



WEEK 14: A New Song Revelation 14

- **Last week**

- We met the two beasts: Antichrist and the false prophet
- They form two-thirds of the unholy trinity that will deceive and delude the world

*...and by the signs that it [the false prophet] is allowed to work in the presence of the beast [Antichrist] it **deceives** those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. – Revelation 13:14 ESV*

*The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and **false** signs and wonders, and with all wicked **deception** for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong **delusion**, so that they may believe what is **false**, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. – 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 ESV*

- **The faith of the 144,000**

- John is given a second vision of the 144,000 Jewish converts
- They are standing on Mount Zion with Jesus, the Lamb
 - Mount Zion is a reference to Jerusalem
 - Jerusalem sat on top of Mount Zion

*“As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.” – Psalm 2:6 ESV*

- The Lamb is an obvious reference to Jesus, the Messiah

And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain... – Revelation 5:6 ESV

- The 144,000 is the same group we met in Revelation 7:3-4

“Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel.”

- John hears a “new song”
 - It is coming from heaven
 - But what is this song?

A new song in the Old Testament was a song of praise to God for new mercies, particularly victory over an enemy and sometimes for God’s work in creation.
– Thomas L. Constable, Notes on Revelation

*You godly ones, shout for joy because of the Lord! It is appropriate for the morally upright to offer him praise. Give thanks to the Lord with the harp! Sing to him to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument! **Sing to him a new song!** – Psalm 33:1-3 NLT*

*Sing to the Lord **a brand new song!**
Praise him from the horizon of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and everything that lives in it,
you coastlands and those who live there! – Isaiah 42:10 NLT*

- Only the 144,000 can understand the song, but why?
- The lives of the 144,000 will have been redeemed or purchased by the blood of the Lamb
- They alone can appreciate the words of this song
- It should remind you of the song John heard back in chapter 11

*“We give you thanks, Lord God, the All-Powerful,
the one who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and begun to reign.*

*“The nations were enraged,
but your wrath has come,
and the time has come for the dead to be judged,
and the time has come to give to your servants,
the prophets, their reward,
as well as to the saints
and to those who revere your name, both small and great,
and the time has come to destroy those who destroy the earth.” – Revelation 11:17-18 NLT*

- They are the firstfruits
 - They were the first of a great harvest to come
 - In the Old Testament, Firstfruits was an annual Jewish feast celebrating God’s provision

- It was a gift of thanksgiving to God for His gracious and merciful display of fruitfulness in their lives

- **The eternal gospel**

- John hears an angel in mid-heaven proclaiming an eternal gospel
- It is addressed to every tribe, nation, language and people
- To all those who dwell on the earth – the unredeemed
- What makes the gospel eternal?
 - It has everlasting consequences
 - ...without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be
 - *euaggelion* – good news
 - ...the glad tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up
- The angel has three parts to his message:
 1. Fear God
 2. Give Him glory
 3. Worship Him
- Why are these three things necessary?
 - Because judgment has come
 - Time is running out
 - But God is still extending grace and mercy

*“In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”
Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, **now is the day of salvation.** – 2
Corinthians 6:2 ESV*

- **The fall of Babylon**

- The angel speaks in the past tense
- The judgment has come
- It's as if it has already taken place
- And it has come upon Babylon
 - Babylon is the biblical symbol of all that is evil
 - It goes all the way back to the tower of Babel
 - Here, Babylon seems to indicate an actual city
 - It will be the operational center for Antichrist's entire political, economic and religious empire
 - This city will enjoy unprecedented prestige and power
 - But its fall will be just as great as its rise to prominence

*And Jeremiah said to Seraiah: “When you come to Babylon, see that you read all these words, and say, ‘O Lord, you have said concerning this place that you will cut it off, so that nothing shall dwell in it, neither man nor beast, and **it shall be desolate forever.**’*

*When you finish reading this book, tie a stone to it and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, and say, ‘Thus shall Babylon sink, **to rise no more,** because of the disaster*

that I am bringing upon her, and they shall become exhausted.” – Jeremiah 51:61-64
ESV

- **The fate of the unredeemed**

- They will suffer the full brunt of God’s righteous wrath
- They will be tormented for eternity – “forever and ever”
- Hell is described as a place of eternal torment without relief

- **The fate of the redeemed**

- Endurance and eternal reward
- This is why it is an eternal gospel
- It has eternal ramifications
- We are called to endure or overcome

*Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? (As the Scriptures say, “For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.”) No, despite all these things, **overwhelming victory is ours through Christ**, who loved us.* – Romans 8:35-37 NLT

- Our ability to endure comes from Christ
- It is He who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13)
- The redeemed are blessed – even in death

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he **foreknew** he also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also **called**, and those whom he called he also **justified**, and those whom he justified he also **glorified**.* – Romans 8:28-30 ESV

