

"THE VICTORY SONG"

Rev. 15

We well might have thought that John had just about conveniently closed up his writing as he told about the reaping of judgement in Chapter 14. But he still has much more to tell. And he must tell final horrors of these years ahead, and the final battle, and the final blessedness.

These things have been piling up. Now for just a thumb-nail review, he has told us about the opening of the (seven seals). He has given to us the sounding of the (seven trumpets). And next, he is going to talk about the pouring out of (seven bowls) of wrath. These things have moved fast and furious. And this is an awful awesome period before the intervention of Almighty God. He draws aside the curtain that we might see for example, something of the end of evil. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. And God is going to deal with Babylon. And sin and death and unrighteousness, and blasphemy, and rejection are going to be swept from this earth.

Now, we might put (Chapter 15 and 16) together. They go together. But I am going to separate them and just use Chapter 15 which is a very short section here, and talk with you just a few moments about these divisions in this chapter. The (sign in Heaven) - V. 1-2. The next two verses - Singing great and marvelous. The (song of the redeemed). And then from V. 5-8 - we will underscore that as the (smoke of Glory). How he filled the temple, and became unapproachable.

Now remember that we have had the judgement of the trumpets and the seals have been broken. And some of these great signs are going along together. This is the doctrine of the last things to come. Eschatology. The doctrine of last things. Having the seven last plagues - in them is filled up the wrath of God.

I. SIGN IN HEAVEN

V.1 In this verse, John says I saw another sign in Heaven. It was great and marvelous - there were seven angels having seven last plagues. For in them is filled up the wrath of God. They have the final and more detailed divine judgement upon the enemies of the church - the dragon, the beast of the sea, and the false prophet. And these little shallow bowls - he skips a vision - and you will note that each bowl contributes a part to the song of the redeemed. And the writer here will use something from Exodus, in his series to deal with the victory of Christ and the church over evil.

And so here he recaptures again - the vision of this judgement. And he puts it down on the trumpets and the bowls - and these visions may be mere repetitions. The severity of the nature of the bowls - and the judgement is easy to see.

Under the seals, in that vision, 1/4 is afflicted. Under the trumpet vision, 1/3 is afflicted. However, there is no indication of any exemption from the judgement. Of the bowls vision. It is retribution that is more dreadful - and it indicates great severity.

What he sees as if all the actors were present at one time. At one moment, in

Heaven. Here are the angels and the plagues. There are seven to stress the number of completeness.

The word plague literally is a stroke or a blow. Since the visitation in Egypt - God's punishment on pride of Godliness, is liken unto the ten plagues in Egypt. These seven plagues show God's righteous power and expose the false pretention - and appose God's sovereignty.

Now the plagues of the bowls are said to be the last. For with them, the wrath of God is ended. Literally was ended. These plagues are last. They culminate in what is gone before. And so, it is divine wrath, and pride, and Godlessness. And there can be no expression on the wrath of God in decree beyond it's direction toward evil. I John 2:22. The plagues here are the ultimate expression of God's wrath against evil. And he deals with those who break the law. They sin and they suffer. These are linked together. Now God has given man time to repent. He bears a long time with them and he warns them often. Those that are disobedient. And when these plagues are ready - and are called the last, it means that they are finished. The term last means this is the last, the completion, the completeness. Lightning strikes in many places. And it touches all the area and the environment. There is no escape from the divine, diverse wrath -- it is finished. The measure is filled up to over-flowing.

Between Exodus 1 and 15 - there is a great war between Jehovah and the Gods of Egypt. For the redemption of his national Israel. And there is a great war between Moses, the mouthpiece of God, and Pharoah - the king of Egypt. And the miracles of Moses and the lying wonders of the magicians. Hence, ten plagues follow. Now if you have studied the ten plagues of Egypt, you will see their completeness in touching all of the environment. And degrading every God in Egypt. And all of their ministers -

whether kings, priests, and all of these discriminated between Israel and Egypt. On the one they fell - on the other, was exempt. And the final overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea. Thus, Jehovah saved Israel that day, out of the hand of Egypt. And Israel saw the Egyptians dead, upon the seashore, and saw the great birth of Jehovah. And the people feared Jehovah. Ex. 13:30-31.

