

## Structure of Revelation 15

Despite Rev 15 being only eight verses long discerning the macro-chiasm proved difficult and the commentaries were unhelpful, fracturing the Song into decreasing micro-chiasms without giving insight into the overall structure. After much experimentation the following macro chiasm emerged forming a reverse alternate pattern with the focal point concentrating on **A<sup>2</sup>** - - -

<b>A<sup>1</sup></b>	In heaven: Seven angels with seven plagues (marvellous sign) Victorious saints	v.1-2
<b>B<sup>1</sup></b>	Worship offered by.....	<b>b<sup>1</sup></b> saints (for marvellous works) <b>b<sup>1</sup></b> gentiles (for judgements )
<b>A<sup>2</sup></b>	In heaven: Tabernacle of witness [ <b>OPEN</b> ]	v.5
<b>B<sup>2</sup></b>	Punishment delivered by: seven angels who [ <b>EXIT</b> ]...	<b>b<sup>2</sup></b> bearing seven plagues <b>b<sup>2</sup></b> given seven bowls
<b>A<sup>3</sup></b>	Until seven plagues from seven angels fulfilled [ <b>CLOSED</b> ]	v.8

The above connects the worship that is offered in **B<sup>1</sup>** with the punishment delivered in **B<sup>2</sup>**. The seven angels with seven plagues are the primary subject of both **A<sup>1</sup>** and **A<sup>3</sup>** – in the initial instance the angels are described as a “great and marvellous sign” and in the final instance the temple is inaccessible until their work is done. The victorious saints (in v.2 of **A<sup>1</sup>**) is therefore connected with the Tabernacle in **A<sup>2</sup>** which becomes the focal point (if this schema is accepted as correct) and both **A<sup>1</sup>-A<sup>2</sup>** record the location as “in heaven”.

This would make v.5 the centre of the spiral and it is difficult to understand why such a short verse should be so important. Translations of verse 5 show the unusual mention of the **temple and the tabernacle** not combined anywhere else in this format:

<sup>NKJ</sup> **Revelation 15:5** After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.

<sup>RSV</sup> **Revelation 15:5** After this I looked, and the temple of the tent of witness in heaven was opened.

Aune remarks, “Charles thought the phrase so difficult that he considered τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίου to be a latter addition to the text (2:38). Eichhorn (2:170) tried to solve the problem by translating the entire clause *aperiebatur templum illud coeleste, in quo arca foederis* [should not Eichhorn have used *testimonii?*] *reposita erat*, “the heavenly temple was opened in which the ark of covenant was located.” The same solution appears in the TEV: “After this I saw the temple of heaven open, with the Covenant Tent in it”.<sup>1</sup> This is indeed an unusual phrase; ISA renders the verse as follows:

καί	ἠνοίγη	ὁ	ναός	τῆς	σκηνῆς	τοῦ	μαρτυρίου	ἐν	τῷ	οὐρανῷ
kai	EnoigE	ho	naos	tEs	skEnEs	tou	marturiou	en	tO	ouranO
AND	-WAS-UP- OPENED	THE	TEMPLE	OF_THE	tabernacle	OF_THE	wITNESS	IN	THE	heaven
<b>CLV: and opened was the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven</b>										

Is the temple being equated with the tabernacle or is **the tabernacle inside the temple?** It seems that Solomon stored the tabernacle itself, along with the ark and the other instruments inside the newly built temple; “And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, these did the priests and the Levites bring up” (see 2 Chron 5:2-9). Randall Price has the following to say;

The extrabiblical writers explain why the Tabernacle is set within the Temple. Josephus states that the Tabernacle was brought into the First Temple (Antiquities 8.101.106) and that the spread-winged cherubim were designed to appear as a tent (8.103). Rabbinic tradition further asserts that the tent of meeting was stored away in the subterranean vault beneath the Holy of Holies (see Babylonian Talmud, Sota 9a; Yoma 21b; Rashi on Genesis 9:27). Friedman again interprets this for us:

