



# The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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# Chapter 15

- **Revelation 15 makes the moral case for what God has done in judgment, and especially for what He is about to do as the 7 bowls are dumped out upon humanity.**
- **What He is about to do could be justified any time after the fall in Genesis 3, but He has patiently endured sin, and all that accompanies it, even making provision for man's salvation.**
- **However, what we read in Rev 15 is that eventually God is done with waiting, and He brings to an end, the time when men can be saved and delivered from their evil deeds.**

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- **Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. 2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. 3 And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! 4 “Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For all the nations will come and worship before You, For Your righteous acts have been revealed.”**

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- **1) Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.**
- **Remember that by this time the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet has sounded, and out of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet comes the 7 bowl judgments. (Heb 10: 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.)**
- **When we come to this place in John's revelation we are very, very close to what is commonly called "the end of the world" – the time when God will settle accounts and meet out justice.**

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- **Let's look back for a moment to the blowing of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet.**
- **Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. 18 And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." 19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.**

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- John sees 7 angels holding the 7 last plagues – and “plague” is very interesting choice of words. It is not some disease as we might usually think the word implies. It is the Greek “plegos”.
- Another place “plegos” is used is in Luke 12:48 “but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few.”
- So the 7 last plagues, or the seven bowl judgments go way beyond how we might generally think of a plague – these will be “death blows” to those living at the time.

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- **And in Rev 15:1 John declares that “in them the wrath of God is finished”. So these are among the last acts of God’s judgment on the world.**
- **They may well be the most widespread, and most devastating judgments yet in the tribulation, and what preceded these last 7 have not been light by any measure.**
- **Also the fact that the word “last” is used to describe the bowl judgments gives us some sense that the judgments, that began with the breaking of the 1<sup>st</sup> seal, are chronologically progressive.**

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- Verse #1 also informs us that in these last 7 plagues “the wrath of God is finished”.
- This is great perspective because throughout history and throughout the bible, God has not been at all subtle about His hatred for sin, and His promise to judge the wicked.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”



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- **The world looks at the promises of God and mocks them because they do not always happen in an instant, or on their own erroneous timetable.**
- **We, as the saints of God, need to look at God's promises for what they are – solemn and certain proclamations that will happen in His time, and on His terms.**
- **What we learn in the end is that God's wrath will come upon this world just as He has promised, and it will not let up until all of His enemies have been crushed.**

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- Zep 3:8 “Therefore wait for Me,” declares the Lord, “For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all My burning anger; for all the earth will be devoured by the fire of My zeal.
- Isaiah 13:9 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it.
- Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

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- **So when John sees the 7 last plagues (the bowl judgments) in the hands of the angels, he is seeing the certain execution of God's judgment that He has been promising since sin entered the universe.**
- **One of the most powerful statements we can make about the grace of God towards His enemies, towards sinners, and all who hate Him, is that while he has been pronouncing judgment upon them, He has also just as certainly been at work to redeem them!**
- **And His efforts to draw them, and to save them continue right up until each sinner draws his or her last breath.**

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- Rev 15:2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. (remember harps are associated with joy)
- Rev 4:6 and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.
- Rev 6:9 9 When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;

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- **3 And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!”**
- **First, “the song of Moses” – it is found in Exodus 15 after the Red Sea had drowned Pharaoh’s men chasing the Israelites on chariots.**
- **Now if you read Exodus 15 you will find that the words are not the same as the song found in Revelation 15. Interesting.**

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- **So how can it be that the Rev 15 says they sang the song of Moses when we can check the words to that song in Exodus 15 and see the words are not the same?**
- **Well, perhaps it's because songs can have more than one stanza, or perhaps it's because the two songs have the exact same themes.**
- **The destruction of the ungodly and the triumph of the saints, God's people are rescued and the ungodly are destroyed, righteousness wins and sin loses.**

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- Okay, so what about “the song of the Lamb”?
- Rev 5:6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. 7 And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

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- So when we read that martyred saints of the tribulation who are under, and around the alter of God in Heaven singing, we can understand the connection between the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.
- The song of Moses is from the “rescued” perspective of what God has done, and the song of Lamb tells of the worthiness of the Son of God to do the “rescuing” and the judging.
- One was sung by “rescued” Israelites, and the other will be sung in response to the “unrescued” people of God’s prayers for vengeance. (or perhaps we should say those who went through a very unorthodox rescue)



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- **5 After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, 6 and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. 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 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.**

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- **5 After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened.**
- **So what is the “temple of the tabernacle of testimony”? Remember how chapter 11 ended and that we have been in a pause of sorts between chapters 11 and 15?**
- **Rev 11:19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.**

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- A tabernacle is nothing more than a container – what is in John’s vision is the ark of the covenant.
- Ex 40:3 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. 3 You shall place the ark of the testimony there, and you shall screen the ark with the veil.
- So what was in the ark of the covenant? The most prominent inventory in the ark was God’s own testimony of His will for righteous living – the stone tablets inscribed with the Word of God.

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- **So why open the ark and expose the words God inscribed on the tablets?**
- **It is evidence of His will, it is evidence of His standards, and it forms the basis for an indictment of all men, and the basis for Him to act justly when He delivers these final death blows to mankind.**
- **So John is looking right into the true holy of holies in the true temple in Heaven, and what he sees is justice coming out in its most potent form yet.**

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- **6 and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes.**
- **And out of the temple come the “officers of the court” if you will, seven angels dressed magnificently, and carrying the final judgments of God on mankind.**
- **It is a solemn moment – there is a bit of pomp and circumstance in the scene, and a sense that what is about to happen is right, is just, and has been inevitable since the inception of sin.**

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- **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.**
- **And so we are coming full circle – we see in chapter 15 the four living ones who we first met in chapter 4.**
- **Rev 4:5 Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; 6 and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.**

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- **Bowls are not fashioned for pouring – bowls are made for emptying their contents as quickly as possible. Just fill it up, and flip it over and everything in it comes out in one quick heap.**
- **That is an apt description of how the 7 bowl judgments are delivered upon men in chapter 16.**
- **No ceremony, no precursor, nothing progressive at all – just swift, unmixed, judgment.**

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- **8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.**
- **Heb 12:25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. 26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.” 27 This expression, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.**



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- **So when John sees the temple of God filled with smoke we just might want to remember what God wrote to us in Hebrews chapter 12.**
- **He is not to be trifled with, He is not to be taken lightly, He always means what He says, and what He speaks will come to pass.**
- **I can't help but think that it is with a bit of sadness that God releases the last 7 plagues – it means the end of all chances to be saved for those who have rejected Him.**

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- **There seems to be an increasing sense in the church, and even in the world at large, that civilization is coming to a place of unprecedented uncertainty.**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:1 You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. 2 For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. 3 They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. 4 They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. 5 They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!**

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- **Things are bad, and likely to get worse – that is the bad news.**
- **But there is also good news in all of the mess that we are in now for us and even for the lost.**
- **The good news is the GOOD NEWS – Jesus still saves, still wants to save, and is still waiting for all who will be saved.**
- **We should look at our world with the hope that, while things are bad, God is good!**

# Questions