

Revelation

Chapter 15

Introduction

- The Revelation to John
 - A prophetic writing with features of a letter and of the form of literature called Apocalyptic
 - Written by John to Christians during the second half of the First Century
 - Placed at the end of the New Testament because of its concern with the “end times.”
 - So far we have finished the first 14 chapters.
 - Tonight we will cover Chapter 15

Review

- Introduction (1:1-8)
- First Vision (1:9-20)
- 7 Letters (Chapters 2 & 3)



Review

- Heavenly Throne Room (Chapters 4 & 5)



Review



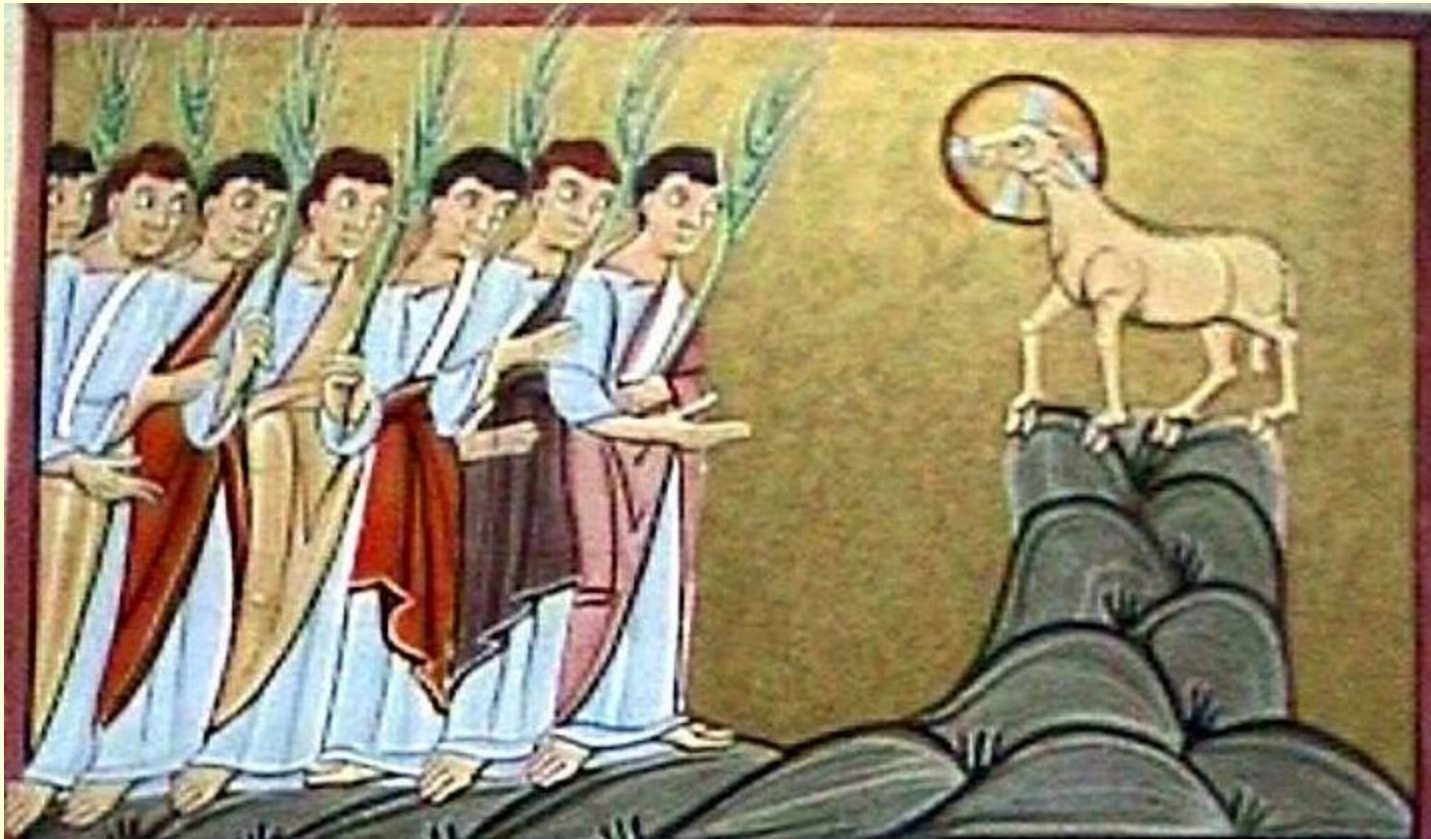
- The First Six Seals (Chapter 6)
 - The 4 Horsemen
 - Souls of Martyrs
 - Vision of the End