It is possible that the Tabernacle was in fact stored in the manner which the Talmud describes, while the appropriately measured space beneath the wings of the cherubim meanwhile corresponded to it above.<sup>2</sup>

What this means is that the Tabernacle was deposited in the chamber Solomon constructed to house the Temple treasures. Directly above it, in the Holy of Holies, the Tabernacle was represented at the Ark. Some have even argued that the inner tent of the Tabernacle was physically present with the Ark, appearing in the form of the dividing or covering curtain known as the *paroket*. The idea by this arrangement may have been to testify to the immanence of God with the Ark and the Tabernacle, and to the transcendence of God with the tent. This reveals that the Jews believed the prior sanctity of a structure can continue to sanctify whatever contains it, in this case the Temple. Therefore, just as the Tabernacle was present beneath the First Temple, yet continued to provide a sanctity to the Holy of Holies above it, so in the Second Temple, when the Ark joined the tent of meeting in the secret chamber, it too could provide this function for the empty Holy of Holies. This, then, suggests the existence of a hiding place for the Ark when such became necessary. Later Judaism describes such a repository”.<sup>3</sup>

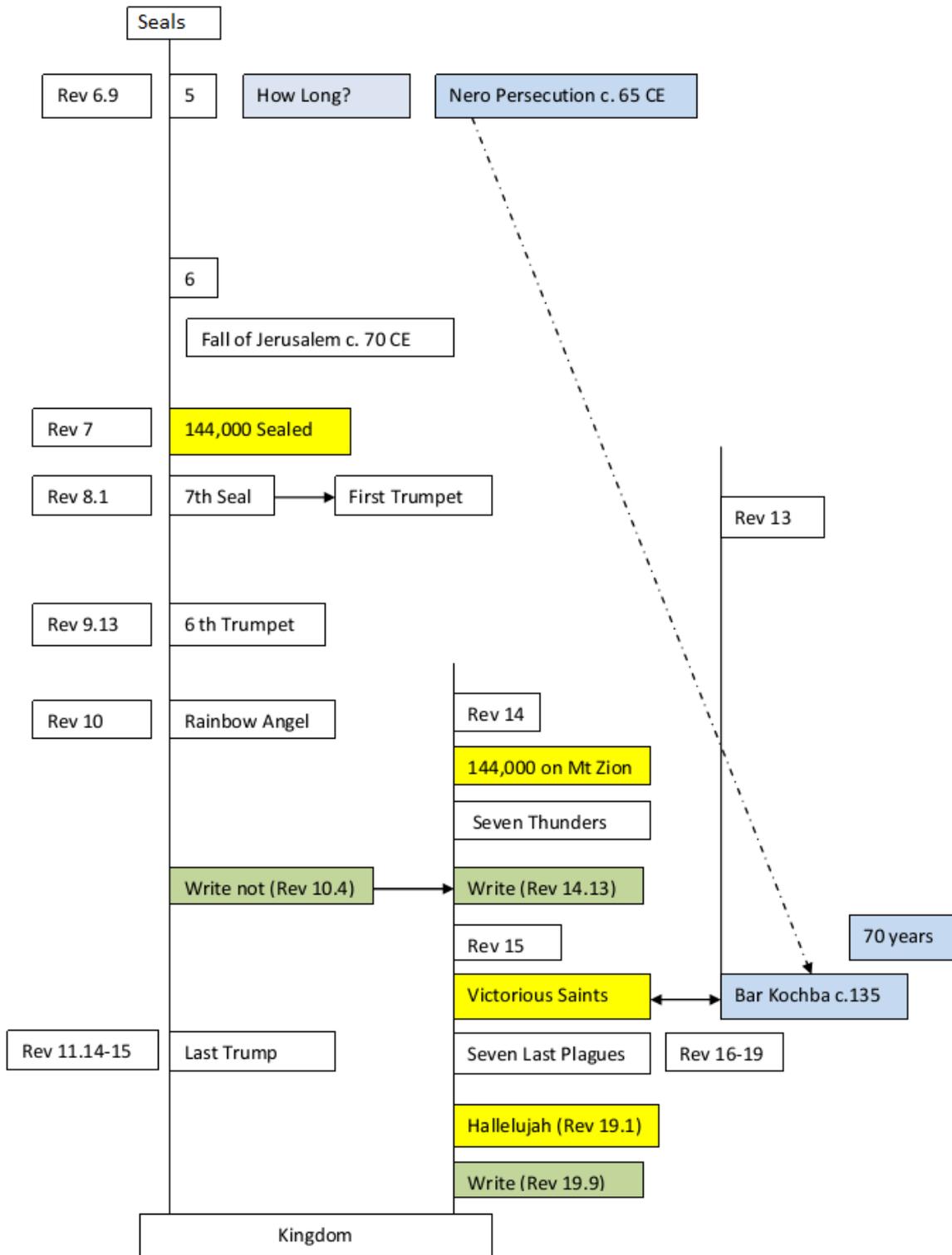
Of course, it is unlikely that the Ark of the Covenant is hidden somewhere under the temple mount – that is probably a fiction. However, it is very likely that the dismantled tabernacle was stored inside Solomon’s temple. It was a “holy relic” and Solomon would not have destroyed it. It probably perished when Solomon’s temple was destroyed by the Babylonians unless it was stored under ground (a warren of tunnels and caves exist under the mount).

