

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 358 – December 24th – Revelation 15:1-8

Works frequently referenced in these notes on the book of Revelation

Morris, Leon	<i>The Revelation of St John</i> (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1969
Mounce, Robert H	<i>The Book of Revelation</i> (New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1977
Peterson, Eugene H	<i>Reversed Thunder</i> , San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1991
Witherington, Ben	<i>Revelation</i> (New Cambridge Bible Commentary), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003

Revelation 15:1-16:21 – The seven plagues

Witherington comments, "In view of the typology of this section, these seven plagues are but the beginning of the end, for the devil is yet to be thrown into the lake of fire and God's people have yet to experience the final redemption. The key to understanding this entire segment is found in the Exodus typology, for as Caird notes we not only have seven plagues in Revelation, we also have a sea that the faithful seem to cross, a song of Moses that is also said to be the song of the Lamb, the smoke of the theophany at Sinai, and the tent of testimony. John is trying to say that God's final deliverance will be like, though much greater than, that paradigmatic deliverance of the OT – the Exodus Sinai events."

Verse 1

Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλο σημεῖον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστόν, ἀγγέλους ἑπτὰ ἔχοντας πληγὰς ἑπτὰ τὰς ἑσχάτας, ὅτι ἐν αὐταῖς ἐτελέσθη ὁ θυμὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
σημεῖον, ου n miraculous sign, sign
θαυμαστος, η, ον marvellous, wonderful;
extraordinary, astonishing

ἑπτα seven
πληγη, ης f plague

Cf. Lev 26:21. "The seven bowls of judgement [vv 5-8] may be the third Woe announced in 11:14." Mounce.

ἑσχατος, η, ον adj last, final
ἐτελέσθη Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s τελεω
complete, finish
θυμος, ου m see 14:19

All that remains is the final judgement itself.

Verse 2

Καὶ εἶδον ὡς θάλασσαν ὑαλίνην μεμιγμένην πυρὶ, καὶ τοὺς νικῶντας ἐκ τοῦ θηρίου καὶ ἐκ τῆς εἰκόνας αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ ἑστῶτας ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν τὴν ὑαλίνην, ἔχοντας κιθάρας τοῦ θεοῦ.

θαλασσα, ης f sea
υαλινος, η, ον of glass, clear as glass

Cf. 4:6.

μεμιγμένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
μιγνυμι mix, mingle
νικαω conquer, overcome

"They are the overcomers to whom the seven letters hold out promise of eating of the tree of life (2:7), protection from the second death (2:11), hidden manna (2:17), authority over the nations (2:26), white garments (3:5), the honour of becoming a pillar in the temple of God (3:12), and the privilege of sitting with Christ on his throne (3:21). Little wonder they break out in song!" Mounce.

θηριον, ου n animal, beast
εικων, ονος f likeness, image
αριθμος, ου m number
ἑστῶτας Verb, perf act ptc, m acc pl ἵστημι
stand
κιθαρα, ας f harp

Verse 3

καὶ ᾄδουσιν τὴν ᾠδὴν Μωϋσέως τοῦ δούλου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν ᾠδὴν τοῦ ἀρνίου λέγοντες· Μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά τὰ ἔργα σου, κύριε, ὁ θεός, ὁ παντοκράτωρ· δίκαια καὶ ἀληθινὰ αἱ ὁδοὶ σου, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων·

ᾄδω sing
ᾠδη, ης f song, song of praise
ἄρνιον, ου n lamb

"We are not to understand two songs, but one. The deliverance of which Moses and the people sang in Exodus 15:1-18 prefigured the greater deliverance wrought by the Lamb." Mounce.

θαυμαστος, η, ον see v.1

παντοκρατωρ, ορος m Almighty
δικαιος, α, ον righteous, just
ἀληθινος, η, ον real, genuine, true
ὁδος, ου f way, path
βασιλευς, εως m king

The textual evidence is fairly evenly divided between βασιλεὺς τῶν ἐθνῶν and βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων. (The TR reading τῶν ἁγίων is clearly secondary.) The UBS editors prefer ἐθνῶν, arguing that αἰώνων may reflect scribal assimilation to 1 Tim 1:17.