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

--- Revelation 6:15-17

Review

- The Servants of God (Chapter 7)



Review

- The 7th Seal (Chapter 8)
 - Silence in Heaven
 - Prayers of the Saints
 - The First 4 Trumpets
 - Announcement of the 3 Woes



Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!" (**Revelation 8:113**)



Review

- The First Two Woes (Chapter 9)



5th
Trumpet

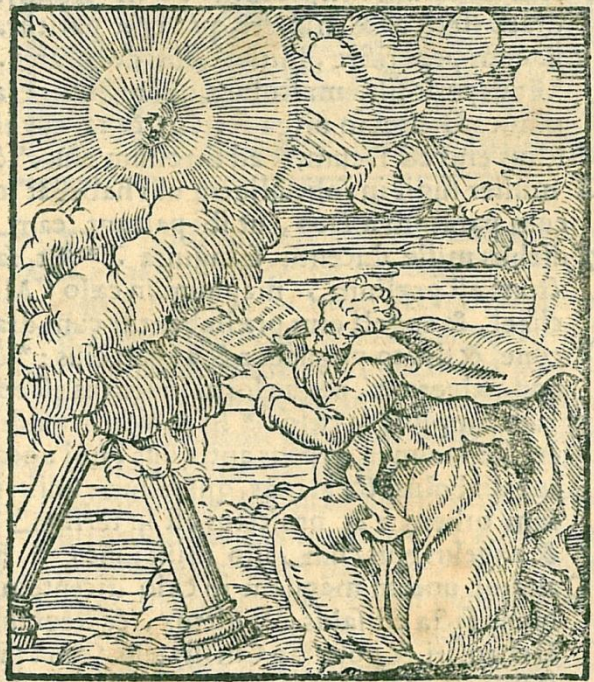


6th
Trumpet



Review

- Interlude
 - Mighty Angel With A Little Book (Chapter 10)
 - Measuring the Temple (Chapter 11, Verses 1-2)
 - The Two Witnesses (Chapter 11, Verses 3-13)



Review

- The Seventh Trumpet (Chapter 11, Verses 14-19)



Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." **(11:15)**

Review



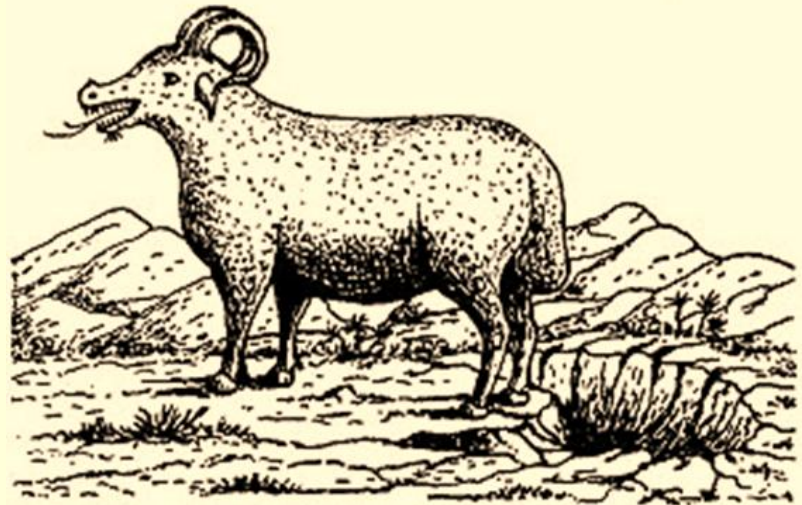
- The Woman, Her Son and The Dragon (Chapter 12)

Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

--- **Revelation 12:17a**

Review

- The Two Beasts (Chapter 13)



Review

- The New Song
(Chapter 14, Verses 1-5)



Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

--- ***Revelation 14:1-3***

Review

- Another Three Angels
(Chapter 14, Verses 6-13)



And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast ... he also will drink the wine of God's wrath..." (9-10)

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. (12)

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" (13)

Review

- The Harvest
(Chapter 14, Verses 14-20)



Discussion

- Concerning the 144,000
 - This number is mentioned three times
 - Revelation 7:4
 - *And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:*
 - Revelation 14:1
 - *Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.*
 - Revelation 14:3
 - *and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.*

Discussion

- Concerning the 144,000
 - It seems very likely that the number points to the same group of people in each instance.
 - $144,000 = 12 \times 12 \times 1000$ is almost certainly to be understood as symbolic and not literal.
 - It might possibly refer to some special “subset” of the redeemed (e.g. Jews, martyrs, ascetics)
 - Much more likely, it is symbolic of the full number of the redeemed --- which nobody can count and nobody knows.

Discussion

- Concerning the 144,000
 - The description of this group in 14:4 as being blameless virgins etc.) is certainly figurative or eschatological.
 - To suggest that anyone other than Christ is worthy of such description in this lifetime, would be to misread not only Revelation but the whole Bible!
 - Most likely this describes the sanctified and glorified state of all men and women who are redeemed, who persevere in following the Lamb.

Discussion

- Concerning the harvest (s)
 - The two visions described in last week's lesson (Revelation 14:14-20) may possibly represent two harvests:
 - A harvest by Christ of the redeemed.
 - A harvest by an angel of God of those who will receive the full outpouring of God's wrath.
 - It is better to understand this as two visions of the same harvest.
 - They are logically (and theologically) inseparable.

ヨハネの黙示録 15:1-8

1. またわたしは、天に大いなる驚くべきほかのしるしを見た。七人の御使が、最後の七つの災害を携えていた。これらの災害で神の激しい怒りがその頂点に達するのである。
2. またわたしは、火のまじったガラスの海のようなものを見た。そして、このガラスの海のそばに、獣とその像とその名の数字とにうち勝った人々が、神の立琴を手にして立っているのを見た。

ヨハネの黙示録 15:1-8

3. 彼らは、神の僕モーセの歌と小羊の歌とを歌って言った、「全能者にして主なる神よ。あなたのみわざは、大いなる、また驚くべきものであります。万民の王よ、あなたの道は正しく、かつ真実であります。

ヨハネの黙示録 15:1-8

4. 主よ、あなたをおそれず、御名をほめたたえない者が、ありましようか。あなただけが聖なるかたであり、あらゆる国民はきて、あなたを伏し拝むでしょう。あなたの正しいさばきが、あらわれるに至ったからであります」。
5. その後、わたしが見ていると、天にある、あかしの幕屋の聖所が開かれ、

ヨハネの黙示録 15:1-8

6. その聖所から、七つの災害を携えている七人の御使が、汚れのない、光り輝く亜麻布を身にまとい、金の帯を胸にしめて、出てきた。
7. そして、四つの生き物の一つが、世々限りなく生きておられる神の激しい怒りの満ちた七つの金の鉢を、七人の御使に渡した。

ヨハネの黙示録 15:1-8

8. すると、聖所は神の栄光とその力とから立ちのぼる煙で満たされ、七人の御使の七つの災害が終わってしまうまでは、だれも聖所にはいることができなかった。

Revelation 15:1-8

1. Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.
2. And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire---and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

Revelation 15:1-8

3. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!
4. Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."

Revelation 15:1-8

5. After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened,
6. and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes around their chests.
7. And 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,

Revelation 15:1-8

8. and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

15:1

またわたしは、天に大いなる驚くべきほかのしるしを見た。七人の御使が、最後の七つの災害を携えていた。これらの災害で神の激しい怒りがその頂点に達するのである。

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Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- “Then” ... when?