So then, the tabernacle was stored inside the temple. But what has this got to do with the victorious saints of verse two? In Rev 13.6 it is the tabernacle (not the temple) that is blasphemed: “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” (Rev 13.6) and in Rev 21.3, “the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them”. Note that the “temple” has been replaced by the “tabernacle” (the in-dwelling presence) because the saints (who were disassembled and re-erected like the tent of meeting) now represented the resurrected indwelling presence of Yahweh.

Moreover, this is the tent of testimony or **witness** μαρτυρίου (marturiou) from which the English words martyr and martyrdom – those who testify (like the two witnesses and like Christ the faithful witness). Thus, the tabernacle of witness **represents the conquerors** that gained victory and overcame the beast. However, this is not a hymn of praise addressed to the conquerors, nor does it list the supposed virtues of the conquerors – it is “the Lord God Almighty” who is praised – a title that speaks of omnipotence and sovereignty and particularly of the covenant blessing of fecundity. The victory was wrought by God and belongs to God alone and therefore his victorious saints offer praise.

There are a number of songs of praise in Revelation starting with the “new song” in Rev 5.9 which is called the “song of the redeemed” who praise the Lamb because they have been saved by his blood. It is logical to call this “new song” the “Song of the Lamb” and the “new song” is sung again in Rev 14.3. It is only in Rev 15.3 that the victors sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. The “song” of Rev 15 is therefore a duet between Moses and the Lamb! It is the “old song” combined with the “new song” (old and new covenants) singing together in harmonious unity, sung by the saints of all ages. The historical context can be depicted thus:

Historical setting of the Sealing and the victory Songs



It will be demonstrated in the exposition that follows that Rev 15 looks back on the historical situation of Rev 14 **but it also looks forwards** anticipating the looming judgments of Rev 16-19 that introduce the kingdom. Thus it functions as both analepsis and prolepsis flashing back to past victories (to draw strength and faith)<sup>4</sup> and flashing forward in anticipation of the ultimate victory. It celebrates Yahweh's past judgements and his future judgements and in so doing establishes the absolute certainty of the outcome – it is already a done deal –the wicked are already defeated they just don't know it yet.

Of course the events of Rev 16-19 are more difficult to quantify – they (the plague-vials) occur within the seventh trump. Do they last seven years or forty-nine years or three-and-one-half years? What do these plagues actually represent (what events). In order to understand Rev 16-19 we can only draw on already established patterns and make suggestions regarding current events (more on this anon). We also note that there has been a huge prophetic “gap” since BCE 135 in which time the gospel was preached to the Gentiles.

