

The Song Of Moses

Revelation 15 Notes

The Song Is Introduced (vss. 1-4)

- Trumpets warn the earth dwellers, while at the same time they draw God's people to Him. On the other hand, bowls of wrath bring final judgment. The first verse forms a superscription to chapters 15-16. The final manifestation of the wrath of God takes the form of seven angels of judgment and is called a "sign." This is the third time John has seen a great sign in heaven; each sign introduces a special revelation from God (12:1, 3). The phrase once again relates to a beginning, introducing something that is to follow in action and consequence, as in the sign of the radiant woman (12:1) and the dragon (12:3). So now a finished judgment is introduced to be traced to its consummation. Each sign is seen from heaven's point of view.
- The "sea of glass" is the one introduced in the throne scene (4:6). There is now a difference, however; the sea is "mingled" or reddened with fire. This would be the fire which symbolizes the fiery trials through which the saints had emerged. They had overcome the conflict with the beast, his image and the enforcers of emperor worship. All of God's victorious saints must eventually be tested (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 1 Peter 1:7). In their victory they are given "harps of God" with which to praise Him for His greatness and power by which they had overcome.
- The song is one of victory and praise to God and to the Lamb. This song was sung by Moses and the Israelites after crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-27), praising God for their deliverance from the Egyptians. Under the same mighty hand of God, the Lamb had given deliverance and victory to these who had overcome the forces of the dragon. As God's servant Moses delivered His people from an oppressive nation, so God's Son, the Lamb, redeemed a people from spiritual bondage (cf. Hebrews 3:5). One conquered and delivered from the foe of physical bondage and tyranny; the other conquered the world and death, delivering from Satan's power. The song is a combination of praises compiled from the Psalms, the prophets and the writings of Moses. The song praises and glorifies God as it magnifies His greatness. As King of the nations, God rules and governs their destiny according to righteousness and truth, whether that nation be Egypt, Babylon, Rome or the United States.
- Because of the greatness of the Lord's works and the righteousness and genuineness of His ways as King of the nations, all should be

compelled to fear and glorify His name. "Fear" means "to reverence, treat with deference, and from this disposition render obedience." The Lord's name stands for all that He is, reverence for Him as Lord and glory to His great name are both due to God.

The Seven Angels Are Introduced (vss. 5-8)

- The temple John saw was the Holy of Holies in heaven which was symbolized by the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle. This vision was not of the ancient temple of Solomon nor of Herod's temple, which was destroyed in A.D. 70. "The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony" erected by Moses was called this because within the Holy of Holies rested the ark of the covenant containing the tables of the law, called "the testimony," which God gave Israel (Exodus 25:21). Previously John had seen the sanctuary opened to reveal the ark of the covenant, the seat of God's righteous laws (11:19); now it was opened that the angels of judgment against those who rejected Him and His law might come forth. The time for mercy is over, and God's law must now take its course.
- The sanctity of the law is emphasized first by the appearance of the angels in the vestments of priesthood, then by a complex allusion to a number of Old Testament passages about the glory of the Lord. The seven angels introduced in vs. 1 now appear bearing the seven plagues to be poured out upon the earth. These plagues of judgment come from the holiness of God (cf. Psalm 97:2). The words used to describe the dress of the angels in this verse is also used to describe the attire of the Lamb (cf. 19:8, 14; 1:13).
- It is not revealed which of the four living creatures was commissioned to give the bowls of wrath to the seven angels. The Greek word for "bowl" is a broad, shallow vessel or deep saucer. The bowl is similar to some of the vessels used in Old Testament sacrifices and ritual. These angels next come forth from the divine presence with bowls of wrath and await the instruction from God to empty them. The seven seals reveal, the seven trumpets announce and warn and now the seven bowls execute.
- Moses at the dedication of the tent in the wilderness and the priests at the dedication of Solomon's temple had been unable to enter it because it was filled with the cloud of the divine presence (Exodus 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10). Isaiah had seen the temple filled with smoke, while the song of the seraphim rang in his ears (Isaiah 6:4). Ezekiel had fallen on his face in awe at the vision of the glory of God returning to the restored temple (Ezekiel 44:4). So now John sees the temple filled with smoke from the glory of God and His power. The divine judgments are impenetrable until they are past; when the last

plague has fulfilled its course, the smoke will vanish, and the vision of God will be seen. No intercessions can change the determinate counsel of God; but when it is fulfilled, we can then see clearly that which is now obscured.