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- “Then” ... when?
 - Sometime after John in his vision saw the winepress described at the end of Chapter 14.
 - It is worth reminding ourselves, again and again, that John is describing the order in which he sees things within his visions.
 - This does not necessarily mean that he is describing things in the order in which they have happened or will happen in “real life”
 - Sometimes it clearly does not mean this.

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Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- “Another sign in heaven” ... what signs has he seen before?

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Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- “Another sign in heaven” ... what signs has he seen before?
 - Possibly he is referring to what he has just seen and recorded at the end of Chapter 14.
 - Probably he is referring back to the beginning of Chapter 12, where the woman and the dragon were also described as great and mysterious signs in heaven.

15:1

またわたしは、天に大いなる驚くべきほかのしるしを見た。七人の御使が、最後の七つの災害を携えていた。これらの災害で神の激しい怒りがその頂点に達するのである。

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- The signs in heaven of the woman and the dragon at the start of Chapter 12, began the three-chapter description of the war waged by Satan against the church.
- This description ended at the end of Chapter 14 with the visions of the final harvest, where the followers of the beast and the enemies of the church are destroyed by the outpouring of God's wrath.

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Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- Not only does 15:1 look back to the preceding vision of the war of Satan on the church,
- It also announces the next major vision that John will see, of which the seven angels with the seven plagues are the sign in heaven.
- This is the vision of the seven bowls of Gods wrath which runs to the end of Chapter 16.

15:1

またわたしは、天に大いなる驚くべきほかのしるしを見た。七人の御使が、最後の七つの災害を携えていた。これらの災害で神の激しい怒りがその頂点に達するのである。

Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- So you see that 15:1 is kind of a hinge connecting the 12,13,14 sequence with the 15,16 sequence, which are respectively the war of Satan on the church (which he loses) and the outpouring of God's wrath on the ungodly.
- But again please remember that this literary sequence represents the order of John's visions and not necessarily the order of human history. The visions can overlap.

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Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- It might possibly have been better to translate this verse as referring to seven angels with **control over** seven plagues, because they have not yet been given the bowls containing the plagues.
- Here as elsewhere in Revelation, it would probably be wrong to suppose that seven is **literally** the number of the distinct calamities which have and will come on earth.

15:1

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- It is much more likely that John would have understood seven as being symbolic of fullness and completeness and, in a certain sense, finality.
- It says here that the plagues are the last, not necessarily because all of them come at the end of time, but because when all of them are finished, the wrath of God is finished.

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Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

- And probably it is best to understand this as the perfection of God's wrath prior to the final judgment.
 - The 7th and final bowl of wrath will be poured out in 16:17
 - Scenes of final judgment follow.
 - But, again, we must be careful not to confuse literary structure and sequence of visions with the sequence of events in human history.

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- In summary, then, regarding 15:1
 - This verse connects and marks a transition from the preceding vision of the war of Satan on the Church and the coming vision of the outpouring of God's wrath.
 - It announces and summarizes the upcoming vision of God's wrath, which begins in Verse 5.
 - Verse 1 and Verse 5 are separated by a brief interlude, in which the redeemed are seen giving praise to God.

15:2

またわたしは、火のまじったガラスの海のようなものを見た。そして、このガラスの海のそばに、獣とその像とその名の数字とにうち勝った人々が、神の立琴を手にして立っているのを見た。

And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire---and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

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And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire---and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

- Where has John seen a “sea of glass” before?

15:2

またわたしは、火のまじったガラスの海のようなものを見た。そして、このガラスの海のそばに、獣とその像とその名の数字とにうち勝った人々が、神の立琴を手にして立っているのを見た。

And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire---and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

- Where has John seen a “sea of glass” before?
 - In Chapter 4, Verse 6, in the heavenly throne room, before the throne of God.
 - Presumably this is the location of the present vision.
 - But now this approach to the throne seems to John to be “mingled with fire”
 - Do you suppose that this is significant?

