

Setting the Stage

15:1-8

Introductory Notes

- We transition now out of the parenthetical section in Chapters 12, 13, and 14.
- A heavenly scene introduces the final judgments, the Seven Vials.
- There is a surprising amount of depth for such a small chapter.

Outline

- The Scene in Heaven - vs. 1-4
- The Seven Angels - vs. 5-8

Notes

- vs. 1 - note the setting: Heaven. Compare how this scene introduces the Seven Vial judgments just as Chapters 4 and 5 introduce the Seven Seals.
- vs. 1 - plague - another term that could be use for the judgments in Revelation. Harkens back to the Ten Plagues in Egypt.
- vs. 2 - sea of glass - just as in 4:6
- vs. 2 - mingled with fire - picturing judgment.
- vs. 2 - "them that had gotten the victory" - martyrs of the Tribulation who did not follow the Antichrist in 13:1-10
- vs. 3 - song of Moses - some think as found in Exodus 15 or Deuteronomy 32.
- vs. 3-4 - the brief synopsis of the song found here highlights God's justice, righteousness, and holiness.
- vs. 5 - "I looked, and, behold," - you can feel how John is moved by this sight
- vs. 5 - the Temple - John Walvoord says "this refers to the inner holy place of the Tabernacle".
- vs. 6 - On the attire of the angels, they are dressed as priests. Given that they come from the Temple makes sense.
- vs. 7 - So, they had the seven plagues in vs. 6 and now are given Seven Vials full of God's wrath. I think the distinction is important in that the plague is not connected to God's wrath. God is not working out of hate or anger as we often do.
- vs. 8 - smoke - the shekinah glory of God, similar to Exodus 40:34-35
- vs. 8 - glory of God - this chapter continues to stress key attributes of God connected with His judgment. He is holy, just, glorious, and righteous. He is not to be blamed or accused in His judgments. God is not taking pleasure in enacting judgment or acting out of spite. He is consistent and blameless throughout.