

REVELATION MESSAGE 31: The Song of Moses and of the Lamb

Revelation 15, Andrew Neville – 8/10/17

Sermon Summary

It has been some time since the last message on Revelation was given, so Pastor Andrew gave a short overview of the previous 14 chapters.

The first section (the first 3 chapters) began with the 7 letters to the churches that existed in the area known as Asia Minor then, but are now part of modern-day Turkey. These churches were by and large dysfunctional – as many are today.

The second section (chapters 4-5) contains a description of the control room of heaven.

The third section (chapters 6-14) concerns the justice of God, the 7 seals, and the 7 trumpet judgments.

Chapter 15 could almost be omitted from the book of Revelation, said Andrew, since 16:1, the bowl judgments, naturally follows 15:1. So what then is the purpose of the 15th chapter?

It is written in 3 visions: 1. The first verse is the prelude to the conclusion of this age. 2. Verses 2-4 describe a victorious “choir” with instruments singing a song with two titles: The Song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-18) and the Song of the Lamb. 3. Verses 5-8 give a description of the temple and of what the 7 angels with 7 plagues are about to do (in chapter 16).

In the opening verse, we read that these angels comprise one of God’s great and marvelous signs. In verse 7, we are told they will execute the completing judgment of the eternal God.

The description of the heavenly temple being opened (verse 5), the tabernacle of Testimony harkens back to the Old Testament, particularly Exodus (25:8-9) with its earthly tabernacle designed by God to contain the covenant between God and His people. (See also Hebrews 8:5, the reference to the copy of the heavenly one).

We, like the Jews of old, have turned away from God – broken our side of the Covenant. Now has come the time when God must finally deal with his people who have rejected Him. Our lifestyle has consequences. Now those consequences are about to be seen worldwide.

The angels carrying out the judgements are dressed (consecrated) in pure white robes. [Note: In a recently watched documentary on the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on June 2, 1953, all her majestic outer robes, and adornments were removed, and she was placed in a simple white robe before being anointed and consecrated as head of the Church in England. Then followed her oath before finally being re-gowned and crowned. I thought of that moment as Andrew preached on that point. P.)

Verse 8 tells us that the “temple was filled with smoke” and “no one could enter”. This is a sacred moment. It occurs a few times in the Bible: when God calls Moses to receive the 10 Commandments; when the Tabernacle is consecrated; when the Temple is consecrated; during the transfiguration of Jesus. They signify sacred moments, but also times when God is signaling His “otherness”, that He is outside and separate from all that He has created, whether visible or invisible.

Those who sing before the throne (verses 2-3) are described beside a “sea of glass mixed with fire” (elements God is often identified with). They have overcome – they have succeeded against all the efforts of this world, the beast, antichrist, Satan; they have suffered, died, and refused to give in. They are the martyrs for the faith of Christ.

God gives no prizes for blending in to one’s society, for hiding, for compromising. God only rewards those who persevere.

In the first 3 chapters of Revelation, Jesus said “to the one who overcomes, I will”:

1. Give the right to eat from the tree of life.
2. See that person is not hurt by the second death.
3. Give that person a new name.
4. Give them authority over the nations.
5. Give them clothes of white and a promise to never erase them from the Book of Life.
6. Make them a pillar in the temple of God.
7. Give them the right to sit with me on my Throne.

In the great Song of Moses, recorded in Deuteronomy 32, is a list of cataclysms that will befall **all** God’s enemies.

The bowl judgments to come are **NOT** a miscarriage of justice as some of God’s enemies will claim. These are what is right and just. They are **NOT** evil. “He is the rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He” (Deuteronomy 32:4).

God always does what is right.

We are the ones who do wrong.

We are the ones who messed up creation.

Judgment is the inevitable result of our actions.

But God who is holy and just has provided an exodus for us in His very plan and nature.

Remember, it is not just the Song of Moses; it is also the Song of the Lamb.

So: What is your “song”? What is the preoccupation of your life, the theme of your worship?
How is this expressed to God?

Discussion Questions

Read Revelation 15.

