

Monday Evening Bible Reading Group: Revelation Chapter 15: Some Notes

A short chapter that introduces the final cycle of disasters. Of course, John didn't know about chapters: these were added centuries later; but the chapter maker did a sensible thing in marking out this short introductory section. The Seven Angels get their marching orders; those who are to be saved are tucked away safely beyond the sea of glass and fire (just as the Israelites were got safely over the Red Sea/ Sea of Reeds; a rich collection of Old Testament celebration songs is put together, with a look back to the Moses and Miriam song that the Israelites sang to celebrate the safe crossing (and Egyptian drowning)); there is a reminder of the Temple and of its fore-runner the nomadic Tent of Witness – in which was the Ark of the Covenant with the Law. It was breaking of the Law and the Covenant relationship) that brought down divine judgement. (You might object that judgement on the gentiles was a bit hard, since they had not been given the Law or the Covenant. But remember that John, as a Christian, was concerned with the New Covenant and with the Law of Love as Jesus had spoken and lived it. One of the Four Animals re-appears, since judgement affects the whole of Creation, not just the human part of it

The song references are:- “Great and wonderful are your works”: Psalm 92.5, Psalm 11:1-2, Psalm 98.1 Psalm 139:14 “Just and true are your ways”: Psalm 145:17. “Who shall not fear and glorify your name”: Psalm 86.9. “You alone are holy”: 1 Samuel 2:2, Psalm 99:3, Psalm 11.9. “All the nations will come and worship before you”: Psalm 86.9 “Your righteous judgements are made manifest”: Psalm 98.2 We don't know how John wrote his book; but I suspect that, in the absence of either a Concordance or a Google facility, he wrote his own thing, but knew the Scriptures well enough to echo them. Note that the martyrs are celebrating God, not celebrating themselves

The Angels are dressed as priests,

There are a number of concepts we might reflect on: (1) The Wrath of God; (2) Divine Punishment; (3) Judgement; (4) Salvation; (5) For ever and ever; (6) Celebration/Praise; (7) Final; (8) Glory. Why a Sea of Glass?