Now this, we keep in mind, that they were filled up with the wrath. And that word translated means - a word that was used by Jesus. (It is finished.) God's wrath is filled up - "I have had it up to here." I am filled up to the brim.

In V. 2 - John saw a sea of glass mingled with fire. And them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, and they stand on the sea of glass having the harps of God.

So here they are on the seashore. And if you have ever stood on the seashore and watched a ship go out to sea, in the late afternoon - as the sun is setting. It will seem to you that it is just like a fire out on the sea.

In V. 2 - "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire." And them that had gotten the victory over the beast. Before John describes the great final days of the visitation of judgement, he gives us a wonderful vision of the immortality of the safety and salvation of God's people - who are standing on the firey sea. These are the ones that have gotten the victory. And furthermore, these are the ones that are given the harps of God. That is, they have the harps of Heaven. And they are taken up with the glory of these harps and singing. They have victory - they have victoriously come out of the conflicts of the enemies of the church. They have conquered the beast.

And now on this vision, emphasizes those who faithfully love God. And they are absolutely safe. And they appear to be standing clearly on this sea.

Now this vision has something to do with Ex. 15:1. It is similar to the vision of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. In the Exodus from - in a spiritual way - they come from a place of danger with the dragon - and the image of the sea. We find a real parallel here. Between Ex. 14:19-22. And the triumph of Exodus. You need only to conceive of the Red Sea dividing. Standing up in walls on either side - and as Ex. 15:8 expresses it - "The flood stood upright as a heap. The deeps were concealed in the heart of the sea." And think of Israel marching between the pillar of fire - between them and Pharaoh - shining on those iced walls which as mirrors reflected its light. Indeed, a sea of glass mingled with fire. They were baptized in the cloud and in the sea. And there were walls on two sides wrapping them in a baptism of light. So hereafter, the plagues had overthrown their long-time enemies. With complete overthrow. And with the song of Moses and the servant of God, is about to take place. Now fire in the Scripture is often a symbol of judgement. When hail came on Egypt - it was mingled with fire. Ex. 9:24. In Matt. 3:12 - it says the chaff is to be consumed in the fire. So in his vision here - which is remarkable - it is the final scene of judgement. A fearful scene of the revelation of the kindness of God - in taking care of his great redeemed company.

There have been hymns written about the crystal sea. The sea of glass. Here referred too.

II. SINGING THE SONG OF REDEMPTION - V. 3-4.

In V. 3

we read, and they sing the Song of Moses.

What a wonderful thing as

Victory Song
11:100 00:05

John talked about this redeemed company - coming across the sea of glass. There was a brazen sea in Solomon's temple. And the brazen laver in the court of the tabernacle. It is a type of the (word) of God which is needed for cleansing here. And these stand cleansed. And they began to sing the song of Moses - this is a song that Moses sang when the children of Israel had come triumphantly through the dangers of crossing the Red Sea. And they came safely through that sea and crossed over. Now, if we turn to Ex. 15:1-19 - we have this song recorded. And it is a wonderful song - I will sing unto the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider hath been thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song. And he has become my salvation - this is my God and I will praise him. My Father's God and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war - the Lord is his name. And Pharaoh's chariots and his hosts hath he cast into the sea. And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea. The depths cover them - they went down into the depths like a stone. Thy right hand oh Lord is glorious in power. The right hand oh Lord dashes in pieces the enemy. Now this is quite a song - and it goes on. And finally closes by the greatness of thine arm - they are as still as a stone. Til thy people pass over, oh Lord. Til the people pass over that thou hast purchased and will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance. The place, oh Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in. A sanctuary oh Lord which thy hands hath established. The Lord shall reign forever and ever. That is a most inspiring, poetic story found anywhere as a religious song. And was accompanied by music. And they began to sing that song.