Verse 4

τίς οὐ μὴ φοβηθῆ, κύριε, καὶ δοξάσει τὸ ὄνομά σου, ὅτι μόνος ὁσίου; ὅτι πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἤξουσιν καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν ἐνώπιόν σου, ὅτι τὰ δικαιώματά σου ἐφανερώθησαν.

φοβηθῆ Verb, aor pass dep subj, 3 s

φοβεομαι fear

δοξάζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt

μονος, η, ον adj only, alone

ὁσιος, α, ον holy

ἦκω come

προσκυνεω worship

ἐνώπιον prep with gen before

δικαιωμα, τος n righteous deed

φανερωω make known, reveal

Witherington comments, "The Lamb's death and the prophetic and martyrological witness of believers are God's strategy for winning the nations. John envisions a great harvest of souls as the end of the ages come. But, as Bauckham says, 'this does not of course mean that Revelation expects the salvation of each and every human being. From 21:8, 27; 22:15 it is quite clear that unrepentant sinners will have no place in the new Jerusalem.' The material in Rev 15 means that John believes that God's chastisements are intended to lead the lost to salvation and that God takes no satisfaction that some of the lost will remain lost. Revelation is not a book about vindictiveness but about vindication, not about the glee of the few over the damnation of the many but about the great cloud of witnesses there will be one day from every tribe, tongue, and nation."

Verse 5

Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον, καὶ ἠνοίγη ὁ ναὸς τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίου ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ,

ἠνοίγη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ἀνοιγῶ

open

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary

σκηνη, ης f tent, tabernacle

μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness

Cf. Num 17:7; 18:2. A reference to the tabernacle containing the two tables of testimony brought down from Mt Sinai by Moses (Ex 32:15; Deut 10:5).

Verse 6

καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ ἑπτὰ ἄγγελοι οἱ ἔχοντες τὰς ἑπτὰ πληγὰς ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ, ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον καθαρὸν λαμπρὸν καὶ περιεζωσμένοι περὶ τὰ στήθη ζώνας χρυσαῖς.

ἐνδεδυμένοι Verb, perf midd ptc, m nom pl

ἐνδύω dress, clothe; midd wear

λινον, ου n linen, flax

καθαρος, α, ον pure, clean

λαμπρος, α, ον bright, shining, fine

περιεζωσμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl

περιζωννυμι wrap around

στηθος, ους n chest, breast

ζωνη, ης f belt

χρυσους, η, ουν made of gold, golden

Symbolic of royal and priestly functions. Witherington comments, "This is similar to the appearance of Jesus in Rev 1:13, but Dan 10:5 may also be echoed, as it describes an angelic figure clothed in linen with a belt of gold."

Verse 7

καὶ ἐν ἑκ τῶν τεσσάρων ζῶων ἔδωκεν τοῖς ἑπτὰ ἀγγέλοις ἑπτὰ φιάλας χρυσαῖς γεμούσας τοῦ θυμοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

ζῶον, ου n living creature

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

φιαλη, ης f bowl

Cf. 5:8. "Since the mention of the golden bowls in Revelation is limited to these two contexts, John may be calling attention to the relationship between prayer and divine retribution." Mounce. Cf. Isa 51:17,22.

γεμω be full

θυμος, ου m see 14:19

ζω live

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, eternity

Verse 8

καὶ ἐγεμίσθη ὁ ναὸς καπνοῦ ἐκ τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν ναὸν ἄχρι τελεσθῶσιν αἱ ἑπτὰ πληγαὶ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἀγγέλων.

γεμίζω fill

καπνος, ου m smoke

Cf. Ex 19:18; 40:34; Is 6:4.

δυναμις, εως f power

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

δυναμαι can, be able to

εἰσερχομαι enter

ἄχρι prep and conj until

τελεσθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl τελεω
see v.1.

Witherington comments, "This is the signal not merely that God is coming but that God is about to act. No one can stand in the way or even in his presence when his wrath is executed or, in this case, until the seven plagues have been fulfilled."