

## Revelation Pastor Lou DeVizia

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Introduction: Chapter 15 transitions back into the narrative of the judgments which will happen during the Great Tribulation. It picks up where 11:15-19 left off, with the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the opening of the temple of God in heaven. Chapters 12-14 inserted other important facets of the Great Tribulation period. Now the story that was being followed through the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and ultimately the seven bowls, resumes. This chapter can be seen as an introduction to the seven bowl judgments (the subject of Chapter 16), which is in fact what the seventh trumpet initiates. That last trumpet sounds, announcing that the kingdom belongs to the Lord, and the final devastating judgments are poured out (the bowls) on the earth.

In addition to serving as an introduction to the bowl judgments, Chapter 15 provides insight into the sights and sounds of heaven. The heavenly temple is seen in a little more detail than previously described, and a great song of praise to God is presented. The contrast between heaven and earth cannot be missed: while the earth is being fiercely judged, the praises of God are being sung in heaven. God is majestic, righteous, and holy; He is to be feared, trusted, worshiped, obeyed, exalted and lauded.

1. Verse 1 - "the wrath of God is complete."

- v.1 - **another sign, great and marvelous...** John sees another presentation of what is coming. This picks up where the end of Chapter 11 left off. It is in **heaven** (the end of Chapter 14 was on the earth) and it is awesome. First, he describes **seven angels**. He is aware that these angels will bring great **plagues** to the earth, and this will **complete** the pouring out of the wrath of God during the Great Tribulation. Chapter 16 will bring the detail of these plagues, the seven bowls.

2. Verses 2-4 - "the song of Moses ...and the song of the Lamb"

- v.2 - Now John describes the surroundings. The **sea of glass mingled with fire** seems to describe a spectacular and awe-inspiring flooring (or "crystal sea" the inspiration for a number of well-known hymns lyrics, as in "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story" for example). **standing on** this floor are the martyred, victorious saints of God, ready to praise Him with music (as evidenced by their **harps**).

- vv.3-4 - John hears the praises the heaven. God is being praised with what John describes as the **song of Moses** and the **song of the Lamb**. Exodus 15 describes the song of Moses as being a celebration of God's **deliverance** from the Egyptians at the Red Sea crossing. And Deuteronomy 32 describes another song of Moses, this

one given a generation later, describing comprehensively God's mighty works (Psalm 90 is also attributed to Moses, but with the title, "A Prayer of Moses the Man of God"). The raptured church was seen in heaven in Chapter 5 of this book singing praise to the Lamb for His *redemptive* work. Thus this song, which begins by praising God for His **works**, is a celebration of His work of deliverance and redemption. Its lyrics (or the portion of them revealed here) speak of praise to God for His **works**, His **ways**, His holiness, and His judgment. The praises sung in heaven will be amazing! *They should be here too!*

3. Verses 5-8 - "...seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God"

- v.5 - i.e., the "Holy of Holies"

- vv.6-7 - **bowls...** details of these final judgments, which will happen in virtually immediate succession to one another, are given in the next chapter.

- v.8 - Note the order of God: His own glory prevents anyone from entering the **temple** until His wrath is finished being poured out.