

Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #31 | Revelation 15:1-8 | Seven Angels Introduced

Revelation 15:1 | Another Sign in Heaven

- The unfolding revelation has taken us from heaven to earth and back again on a number of occasions.
- The previous chapter had been a “flash forward” to the things on earth, concluding with a preview of the battle of Armageddon.
- The previous “sign in heaven” had been a woman, a child, and a dragon (Rev. 12:1-6).
- Now we see a sign that is **great and marvelous** (v. 1).
 - θαυμαστός [*thaumastos*] is of the same Greek word as the English word *theater*, where a person gazes upon a scene.
- The sign is worthy of gazing upon because **the last plagues and in them the wrath of God is filled up** (completed).
- When this sign has been completed and the wrath of God fully poured out, God’s Son will begin His reign.
- While chapter 15 is a scene from heaven, the completed work of these seven angels will be done on earth, in chapters 16-18.

Revelation 15:2-4 | The Songs of Heaven

- John sees a **sea of glass mingled with fire** (v. 2).
 - In Revelation 4:6 we saw a **sea of glass** around the throne. This could be the same sea, which is at the throne of God (verse 2 would seem to indicate).
 - However, there are a number of differences:
 - This one is **mingled with fire**.
 - This one is *outside the Holy of Holies* in heaven (as we shall see beginning in v. 5).
 - Jeremiah 52:20 speaks of a **sea** of brass in the first Temple as a reference to the laver before the entrance of the Temple, followed by the altar.
 - Could this **sea of glass mingled with fire** be a look at the laver with the fire of the heavenly altar reflecting within it?
- John also sees **them that had gotten victory over the beast** (v. 2).
 - The verb is in the active tense.
 - Who are these people?
 - Compare Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21.
 - The same verb is used in these verses as in 15:2, νικάω [*nikao*] – overcomers.
 - See also Revelation 12:17 **the remnant of her seed**.

- These overcomers sing two songs (not the **new song** of Revelation 14:3).
 - **The song of Moses** (v. 3). See Deuteronomy 31:19-22, 29, and Deuteronomy 32. The use of this song provides an example of the Jewish means of interpretation of the books of history, in which history in the Biblical text is prophetic of the future. (For further study, look at the Jewish exegetical method called *pardes*.)
 - **The song of the Lamb**, the words of which are given in vv. 3-4.

Revelation 15:5-8 | Inside the Holy of Holies

- The **temple of the tabernacle** is the Holy of Holies. Recall that the earthly tabernacle and temple were but shadows of the heavenly.
- Out of the Holy of Holies, John sees seven angels, dressed in strength and victory.
- One of the **four beasts**, which are found in God’s presence (the *cherubim*), give **seven golden vials filled with the wrath of God** to these seven angels.
- At this point, the Holy of Holies is **filled with smoke from the glory of God** and God is not seen **till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled**.

Revelation 16:1 | The Chronology of the Revelation

- Revelation 11:15-19 is the last chronologically ordered information we have had in the book of Revelation.
- Revelation 12-15 are parenthetical, filling in the details of what happens before, during, and after the seventh trumpet of the seventh seal of Revelation 11:15-19.
- Revelation 16:1 picks up where 11:19 left off. The pouring of the vials is going to be quick and furious, and bring the destruction of the nations of the world.

Can you be an overcomer?

- In lessons like this one, we can easily become worried about whether we have the “staying power” to survive.
- Staying power and “faith-stamina” is something each of us should develop, for the sake of our witness, our church, our family, and our country.
- The “overcoming” in the Revelation is for the sake of their souls. They must “endure to the end” to be saved.
- Fortunately, we live in an age of grace, in which we are given secure salvation *by grace, through faith*. We can rejoice in eternal life!