Longfellow once said that music is the language spoken by angels. And I like what Landon once said, the only art of earth that we will take to Heaven, will be that of music.

Now they have a second song - it is the song of the lamb. The redeemed. And this is wonderful as the people sing in thanksgiving. And they have come now to

blend in the victory song of salvation.

And the words go - great and marvelous are thy works. Lord, God, Almighty.
Just and true are thy ways. Thou (king of saints). King of the ages. King of
the nations is a better translation of this. The title - king of nations has great
force here. Because by the exercise of his power, God has proved himself king of
the nations.

And some of this wonderful music is taken from the Old Testament.

Great and wonderful are your works. Ps. 92:5. Oh Lord, how great are thy works.
Also Ps. 111:2 - the works of the Lord are great. Ps. 98:1 - He hath done marvelous
wonderful things. Ps. 139:14 - Marvelous are thy works.

Just and true are your ways. Ps. 145:17. The Lord is righteous in all his
ways, holy in all his works.

Who shall not fear and glorify your name. Ps. 86:9. All the nations whom
thou hast made shall come and worship thee, oh Lord, and glorify thy name.

4.4. 4. You alone are holy. I Sam. 2:2. There is none holy as the Lord. Ps. 99:3,
and Ps. 111:9.

< All the nations will come and worship before thee, Ps. 86:9. All nations whom thou hast made will come and worship before thee, oh Lord.

< Your righteous judgements are made manifest, Ps. 98:2. The Lord hath made known his salvation and righteousness.

This passage is steeped in the Old Testament. And when John and the martyrs wished to define words of praise of God for his goodness, his greatness, his marvelous works - they found them.

But there is another thing that must strike anyone about the song of the triumphant martyrs. There is not one single word about their own victory, and achievement. There is not one single mention of their own triumph. From the beginning to the end of this song, is an outburst on the greatness of God. Great and marvelous.

Heaven is a place where men forget themselves, forget their own achievements, and remember only God. It is a place where self will be wholly forgotten. And the doxology with which they greet their first unclouded vision of God, is concerning his works, and they see how little a part man has had in it.

In Heaven, a man will see the greatness of God fully displayed.

So the remembrance, will be that God, the judge of the earth - has been able to do right against those who oppose the lamb.

I think of Edgar Page Stites who wrote Beulah Land. He was over 70 years of age when he wrote the hymn. It was in 1876, that he wrote it. And there was going to be a meeting of the ministers at Arch Street Church (the Methodist ministers) in Philadelphia. For all the preachers in that area. And he wrote two verses and the chorus. When he was overcome and fell on his face. He said, I only wept, I could write no more. And that was on a Sunday.

A week later, he wrote the 3rd and 4th verses - again he was influenced by only prayer and weeping. The first time it was sung was by Bishop McCabe. And since that, it has been a very moving hymn. I've reached the land of corn and wine. And all of its riches freely mine. Here shines undimmed, one blissful day. For all my nights have passed away. Oh Beulah Land. Sweet Beulah Land. As on thy highest mount I stand, I look away across the sea where mansion are prepared for me. And view the shining, glorious shore. My Heaven, my home, forever.

My Saviour comes and walks with me.

In sweet communion here have we

He gently leads me by his hand

For this is Heaven's border land

Oh, Beulah Land, Sweet Beulah Land.

A sweet perfume upon the breeze

Is born forever eternal truths

And flowers that never fading grow

Where streams of life forever flow

Oh, Beulah Land, Sweet Beulah Land.

The zephyrs seem to float to me

Sweet sounds of Heaven's melody

As angels with the white robed throng

Join in the sweet redemption song

Oh, Beulah Land, Sweet Beulah Land.

