

REVELATION

VISIONS OF VICTORY

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Songs in the Night

Revelation 15:1-8 (NKJV) – Bible passage [my explanatory notes]

1. The Sign of God's Power (Rev. 15:1)

¹ **Then I saw** another **sign** in heaven [This is the third great sign in Revelation. The first was the woman clothed with the sun (12:1), representing Israel. The second was the great red dragon (12:3), representing Satan.], **great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues** [God's judgments are coming to completion. The word "plague" means "a blow" or "strike," emphasizing swift, decisive punishment.], **for in them the wrath of God is complete.** [His holy judgment is finalized and fully poured out, marking the end of His patience with sinful humanity.]

2. The Songs of God's Praise (Rev. 15:2-4)

² **And I saw** something like a sea of glass [The sea was not an actual ocean, because "there is no longer any sea" (Rev. 21:1). What John saw was a transparent crystal platform before God's throne, shimmering and glistening like a tranquil, sunlit sea (4:6; Exodus 24:10; Ezekiel 1:22).¹ This "sea" symbolizes calmness and peace, reflecting God's sovereignty (Revelation 4:6)] **mingled with fire** ["fire" either indicates: 1) the great fiery tribulation that these people have gone through, or 2) God's judgment that they have escaped (I think option #1).], **and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.** [Those standing on the sea are victorious martyrs who refused to worship the beast, his image, or take his mark (13:16-18). The "harps of God" signify celebration, worship, and praise in God's presence.]

³ **They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb,** [The Song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-18), celebrates deliverance from Egypt, and the Song of the Lamb (Revelation 5:9-10), celebrates redemption through Christ. Together, these songs praise God's power, justice, and faithfulness.] **saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works** [God's power and sovereignty], **Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways** [God's judgments are righteous and perfect.], **O King of the saints!** [literally, "O King of the nations."]

⁴ **Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?** [God's worthiness of worship and reverence] **For You alone are holy** [God's holiness sets Him apart as uniquely deserving of reverence and awe.]. **For all nations shall come and worship before You** [This anticipates the Millennial Kingdom, when Christ will reign, and all nations will bow before Him (Philippians 2:10-11).], **For Your judgments have been manifested** [Wuest (Greek scholar) says, "your judicial acts characterized by righteousness have been shown openly."]."

¹ John MacArthur, *Because the Time Is near: John MacArthur Explains the Book of Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 245.

3. The Smoke of God's Punishment (Rev. 15:5-8)

⁵ **After these things I looked**, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony [NIV – “the tabernacle of the covenant law”] in heaven was opened. [This refers to the heavenly Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant is kept (11:19). The opening of the temple signals that the time for mercy has ended, and judgment is about to be unleashed.]



The Ark of the Covenant contained three items (Hebrews 9:4):²

- 1) The **stone tablets of the Law**, which represent **man's rebellion** against God's commands. (Deuteronomy 10:2, 5)
- 2) The **jar of manna**, which symbolizes God's provision but also reminds us of **man's discontentment** with God's care. (Exodus 16:33-34 and Numbers 11:6)
- 3) **Aaron's rod that budded**, which represents **man's rebellion** against God's chosen leadership. (Numbers 16-17, see 17:10)



When John saw the testimony in heaven, it was a reminder of man's sinful and rebellious attitude toward God. It also points to God's faithfulness in carrying out His covenant, judging sin, and ultimately offering mercy through the work of Christ.

⁶ **And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues** [The seven angels emerge directly from God's presence, symbolizing that these judgments are divinely ordained.], **clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands.** [Their pure, bright linen represents holiness and righteousness, while the golden bands reflect the glory and majesty of their divine mission.]

⁷ **Then one of the four living creatures** [These represent all creation (Revelation 4:6-8) and cooperate in delivering God's judgment.] **gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls** [Shallow saucers used for quick pouring, symbolizing the rapid and complete outpouring of God's judgment.] **full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.** [This emphasizes God's authority and timeless justice.]

⁸ **The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God** [like Exodus 40:34-35 (Tabernacle was completed) and 1 Kings 8:10-11 (Solomon's temple was completed).] **and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.** [It signifies that these judgments are irrevocable. **The time for intercession is over.** God's wrath will be fully poured out.]

Lessons for Today:

- 1) **Saints can sing in the night.** Trials, heartaches, and suffering should not rob us of our song. "God gives songs in the night" (Job 35:10). Just as the saints in Revelation 15 sing after enduring the fiery trials of the Tribulation, believers today can find hope and joy in God, even in life's most difficult moments.
- 2) **Victory belongs to the faithful.** Despite enduring fiery trials, the saints stand victorious, praising God for His power and justice. We should also remain faithful, knowing that ultimate victory is assured through Christ.
- 3) **God Alone is worthy of worship.** The saints' song highlights God's greatness, holiness, and justice. Like them, we should respond to God's works with reverence, gratitude, and praise.
- 4) **The time to repent will eventually run out.** Verse 8 signifies that the opportunity for repentance has ended. **Now is the time** to turn to Christ and receive His offer of salvation.

² Adapted from Bill Bennett, *Satanic Reverses*, unpublished book, 288.