It is only now that the Jews have returned to the land that the “prophetic clock” has started ticking again and **a repeat pattern** of trumpets, witnessing etc can replay. We note that the first and second centuries **never got to the stage of the last trump and the plague-vials**...therefore the full realization of Rev 15 onwards is in **our present and future**. Turning away from such thoughts we can now progress with an exposition of Rev 15.

### Seven angels with seven plagues (Rev 15.1)

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God”.

John commences the chapter with “And I saw another sign in heaven”. The word sign (semeion)<sup>5</sup> establishes the link with 12.1 which, together with the customary rubric, reinforces the fact that we are still in the same series. Rev 15 forms the seventh and final section in the series, and, as with the seventh seal (8.1) and seventh trumpet (11.15), it introduces us to a further series of seven – the vials. Chapters 12-14 consisted of a parenthesis, half recapitulatory, half anticipatory. Hence Rev 15 is both the continuation and expansion of the closing verses of chapter 11, where we witnessed the opening of the temple in heaven.

The seven angels John beheld had “the seven last plagues” with which “the wrath of God is completed” (v.1). Although described as plagues, the Greek word plege, a cognate of the verb plesso (to strike), simply denotes a “blow”. Thus here are the seven last punitive, of an assorted nature as we shall see, that God has to deliver against mankind. Fair warning has been given, but neglected. Now is the time for the divine wrath to be finally exhausted upon the ungodly of the world.<sup>6</sup> Seven plagues are mentioned in Lev 26.21; “If you walk contrary to me, and will not hearken to me, I will bring more plagues upon you, sevenfold as many as your sins.” But these plagues are not limited to Israel, they are universal in scope.

The seven angels having the seven last plagues are described as **another sign in heaven, great and marvellous** which (as already noted) is used to describe the celestial woman in Rev 12.1 but also the celestial Red Dragon in Rev 12.3. The “sign in heaven, great and marvellous” (σημείον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ μέγα καὶ θαυμαστόν) of Rev 15.1 becomes “Great and marvellous the acts [works] of you” (Μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά τὰ ἔργα σου) in the praises of the saints in Rev 15.3. The LXX version of the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15) employs the adjective nominative to describe divine glory; “Who is like to thee among the gods, O Lord? Who is like to thee? Glorified in holiness, marvellous (θαυμαστός, thaumastos) in glories, doing wonders” (Exod 15.11, LXE) and again in Exodus 34.10 (θαυμαστά, thaumasta)<sup>7</sup> which is a reference to the plagues (wonders) of Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea (Ps 106.22 LXX Ps 105.22, θαυμαστά).

Reference is again made to Yahweh's past marvellous works in the Asaph Psalm sung when the ark was brought up to Jerusalem by David.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the most significant intertext is LXX Psalm 98.1: Sing to the Lord **a new song**; for the Lord has wrought wonderful works (θαυμαστά ἐποίησεν, *thaumasta epoiEsen*) the complete Psalm (KJV) reads:

**Psalm 98:1** <A Psalm.> O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. <sup>2</sup> The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. <sup>3</sup> He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. <sup>4</sup> Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. <sup>5</sup> Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. <sup>6</sup> With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King. <sup>7</sup> Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. <sup>8</sup> Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together <sup>9</sup> Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

The setting of Psalm 98 is most probably (Passover) deliverance from Assyria during the Hezekiah era.<sup>9</sup> Psalm 98 contains many of the themes found in Rev 15, particularly the manifestation of divine judgements on the Gentiles. A “new song” is sung – a song of salvation that now includes both Jew and Gentile (not just the 144,000) who together “Exodus out of Egypt” as a mixed multitude, because the “new song” harmonizes both old (Moses) and new (Lamb) testaments. The viewpoint becomes panoramic, moving away from a narrow ethno-centric Jewish focus and so the judgements also become universal when the “kings of the earth and the whole world” (Rev 16.14) are gathered together, and the final punishment involves not only the “great city”, but also the “cities of the nations” (Rev 16.19). Of the ten plagues of Egypt, only the first three affected both Jews and Egyptians, however, the last seven plagues only touched the Egyptians.

