

## **Revelation Ch. 15: The Song of Moses and The Lamb**

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Here we are introduced to the seven bowls of wrath representing the completion of God's punishment on Jerusalem (15:1), culminating in the final destruction of the city (11:15; 18:1-24). But first, a song of praise for His righteous judgments (15:3, 4).

### **Verse 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.**

Israel had filled up the cup of their sins (Matt. 23:32; 1 Thes. 2:16), and it had to be poured out (6:17; 14:8; 16:19). His wrath is symbolized by plagues, just as He had done to other wicked nations, and just as He promised Israel (Ex. 15:26; Deut. 28:58, 59; 29:22-24). The significance of the number seven is consistent with the rest of the book; the wrath of God would be complete as He pours out the fullest and final extent of His punishment upon these rebellious people (cf. Isa. 42:24, 25).

While Jerusalem had been destroyed before (2 Kings 25), the previous desolation was not to be the full end of the nation (Jer. 5:18). It was by the Romans, the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15; Lk. 21:20), that their power would be completely shattered (Dan. 12:7), never to be regained.

### **Verse 2**

**And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have 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.**

John saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, which may identify with the sea of glass seen previously (4:6). Like the previous sea, it represents the separation between man and God, and the cleansing process that needs to occur in order to reconcile that relationship. Those standing on the sea were going through that process that begins at baptism (Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:4) and continues throughout life (1 Jn. 1:7). It is mingled with fire because of the many trials that we come across in that journey, yet we can overcome (2:10; 3:18; 1 Cor. 3:9-15; 2 Tim. 3:12; Heb. 11:35-40; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:7).

In this case, those pictured have endured trials at the hands of the Roman Empire, namely during the persecution by Nero (2:10; 13:1-18; 14:9-13). Though Christians were protected from the tribulation connected with the fall of Jerusalem (7:14), some had been suffering from this Roman persecution a few years prior to this event (64-68? AD). It should be noted that whether they lived or died as a result, those who did not lose faith had victory over the beast (2:10; cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8). As in prior verses, the harps represent the praise in song of the saints (5:8; 14:2).

### **Verses 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."**

Just as the 144,000 sang a new song (14:2-3), the faithful here sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, acknowledging God for Who He is, and what He has done (cf. Ch. 4-5). This is a song praising the

faithfulness and righteous judgments of God, as He avenges His servants (cf. 6:9-11; 18:20; Deut. 32:43).

The song is that of Moses and the Lamb, connecting the righteous of both covenants (cf. Heb. 3:1-6). All who had overcome since time began, whether under the law of Moses, or the law of Christ, were being avenged (18:20, 24; 19:2; Matt. 23:35). Just as God's people were delivered through Moses from the bondage of Egypt (Ex. 15:1-19; Deut. 32:1-43), so also are His people delivered from the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ (Rom. 6; Heb. 2:14, 15).

#### **Verse 5**

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

See notes on 11:19.

#### **Verses 6-7**

**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. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.**

As with previous angels, these seven come from the presence of God (14:15, 17), clothed in bright linen, representing righteousness (19:8), and having their chests girded with golden bands that priests would wear (1:13; Ex. 28). These angels are pouring out the bowls of wrath on behalf of the High Priest (Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 6:20; 8:1).

One of the living creatures gave the bowls to the angels because they would affect the creation. Just as the attributes of God are reflected in the things that are made (Rom. 1:20), so also is His character reflected in His judgments. Our God is a good and just God (Mk. 10:18; Rev. 15:3). The angels had the seven plagues, and were given permission to deliver them by pouring out the bowls of wrath.

#### **Verse 8**

**The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.**

This is a picture of the glory, power, and presence of God as He executes judgment (cf. Ex. 19:18). His glory filled the temple because the work of building up the church was finished (Ex. 40:33, 34; 1 Kings 8:10, 11; Eph. 4:12), and His word was complete (1 Cor. 13; Eph. 4:13; cf. Rev. 10:7).

Since the word was confirmed by miracles (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3, 4), and signs and wonders were prophesied to occur “as in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt” (Mic. 7:15; 40 years, cf. Num. 14:34; Deut. 2:7; 8:2; Jos. 5:6; Heb. 3:9), it is logical to conclude that there would be no more revelation to confirm 40 years from the establishment of the church (30 AD).

No one was able to enter the temple because all who had obeyed the gospel had already done so prior to this event (cf. 6:11; 7:3; 12:6, 14; 22:11). It was time for His wrath to be poured out, and nothing could stop it.

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