

## The Book of Revelation Lesson 18 - Revelation 15

1. Key Verse is **Revelation 17:14** - **“These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they [also shall overcome] that are with him, called and chosen and faithful.”**
2. The purpose of Revelation is to comfort Christians in trials and persecution by assuring them that the enemies of righteousness will be conquered and destroyed. Christ will ultimately triumph over Satan and death, and his church will gain the final victory over all the forces of evil.
  - 2.1. Our consolation is God Himself, who dictated this book, through Christ, by an angel, to John the apostle, who wrote it down, and sent the completed book to the seven churches of Asia (**Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8**).
  - 2.2. John was told to write of **“things which must shortly come to pass”** (**Rev. 1:1**), **“which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter”** (**Rev. 1:19**). There is an amazing parallel between the visions of the book and the course of church history. Much of Revelation refers to the end of the world, the judgment, and to the new heaven and the new earth.
  - 2.3. **Rev. 15** and **Rev. 16** are a summary of the events symbolized by the seven seals and the seven trumpets. In **Rev. 15**, the shortest section in the book, the seven angels introduce the seven plagues of **Rev. 16**. The seven vials, or bowls, of God's wrath are poured out upon the earth (**Rev. 16:1**). **“In them is filled up the wrath of God”** (**Rev. 15:1**), **“till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished”** (**Rev. 15:8**).
  - 2.4. God's punishment of the impenitent is seen, according to Paul's warning, **“after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of the judgment of God”** (**Rom. 2:5**).
  - 2.5. One sees a similarity between these symbols of God's wrath and the plagues visited upon Egypt. Here the wrath of God is poured out upon the earth, the sea, the rivers, the sun, the throne of the beast, the great river Euphrates, and the air. The total physical environment is pictured. This symbolizes man's spiritual environment -- the completeness of God's judgment upon all evil, especially in the time of the final and ultimate hardening of the human race, when they repented not and “men blasphemed God” (**Rev. 16:9, 11, 21**).
  - 2.6. The sources of evil are the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. The dragon is Satan (**Rev. 12:9**); the beast represents anti-Christian government, whether Rome, Russia, or any other; and the second beast, or false prophet, symbolizes anti-Christian religion and thought.
  - 2.7. Revelation 15
    - 2.7.1. John sees another sign in heaven, seven angels with seven plagues.
    - 2.7.2. These seven plagues, which have come to an end, represent the completeness of the wrath of God.
    - 2.7.3. There is no longer repentance for the wicked.
    - 2.7.4. Their doom is sealed and the wrath is being prepared to be poured out.
    - 2.7.5. The trumpets have sounded. The trumpets were to warn.

- 2.7.6. Now the wrath of God is to be poured out from the bowls. This is all in preparation for the seven bowls of wrath. The seven angels were given seven bowls filled with the wrath of God by one of the four living creatures. This wrath is final.
- 2.7.7. The wicked have hardened their hearts and their judgment is delivered.
- 2.7.8. No one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels are finished, indicating there would be no more intercession for them.
3. **Rev.15:1 - And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, [which are] the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God.**
- 3.1. The trumpets have warned calling all men to repentance. Those who have not repented have run out of time for in the seven bowls of wrath will culminate in the final judgment of mankind.
4. **Rev.15:2 - And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God.**
- 4.1. The sea of glass, a clear separation of the redeemed from those who face eternal punishment.
- 4.1.1. Rich man and Lazarus – **Luke 16:19-31**
- 4.2. Before John tells about the seven plagues, he looks at the church triumphant to encourage Christians to be faithful and that they can overcome. Here Christians are seen after the judgment as victorious. He sees as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire, similar to the sea in chapter 4:6, but here it is mingled with fire.
- 4.3. Whether the fire represents the trials that God's people must go through and overcome or whether it is representative of the eternal fire awaiting those who serve Satan is unsure.
- 4.4. Those who are God's are victorious. He is showing that the Christians were victorious over the beast, his image and the number of his name. They seemed invincible in chapter 13, but with God's help, the Christians were faithful and overcame them.
5. **Rev.15:3 - And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages.**
- 5.1. They sang the song of Moses and the Lamb. This is the song of victory after deliverance.
- 5.1.1. The song of Moses is found in Exodus 15:1-18, but the words of the song of the Lamb are taken from several places in the Old Testament (Psalms 11:2; 139:14; Amos 4:13; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 86:9; Malachi 1:11).
- 5.1.2. God's works are great and marvelous, much greater than those of the dragon and beast. The song is a song of praise for the great righteous acts of God, the King of the ages. God is the Almighty; he is able to do anything that he purposes to do. There is none like him. He is the Supreme Ruler of the universe, the King of the ages - throughout all ages.
6. **Rev.15:4 - Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest.**

- 6.1.1. God is praised for his great righteous acts. They indicate that all will fear and glorify the name of God (Psalm 86:9; Malachi 1:11; Jeremiah 10:7). The Lord's name stands for all that he is.
  - 6.1.1.1. Only God is holy. The word **hosios** is used here rather than the usual **hagios**.
  - 6.1.1.2. It means perfect purity.
  - 6.1.1.3. It indicates that all nations shall come and worship before God after the victory over the beasts and dragon (Psalm 86:9). His righteous acts are evident to all. It is noteworthy that the saved do not talk about their overcoming, but the praise is given to God.
  - 6.1.1.4. All praise and glory belong to God. This section was put in to re-assure Christians that in the midst of severe persecution, that even if Christians die or are severely persecuted, they will be more than conquerors in eternity.

## 7. Rev. 15:5-6

7.1. **Rev.15:5 - And after these things I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:**

7.2. **Rev.15:6 - and there came out from the temple the seven angels that had the seven plagues, arrayed with [precious] stone, pure [and] bright, and girt about their breasts with golden girdles.**

7.2.1. The temple of heaven was opened to allow the seven angels to come out from the presence of God. This was done in order that it can be understood that the wrath, which is about to be revealed, is God's wrath.

7.2.1.1. The tabernacle of the testimony was a common Old Testament name for the tabernacle in the wilderness (**Numbers 17:7; 18:2**). It was called this because it contained the two tables of testimony, which were kept in the Ark of the Covenant (**Exodus 32:15; Deuteronomy 10:5**).

7.2.2. He uses this terminology to refer to the temple of heaven. It was opened to allow the seven angels to come out from the presence of God. This was done in order that it can be understood that the wrath, which is about to be revealed, is God's wrath.

7.2.3. It may either be arrayed with precious stone or clothed in pure white linen. There is textual evidence for both. These seven angels came from the very presence of God arrayed in dazzling apparel indicating their actions are from pure concern for the right, not with evil intentions.

## 8. Rev.15:7-8

8.1. **Rev.15:7 - And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.**

8.2. **Rev.15:8 - And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished.**

8.2.1. One of the four living creatures near the throne of God gave each angel a golden bowl full of the wrath of God.

8.2.1.1. In Revelation 5:8 these bowls were full of the prayers of the saints.

8.2.1.2. The bowls are of gold as they are used in the service of God.

- 8.2.1.3. They are full, to indicate the fierceness and unmitigated character of God's wrath. It is ever lasting wrath for it proceeds from the ever-living God.
- 8.2.2. The smoke in the temple represents the glory of God with the power to carry out his judgments. This imagery is seen often in the Old Testament (**Exodus 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10; Isaiah 6:4; Ezekiel 10:4; 44:4**). No one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished. This means intercession was no longer possible.
- 8.2.3. God has warned and now his longsuffering has run out.