremiah warned Jerusalem against using the temple "which is called by my name," while practicing theft, murder, adultery. For God's chosen people to steal would be a violation of His covenant with them. By keeping the eighth commandment, "You shall not steal," Israel witnessed to its faith in and loyalty to God.

Jeremiah 7:8-11 "Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations'? Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the LORD.



Here is Jeremiah's warning to Israel, directly from God . Apparently, they were stealing in various ways. Ultimately, God will judge all sinners who have rebelled against His law, but He will start with Israel because she was given God's Law first. It is a divine principle that judgment begins with God's people.

Zechariah writes to give a warning and encouragement of God's offer and promise to Jerusalem (which as we know is a code word for the church). The Lord tells Zechariah to tell the church that, if she returns to Him, He will return to her. This is by extension, because he is speaking directly to Israel in his writing. God invites His people to renew their commitment to Him. I am not saying that the church is awfully sinful or anything like that, but I am saying that sin always separates people from God. Any time we do sin, even if it is inadvertently or we do not mean to, and then we repent, there is still a sense of separation from God. We certainly want to overcome sin, and get rid of that separation.

The Lord promised that God's people would be full of the abundance of the gifts of God and His grace. God would restore, expand, and secure them under His protection. There is a reverse side to all of this in that, if they did not take God up on His offer, His judgments would be on those who reject all His mercies.

Zechariah 5:1-2 Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits."



This sixth vision is of a gigantic scroll, 30 feet by 15 feet, flying in mid-air. It could not be missed. The dimensions are those of a large billboard, suggesting that the scroll is unrolled so that its fearful contents may be easily read. Its flight signifies the very swift coming of punishment, and its flying from heaven signifies that the sentence came from the judgment-seat above.

Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer [or liar] shall be expelled,' according to that side of it."

Zechariah 5:3

The scroll is a covenant document, written on both sides, like the tablets Moses received from the Lord. Those tablets given to Moses were the Ten Commandments, of course.

Exodus 32:15-16 And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

The purpose of this scroll is to bring the covenant curses to bear on covenant-breakers, using as representative examples everyone who steals and everyone who swears falsely.



Zechariah 5:4 "I will send out the curse," says the LORD of hosts; "It shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house and consume it, with its timber and stones."

Theft is a sin that carries a severe curse with it. It is the breaking of the eighth commandment: "You shall not steal." All covenant breakers will be cleaned out from God's church according to His covenant. The curse will enter the house of the covenant-breaker and consume it, no matter what spiritual building materials have been used in leading and training the family. Apparently, the curse is that if someone is a thief, then that will bring destruction upon his home. I am pretty sure it would also be that a person who was a thief would always struggle with employment. I am not implying at all that someone who has struggled his whole life with unemployment or is struggling now is a thief. I am just saying that apparently this seems to be a curse that comes along with it. God tests us in various ways. Sometimes we are just out of work, and God wants us to learn lessons.

This scroll represented the law of God, which brings a curse on all who disobey it. That includes all of us; nobody can fully obey God's law without God's Holy Spirit. We are so thankful that we have the blood of Christ by which we are able to be forgiven. For that matter, the law was never given to save people but to reveal that people need to be saved, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Here in Zechariah, out of Ten Commandments, God selected the two that forbid stealing and swearing falsely. These sins



were especially prevalent among the Jewish remnant at that time. Many of the Jewish people were not faithful in their giving to God; **they were robbing Him of tithes and offerings and then lying about it.** Also, in their business dealings, they cheated one another. Ultimately, God will judge all sinners who have rebelled against His law; but He will start with Israel, the people who had God's law. Judgment begins with God's people.

The Lord announced that the scroll of His law would visit the individual homes in the land and judge those who were deliberately disobeying God. *Expelled*, in verse 3, means "cutoff or removed from the covenant community." Thieves were to be expelled from Israel, cut off from the church, and refused entry into the kingdom of God. Ironically, the curse for stealing enters the houses like a thief itself, or a plague unannounced, and brings destruction.