## The conquerors (Rev 15.2)

“And I saw as it were 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, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God”.

In Rev 13 we find the Dragon<sup>10</sup> standing upon (ἐστᾶθη ἐπί, estathE epi) the sand of sea shore. Some translations have John standing on the sea shore but the Dragon<sup>11</sup> typology is better suited to the Egyptians pursuing the Israelites to the shores of the Red Sea. On that occasion Yahweh looked down/through “the pillar of fire and cloud” (Exod 14.24) and “congealed” the sea (Exod 15.8). However, now we see the saints standing upon (ἐστῶτας ἐπὶ, estOtas epi) a sea of glass mingled with fire. The Dragon who stood on the shore transferred his authority to the Sea-beast who continued the dragon’s pursuit but the saints have escaped their clutches and emerge victorious from the typological “Red sea” (of Exodus 15) and are now standing upon the clear glass sea of the throne room (cf. Rev 4.6) that is now mingled with the fire of judgement. One of the plague angels has the power over fire (Rev 16.8) and the whore is utterly burned (Rev 17.16) the eyes of Christ are flames of fire (Rev 19.12) and all the miscreants are cast into the lake of fire (Rev 19.20). Therefore the saints now look down/through the transparent floor the tranquil glass sea of the throne room (Like Yahweh looking down/through the fiery cloud-pillar) on the unfolding punishments.

Osborne, states; “The three aspects of the Antichrist over which they emerge victorious are drawn from 13:1-2 (the beast), v.14 (his image), and v.17-18 (the number of his name). They sum up all aspects of the evil empire by which the Antichrist will force the nations to worship him instead of God. As such they stress the personal conflict (with the beast), the religious pressure (with his image), and the economic persecution (with the number of his name)”.<sup>12</sup> The saints are therefore looking backwards to the victory achieved in Rev 13-14 and forwards to the victory of Rev 16-19. Although the actors may change the script is predictable as **the patterns repeat**. In Rev 14 we see a vision of the redeemed **first** (before the seven thunders), so also in Rev 15 the redeemed are seen **before** the plague-vial tribulations. God declares the end from the beginning.

### Song of Moses and the Lamb (Rev 15.3-4)

“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of saints. 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 are made manifest”.

This hymn of praise is directed at God as solely responsible for the victory and it draws on allusions found throughout the OT. Mounce<sup>13</sup> comments as follows: “Practically every phrase of the hymn is taken from the rich vocabulary of the OT. For the first strophe cf. Ps 111:3 (“Glorious and majestic are his deeds”); Amos 4:13 (“the Lord God Almighty is his name”); Deut 32:4 (“all his ways are just”); Jer. 10:7 (“O King of the nations”). In the Nestle-Aland text almost 80 percent of the words in the hymn (10 of 48) are italicized to show that they have been taken from the OT”.<sup>14</sup> The canticle itself is therefore a mosaic of Old Testament phrases (besides those mentioned by Mounce above see; Ps 139.14; Ps 145.17; Ps 86.9; Mal 1.11; Ps 98.2).

Before we explore the OT inter-texts we note (once again) the emphasis placed on the unity between Moses the Servant of God and the Lamb who sing one “new song” together. The song consists of a number of OT themes given new life. The OT is therefore not redundant as it finds its true meaning in the Lamb. In the same manner the “New Jerusalem” is built on the foundation of the twelve apostles (Rev 21.14) and has gates with the names of the twelve patriarchs (Rev 21.12). The Old and the New sing together in harmony.

