

## Revelation 15 (NASB) A Scene of Heaven

*15:1 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.*

Chapter 14 ended with the battle of Armageddon. There are still 8 chapters left. This shows that the book is not in chronological order. The 7 angels inflict the 7 plagues in Leviticus 26:21 which says *"If then, you act with hostility against Me and are unwilling to obey Me, I will increase the plague on you seven times according to your sins."*(NASB) The following verses tell us about this time of wrath and judgment being poured out.

Psalm 96:13    The judgment and wrath are righteous and perfect.  
Psalm 98:9     Equity and fair  
Joel 3:2        He has His payback  
Acts 17:31     It is given with justice.  
2 Timothy 4:1  Father and son will take responsibility

God does NOT overlook evil in our world until the day of wrath, He expresses it every day. Psalm 7:11 says *"God is a righteous judge, a God who displays his wrath every day."* Isaiah describes the end of the world in Isaiah 13:6-9 as terrible and terrifying.

*6 Wail, for the day of the Lord is near!  
It will come as destruction from [a]the Almighty.  
7 Therefore all hands will fall limp,  
And every man's heart will melt.  
8 They will be terrified,  
Pains and anguish will take hold of them;  
They will writhe like a woman in labor,  
They will look at one another in astonishment,  
Their faces aflame.  
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.*

Ezekiel describes the same days as a time of doom and despair in Ezekiel 30:3.

*"For the day is near, Even the day of the Lord is near;  
It will be a day of clouds, A time of doom for the nations.*

Zephaniah described it as sudden without warning in Zephaniah 1:14-15) Revelation 6:16 says *"and they \*said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the [a]presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;"*

Job describes it *"For the wicked is reserved for the day of calamity"* in Job 21:30 (NASB.) The NIV, NLT, ESV, HCSB, ISV, and almost all other versions are WAY off on this, in fact they state the exact opposite of the writing. The word wrath in Greek is 'thimos' and means a volatile passionate anger. The word is used only 11 times in the entire Bible and 10 of them are in Revelation. The word "complete" in Greek is 'etteste' and means come to an end or complete. God's wrath is coming. But

right up until the final day, He is trying to win believers. God is NOT an unfair tyrant in His wrath. In Deuteronomy 32:4 it says *“The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.”* The word for "plagues" is "plege" and means to wound or strike with blows. Knowing that, these 7 last plagues are not plagues as we know them but rather they are powerful deadly plagues.

*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.*

Ezekiel said that this "sea of glass" was like crystal in Ezekiel 1:22. It says *“Now over the heads of the living beings there was something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, spread out over their heads.”* John's vision differs in that he described it as glass mixed with fire. Moses described as sapphire in Exodus 24:10.

In the following verses the fire represents different things.

Hebrews 10:27	Absolute and final judgment
Numbers 11 :1	God's anger or wrath
Numbers 16:35	God knows who is guilty and innocent
Deuteronomy 9:3	God will destroy them
Psalms 50:3	God's enemy will be destroyed
Psalms 97:3	No one escapes, God consumes His foes.
Isaiah 66:15	God's rebuke
2 Peter 3:7	God knows the set day

Man will NOT destroy the planet through nuclear bombs, global warming or anything else. It is all part of God's plan. "Those who had victory over the beast" were those who believed after the Rapture. These saints did NOT live through the Tribulation. The only others ever shown with harps were given in Revelation 5:8. It says *“the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp”*. It means that they were special to God.

"The appearance of the tribulation saints makes the point that God sends His wrath as an act of vengeance on those who mistreat His people." John MacArthur

How many times have we seen this so far that God's wrath is punishment against those who oppose God's people?

*15:3 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.”*

The song being sung is one song. It shows the joining of the new to the old. The song describes God's works as great and marvelous. (Psalm 139:14) God's ways are described as true and just in

Daniel 4:37, Deuteronomy 32:4 and Hosea 14:9. The following verses describes God's worthiness as god alone is Holy and worthy of our praise. 1 Samuel 2:2, Psalm 22:3, Psalm 99: 5 and 9, Psalm 111:9, Isaiah 6:3 and Isaiah 57

Romans 14:11 describes God's prominence as above all we will praise Him. Psalm 86:9 says that every person and every nation will praise God.

*15:5 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.*

This is the 9<sup>th</sup> time that John uses the phrase "After these things". The first thing that John notices in this new vision is the temple of the tabernacle of testimony was open. The purpose of the tabernacle was for God to dwell in it. (Exodus 25:8-9 – "Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them. 9 You must build this Tabernacle and its furnishings exactly according to the pattern I will show you.") It was designed by God. The word for 'temple' in Greek is "naos" and it means Holy of Holies. This was not the first time that John saw the tabernacle. He saw the Ark of the Covenant inside the tabernacle in Revelation 11:19. It says "Then, in heaven, the Temple of God was opened and the Ark of his covenant could be seen inside the Temple." Only two versions, the NIV and the NLT call it the Ark of the Covenant. Almost every other version calls it the Tabernacle of the testimony or the Ark of testimony. See Exodus 25:22, Numbers 1:50, Number 1:53 and Acts 7:44. The important difference in these names is that testimony refers to one party. A covenant requires at least two people.

Next John saw seven angels. The 7 angels were bringing seven plagues of God. These angels came from the throne of God. It is not likely or unsure whether these angels are the ones describe in Matthew 13:41-42 and Matthew 13:49-50 ("49 So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, 50 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."). If we look at the verses in Matthew we can see that these angels gather the wicked and throw them into the furnace of fire. This does not happen until God's final judgment. MacArthur, Swindoll, Pastor Brian . . . are not the authority. God is. We learn from Revelation 20:7 and 10-15 that Satan is released and after Satan is released there is an order and humans are thrown into the fire last. Clothed in white represents purity and righteousness. Revelation 19:8 says "It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

*15:7 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.*

One of the 4 living creatures gave the bowls to the seven angels. According to MacArthur these entities are cherubim. You can read further in 1 Samuel 4:4, 2 Samuel 6:2, 2 Samuel 22:11, Psalm 80:1, Psalm 99:1 and Isaiah 37:16. Isaiah 37:16 says "O Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth." God is enthroned around the Ark of the Covenant in these verses. Genesis 3:24 says "So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life." These cherubim are not cute chubby baby angels. They are powerful angels. This scene is similar to the

scene in Revelation 8:3-5 in that the temple is filled with smoke. The smoke is the glory of God. See Exodus 40:34-35. No one could enter into God's presence here in the final verse of Chapter 15 as well as in the Exodus 40 verses.