Revelation 15:1-2: The Scene

1. A “sign” is a symbol that signifies and teaches an important truth. In 15:1, what is this final sign and why is it called “great” and “marvellous”? What destination has been reached and by whom? What eternal purpose does this hot wrath of God “complete” (“reach its aim”)?
2. How does the sea mingled with fire signify God’s holy judgment?
3. How do we know that the people standing on this sea are tribulation martyrs (see 6:9-11; 7:9-17; 12:11; 14:1-5, 13)? How have these saints overcome the Beast, his image, and the number of his name? Did they do it by living or by dying?
4. Have you experienced the following paradox: that Christian victory is often achieved by apparent defeat? Can you explain: it is those who would save their lives who lose them, and those who would lose their lives who save them (cf. Matt. 10:38-39)?
5. What does it suggest to you that these people hold harps given to them by God and that they sing? (see 5:8, 14:2). Why do persecuted people often seem to worship and sing with such fervency (think of American slaves before the Civil War)?

Reread Revelation 15:3-4: The Song

6. Why does this song have two titles? How does it suggest the union of law and love?
7. Compare Exodus 15 to Revelation 15. What parallels do you find between them?
8. How was the great deliverance of Israel under Moses a foreshadowing of the even greater deliverance by the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ? How is the applying of blood essential for those who would be spared the wrath of God and delivered from His enemies? (Compare Rev. 5:9-10).
9. How does this song praise both God’s person and His works? How is it a model for us of a true worship song? (Notice its focus on “you”).
10. How well do you know God’s person? Have you ever studied the attributes of God? Have you ever read a book on the character of God? Keith Krell recommends: *“The Knowledge of the Holy”* by A.W. Tozer, *“Knowing God”* by J.I. Packer, *“Close to His Majesty”* by David Needham, *“Our God is Awesome”* by Tony Evans. Can you recommend any?
11. How much time do you spend pondering the great works of God? “Great are the works of the LORD; they are studied by all who delight in them” (Psalm 111:2). What has God accomplished in history and in your own life? Have you shared God’s great works with your children, grandchildren, and fellow believers?

12. Compare the rhetorical questions of Revelation 15:4 and Psalm 86:8-10. What reasons are given that all nations will at long last worship the one true God?
13. How does God's holiness lead to Jesus' death on the cross? How does God the Father maintain His holiness at the same time that He is merciful to sinners? Have you personally experienced the freedom of having your sins forgiven?
14. Read Revelation 21:24-26. Compare also Matt. 28:19 and Luke 24:47. God's plan includes every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. Do you share God's heart? Are you passionate about what He is doing in other parts of the world? How do you show it?
15. Let me ask you a very simple question: What is your "song"? What is the preoccupation of your life, the theme of your worship? How is this expressed to God?

Rev. 15:5-8: The Smoke and the Temple

16. Read Exodus 25:8-9 and Hebrews 8:2, 5 and 9 and 9:23-24. Moses' tabernacle was based on the heavenly one not vice versa. Why is it significant that these seven angels come out of this temple? What does their clothing suggest about them?
17. Compare these bowls to those in Rev. 5:8-9. See also Rev. 8:3-5. Might the prayers of the righteous become the plagues of Revelation 15 and 16?
18. When the smoke fills the temple in heaven, no one can enter. How is this similar to Exodus 40:34-35? Where does the smoke come from and what does it signify?
19. What does it signify that no one is able to enter the temple until the seven plagues are completed?
20. Rev. 15: 7 includes the important phrase "who lives forever and ever." Why is it important to remember that God is eternal? How long has God waited to bring His judgment? What does this say about God? Read 2 Peter 3:8-9.
21. At this point, not only will God's period of grace be over, but once God pours out His justice in divine wrath it will have eternal ramifications. Through the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the opportunity and the means to come to God and be with Him eternally, but if we reject God's grace in Jesus Christ, we must eternally face God's wrath (see Rev. 14:11-13).
22. Do you find the following statement true for you: "Whenever we fail to repent in answer to God's initial corrections and judgments, we can be sure that He will escalate our discomfort and hem us in with the purpose of turning us back to Himself" (Keith Krell). Do you see this as an act of love on God's part?
23. Do you stand for your faith or hide it? Victory is promised to those who resist Satan and the world's system and stay strong to the end for Jesus. (See Rev.2:11, 17, 26 and 3:5, 11, 21).
24. How are you doing? What would strengthen you to persevere -- can we pray now?

Some helpful sources: David Guzik in the Blue Letter Bible www.blueletterbible.org and Keith Krell on www.bible.org