Yes, there have been many hymns that have been anthems. That have been based on this portion - from the book of Revelation. Of that day, when the great crowd of redeemed may sing the song of Moses. The song of the lamb.

III. THE SMOKE OF GLORY - V. 5-8

We have talked about the sign in Heaven and the seven plagues. And of the singing - great and marvelous. And now we see something that is taking place in the next vision - the opening of the temple in Heaven.

V. 5 - I beheld and the temple of the Tabernacle of the testimony in Heaven was opened. John looked into the very inner most shrine of deity. The very heart of the sanctuary - the center of the holy of holies. And when he looked - he saw coming out of the very heart of God, grace and mercy. He saw an amazing vision of seven angels. And they were dressed like priests. And these seven angels of the seven last plagues were coming.

In V. 6 - He said and the seven angels came out of the temple - having seven

plagues. And were clothed in white linen. Here is a Heavenly vision - it is not the picture of the temple of Solomon. It is the tent of witness - the wilderness Tabernacle. And the Tabernacle is not open to reveal the arc of the covenant. As in 11:19. It is open to allow seven angels to come from the presence of the inner most chamber. And they are going to come and pull out their bowls of God's wrath upon the earth. And they are dressed very much alike - in white. So they come from where the Lord God is. Now that demonstrates to us and shows to us that no man and no nation can defy the law of God and get by with it. They are coming from the very resting place of the divine law. Which shows us that you cannot break God's law. You cannot be disobedient to God's law and get by with it.

V. 6 - It says they were clothed in shining white robes. They had golden girdles. They were dressed in priestly robes. Fine linens. And they were God's representatives. They were dressed in royal dress, as they came forth. Like princes and kings. They were gleaming white. You remember the young man at the tomb of Christ was clothed in a long white garment. Mark 16:5.

So they come directly out of the presence as servants and agents of God - and the white linen symbolizes purity and holiness. And the wrath which these angels had and were about to pour out on the earth, there is no beastly passion. There is no spite, there is no hate, there is no anger, at all. It is just simply what is going to happen when people break God's law - it is going to be punished. And so this marvelous book of all books is opened. As he mentioned these coming out of the tabernacle. And they are coming with judgement. And the Glory of God is at stake here - and it is the glory of God coming down from his enemies.

V. 7 - It says and one of the four beasts - gave unto these seven angels seven

vials. Now it says here - seven golden vials full of the wrath of God who liveth forever and ever. The Greek word here denotes here that it is a shallow pan - we call them censers. The coals were placed from off of the altar and on top of the coals, incense was poured to burn unto God. And these golden censers were given to the angels of judgement. You remember in Chapter 6, the cherubims are instruments of judgement. And one of them, you remember, said that the first horsemen came - there was a rider, and a white horse burst out. The next came with a red horse, the next a black, and the next a pale horse. Now one of the cherubims who gives to these seven angels the seven censers. In preparation - here we have - you remember we met them in Chapter 4:7. They are four living creatures. The first was like a lion. The second, like an ox. The third, like a man. And the fourth, like an eagle. And one of them should hand the bowls of wrath to the seven angels.

We remember that earlier in Chapter 5:8 - there was one who had a golden bowl with the prayers of the saints in it. Now we have the plagues that are going to come - the penalties of broken laws. The operation of God's righteousness against sin. Which cannot be broken and it is taking place at God's bidding. And God is going to live forever and he is unshakeable. And we find that these angels are ready to go forth.

Now in V. 8 - we read, and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and his power, and no man was able to enter into the temple. Till the seven plagues and the seven angels were fulfilled.

So as the seven angels received their censers - their goals - the temple was filled with smoke and the glory of God. And no man was able to enter into it.