Hosea pointed out that while there is no faithfulness, kindness, and knowledge of God in the land, swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and adultery existed in abundance. This sounds like this society today! The prophet Haggai rebuked them for putting their own interests ahead of the Lord's work (Haggai 1:1-11). Malachi tells us that as an evidence of wholehearted repentance, God promises that if His people become faithful in presenting the **full tithe, God's full tenth**, then the desperately-needed rain will come, pestilence and crop failure will cease, and the promise to Abraham that "all nations will call you blessed" will be fulfilled. That promise goes to the physical nation, but it is fulfilled, in the spiritual sense, in our lives as members of God's church.



The tithes were given to support the priests and Levites, whose ministry was essential if Israel was to be faithful to its calling.

Also, the second tithe was kept for the attendance of the Feast, and a tithe was to be given every three years on a seven-year cycle for the poor and the needy.

"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In ***tithes*** and ***offerings***. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:8-10

We see in this nation the curse that is coming financially, because there is a lack of tithing fully. Because the Israelites did not render God's tithes and offerings, they were cursed in famine and poverty. *Famine* generally means "***severe shortages***." Because they did not give tithes and offerings to the Levites, the Lord said that He Himself suffered fraud when His ministers, constrained by hunger and poverty, deserted the temple. In ancient Israel, the people were not tithing; therefore, there was no way of supporting the priesthood, and the priesthood ended up just going off and getting other jobs and leaving the people with no one to teach God's ways to them. The nation declined very rapidly into chaos and was eventually overtaken and conquered. This sinful negligence of withholding God's



tithes and offerings may have seemed justified because of crop failure, drought, pestilence and famine, and shortage of work; but God reveals that these natural disasters were not the cause of the nation's disobedience but the cursed result.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can **serve two masters**, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

Nevertheless, God is merciful! He promises abundance to those who obey Him by giving Him back his tithes and offerings.

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:10

These blessings come in both physical/material and spiritual / understanding forms. By saying, "**try me now**," or "**put me to the test**," God is challenging the people to give the tithe that they owe Him and then watch to see if He would be faithful to His promise. God promises to meet all our needs—but not necessarily all our "greeds"—and to pour down on us blessings until there is no more need.



On the spiritual level, God's church will be judged first.

This judgment will occur before Christ establishes God's kingdom on earth. This judgment is happening now. These bad economic times are tests on God's people as to our faithfulness in ***tithing*** and dedication to God's way of life. All the commandments, including "You shall not steal," are summed up and fulfilled in the words, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Peter included the admonition that, while Christians can expect to suffer for the name of Christ, they should not suffer as murderers, thieves, wrongdoers, or mischief-makers.

I Peter 4:12-17 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?



Simply put, no thief or robber will inherit God's kingdom.

I Corinthians 6:9-10 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

In verse 9, we see Paul's third reminder, "Do you not know..." meaning it is inconceivable that a member of God's church would not know better.

I Corinthians 6:2-3 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

This illustrates the gap that existed between the Corinthians' future spiritual position and their present fleshly practice of breaking the commandments. The unrighteous would not have any share in God's future kingdom because they were not Christ-like. One day, the unrighteous will be judged by the saints on the basis of their works, which will condemn them. The problem Paul saw in the Corinthian brethren is that the saints are acting no differently than those they are to judge in the future.



Will a saint rob God in tithes and offerings?

Not if he wants to be able to stand on the sea of glass before God's throne and receive a new righteous name. No habitual thief can call himself a saint.

Revelation 22:14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life [and the Kingdom of God], and may enter through the gates into the city [Jerusalem].

Those who have given up the god of their lives to obey God the Father and follow Christ's example will receive abundant reward and will inherit eternal life. Eternal life (which is a gift) is an inheritance, not an earned reward. This devotion and submission and obedience to God that we call "conversion" is a long process that requires patient endurance.

Revelation 14:12-15 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' Yes," says the Spirit, "that they **may rest from their labors**, and their works follow them." Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "**Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.**"



The Harvester takes a sickle and cuts the grain, and then He gathers it.

