

NOON BIBLE STUDY: REVELATION 15

WE SAID IN OUR LAST STUDY THAT THINGS IN REVELATION WERE HEADING TOWARDS AN INTENSE AND DIFFICULT PERIOD. HERE IS A QUICK SUMMARY OF WHAT I MEAN BY THAT.

REVELATION 16 IS GOING TO BEGIN TO DESCRIBE THE "WRATH OF GOD" THAT IS GOING TO BE "POURED OUT" (USING IMAGERY OF LIQUID BEING POURED OUT OF SEVEN BOWLS). THESE SEVEN PLAGUES WILL COME UPON THE EARTH AND BRING DEVASTATION TO THE EARTH, THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH, AND THE RULER(S) OF THE EARTH. THEN IN REVELATION 17, THE BEAST AND THE DRAGON HE IS SERVING WILL BE TARGETED. REVELATION 18 WILL FOLLOW WITH THE JUDGMENT AND END OF BABYLON, HUMANITY'S KINGDOM ATTEMPT. REVELATION 19-20 WILL DESCRIBE THE END OF THE BEAST, THE FALSE PROPHET AND THOSE WHO HAVE FOLLOWED AFTER THEIR WAYS - CULMINATING IN THE ARREST AND DESTRUCTION OF THE DEVIL HIMSELF. THE FINAL SCENE OF REVELATION 20 WILL OUTLINE GREAT JUDGMENT OF ALL AND EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER LIVED - AND GOD'S JUSTICE BEING UNSWERVINGLY BEING DONE TO ALL. THIS CRITICAL SECTION OF SCRIPTURE WILL CONCLUDE WITH THE FINAL ANNIHILATION OF EVERY EVIL THING, EVERY EVIL PERSON AND DEATH ITSELF - BY BEING THROWN INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE.

THAT IS WHAT IS NEXT. BUT FIRST WE READ REVELATION 15 AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME.

REVELATION 15:1 - SEVEN ANGELS WITH SEVEN PLAGUES

"ANOTHER SIGN" - PREVIOUSLY THIS LANGUAGE WAS USED TO DESCRIBE THE WOMAN IN REVELATION 12 WHICH WAS REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL AND MARY AS WELL AS THE "GREAT RED DRAGON" OF REVELATION 12 WHICH TRIES TO DEVOUR THE WOMAN'S CHILD AND FIGHTS AGAINST THE SAINTS. THESE VISIONS ARE VIVID AND HAVE THUS FAR ILLUSTRATED THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE AND THE FORCES OF EVIL, LED BY SATAN.

"THE LAST" - THE LAST PLAGUES. THE LAST AS IN THE FINAL ONES IN HISTORY, BUT ALSO THE LAST IN THE SERIES OF PLAGUES WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN IN REVELATION. THROUGH THESE LAST SEVEN PLAGUES, THE WRATH OF GOD WILL BE METED OUT AND COMPLETED. THE GREEK WORD USED FOR "FINISHED" IS *TELEO* WHICH MEANS TO BRING TO AN END, ACCOMPLISH OR COMPLETE.

SEVEN IS A NUMBER USED THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE. IT SEEMS TO CARRY THE MEANING OF COMPLETION, FINDING ITS ORIGIN IN THE 7 DAYS OF CREATION ITSELF. IN FACT, THE HEBREW WORD FOR SEVEN USES THE SAME LETTERS AS THE HEBREW WORD FOR COMPLETE/FULL. JOSHUA MARCHED AROUND JERICO 7X. NAAMAN IS TOLD TO WASH IN THE JORDAN 7X. THERE WERE 7 JEWISH FEASTS IN THE YEARLY CALENDAR. DEBTS WERE TO BE FORGIVEN IN THE 7TH YEAR. EVEN THE RAINBOW SYMBOLIZING GOD'S COVENANT AND THE END OF THE JUDGMENT DURING NOAH'S TIME HAS 7 COLORS. SO WHILE THERE IS MORE TO THE FINAL JUDGMENT THAN JUST THESE 7 PLAGUES, FOR THE SEVEN ANGELS TO HAVE SEVEN FINAL PLAGUES, IT COMMUNICATES A COMPLETION AND FULLNESS OF THE WRATH OF GOD.

