

Revelation Chapter 15 Notes Edited

Vs.1: And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels (messages), having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

This demonstrates a change in the vision. This is an extremely important development in God's divine Plan of the Ages. It is the preparation for the final destruction of the Anti-Christ systems, nominal Churchianity.

As shown in the previous chapter (14), the angels are symbolic of messages. Here the seven messages represent the seven Truth messages that the seven Star Messengers (Rev. 1:20) had delivered to the seven Churches. These are the same Truth messages that had been "Trumpeted" forth by these same Messengers throughout the Gospel Age (Rev. 8; 9; 10 and 11 chapters). The seven trumpet blasts demonstrate the effects of these Truth messages on the nominal Church systems.

Here we are told that these seven Truth messages contain in them the seven LAST PLAGUES. It is in these seven last plagues that God's wrath, His righteous indignation, will be fully vented upon those Harlot, Beastly systems. They have blasphemed His holy name, blasphemed against His Son Jesus Christ, against His Truth and against His holy people, the true Church.

When we read "last plagues," it implies that there were previous plagues. This helps us immensely in our interpretation of what these plagues might be.

In Rev. 9:20: **"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these PLAGUES, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk."**

The context here is in the sixth Trumpet blast period, which is also the sixth stage of the Church. The Trumpeter was Br. Martin Luther. We have learned that in the Trumpet blasts we are being informed how the nominal Churches viewed or were reacting to the truth. Being "killed" was how the nominal Church leaders viewed anyone who converted to the truth! They were considered heretics and therefore "dead" to the orthodox faith.

In this verse it is the various truths being put forward by the Reformers—as well as being presented to the common people in the newly available Bibles in

their languages—that were viewed as “plagues.” It is those who were NOT killed by these PLAGUES and did NOT repent from idol worship (all the false teachings and practices of Papacy) that rejected these truths and still clung to their Roman Catholic beliefs and practices.

We can scripturally conclude that Plagues are God’s truths.

Similarly we read in Rev. 14:10 – **“The same shall drink of the WINE of the wrath of God, which is Poured out without mixture (undiluted – full strength)...”**

When we had previously considered this verse, we learned that the “wine” represents doctrinal truths. We learned that the time was coming when God would pour out His Truths undiluted—full strength—and that this will be His wrath. This is just as we read, that the seven last plagues fill up His wrath.

In Rev. 14:20 and Rev. 19:11-16 we read that it is “horses”—doctrines—that will trample the grapes of the counterfeit “vine of the earth.” We learn the chief rider is Jesus who uses a “sharp sword.” Again, penetrating truths is what will bring down all false systems.

To summarize, we have the final destructive forces of God’s wrath depicted as:

- a. the seven last plagues
- b. the wine of His wrath
- c. horses trampling the winepress
- d. a sharp sword out of Jesus’ mouth

Wine, horses and a sharp sword out of the mouth, symbolize strong truth doctrines. Hence, the seven last plagues are, as already noted in the trumpets, also strong, error-destroying truths.

These will expose all the false demon-inspired, man-made doctrines and practices of Papacy and her daughter Churches. These Anti-Christ Church systems will no longer be able to produce Tares (imitation Christians) and the “bundled tares” will be burned. That is, these imitation Christians will finally learn that they had been grossly deceived and that they will not be “going to heaven”!

The number seven represents divinely acknowledged, complete destruction.

Vss. 2-4 “And I saw as it were a sea of glass (glassy sea), mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And

they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, great and marvelous are thy works (plans) Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints (of ages). Who shall not fear thee O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments (righteous dealings), are made manifest.”

The glassy sea first appeared in Rev. 4:6, **“And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal...”**

This is in the great throne room of God Almighty. In Chapter 4 we determined that most of the references were either to God’s character, His Word, or His divine plan of the ages. It did not make sense to think of this as the “sea” of restless mankind. Rather, it reminded us of the “molten sea” (cast or poured metal, bronze or copper), the giant laver that Solomon had built and set in the corner of the court of the Temple (1 Kings 7:23-26, 2 Chronicles 4:2-5). It held approximately 2000-3000 gallons of water, depending on which account you read.

