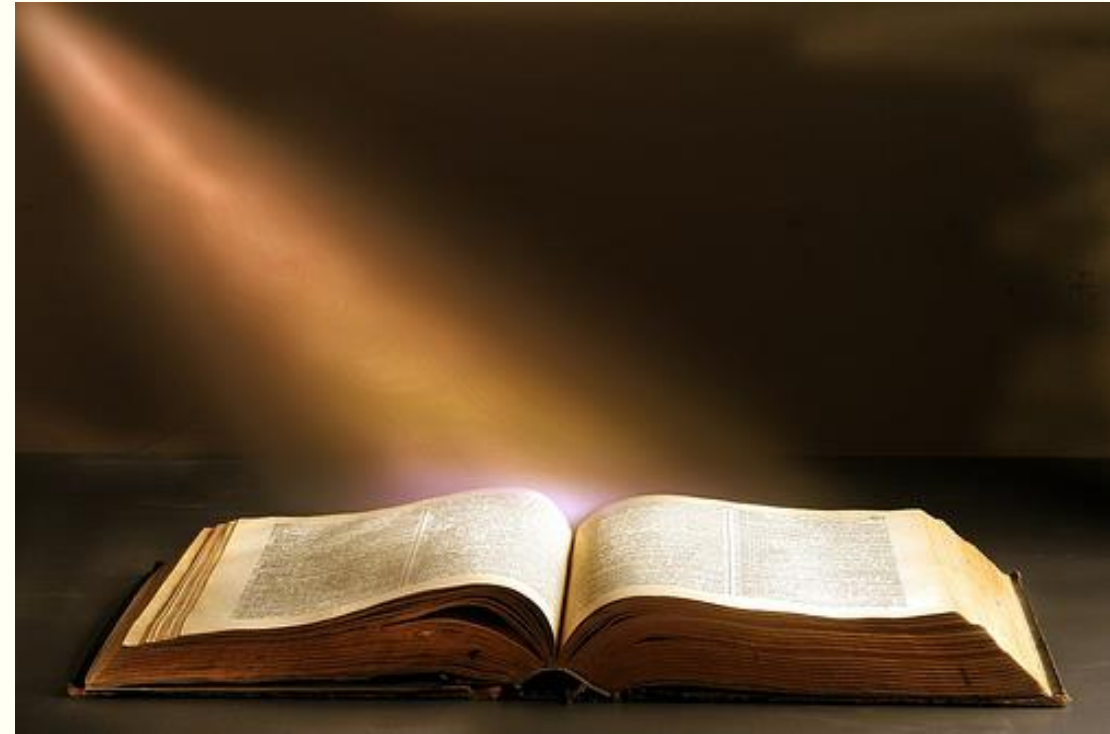




Exploring the Book of Revelation: Verse by Verse

Chapter 15





CHAPTER 15

Introduction to the Seven Last Plagues

Chapter 15



Primary purpose of our Bible study
is to understand Jesus' message to
His church AND its personal
application for us today

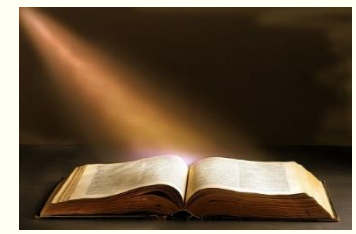
God's wrath to be unleashed

A Song of Deliverance & Victory

The temple of God's Law

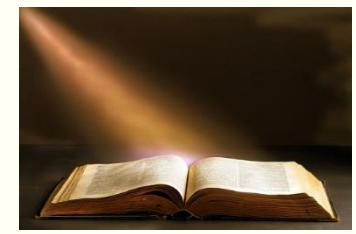
The Justice of God

Revelation 15:1-4



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. **2** And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. **3** They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the nations! **4** Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested.”

Revelation 15:5-8



5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. **6** 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. **7** Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. **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.

God's wrath to be unleashed

Rev 14:20 transitions to Rev 15: 1 and completes the scene of the grapes of wrath trampled in the winepress. Seven angels prepare with the seven bowls of God's wrath.

The treading of the winepress is the visitation of the seven last plagues.

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” – Heb 10:31

The sign in heaven (Greek – semeion) refers to a striking visual scene or unusual occurrence which transcends the common course of nature

(Greek – mega): great, splendid, and on a grand scale

(Greek – thaumastos) meaning wonderful, amazing with terror, extraordinary, surprising

The seven last plagues are rendered in the Greek (hepta tas eschatas) as “seven, which were the last” signifying that there would have been plagues before these. These plagues are the last, referring to time or extreme.

The difference between the 7 plagues and the 7 trumpets are significant. The purpose of the trumpets was to bring apostates to repentance, so it was mixed with mercy, while the purpose of the plagues is to execute God's justice on the impenitent.

