

A STUDY OF REVELATION

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PART XXI

SEVEN VIALS OF WRATH

Revelation 15:1-8

Introduction: It is hoped by now the idea of time sequence in Revelation has been pushed aside in favor of logical connections and presentations. Notice again that the last chapter ends in Armageddon, the last event to occur before the visible, bodily return of Jesus with His saints. Chapter fifteen backs up, tells the story of the great tribulation again from the standpoint of God's wrath on a sinful world and from the viewpoint of His purpose to bring the nation of Israel to final glory. The story begun here, continues through chapter 16, but we will concern ourselves for the time with chapter 15. It is believed the time of Revelation 15 is approximately the middle of Daniel's seventieth week.

I. ANGELS OF WRATH AND REDEEMED MEN. V. 1-4.

- A. John saw another sign in heaven.
 - 1. It is described as great and marvelous.
 - 2. It consisted of seven angels having the seven last plagues.
 - 3. These plagues are the fullness of the wrath of God.
- B. John saw a sea of glass mingled with fire.
 - 1. Those victorious over the beast stand upon this sea.
 - 2. They overcame the beast, his image, his mark and his number.
 - 3. They have the harps of God.
- C. The action of the redeemed.
 - 1. They sing the song of the Lamb.
 - a. Greatness of works.
 - b. Righteousness of ways.
 - c. Name to be feared and glorified.
 - d. Holiness of being and worthiness of worship.
 - e. Manifestation of judgments.
- D. General Comments.
 - 1. This is the third wondrous sign in heaven (note Rev. 12:1, 3).
 - a. They appear to have to do with bringing Israel to glory in spite of, and over the work of Satan.
 - b. This is the purpose of the seven last plagues.
 - c. This is illustrated by Israel in Egypt.
 - d. All the wrath of God from Eden onward will be vented upon fallen man who has chosen Satan and his ultimate god.
 - e. Seven angels and seven vials indicate completion.
 - 2. The sea of glass mingled with fire indicates judgment.
 - a. It is first introduced in chapter four, indicating earth.
 - b. Mingled with fire indicates judgment.
 - c. The redeemed of all ages stand upon the sea of glass.
 - (1.) Some from Old Testament times sing the song of Moses.

- (2.) Some from New Testament times sing the song of the Lamb.
 - (3.) This may indicate the rapture and first resurrection has occurred.
- d. These redeemed ones are victorious over the beast.
 - (1.) Beast activity has been building ever since Eden.
 - (2.) They did not contribute to his cause in their lifetime.
 - (3.) They attained unto the first resurrection.
- e. The redeemed have the harps of God (appropriate instrument of praise).
- f. The action of the redeemed.
 - (1.) They sing the song of Moses.
 - (2.) They sing the song of the Lamb.
 - (3.) Moses and Jesus fulfilled similar roles on earth mediating a covenant.
 - (4.) Again, this song is not strictly a song of spiritual salvation which is universal.
 - (5.) It is a song of accomplishment in covenant relationship with God.

II. THE HEAVENLY SCENE, V. 5-8.

- A. The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony was opened.
 - 1. Seven angels came out.
 - a. Clothed in pure, white linen.
 - b. Girded with a golden girdle.
 - c. Each given a vial full of the wrath of God.
 - 2. They were given the vials by one of the four living creatures.
- B. The temple was filled with smoke.
 - 1. From the glory and power of God.
 - 2. No man was able to enter the temple.
 - 3. This state continues until the seven plagues are fulfilled.
- C. General Comments.
 - 1. Temple, tabernacle, testimony are things related to Israel: this part of the story is told from the viewpoint of bringing Israel to predestined glory.
 - 2. Angels are seven in number, the number of completion.
 - a. Their clothing, white linen, golden girdles speak of righteousness and their work however terrible is just and righteous.
 - b. The living creature, representative of creation, offers the vials of wrath. Note, Romans 8:18-22.
 - 3. The temple filled with smoke indicates the presence of the altogether righteous God, note I Kings 8:10-11.
 - a. Man may enter God's presence only through the sacrifice of Jesus.
 - b. In this situation it appears God allows no one in His presence until His wrath is abated by righteous judgment and Israel is brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus which shall occur at the end of Armageddon. Romans 11:25-26; Zach. 12:9-10; 13:6.