

Revelation 15:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.... This verse from Revelation's vision of seven angels with seven plagues - completion of god's wrath, moses and lamb's song employs apocalyptic imagery rich with Old Testament allusions and symbolic meaning. The Greek text uses vivid apocalyptic language characteristic of Jewish prophetic literature, drawing heavily from Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah.

The symbolism must be interpreted within its first-century context while recognizing timeless spiritual realities. The imagery would resonate powerfully with persecuted believers facing Roman imperial cult worship, providing hope that despite present suffering, Christ reigns sovereign and will consummate His kingdom. The apocalyptic genre uses symbolic numbers (seven, twelve, 144,000), colors, beasts, and cosmic imagery to convey theological truth rather than photographic descriptions.

Christologically, Revelation consistently exalts Jesus as the victorious Lamb, the faithful witness, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Every vision ultimately points to Christ's supremacy, His finished redemptive work, and His certain return to judge the living and dead and establish the new creation.

Historical Context

John received this revelation circa AD 95 during Domitian's persecution, exiled on Patmos for his testimony. The seven churches of Asia Minor faced increasing pressure to participate in emperor worship and pagan religious practices. Refusal meant economic hardship, social ostracism, and potential martyrdom. Understanding this context illuminates Revelation's encouragement to faithful endurance.

The apocalyptic genre was familiar to first-century Jewish and Christian readers. Rather than newspaper-style predictions, apocalyptic literature uses symbolic imagery to reveal spiritual realities behind earthly events, encourage the faithful, warn the unfaithful, and assert God's ultimate sovereignty over history. Parallels with Daniel, Ezekiel, and intertestamental apocalyptic writings would help original readers decode the symbols.

Rome's imperial cult demanded worship of Caesar as divine, placing Christians in impossible situations—compromise their faith or face persecution. Revelation identifies Rome as "Babylon" and assures believers that despite appearances, the Lamb conquered through His death and resurrection, and all earthly kingdoms will submit to His reign.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 15:8 reveal God's character, particularly His sovereignty, holiness, and justice?

2. What specific encouragement or warning does this verse offer for maintaining faithful Christian witness amid cultural pressure?
3. How does this passage point to Christ's victory and the hope of new creation, and how should that shape your present priorities?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	έγεμίσθη	ό	ναὸν	καπνοῦ	ἐκ	τῆς	δόξης	τοῦ
And	was filled	G3588	the temple	with smoke	from	G3588	the glory	G3588
G2532	G1072		G3485	G2586	G1537		G1391	
θεοῦ	καὶ	ἐκ	τῆς	δυνάμεως	αὐτοῦ	καὶ	οὐδεὶς	ἡδύνατο
of God	And	from	G3588	power	his	And	no man	was able
G2316	G2532	G1537		G1411	G846	G2532	G3762	G1410
εἰσελθεῖν	εἰς	τὸν	ναὸν	ἄχρι	τελεσθῶσιν	αἱ	ἐπτὰ	
to enter	into	G3588	the temple	till	were fulfilled	G3588	of the seven	
G1525	G1519		G3485	G891	G5055		G2033	
πληγαὶ	τῶν	ἐπτὰ	ἀγγέλων					
plagues	G3588	of the seven	angels					
G4127		G2033	G32					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 6:4 (Parallel theme): And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Revelation 15:1 (References God): 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.

Psalms 29:9 (Glory): The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.

2 Thessalonians 1:9 (Glory): Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