- We are blessed because God will complete what He began
- We will one day be glorified

Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?” – 1 Corinthians 15:54-55 NLT

- **The final harvest**

- The day will come when it is time to reap what has been sown
- The fruit will come to its full ripeness
- And only one individual has authority to stand in judgment over lost humanity

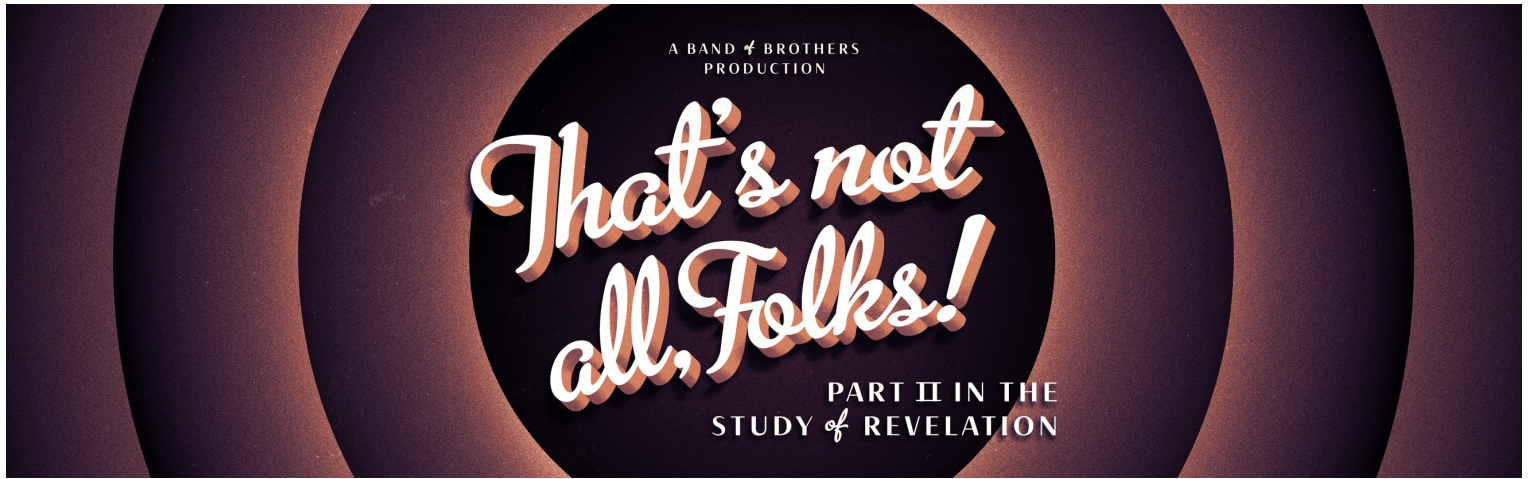
- The Reaper: The Son of Man
 - This was Jesus' favorite designation of Himself
 - It speaks of His humanity
 - It was what made His sacrificial death acceptable
 - His sinless sacrifice gives Him the authority to judge

“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” – Revelation 5:9-10 ESV

- Jesus alone was worthy to open the seals of the scroll
- He has the right to judge those who have rejected His offer
- And the last portion of this chapter reveal the reaping of humanity
- The grapes are over-ripe
- They are practically bursting with sin and rebellion
- The time for reaping has come

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Spend some time discussing your feelings about the image of Jesus reaping the earth and sending to eternal torment all those who have rejected Him as their Lord and Savior.
- The next time you find yourself facing difficulties, what lessons could you apply from the lives of the 144,000?
- Why do you think we are so quick to recognize and appreciate the redemption of God, but wrestle with any mention of His wrath? Why are these two aspects of God's nature not mutually exclusive or contradictory?



Week 15 Homework: The Seven Plagues. – Revelation 15

- Read Revelation 14. Also read pages 134-137 of the Devotionary™ study on Revelation.

This is a much shorter chapter, but it is far from sparse in terms of content. In the first verse John sees a great sign revealing seven angels, each carrying seven bowls of judgment. What do you think it means when it says they are “the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished”?

In verse two, John sees a sea of glass. Go back and read what he saw in Revelation 4:1-8. Based on this earlier vision, what do you think John seeing in Revelation 15 and why is this significant?

- Write down any similarities you find between the songs found in Revelation 4 and the one recorded in Revelation 15.

Now compare verse 5 with verse 19 of Revelation 11. What do you think is the significance of heaven being opened and John being allowed to see what he does?

- In verse 5, there seems to be a contradiction between the way the angels are dressed and the content of the bowls they are carrying. Write down anything you see as contradictory or out of place.

Verses 7-8 reveal the wrath of God found in the form of the plagues contained in the seven bowls. What do you think is significant by the phrase, “the full wrath of God”?

Why is it important that the smoke describe in verse 8 represents the glory and power of God? What do these two things tells us about God?