The lesson is the same as for the laver of the Tabernacle. The water is the Word of God. We must wash or cleanse ourselves from earthly defilements on a daily basis. (“...Washed with the water of the Word.” Ephesians 5:26)

However, here in the throne room of God Almighty, it is a “crystal clear sea of glass.” It is like a glass bowl filled with pure water. This represents that the Word of God is pure and gives His covenanted people crystal clear instructions for living lives of holiness and sanctification.

In Rev. 15:2 it also represents the Word of God. The final Feet members of the Body of Christ gain their victory over the enforced marking (by the combined forces of Papacy and Federated Protestantism) by their standing upon, or being supported by, the Scriptures. This is not unusual. We saw a similar expression in Rev. 12:1: **“...a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet...”** Here it is the early Church, having the New Testament Gospel of Jesus’ ransom and justification for her clothing. The Old Testament is supporting her with the Types, Shadows and Prophecies that all foretold of what was to come.

In our text, the sea of glass is mingled with fire. Fire represents judgments and trouble. This is found in the Word of God regarding His fiery judgments that are coming upon the Anti-Christ systems in the pouring out of the seven last plagues. A further lesson is that any trouble that the Feet Members will experience, like that of the 3 Hebrews being cast into the fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar, will not hurt them (Daniel 3:14-30).

These final Victors have the “**harps of God**” as we saw in Rev. 14:2. These final members of the 144,000, still in the flesh, can bring forth the harmonious melody of God’s divine plan of the ages from His scriptures.

These sing, even as we read in Rev. 14:3, but here it is the final Members of the Bride that are singing victory songs. This is likened to Israel singing after they followed Moses through the parted Red Sea. It is also likened to the Lamb that had been slain – Jesus (as in Rev. 5:12) — who, through his willingness to die as our sacrifice, gained the great exaltation and victory over death and over Satan.

Perhaps it is also the song of the Ransom (Lamb) and the Restitution (**which Moses depicted**) that enables the rest of the divine plan of the ages to be carried out.

Then follows the words that they sing. They sing of God Almighty’s glorious plans. They sing of His righteous judgments. They sing that all nations (peoples) will eventually come to recognize His just and true judgments that toppled and removed the Old heavens and Old earth. They recognize that this was all for the best.

Vs. 5, 6: “And after that I looked and behold the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels (messages), came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.”

After the final Feet members proved they were faithful (although still in the flesh for their final work) we are shown that the temple of God (His divine plan of the ages) was to begin another important work at exactly the right time. The tabernacle of the testimony, or Covenant, we have learned, from Rev. 11:19, is the ark of the Covenant. In it were the three items. The two tables of the Law (which represent the Covenant) are scripturally called “the tables of testimony” (*Hebrew Covenant*). See Ex. 25:16, 31:18. Symbolically this represents that The Christ is complete. Being opened shows that the Church is ready for this final work – the resurrected Saints in the spirit realm with Jesus, and the Feet members on earth. The pouring out of the 7 Last Plagues will prepare mankind for the New Law Covenant. We will consider more on this aspect in verse 8.

The seven messages, as described in depth in verse 1, have the destructive truths – though pure and just like white linen. These sharp exposing truths are prepared for divine service as shown by the golden girdles. What service? They will expose all the false doctrines that have blasphemed the characters of God and Jesus that have been used to persuade the civil powers to persecute the true

Church throughout the Gospel Age. This will be an essential part of preparing mankind to receive the truth in due time.

For an in depth scriptural consideration of how to interpret these symbols of clothing please see the addendum at the conclusion of this chapter.

There is another important aspect: that is that ALL of the Church, all 144,000 and One, engage in this grand destruction of error! In Rev. 19:11-16 & 19, we read of this destruction of Papacy, Protestantism and even the civil powers that cooperated with them. It is the work of a group, not just seven individuals.