They come forth to execute their awful mission. And it was a time of intent concern in Heaven. The place was filled with smoke and the glory of God. And everyone was standing at awe. And the great voice in the temple was heard that they are going out now and to pour out, and to empty the bowls of wrath of God upon the earth. This may have been a similar vision - part of it. Isaiah 6:1. The cloud and the smoke and the symbol of God's powerful presence of glory and majesty, and holiness. And the consuming fire - smoke in the temple. And God is in that temple. And it is impossible now to break the divine order. Because it is being carried out - it is being fulfilled. The idea of the glory of God here is symbolized with smoke. And it filled the temple.

Now there is one thing to note here - no one could approach while the smoke and the cloud were there. And that is true. In both the tabernacle - and it was true in the temple. The cloud covered the congregation - and the glory of God filled the tabernacle. And filled the temple. Ex. 40:34-35. And at the dedication of Solomon's temple - it filled the house. I Kings 8:10-11 no priest - no one could minister or move in the house of God at that time. Here is a double idea. And it is this - that the purposes of God may be obscure to man. No man can really see and understand the mind of God in this.

Another thing is, no man could come into the temple until the seven plagues had been completed. Now it is symbolic here - that when the time of judgement really arrives, it is not going to be any good to pray for any man to God. No man will be able to approach God. You cannot halt the judgement. Nothing will hold him back.

God has set some boundaries here. As the restless ocean - the tides rise and

it can come no farther. They can come no farther. God has set a boundary. To the evil days of the nations of the earth. And when that time comes, then you can go no further. The great and final unpardonable sin has been committed. And no man can enter the temple of prayer and supplication. The door is going to be shut. The temple has become a house of indignation now. And wrath is going to be poured out upon this earth.

Hope is a big word. It is an extremely big word - it has many meanings. But here is an hour when there is no hope. We think of hope as a time when we try and yet we are given another chance. Some people find the secret of living with the word hope. They are happy people. They are successful people. There are other individuals who search and have never found that hope. They hope against odds.

Who needs it - we do, you and I. We cannot live without it. What would life be if we tried to go on without it. Why would we care if the sun comes up tomorrow - if we did not have it. None of us are ever so rich that we do not need hope.

Where does it come from - it comes from above. For there is no hope that is not found in Jesus. He is the author of it. He says there is a better world. You believe in him - then we have hope.

Some of us will wait until the day - as this judgement. You remember that carpenter - how the nails ripped through his flesh and the blood gushed from his side. And the multitude laughed and the soldiers gambled. But Jesus had hope - forgive them, they are ignorant.

Hope carried him there - and hope lifted him up from his knees in the garden. Hope brought him out of the grave. And hope was the thing that took that slave and criminal on the cross and brought him into the presence of God.

It is a sorry world today - man robs man. Little children die of starvation. Man kills man. People rave - it is a cruel world. Why doesn't God send a gust of wind and wipe this whole earth from the face of the universe. All the inhabitants, why doesn't he strike this world with his little finger. And blast it forever out into space because he has offered hope. And listen, he says, the smoke came and no man could enter the temple. He, who is refusing to go in, is a man who has no hope.

Where is your hope today.

Six Profess Faith At Crewman's Funeral

NEW ALBANY, Ohio (BP)—Six persons made professions of faith in Christ at the funeral for a crewman killed in the crash on the aircraft carrier Nimitz.

The funeral for Ronald Lee Wildermuth, 19, was conducted at First Baptist Church, New Albany, by its pastor, Kenneth Branham. Ohio -

Wildermuth was working on a parked aircraft when another airplane crashed on deck.

The accident occurred in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Jacksonville.

Branham said the family of the killed crewman asked for an evangelistic emphasis along with the normal funeral service. An invitation was given and six persons indicated they wished to receive Christ.

Wildermuth had made his own profession of faith at New Albany nearly two years ago. One member of his immediate family had been baptized at New Albany during the past year, according to Branham. This includes an older brother and two younger brothers of the sailor and also his grandparents. The mother of the dead crewman is visiting in person. His father has indicated a call from the military.