Mounce has pointed to a number of OT allusions but there are even more that can be unpacked. However, first we commence with the Song of Moses which naturally suggests Exodus 15 (Song of the Sea) but the other Song of Moses is found in Deut 32 which is called the “Song of Witness” (in Deut 31.19). An allusion is made to Deut 32.4 in Rev 15.3c; “his works are true and all his ways are just”. Moreover, the “Song of Witness” is extensively alluded to throughout Revelation<sup>15</sup> and (as we shall see) Rev 19-20 contains widespread allusions to Ezekiel 38-39 which in turn plays of Deut 32.

This “farewell of Moses” focuses on the sovereign justice of Yahweh and a warning to rebellious Israel of his justice and wrath. Deuteronomy 32 is primarily a “covenant lawsuit” and can be organized via a covenant form, with witnesses (vv.1-2), title of God (vv. 3-4), historical review (vv. 5-14), indictment (vv.15-18), judgment (vv. 19-29), assurance of salvation (vv. 30-38), and the divine oath (vv. 39-42).<sup>16</sup> So, the two “Songs of Moses” are used throughout Revelation to depict the Passover Exodus from Egypt and the covenant lawsuit before entering the kingdom. Bauckham (1993b: 298-300) notes that the hymn partakes of a Jewish tradition of reinterpreting key texts via verbal links. As in Isa. 12.1-6 (Tell of his wonderful works...remember the wonderful works he has done) builds on the Song of Moses, so also the hymn in Rev 15 builds on both Songs of Moses. But, to paraphrase Bauckham -- the “Songs of Moses” gave rise to a rich vein of themes that are reinterpreted in Jewish tradition, particularly in the Hallel (Passover) psalms etc and these “spin-offs” on the Exodus theme are again alluded to in the “new song” of Rev 15. Therefore, each redemptive intervention gives rise to reinterpretation and application of older patterns within new historical settings. A closer look at some of these allusions will demonstrate a complex intertextual web.

The “song of the Lamb” is no doubt a reference to the fact that Psalm 118 which is based on Exodus 15, is one of the Passover Psalms, known as the “Paschal Hallel” (Passover praise), these were sung at Passover (Ps.113-118). Psalm 118 was literally the “Song of the Lamb”. It, together with Psalm 117 perhaps, was the hymn sung by the Lord and his disciples at the Last Supper (Matt.26.30).

### Exodus 15

- Israel cried out unto the Lord. **(14.10)**
- *Yah* is my strength and song. **(v.2)**
- The right hand of the Lord. **(v.6,12)**
- My father’s God, and I will exalt thee. **(v.2)**

### Psalm 118

- I cried unto *Yah* in my distress. **(v.5)**
- *Yah* is my strength and song **(v.14,21)**
- The right hand of the Lord **(v.15,16)**
- Thou art my God, I will exalt thee **(v.28)**

According to the Talmud, the “Hallel” recorded five things: “The coming out of Egypt, the dividing of the sea, the giving of the law, the resurrection of the dead, and the lot of the Messiah.” The theme of Passover deliverance is continued in the Hallel of praise found at the commencement of Rev 19 which is based on Psalm 113. The vision of the redeemed in Rev 15 (based on Passover deliverance) is in stark contrast with the pouring out of judgements depicted later on in Rev 15 (based on the Day of Atonement). The punishments are described in detail in Rev 16. The prophet Isaiah also recycled Exodus 15 to celebrate Passover deliverance from the Assyrians during the reign of Hezekiah (note the emphasis on water and the construction of Hezekiah’s water tunnel for the siege).