15:2

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And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire---and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

- Standing beside the sea of glass, and therefore standing before the throne of God, with harps in their hands are certain beings....described as those who had conquered the beast and etc.
- Who do you suppose they are?
 - Men and women who held fast to their faith in Christ until the end.

15:3

彼らは、神の僕モーセの歌と小羊の歌とを歌って言った、「全能者にして主なる神よ。あなたのみわざは、大いなる、また驚くべきものであります。万民の王よ、あなたの道は正しく、かつ真実であります。

And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

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彼らは、神の僕モーセの歌と小羊の歌とを歌って言った、「全能者にして主なる神よ。あなたのみわざは、大いなる、また驚くべきものであります。万民の王よ、あなたの道は正しく、かつ真実であります。

And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

- These people are singing a song.
- It is not two songs, but one song, which is described as the song of Moses and, also, the song of the Lamb.

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- Exodus 15 contains what is often referred to as the song of Moses, which is a song mainly about God's power and faithfulness in delivering his people out of Egypt.
- Some also use this expression to describe Moses' final address to the people in Deuteronomy 32.
- Perhaps both "songs of Moses" are to be heard here.

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And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

- The content of this song, is filled with epithets common to the Old Testament prophets and psalmists.
 - The deeds of God are great and amazing.
 - “O Lord God the Almighty” is an expression used only once in the New Testament outside of Revelation, but 9 times in Revelation!
 - Here we understand that God’s victory in Christ is his greatest!

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And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

- God's victory in Christ is his greatest, not just as a manifestation of his great and amazing power,
- but also and especially of his justice and truth.
- God does not merely "win" against his enemies and the enemies of his people,
- he proves himself to be just and true in all his ways!

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彼らは、神の僕モーセの歌と小羊の歌とを歌って言った、「全能者にして主なる神よ。あなたのみわざは、大いなる、また驚くべきものであります。万民の王よ、あなたの道は正しく、かつ真実であります。

And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

- Thus God in Christ shall be finally and ultimately seen to be the ruler of all the nations.
- There are no “other Gods”
- And no greater god is conceivable, beside the one who has revealed himself through Moses and the Lamb!

15:4

主よ、あなたをおそれず、御名をほめたたえない者が、
ありましょか。あなただけが聖なるかたであり、あ
らゆる国民はきて、あなたを伏し拝むでしょう。あな
たの正しいさばきが、あらわれるに至ったからであ
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Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you
alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for
your righteous acts have been revealed."



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- Who will not fear and glorify the name of the Lord?
– Who?

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- Who will not fear and glorify the name of the Lord?
 - Who?
 - Nobody.
 - In other words, everyone will come to fear God and glorify his name.
 - There is no other choice: for God alone is holy.

15:4

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- What do the singers mean: ***you alone are holy?***

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alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for
your righteous acts have been revealed."

- What do the singers mean: ***you alone are holy?***
 - Holiness and “Godness” are the same thing!
 - Only God is God. He is absolutely “other” and set apart from everyone and everything else.
 - Every good thing comes from him
 - Apart from him nothing can exist.

15:4

主よ、あなたをおそれず、御名をほめたたえない者が、
ありましょか。あなただけが聖なるかたであり、あ
らゆる国民はきて、あなたを伏し拝むでしょう。あな
たの正しいさばきが、あらわれるに至ったからであ
ります」。

Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you
alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for
your righteous acts have been revealed."

- God is beyond compare: essentially and infinitely perfect.
- This has been revealed in human history through the
“song of Moses” and the “song of the Lamb.”
- Therefore all nations will come and worship Him.
- “Every knee will bow and tongue confess...” Rom. 14:11

15:4

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- Does this mean that everyone will turn to God and be saved?

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Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you
alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for
your righteous acts have been revealed."

- Does this mean that everyone will turn to God and be saved?
 - Evidently, and sadly, not.
 - It is evidently possible for some men and women to reject God while acknowledging his holiness....to reject him because of his incomparable goodness...just as Satan has done.