THERE'S ALSO ONE OTHER BIBLICAL PRECEDENT TO THE JUDGMENT AND THE NUMBER 7. IN LEVITICUS 26:1-13, GOD OUTLINED THE REWARDS/BLESSINGS THAT WOULD COME TO GOD'S PEOPLE IF THEY OBEYED HIM. IN CONTRAST, LEVITICUS 26:14-29 DESCRIBES THE CONSEQUENCES TO DISOBEDIENCE. INTERESTINGLY, THROUGHOUT THE SECTION DESCRIBING THE THINGS THAT WILL HAPPEN IF GOD'S PEOPLE REBEL AND DISOBEY, THIS IS REPEATED:

LEVITICUS 26:18 - 'IF ALSO AFTER THESE THINGS YOU DO NOT OBEY ME, THEN I WILL PUNISH YOU **SEVEN** TIMES MORE FOR YOUR SINS.

LEVITICUS 26:21 - 'IF THEN, YOU ACT WITH HOSTILITY AGAINST ME AND ARE UNWILLING TO OBEY ME, I WILL INCREASE THE PLAGUE ON YOU **SEVEN** TIMES ACCORDING TO YOUR SINS.

LEVITICUS 26:23-24 - 'AND IF BY THESE THINGS YOU ARE NOT TURNED TO ME, BUT ACT WITH HOSTILITY AGAINST ME, 24 THEN I WILL ACT WITH HOSTILITY AGAINST YOU; AND I, EVEN I, WILL STRIKE YOU **SEVEN** TIMES FOR YOUR SINS.

LEVITICUS 26:27-28 - 'YET IF IN SPITE OF THIS YOU DO NOT OBEY ME, BUT ACT WITH HOSTILITY AGAINST ME, 28 THEN I WILL ACT WITH WRATHFUL HOSTILITY AGAINST YOU, AND I, EVEN I, WILL PUNISH YOU **SEVEN** TIMES FOR YOUR SINS.

THE 7 PLAGUES OF GOD'S WRATH ARE THE CONSEQUENCE AND RESULT OF THE DISOBEDIENCE AND HOSTILITY OF THE CREATION AGAINST THEIR CREATOR.

REVELATION 15:2-4 - A CHOIR & A SONG

THE CHOIR: A MULTITUDE APPEARS AT THE AREA "LIKE A SEA OF GLASS MIXED WITH FIRE". WE KNOW FROM PREVIOUS STUDY THAT THIS IS BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD (SEE REVELATION 4:6; EXODUS 24:10, EZEKIEL 1:22). THIS GROUP IS COMPOSED OF THE "VICTORIOUS" ONES WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED THROUGHOUT REVELATION AND HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO EMULATE (CP. REVELATION 12:11). THEY ARE HOLDING "HARPS OF GOD".

THE SONG(S): THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE SONG OF THE LAMB. THERE SEEMS TO BE A REMIX/MEDLEY OF TWO OF THE GREAT SONGS IN GOD'S REDEMPITIVE STORY. THE SECOND SONG IS A NEW SONG INTRODUCED A FEW CHAPTERS AGO. WE'LL REVISIT THAT ONE FIRST:

THE SONG OF THE LAMB: REVELATION 5:9-10, 12-14

WHAT IS THE SONG OF THE LAMB ALL ABOUT?

THE SONG OF MOSES: SONG 1 - EXODUS 15:1-18 (TIMING)

WHAT IS THIS SONG OF MOSES ALL ABOUT?

SONG 2 - DEUTERONOMY 31:28-30; 32:1-43 (TIMING)

DEUTERONOMY 31:28-30 (NLT) - "NOW SUMMON ALL THE ELDERS AND OFFICIALS OF YOUR TRIBES, SO THAT I CAN SPEAK TO THEM DIRECTLY AND CALL HEAVEN AND EARTH TO WITNESS AGAINST THEM. 29 I KNOW THAT AFTER MY DEATH YOU WILL BECOME UTTERLY CORRUPT AND WILL TURN FROM THE WAY I HAVE COMMANDED YOU TO FOLLOW. IN THE DAYS TO COME, DISASTER WILL COME DOWN ON YOU, FOR YOU WILL DO WHAT IS EVIL IN THE LORD'S SIGHT, MAKING HIM VERY ANGRY WITH YOUR ACTIONS." 30 SO MOSES RECITED THIS ENTIRE SONG PUBLICLY TO THE ASSEMBLY OF ISRAEL:

DEUTERONOMY 32:1-4 (NLT) - "LISTEN, O HEAVENS, AND I WILL SPEAK! HEAR, O EARTH, THE WORDS THAT I SAY! 2 LET MY TEACHING FALL ON YOU LIKE RAIN; LET MY SPEECH SETTLE LIKE DEW. LET MY WORDS FALL LIKE RAIN ON TENDER GRASS, LIKE GENTLE SHOWERS ON YOUNG PLANTS. 3 I WILL PROCLAIM THE NAME OF THE LORD; HOW GLORIOUS IS OUR GOD! 4 HE IS THE ROCK; HIS DEEDS ARE PERFECT. EVERYTHING HE DOES IS JUST AND FAIR. HE IS A FAITHFUL GOD WHO DOES NO WRONG; HOW JUST AND UPRIGHT HE IS!

MOSES WILL THEN SING OF THE HISTORY OF HOW GOD'S PEOPLE WERE CARED FOR, HOW THEY TURNED FROM HIM AND HOW THEY FORGOT HIS GOODNESS.

DEUTERONOMY 32:15-18 (NLT) - "BUT ISRAEL SOON BECAME FAT AND UNRULY; THE PEOPLE GREW HEAVY, PLUMP, AND STUFFED! THEN THEY ABANDONED THE GOD WHO HAD MADE THEM; THEY MADE LIGHT OF THE ROCK OF THEIR SALVATION. 16 THEY STIRRED UP HIS JEALOUSY BY WORSHIPING FOREIGN GODS; THEY PROVOKED HIS FURY WITH DETESTABLE DEEDS. 17 THEY OFFERED SACRIFICES TO DEMONS, WHICH ARE NOT GOD, TO GODS THEY HAD NOT KNOWN BEFORE, TO NEW GODS ONLY RECENTLY ARRIVED, TO GODS THEIR ANCESTORS HAD NEVER FEARED. 18 YOU NEGLECTED THE ROCK WHO HAD FATHERED YOU; YOU FORGOT THE GOD WHO HAD GIVEN YOU BIRTH.

HE RETELLS HOW THEY WERE FOOLISH BUT THAT IN HIS MERCY HE CALLS THEM TO RETURN TO HIM - AND IF/WHEN THEY DO, HE WILL WELCOME THEM AND INSTEAD OF BRINGING JUDGMENT UPON THEM, HE WILL BRING JUDGMENT UPON THEIR IDOLS AND THEIR ENEMIES.

DEUTERONOMY 32:36-39 (NLT) - "INDEED, THE LORD WILL GIVE JUSTICE TO HIS PEOPLE, AND HE WILL CHANGE HIS MIND ABOUT HIS SERVANTS, WHEN HE SEES THEIR STRENGTH IS GONE AND NO ONE IS LEFT, SLAVE OR FREE. 37 THEN HE WILL ASK, 'WHERE ARE THEIR GODS, THE ROCKS THEY FLED TO FOR REFUGE? 38 WHERE NOW ARE THOSE GODS, WHO ATE THE FAT OF THEIR SACRIFICES AND DRANK THE WINE OF THEIR OFFERINGS? LET THOSE GODS ARISE AND HELP YOU! LET THEM PROVIDE YOU WITH SHELTER! 39 LOOK NOW; I MYSELF AM HE! THERE IS NO OTHER GOD BUT ME! I AM THE ONE WHO KILLS AND GIVES LIFE; I AM THE ONE WHO WOUNDS AND HEALS; NO ONE CAN BE RESCUED FROM MY POWERFUL HAND!

DEUTERONOMY 32:40-44 (NLT) - NOW I RAISE MY HAND TO HEAVEN AND DECLARE, "AS SURELY AS I LIVE, 41 WHEN I SHARPEN MY FLASHING SWORD AND BEGIN TO CARRY OUT JUSTICE, I WILL TAKE REVENGE ON MY ENEMIES AND REPAY THOSE WHO REJECT ME. 42 I WILL MAKE MY ARROWS DRUNK WITH BLOOD, AND MY SWORD WILL DEVOUR FLESH-- THE BLOOD OF THE SLAUGHTERED AND THE CAPTIVES, AND THE HEADS OF THE ENEMY LEADERS.'" 43 "REJOICE WITH HIM, YOU HEAVENS, AND LET ALL OF GOD'S ANGELS WORSHIP HIM. REJOICE WITH HIS PEOPLE, YOU NATIONS, AND LET ALL THE ANGELS BE STRENGTHENED IN HIM. FOR HE WILL AVENGE THE BLOOD OF HIS SERVANTS; HE WILL TAKE REVENGE AGAINST HIS ENEMIES. HE WILL REPAY THOSE WHO HATE HIM AND CLEANSE THE LAND FOR HIS PEOPLE." 44 SO MOSES CAME WITH JOSHUA SON OF NUN AND RECITED ALL THE WORDS OF THIS SONG TO THE PEOPLE.