**Isaiah 12**

Yah *is* my strength, song and salvation. (v.2)

The wells of salvation (v.3)

Sing as Yah does excellent things (v.4-5)

**Exodus 15**

-Yah *is* my strength, song and salvation (v.2)

-Twelve wells of water at Elim (v.27)

-Then sang Moses and Israel this song (v.1)

Each salvic event sees the reworking of the same traditional themes. Jeremiah 10 is employed because of its underlying concern with the heathen and therefore it forms a suitable inter-text for the coming judgements:

<b>Jeremiah 10</b>	<b>Revelation 15</b>
Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them (v.2)	And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous (v.1)
Pour out thy fury upon the heathen (v.25)	Pour out the vials of wrath (16.1)
Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? (v.7)	Thou King of nations. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? (v.3-4)
Brutish and foolish (v.8)	The beast worshippers. (v.2)
His molten image is falsehood (v.14)	Image worshippers (v.2)

### The plague vials given (Rev 15.5-7)

“And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever”.

The importance of the phrase “the temple of the tabernacle of witness” has already been discussed above. The temple is opened and the angels have exited but soon it will be closed until their work is done. The angels emerge from the very presence of God himself, from whence no doubt they have received their instructions. They are clad in white linen, denoting righteousness. Purity of motive is being stressed. Margaret Barker says, “Any priest would wear a multi-coloured sash of red, blue, purple and white, but only the high priest wore a sash interwoven with gold (Ant. 3.159). The prescription in Leviticus 16.4 is that the high priest has to wear four linen garments when he enters the holy of holies: the loin cloth, the coat, the sash and the turban; and at the end of the second temple period, it was still the custom to enter the holy of holies wearing white linen (m. Yoma 3.6)”.<sup>17</sup>

It was only on the Day of Atonement that the high priest wore the “white garments” with a golden sash on all other occasions the priestly garment was multi-coloured and highly decorated. Thus we are dealing with atonement ritual similar to Rev 8 which is also based on the Day of Atonement. The angels perform their tasks out of righteous concern for justice and nothing more. In verse five we witness a reversal of the Day of Atonement ritual of Lev 16 where the high priest emerges to pronounce the blessing.

In contrast, angels bearing punishments exit the inner sanctum. Atonement can no longer be obtained by means of the blood of animals, or even by the blood of the Lamb; now only the shedding of the sinner’s own blood will suffice. The earth can only be sanctified and cleansed from iniquity through the pouring out of the seven vials, imitating the ritual of Lev 16.19. In Rev 15.7 the angels receive seven vials from one of the four living creatures (the cherubim in the heavenly throne room i.e., the *sancta sanctorum* or “holy of holies”).

If we are correct in understanding these four living creatures as representing creation then this act is appropriate in view of the universal nature of these final judgments. The angels are already in possession of the plagues but they are handed the vessels to transport them and pour them as they exit the “holy of holies” into the “holy place”. Perhaps these vessels were the empty vessels that had contained the blood that was sprinkled seven times on the mercy seat.<sup>18</sup>

The word *phiale*, generally rendered “vial”, has sacrificial connotations, being commonly used in the Septuagint for certain sacred bowls employed in the sanctuary (Exod.27.3, Num.4.14). It may also denote a “cup” (Prov.23.31) for drinking wine. In Rev 16.7 the vials are described as being “full of the wrath of God”. Here then we perceive the “cup of his indignation” mentioned earlier in Rev 14.9 as the counterpart to the cup of the harlot. The word also has connections with Rev 5.8 where an identical vessel contained the prayers of the saints. In the fifth seal that prayer request was; “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Rev 6.9).

## Day of Atonement (Rev 15.8)

“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, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled”.

The picture here is based on the Day of Atonement<sup>19</sup> when a cloud of incense was used to protect the high priest. However, instead of incense it is called “smoke from the glory of God”. The phrase “and no man was able to enter into the temple” is reminiscent of Leviticus 16.17; “And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place”. In Rabbinical writing this was thought to mean that the priest was transformed into an angel of the divine presence on this one particular day, but such an angelomorphic interpretation is not necessary, it simply means that no other priests were present in the outer sanctuary (holy place) when the high priest entered the inner sanctum. Here it means that no intercession is possible until divine wrath is executed. There follows a series of impressive punishments that are decisive, swift and just. They leave no doubt to who is in charge “The LORD GOD ALMIGHTY” and they are perceived as “righteous acts” by the Gentiles and “marvellous wonders” by the saints.