In Psalm 149:5-9: **“Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds, let the high praises of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand. To execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people: to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have ALL HIS SAINTS. Praise you the LORD.”**

In these verses Br. Russell states that it is the Saints on both sides of the veil that execute these final judgments. The Church in the flesh will be the spokesman for the whole. The two-edged sword represents truths. Here, it is the truths contained in the seven last plagues. Consider Reprints 5451, 2975, 5631, 5761.

Vs. 7 “And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels (messages), seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.”

This living creature is Justice, one of God’s four attributes. There is a strikingly similar picture of these events in Ezekiel 9:11 & 10:1-7. We will only comment on it briefly here. The man clothed in linen represents the Harvest Message that Br. Russell was given, to save or mark the faithful Christians during the Harvest period. Once he, or rather his writings, had completed that work, the 144,000 being complete, it was the same message of truth that would be given the coals of fire from God’s judgments that would be scattered over the city. There the city was corrupted Jerusalem. This represents Nominal Churchianity of our time. It was one of the four cherubs (these also represent God’s four attributes) that gave him the fire for destruction, perhaps Justice.

That the seven messages are given seven golden bowls to pour out the seven last plagues demonstrates that these plaguing truths NEED a method of being effectively delivered upon Babylon. The LORD will “set the stage,” so to speak, for these truths to be spoken in such a way, or in such an atmosphere, that

they will have HIS intended design. This final witness of the truth will force nominal Christians (and some of the Great Company) to realize their deplorable spiritual or religious condition, as well as that of their denominations!

How this might be we can only guess. In the Scriptures we have a number of examples on how the LORD used a very insignificant number (sometimes even one) to accomplish a great work. A few examples: Gideon's band of 300, the 3 Hebrews, Daniel during the night of Babylon's destruction, John the Baptist, Moses in Pharaoh's court, Jesus before Pilate and the High Priests, David against Goliath, Elijah smiting Jordan and more.

Note also that God at times had tremendous events take place on special occasions: Jesus at the Passover, Peter on the day of Pentecost, John the Baptist on Herod's birthday, the 3 Hebrews on the great ceremonial day that the Image was honored, and more.

Our last reference is to when the great city Jericho fell, found in Joshua chapter 6. In brief, the LORD commanded that seven priests march about the city blowing trumpets once, for six days. Then, on the seventh day, the seven priests marched around the city blowing their trumpets seven times. After this, the people shouted, and the city walls fell down flat, utterly destroyed! This may represent how the seven messages of truth that had been blasted out during the Gospel Age (the six days representing the 6 stages of the Church as depicted in Revelation) would be blasted seven times on the seventh day, or at the close of the seventh stage of the Church. This represents how the same truths will be the contents of the seven last plagues that will bring down the city of Babylon the Great! The people rushing in might represent the Lord's great army at that time, reacting to the plaguing truth messages!

Before we consider the next verse, we want to clearly relate that the Harvest Message, proclaimed by Br. Russell and the faithful brethren of his day, DID have a tremendous effect in exposing the dark-age doctrines and errors of the Nominal Churches. However, it was mostly meant to call out of Babylon God's people – the spirit-begotten (Rev. 18:4). His message DID plague the Church leaders. However, it was not the time for Babylon's complete destruction.

In fact, The Revelation describes the 5, 6, and 7 Trumpet blasts as "3 Woes" (Rev. 8:13). Note that the fifth Trumpeter was Br. Wycliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, while Br. Luther was the sixth trumpeter – who led the great Reformation. These trumpet blasts were not meant to destroy Babylon, but rather

to reform. And the message of the 7th trumpeter – Br. Russell – was to separate the Wheat Class from the Tares and to bundle the Tares into their different denominations. It would be the culmination of the plaguing truths from all 7 trumpet blasts that would eventually lead to the utter destruction of the Anti-Christ systems.

It is true that the Gentile Times, ending in 1914, lead to the removal of any meaningful relationship between the nominal Church and the Monarchies of that day. Yet today there are equally powerful world financial, military and political leaders, some who still seek a relationship with Church leaders and their followers.