The angels gather it and take the firstfruits to the sea of glass before God. The rest of the chapter talks about the harvest of the wicked. You do not want to be in that harvest. In the vision of heaven in Revelation 4:6 and 15:2, the likeness of a "**glassy sea**" is seen in front of the throne of God. The pure translucency of the sea is indicated in the words **like crystal**. Its fiery appearance is suggested in Revelation 15:2, by the words *mingled with fire*. On the sea stood the victorious martyrs with harps in their hands, singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

Revelation 15:1-2 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. 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.



That is what it looked like.

It was created out of spirit and shone very brightly. We see here that those of us who have spiritual victory over the beast and all it represents will stand on the sea of glass. Also, of course, God's throne and His temple are also there with the sea of glass. The cycle of bowls containing the seven last plagues, in which God's wrath on rebels is completed, is preceded by a scene of celebratory worship that is offered by the saints who share the Lamb's victory. The harps of God and the song of the Lamb seem to indicate that this choir is the same as the **144,000 saints** who appeared with the Lamb before God's throne in Revelation 7:1-8 and Revelation 14:1-5.

Revelation 14:1-4 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with ***Him one hundred and forty four thousand***, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ***They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty four thousand*** who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins.



Remember this has a spiritual application as well, these are those who are not defiled by other churches, or nations, or systems that are on earth.

Revelation 14:5 These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

As human beings, we cannot become totally sinless, but it will be God who wipes away both our sins and our tears. Here are the 144,000, with the Father's name on their foreheads identifying them as His Family, standing on the Mount of Olives after they had been standing on the sea of glass in front of God's throne. In contrast to a picture of peace on the sea of glass, in the front of God's throne, the sea is said to be "**mingled with fire.**"

What is that all about?

God's throne is a spectacularly dynamic throne, described in various scriptures as flaming with fire; flashing and crashing with lightning and thunder; and dazzlingly white, with brightness everywhere.

Revelation 15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.



Like the woman and the dragon of Revelation 12:1-3, these angels signify another turning point in the war between Christ and Satan: **the completion of God's triumph and the destruction of His enemies.**

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.

Revelation 15:2

The portion of the sea that seemed to be crystal-glass stands for **justice** and **holiness** in **biblical imagery**, while in this case, intermingled with that image, is the image of just anger or righteous indignation, represented by the portion that was fiery. There is far more to it than that, though. **Fire** in Scripture represents the **impending judgment of God**, and it also signifies **cleansing** and **refining and even protection for God's people.**

Let us look at how the imagery of fire is used in Scripture.

Notice how God often reveals Himself. In Exodus 3:2, God makes Himself known to Moses "**in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.**" Later, in Exodus 19:18, God descends upon Mount Sinai "**in fire.**" There is thunder, and it encourages us to think of the lightning that comes with it. In Ezekiel, the prophet sees "a storm wind" come "out of the north, and a great cloud," with "brightness round about it," **and fire flashing forth continually.**



Ezekiel 1:4 Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

Ezekiel tries to describe the indescribable form on the divine throne:

Ezekiel 1:26-28 And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the **appearance of fire all around within it**; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

If the **glory of God Himself appears as fire**, so do the things around Him; they reflect His glory. Described in scripture, His throne appears like "**fiery flames**," its wheels "**burning fire**." His angelic servants are "flames of fire." Between the cherubim are fire and coals of fire. A lot of fire is used in this type of imagery. In front of God's throne is a "**sea of glass mingled with fire**." Symbolically, as a physical type, the cast metal sea in Solomon's temple was made of polished bronze; and when the light shone



on it from the torches in the temple, there was a flickering effect reflecting from the polished bronze sea. I think it was 15 feet in diameter and 7.5 feet tall.

In heaven, the "**seven spirits of God**" are "**torches of fire.**" Heavenly chariots are made of fire. Even the eyes of the glorified Jesus Christ and other heavenly beings are like flames of fire. In Acts 2:3-4, the **Holy Spirit** is also associated with fire.