Never again will the display of God's wrath (Greek – thumos: passionate anger or fury) be seen in all of eternity for sin will never rise a second time



A Song of Deliverance and Victory

Before the execution of the plagues, John sees the victorious saints standing on the sea of glass, celebrating their deliverance and victory over the beast, his image, his mark and the number of his name

Like the Exodus, their cries for God’s intervention has now turn to songs to praise

“Before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal.” – Rev 4:6

John does not exactly see a sea of glass. He uses **metaphorical language** to attempt to convey a vast expanse like a sea with transparency and purity of crystal and vivid brilliance

The song the redeemed sing as they stand on the sea of glass is almost entirely composed of phrases from the Old Testament



Great and marvelous are your works	Psalms 111:2-3
Lord God Almighty	Genesis 17:1
Just and true are your ways	Psalms 145: 17
O King of the nations	Jeremiah 10: 7
Who will not fear You O Lord and glorify Your name	Jeremiah 10: 6-7
For You alone are holy	I Sam 2:2
All the nations will come and worship before You	Psalms 86:9

A Song of Deliverance and Victory

Up to now, God has always mingled judgment with mercy. Now the unsaved will experience the final wrath of God in its full strength without mercy and grace. The final last plagues are poured out on the unrepentant in anticipation of the final judgment

The redeemed are under the full protection of God throughout the outpouring of the seven last plagues like the Israelites in Goshen as the plagues fell on the Egyptians

“Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly” – Isa 33:14-15

The sea of glass is before the throne of God in the heavenly throne room (Rev 4:6). It reflects the dazzling splendor and colorful display of God’s glory as the seven torches of fire burn before the throne (Rev 4:5)

Fear, Glorify, Worship, Judgment are all key elements of the first angel’s message

John sees the redeemed in Revelation 15 singing the song of Moses which is a song of deliverance from their enemies, just as the children of Israel stand on the Red Sea watching the destruction of the Egyptians after the plagues (Exodus 15)

The song is all about the Lamb, their Great Deliverer, Lord God Almighty, the One who protected, preserved and carried His people through their hour of trial and distress



Revelation 15:2 indicates that those who stand on the sea of glass will have victory over the beast. The generation that goes through this time will have experienced the greatest conflict ever known to humanity. It is a trial similar in some ways to the one Jesus endured in the Garden of Gethsemane. This is the same victorious group that was revealed in Revelation 14: 1-5 who are symbolized by the number 144,000. This group exists only in the end time, for only then is the conflict with the beast and his image an issue. They have faced adverse public opinion. They have felt compelled to disobey the laws of the land and to endure public ridicule and universal contempt. They have been boycotted and threatened with starvation. They have lost family and friends – every earthly joy. Finally, they have faced the death decree. They have chosen to forsake everything, either fleeing to the mountains or enduring imprisonment. The only thing this group retains is their implicit faith in God and their confidence in His promises.

The temple of God's law

The victory of the redeemed is also “great and marvelous” as the victory of Israelites. They refused to succumb to pressure to worship the beast or receive his mark.

The harps of God are mentioned 3 times in the Book of Revelation: The 24 elders have harps (Rev 5:8) and the faithful remnant (Rev 14:2, 15:2).

The saints have learned to praise God through pain and will now their joy is complete. They will possess special abilities and will require no prior learning to play the harps whose touching with an inspiring and enthralling heavenly music

Revelation 15 is an introductory scene to the Seven Last plagues and to the Most Holy Place which completes the plan of salvation for man.

The temple (Greek – naos: Most Holy Place) is the final compartment, where God's throne is

The Testimony refers to the Ten Commandments placed in the ark of covenant

“Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple.” – Rev 11:19

The seven angels emerge from the Most Holy Place of the heavenly temple with the authority of Jesus. They are also girded with golden band around their chest and dressed in pure white linen, like the appearance of the glorified Christ in Rev 1:13

These may be the same seven angels who stand before God and who were given seven trumpets to sound (Rev 8:2,6)



The temple of God's law

The saints proclaim and vindicate God's character, His Law, and His ways.

All heaven is involved in the plan of salvation: the Godhead, angels, four living creatures, the twenty-four elders

The **golden bowls full of incense** which represents the prayers of God's people which the 24 elders offer to God (Rev 5:8) are now replaced by **golden bowls full of the wrath of God** to be poured out on the ungodly

“Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” – Exo 40:34-35

“And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.” – I Kings 8: 10-11

An empty and open temple indicates the end of heavenly intercession, the close of human probation on earth and the cessation of the proclamation of the gospel

All God's saints are sealed. Every man, woman and child on planet Earth has made their permanent decision to accept Jesus and give Him their allegiance or reject Him, choosing Satan. Probation for mankind closes before the plagues are poured out.

No one can continue to defy the Law of God with impunity and not go unpunished



The Justice of God

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he who is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”
Rev 22:11.

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” – Gen 18:25

“For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: “As I live,” says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”
Rom 14: 10-11

Just means “morally right and fair”. Judgments means “righteous acts”.

When the unsaved stand before the great white throne in the final judgment, all will acknowledge God’s dealings with the devil, sin, and sinners have been just and righteous. All will bow in acknowledgment of God’s love and justice.



“What a song that will be when the ransomed of the Lord meet at the gate of the Holy City, which is thrown back on its glittering hinges and the nations that have kept His word—His commandments—enter into the city, the crown of the overcomer is placed upon their heads, and the golden harps are placed in their hands! All heaven is filled with rich music, and with songs of praise to the Lamb. Saved, everlastingly saved, in the kingdom of glory! **To have a life that measures with the life of God—that is the reward.**”

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