To summarize this point – Br. Russell’s Harvest Message did what the LORD intended it to do. That work continues, even though to a lesser extent. The final destruction of Churchianity is yet future. This is in harmony with both the Revelation scriptures and Br. Russell’s 1916 Forewords.

Vs. 8: “And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no man was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. “

In Israel’s experiences, both the Tabernacle and the Temple built by King Solomon were filled with smoke of the glory of God once they were completed. It is good to note that the Temple that Ezekiel saw in vision also is to be filled with the glory of God – which is a depiction of the Mediatorial Phase of the Kingdom.

Here in verse 8, this represents that the divine plan of God cannot begin the work of the Mediatorial or peaceable phase of the Kingdom until all the false systems of religion and corrupt civil authority are destroyed and removed. As we shall read in Chapter 16, every man or every person will have their pride beaten down, demonstrating that they will finally be ready for all the marvelous blessings God has in store for them! The terrible time of the permission of evil will almost be at an end. The climax of the Armageddon Crash will prepare human hearts for the blessings to follow.

Thus we learn that, as is God’s customary way, His judgments are meant to create an environment that will bless His creatures. So will be fulfilled what the Feet members sang and said in verses 3 and 4.

Addendum on verse 6:

We want to look at some very helpful Scriptures that will assist in explaining these symbols.

We read in Rev. 4:4: **“And round about the throne were twenty-four thrones and upon the thrones twenty-four elders sitting clothed in white raiment and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”**

The 24 elders are a small sub-study on their own. This is our first introduction to them, and they will appear in 5 more chapters.

Some observations:

- a. If they are seated, they DO NOT seem to be “saying or singing.”
- b. If they fall on their faces, they DO “say or sing” a message with information like a statement or they are expressing their worship to God and/or the Lamb.
- c. On two occasions one elder “talks” to the John Class, as it were.
- d. In all 6 chapters, they are mentioned in context with God’s throne.

The 24 elders appear in six chapters: 4:4, 10, 11; 5:5, 8-14; 7:13-17; 11:16, 17; 14:3; 19:4. These are all directly or indirectly in proximity to the throne of God.

The 24 elders represent the personification of 24 Old Testament prophecies. These prophecies are spoken by 24 prophets of God. An elder represents those of aged authority. In Acts 3:21 **“Whom the heaven must receive (retain), until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”**

And again, in Hebrews 11:2, **“For by it the elders obtained a good report.”** In context, this is the chapter in which a number of the Ancient Worthies are mentioned.

Seated upon seats (thrones), around The Throne of God, shows their nearness to him. Being clothed in white raiment symbolizes that these 24 Messages are pure truths. Having golden crowns demonstrates that these have divine authority. All these symbols demonstrate that God had previously foretold, by ancient prophecies, the coming glorious Kingdom as well as some of the most important aspects or events of how that glorious Kingdom will come to be.

In each of the 6 chapters that they appear, it is always in association with the throne of God. When they are seated, they are in repose, waiting, for the fulfillment of one or more important prophecies. When they rise and fall on their faces, worshipping God or the Lamb, it represents that a fulfillment of an

important prophecy has taken place. There are times in which they sing. In their song an elaborate message is given in association with their praise. In two places it is a singular elder who is “talking” to the John Class. Consider the following:

Rev. 5:5: “And one of the elders saith unto me, weep not, behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the scroll and to lose the seven seals thereof.”

Perhaps this comes from the prophecies of Jacob from Gen. 49:10 and Isaiah 11:1, 10.

The following list of 24 prophets and their prophecies is found in **Br. Anton Frey’s Notes**, pages 66-68 (With one exception: We list Abraham instead of John the Baptist).