The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* describes fire compared to God this way:

*Just as **fire lights up the blackness of night**, so does God overcome the **dark powers of evil**. Just as fire is mysterious and immaterial, so too, is **God enigmatic and incorporeal**. And just as fire is always flickering and changing its shape and cannot be held for examination, so is **God always the indefinable in human terms**.*

Basically, His glory is beyond our comprehension with our human minds. Notice how God uses fire for His own purposes. **Fire** represents God's desire to **destroy sin** and to **purify his people**.

Isaiah 6:6-7 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he **touching my mouth with it**, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your **iniquity is taken away**, and your sin purged."



Being tested by God is like being purified by fire. God appears as fire for many reasons. Similar to the way all physical life depends on the fire that is the sun, so does all spiritual life depend on God.

Revelation 16:8-9 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.

God's word is fire in that it destroys.

Jeremiah 5:14 Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: "Because you speak this word, behold, ***I will make My words in your mouth fire***, and this people wood, and it shall devour them."

Just as fire both purifies and destroys, so does God purify the righteous and destroy the wicked—"***for our God is a consuming fire.***" Prophecies of destruction by fire are often simply figurative ways of saying that God's judgment is sure or thorough. The association of fire with wrath and the fact that God sometimes ***destroys the wicked by raining fire down*** on them make it natural for judgment to be depicted as fire. II Thessalonians says that the Lord Jesus will be revealed "from heaven with his mighty angels ***in flaming fire.***"

II Thessalonians 1:6-8 Since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ***in flaming fire taking vengeance*** on those



who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is something else that appears to be like fire and lightning. This may help explain the fire mingled with the sea of glass.

The movement of the angels often resembles flashes of fire and lightning.

As for the likeness of the living creatures, their ***appearance was like burning coals of fire***, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. And the ***living creatures*** ran back and forth, in ***appearance like a flash of lightning***.

Ezekiel 1:13-14

This may be what is seen mingled with the sea of glass. As we stand on the ***sea of glass will the angels appear as torches of fire*** and flashes of lightning? It appears so!

Revelation 15:2 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.



This happens just before the bowl judgments of the seven last plagues of God's wrath are poured out on the earth. The sea of glass mingled with fire appears to have the seven angels who are about to pour out the seven last plagues actively preparing to carry out the Lord God Almighty's true and righteous judgments against the wicked inhabitants of the earth. When God's Kingdom is established on earth, fire is not destructive. Isaiah prophesies that there will be over Mount Zion "a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night."

Isaiah 4:2-5 In that day the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing for those of Israel who have escaped. And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering.

This prophecy bears in mind the pillar of fire of the Exodus. Also, an example of God's fiery protection is seen in the miracle to protect Elisha in II Kings 6:17, "**And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.**" Also, in Zechariah 2:5, God promises, "For I,' says the Lord, 'will be a **wall of fire all around her** [Jerusalem, the Church], and I will be the glory in her midst." God protects His people with



fire. This may be a reference to the "**place of safety**"—the place of final training.

Revelation 15:2 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.

The calm, glass-like sea before God's throne is never stormy; nevertheless, it is interfused with flames at this time. The sea is reflecting the counsels of God, His purposes of righteousness and love which are often fathomless, but never obscure, always the same though sometimes glowing with holy anger—this too is represented by the flames.

Revelation 15:3-4 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! 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."

The "song of Moses" (Exodus 15:1-18) points to the song of victory sung by Moses and the Israelites after their passage through the Red Sea. This song may be the one sung on the sea of glass. It is referring to the Red Sea crossing that ***spiritually symbolizes the process of salvation*** from God's calling to our ***baptism, overcoming, leaving sin behind, and entering God's kingdom.***



The ancient "**song of Moses**" is fulfilled in the future "**song of the Lamb**," which tells of a **greater redemption** of a new kingdom of priests: **the bride of Christ**. Essentially, this song pictures the majesty, holiness, and purity of God. A later song of Moses praised the Lord whose ways are just. That song of Moses is found in Deuteronomy 32:1-43 (note especially verse 4).

Revelation 15:5-6 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands.