WHAT IS THIS SONG OF MOSES ALL ABOUT?

TO SUMMARIZE THE SONG OF MOSES: GOD HAS DONE WHAT HE SAID HE WILL DO. AND IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PLAGUES DEFEATING PHAROAH, HE IS THE VICTORIOUS WARRIOR! AND AT THE END OF MOSES' LIFE, ANOTHER SONG IS WRITTEN WHICH CAN BE SUMMARIZED - GOD HAS DONE WHAT HE SAID HE WILL DO - AND IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS PEOPLE IN THE DAYS TO COME - HE WILL FIGHT FOR THEM, CARE FOR THEM, WARN THEM, AND FORGIVE THEM - WITH A FINAL WARNING TO ALL THAT WILL OPPOSE GOD AND HIS CHILDREN!

WHICHEVER "SONG OF MOSES" THIS WILL BE, IT'S SUMMARIZED IN REVELATION 15:3-4. IT IS AN EXALTATION OF GOD AND A DECLARATION OF HIS GLORIOUS CHARACTER, HIS SUPREME WORTHINESS AND HIS UNMATCHED POWER.

BUT THE SINGING OF THIS SONG AT THIS TIME IS REMARKABLE. THE SONG IS A SONG OF VICTORY - VICTORY OF THE LAMB AND VICTORY OF GOD - AND IT IS A SONG THAT IS BEING SUNG *BEFORE* THE FINAL BATTLE!

REVELATION 15:5-8 - THE SEVEN ANGELS APPEAR & PREPARE

WITH THE SONG RESOUNDING FROM HEAVEN AND THROUGHOUT THE CREATED ORDER, OUR EYES SEE ALONG WITH JOHN THE NEXT SCENE - A SCENE AT THE VERY CENTER OF IT ALL - THE HEAVENLY TEMPLE OF GOD OPENED. WE SEE THAT ONE OF THE 4 LIVING CREATURES THAT IS BEFORE GOD'S THRONE (OF REVELATION 4-5) DISTRIBUTES THE BOWLS TO THE SEVEN ANGELS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED - WHO ARE ALSO NOW DESCRIBED. THEY ARE WEARING LINEN - CLEAN AND BRIGHT - AND THEY ARE GIRDED AROUND THEIR CHESTS WITH "GOLDEN SASHES."

THERE'S BEEN SOMEONE WEARING THIS OUTFIT EARLIER IN REVELATION:

REVELATION 1:13-14 (NLT) AND STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAMPSTANDS WAS SOMEONE LIKE THE SON OF MAN. HE WAS WEARING A LONG ROBE WITH A GOLD SASH ACROSS HIS CHEST. 14 HIS HEAD AND HIS HAIR WERE WHITE LIKE WOOL, AS WHITE AS SNOW. AND HIS EYES WERE LIKE FLAMES OF FIRE.

THE LANGUAGE USED HERE IS DELIBERATE AND EMPHATIC -

- THIS JUDGMENT IS COMING FROM ALMIGHTY GOD HIMSELF.
- THE ANGELS ENTRUSTED WITH THE ASSIGNMENT APPEAR TO BE THE ANGELS OF JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF.
- THE SUPERNATURAL ENERGY AND INTENSITY OF THIS EVENT SHUTS EVEN THE MOST HOLY OF BEINGS AND CREATURES OUT OF THE IMMEDIATE PRESENCE OF GOD.

VICTORY IS ALREADY ASSURED, THE PRAISES OF THE CONQUERING HERO ARE ALREADY SUNG. GOD IS THE WINNER AND THE SURE JUDGMENT AND DEFEAT OF ALL THOSE THAT OPPOSE HIM IS AT HAND.

*"GREAT AND MARVELOUS ARE YOUR WORKS, O LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY.
JUST AND TRUE ARE YOUR WAYS, O KING OF THE NATIONS.
WHO WILL NOT FEAR YOU, LORD, AND GLORIFY YOUR NAME?
FOR YOU ALONE ARE HOLY.
ALL NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU,
FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS DEEDS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."*

REVELATION 15:3-4 (NLT)