15:5

その後、わたしが見ていると、天にある、あかしの幕屋
の聖所が開かれ、

After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness
in heaven was opened,

- Once again we John is allowed to look into the deep things of heaven.
- Here he understand that he is being allowed to look into the heavenly tent of witness.
- The earthly tent of witness was the tabernacle of Israel during the wilderness wandering years.
- It was called the tent of witness because they kept the ten commandments there.

15:5

その後、わたしが見ていると、天にある、あかしの幕屋
の聖所が開かれ、

After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness
in heaven was opened,

- The tent of witness also symbolized God's presence in the midst of Israel, always a dangerous thing, precisely because of God's holiness and the sinfulness of Israel!
- The opening of the tent of witness must be momentous and frightening and dangerous things --- dangerous to those who would oppose God and his commandments.

15:6

その聖所から、七つの災害を携えている七人の御使が、
汚れのない、光り輝く亜麻布を身にまとい、金の帯
を胸にしめて、出てきた。

and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the
seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden
sashes around their chests.

- From out of there come the seven angels with the seven plagues.
- These are called “the” seven angels, because John has already described them to us, in 15:1 for certain.
- John may possibly also have understood these to be the same angels who, for example, sounded the 7 trumpets.

15:6

その聖所から、七つの災害を携えている七人の御使が、
汚れのない、光り輝く亜麻布を身にまとい、金の帯
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and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the
seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden
sashes around their chests.

- Here the seven angels are described as having special clothing:
 - Some see this merely as proper dress for “heavenly beings”
 - Others see this as being also as being “priestly” dress, which maybe makes sense considering that they are coming out from the tent of witness.
 - The notion of priests of God bringing plagues to those who oppose Him is not foreign to Bible.

15:7

そして、四つの生き物の一つが、世々限りなく生きておられる神の激しい怒りの満ちた七つの金の鉢を、七人の御使に渡した。

And 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,

- As with all of the other plagues which have come upon the earth within John's visions, we are made to see that these come ultimately from God.
- Here the angelic, priestly beings are given bowls full of God's own wrath.
- Bowls were common to worship in the temple and the tabernacle --- here the use of bowls may connect to the prayers of the saints in 5:8

15:7

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- Thus we may once again have an image in which God and his heavenly and earthly beings are all acting in concert to bring about the history which the Lamb has unsealed and set into motion.
- It is important to understand that the wrath of God who lives forever and ever is very different from the anger of man, however righteous.

15:7

そして、四つの生き物の一つが、世々限りなく生きておられる神の激しい怒りの満ちた七つの金の鉢を、七人の御使に渡した。

And 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,

- God's wrath is poured out after long, long years of patient waiting ---- it is nothing like a human fit of rage.
- God's wrath is purely beneficial --- somehow necessary to the achieving of the good and perfect plan which God has written since before the beginning of the world.
- The painful aspect of God's wrath is something which God himself, in and through Christ, shares with us.

15:7

そして、四つの生き物の一つが、世々限りなく生きておられる神の激しい怒りの満ちた七つの金の鉢を、七人の御使に渡した。

And 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,

- In other words, for those who love God and are called according to his purpose, God's wrath is a "good thing."
- Thus the prayers of the saints must be understood as participating in the completion of God's perfect plan, including the part which involves God's wrath.

15:8

すると、聖所は神の栄光とその力とから立ちのぼる煙で満たされ、七人の御使の七つの災害が終ってしまふまでは、だれも聖所にはいることができなかった。

and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

- Now the vision has, in some sense, prepared John for the coming vision of the outpouring of God's wrath.
- He will understand it as the sequel of the war of Satan against the church, of which we read in Chapters 12-14, and the prequel of the glorious visions of the redeemed which we have seen several times, but most recently in verses 2-4 of Chapter 14.

Next Week

- Next week we will read Chapter 16 which tells of the outpouring of the seven bowls filled with God's wrath.
- That will be the last lesson before the holiday break.

Holiday Schedule

- I propose that this Tuesday Evening Bible Study should not meet on December 20 and 27 and January 3.
- In other words our last class of this year would be December 13 and our first class of next year would be January 10.
- Does that sound right to you all?!