1. Enoch as recorded in Jude 14, 15
2. Abraham as recorded in Gen. 22:17, 18
3. Jacob in Gen. 49:10
4. Moses in Deut. 18:15-19
5. Samuel in 2 Sam. 7:13
6. Job in Job 19:25, 26
7. David in Psa. 30:5
8. Solomon in Prov. 8:22-30
9. Isaiah in Isa. 35:8-10
10. Jeremiah in Jer. 31:29, 30
11. Ezekiel in Ezek. 21:26, 27
12. Daniel in Dan. 12:12
13. Hosea in Hos. 3:5
14. Joel in Joel 2:28
15. Amos in Amos 9:13-15
16. Obadiah in 21
17. Jonah in Jonah 4:10, 11
18. Micah in Mic. 4:1, 2
19. Nahum in Nah. 1:15
20. Habakkuk in Hab. 2:14
21. Zephaniah in Zeph. 3:8, 9
22. Haggai in Hag. 2:6, 7
23. Zechariah in Zech. 6:12, 13
24. Malachi in Mal. 3:17

This list is a demonstration of what is being symbolized by the 24 elders.

Another possible and related interpretation is that the 24 elders symbolize the 24 Books of the Old Testament as arranged in some Hebrew translations. There you will find 24 Books instead of the common 39 Books. While all the same writings are in both, some Book divisions have been eliminated.

The Five Books of Moses:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

The eight Books of the Prophets:

Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve (minor prophets).

The Eleven Books of the Writings:

Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Chronicles.

In either case, the authority (demonstrated by the white raiment, golden crowns, and thrones), along with their proximity to God's Throne, is unmistakable and represents His Word as found in the Old Testament. It represents either the books as a whole or specific Prophets/Prophecies which are found therein.

It is important to recognize the "flow" of the end of the third chapter into the fourth chapter and on into the fifth. The throne of God is at the center of our attention. That which is shown on the throne, around the throne and before the throne, all contribute to our understanding of God. We understand Him by understanding His character attributes which are demonstrated by His prophetic Word, and His messages that He sends forth.

In the fifth chapter, while still in the throne room, we are introduced to the Lamb. Here in verses 5-14, we have first one elder (vs. 5), then the 24 elders, who, during their exclamations, clearly demonstrate that they are NOT the Church, not the Bride of Christ, not the Kings and Priests with Jesus. However, you cannot see this so easily from the King James Version. It requires using one of the better Bible Translations which use the oldest Manuscripts. In 5:9 the word "us" in the KJV is omitted. In 5:10 the word "us" should be "them." The word "we" should be "they." In essence, the 24 elders are using third person grammatical expressions.

To emphasize this point, in Rev. 14:1-3 we read that the 144,000 are singing a song which only they could know. In context, we read that the 24 elders are there, a clear indication that the 24 elders cannot be the Church of the 144,000.

Again in Rev. 5:8: **“And when he (the Slain Lamb – Jesus) had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of saints.”**

In this verse we want to note that both the FOUR ATTRIBUTES OF GOD AND THE 24 OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES REGARDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD have harps and golden bowls, full of the saints' prayer incense.

In summary, the 24 Elders, or Old Testament messages concerning the Kingdom, are clothed in white raiment and have golden bowls. Yet, they are NOT symbolizing actual individuals but rather their 24 MESSAGES.

Likewise, we can, with equal meaning, see the 7 MESSAGES, clothed in pure white linen, having golden girdles and being given golden bowls.

We want to note that there are several places in the Revelation that states that “one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls talked with me saying...” (Rev. 17:1) We think that this too represents the Harvest Message, part of the Volumes written by Br. Russell. Here in context it is probably the 2nd Volume, the Man of Sin chapter.

Further, in Rev. 19:1: **“...and I fell at his feet to worship him, and he said unto me, see thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren...”**

This text is often seen as referring to Br. Russell. However, here also, we suggest it is the spirit of Br. Russell's writings or Message. Let me quote Br. Russell on this very point from Reprint 2080: “...while we appreciate the love, sympathy, confidence and fellowship of fellow-servants and of the entire household of faith, we want no homage, no reverence, for ourselves or our writings....Nor would we have our writings revered or regarded as infallible or on a par with the holy Scriptures.”

End.