## End Notes Chapter 15 Pages 304-317

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, Aune, Rev 6-16, p.877-878

<sup>2</sup> Richard F. Friedman, The Tabernacle in the Temple, *Biblical Archaeologist*, Fall 1980, p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Randall Price, Searching for the Ark of the Covenant,(Harvest House Publishers, 2005), 140-141

<sup>4</sup> But remember that for John Rev 14 was still in the future – a future that he would not see because he had passed away by then.

<sup>5</sup> Note the ancient constellations and associated mythology such as Virgo (the woman), Drako (the dragon/serpent) and the seven stars of Orion the hunter or the herald (messenger) of the gods.

<sup>6</sup> George Bradford Caird, The Revelation of Saint John, (Hendrickson Publishers, 1966),*ad., loc.*

<sup>7</sup> LXE **Exodus 34:10** And the Lord said to Moses, Behold, I establish a covenant for thee in the presence of all thy people; I will do glorious things, which have not been done in all the earth, or in any nation; and all the people among whom thou art shall see the works of the Lord, that they are wonderful, which I will do for thee.

<sup>8</sup> In the LXX: **Marvellous** (θαυμάσια, thaumasia) together with **works** (ἐποίησεν, epoiEsen), **wonders** (τέρατα, terata) and **judgements** (κρίματα, krimata) in 1 Chron 16.12 (LXE): “Remember his wonderful (marvellous) works which he has wrought, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth” Also in v. 24 “Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations” (this verse is present in the MT but missing in the LXX)..

<sup>9</sup> George Booker: Psalms Studies - Book 4 [Access here](#) [retrieved May 2017]

<sup>10</sup> In Rev 13.1 the NIB/NIV/CLV/ISA have either “it” or “the dragon” and the older translations have “I” (John) standing on the shore. Aune is neutral in his translation giving “He stood...” but listing the variants in the notes.

<sup>11</sup> Both Egypt and Babylon are referred to as Dragons (Isa 51.9, Jer. 51.34). Of course the Red Dragon of Rev 12 was the Idumean Dynasty of Herod. However, in a similar fashion to Pharaoh, Herod the Great is depicted as attempting to slaughter male Hebrew children.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, Osborne, 563

<sup>13</sup> Robert H. Mounce, The Book of Revelation, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, [1977 1<sup>st</sup> ed.] 1998),286

<sup>14</sup> In the NA<sup>27</sup> only ὅτι μόνος ὄσιος, ὅτι [PW: “because Thou alone *art* kind, because” ] and the final clause (ὅτι τὰ δικαιώματά σου ἐφανερώθησαν) are not italicized. [PW: final clause: “that the judgements of you were made manifest”]

<sup>15</sup> See the comparison table in the chapter on Revelation 10 page 190 [Access here](#)

<sup>16</sup> See Niehaus, *NIDOTTE* 4:539

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Barker, Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place, (A&C Black, 2000),85

<sup>18</sup> If each one represented the empty vessel retained after the Day of Atonement ritual then we have seven empty vessels representing seven years of Atonement rituals – this suggests a seven year period of “blood sprinkling” on the mercy seat – the empty vessels are then filled with “plagues”- could this denote that the seven plagues represent a seven year period rather than 49 years?

<sup>19</sup> As noted previously the Seals are associated with Passover and the Trumpets with Atonement and Rev 15-16 is here also based on the Day of Atonement. Other references to Jewish feasts can be found (such as Tabernacles etc) suggesting that the Apocalypse is based on a three-and-one-half year conceptual framework of Feasts which makes liturgical sense as the Jews had a three-and-one half year (triennial) reading cycle of the OT. On this see the Digression on the Triennial Cycle. [Access here](#)