There we are on the sea of glass. The throne of God is there, and we see the seven angels come out and get the seven bowls for the seven last plagues. God gives us the blessing of His promise that He said that we would see His vengeance. It appears here that we will be standing on that sea of glass when those angels head out to give those seven last plagues. This is how it appears to me, but it is speculation. Keep that in mind. Christ revealed to the apostle John that there will be no more sea. What is that all about?

After the Great White Throne Judgment, there is no longer an earthly sea, which seems to indicate in symbol that there will be no more threatening attempts against the creation and sovereignty of God.

Revelation 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. **Also there was no more [earthly] sea.**



Today, the seas and oceans occupy about three-fourths of the surface of the globe and, of course, to that extent prevent the world from being totally occupied by people, except by the comparatively small number that are mariners. In the present physical state of things, these vast oceans are necessary to make the world a fit habitat for human beings, as well as to give life to the innumerable species of animals that find their homes in salt water. As you know, the movement of the moon causes the tides of the sea to increase and decrease. The earthly sea is a symbol of the seething nations of the world and of the troubled lives of the unrighteous. This is why the apostle John spoke of the glorious new heaven and new earth as a place in which "there was no more sea." The phrase *no more sea* does not mean "**no more water.**" It simply indicates that the new earth will have a different arrangement or consistency as far as water is concerned. Keep in mind that the new heaven and the new earth are spiritual. No doubt, we as saints and kings and priests in the family of God will be assisting if not creating, because God is a creating God. He is not going to stop with the creation that we know of here, but, with us, He will continue to create things in the universe.

In the future state, the present physical ecosystem will be unnecessary; spirit beings do not have physical restrictions for inhabiting the new earth. Also, immense bodies of water will be unnecessary. Whatever the details of God's creation of the new heavens and new earth, in general, these descriptive images point out great changes in the universe. It is a change from physical to spiritual. This new creation is described as a totally new heaven and a new earth and not the present heaven and earth renovated.



This is made clear by the additional statement, "for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away." This earth on which we live now will be renovated, in a sense, during the Millennium, but this is after the Great White Throne Judgment.

Very little information is given about the new heaven and the new earth, but one major additional fact is stated in this verse: Not only had the first heaven and earth been wiped away, there was no longer any earthly sea. When we look out over a churning sea or ocean, it is very easy to see its power and relentless pushing at its boundaries, all the time eroding away whatever it pushes and pulls against. In this, we see in symbol the effects of sin on our own lives. Sin hits every bit as hard, as shockingly, and as destructively as a rogue wave. A rogue wave gives no warning, but it is devastating when it comes, as is Satan's influence and sin. As beautiful as the earthly seas and oceans are, they are deceptively destructive. As useful as they appear, they carry with them terrifying danger (people drown, ships sink, tidal waves wipe out coastal communities, and hurricanes gain their power from them). As enticing as the many entertainment and sporting activities offered by them are, they are potentially watery graves.



God's forgiveness and salvation are portrayed as casting sin into the depths of the sea.

Micah 7:18-19 Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

This has a positive cleansing effect, destroying the poison of sin permanently. Not only is sin conquered and destroyed but also, apparently, the place it is cast also ceases to exist. In this we see the totality and finality of God's judgment, His mercy, and His love, from which eternal peace will come. In contrast to the perpetual unrest and chaos seen in the earthly sea, the sea of glass at God's throne reflects and symbolizes God's holiness and purity, peace and calmness, and His purposes of righteousness and love.

Revelation 22:1-5 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.



The message of the biblical image of the sea of glass is that the Eternal is the God of holiness Who demands righteous living from His people. To righteous people, He will abundantly give eternal life and peace. It may very well be that this will begin when we stand on that sea of glass before His glorious throne with God sitting there in all His majesty!

May God help us to live our lives in a way that pleases Him, in obedience, submission, and righteousness, so that we may come and stand on the sea of glass before His throne, to share in His glory! What an exciting, breathtaking, and awesome time that will be. I do not know about you, but I do not think that I will be able to stand at that point.

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TheLightTowers@gmail.com



*"I am the Bright Morning Star -
Surely I come quickly"
Rev 22:16, 20*