

WEEK 15: The Seven Plagues Revelation 15

• **Last week**

- John was given a preview of coming events
- He sees the Lamb and the 144,000 on Mt. Zion
- Jesus has returned to earth
- The final judgment is about to begin
- The 144,000 heard a “new song”
- An angel appeared proclaiming an eternal gospel
- A second angel proclaimed the fall of Babylon
- A third angel proclaimed the fate of those who worship the Antichrist
- God’s final judgment the world has come
- The reaping of the harvest can begin

• **The Grim Reaper** – Revelation 14:14-16

- John is given a vision of the “son of man”
 - This was Jesus’ favorite designation of Himself
 - It speaks of His humanity
 - Jesus alone was worthy to open the seals of the scroll
- “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*
- He has the right to judge those who have rejected His offer
 - The last portion of this chapter reveals Him reaping humanity
- The son of man is given a command to reap
 - “You reap what you sow”
 - The world has sowed sin in the form of rebellion against God
 - And now it is time to reap the harvest of their efforts

For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. – Hosea 8:7 ESV

I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. – Isaiah 13:11 ESV

On that day the Lord will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. – Isaiah 24:21 ESV

- The harvest of the earth is “fully ripe”
 - o This isn’t the harvest Jesus talked about

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” – Matthew 9:36-38 ESV

- o “fully ripe” – **xērainō** – withered, dried up
 - The earth’s inhabitants are beyond use
 - Like grapes that have withered on the vine
 - They are unredeemable
 - Jesus spoke of this day

*The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and **burned with fire**, so will it be at the end of the age. – Matthew 13:39-40 ESV*

- **Another angel** – Revelation 14:18
 - John sees another angel coming out of the heavenly temple
 - He has a sickle as well
 - He too, is given an order to reap
 - And he is told that the grapes are “ripe”
 - o This is a different word than before
 - o **akmazō** – fully ripe, having come to maturity
 - o They are bursting with wickedness
 - o The harvest can be delayed no longer

- **The winepress of the wrath of God**

- The harvested grapes are thrown into God’s winepress
- But rather than grape juice, there is blood
 - ...*blood flowed from the winepress as high as a horse’s bridle...* – Revelation 14:20 ESV
- o A premonition of the coming battle of Armageddon
- o A battle between the armies of the world and Christ Himself

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by

which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh. – Revelation 19:20-21 ESV

- **A great and amazing sign**

- John sees another sign in heaven

- There are seven angels carrying seven plagues
- These are not diseases, but literally, “blows”
- The seven bowl judgments are about to be poured out on the earth
- John’s vision moves back in time, just before Christ’s return
- It shifts from earth back to heaven
- We are picking up where chapter 11 ended

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet... – Revelation 11:15

- These are the last of the judgments
- They signify the end of God’s wrath against the world
- But God has saved the worst for last
- Everyone fears the end of the world
 - Global warming Environmental destruction
 - Nuclear war A global pandemic
 - Terrorism Economic collapse
- But the world doesn’t fear the wrath of God

...for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in his faithfulness. – Psalm 96:13 ESV

He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. – Psalm 110:6 ESV

I will gather all the nations ... And I will enter into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel. – Joel 3:2 ESV

- The conquerors

- John sees a group of people standing before a sea of glass
- This is reminiscent of chapter 4
- This is all taking place before the throne of God in heaven

...and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal... – Revelation 4:6 ESV

- John sees saints standing before God’s throne
- They are describe as “those who have conquered”

nikaō – overcomers, victorious ones

- Reminiscent of Jesus' messages to the seven churches
- Each of them was challenged to overcome

Ephesus – *To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. – 2:6*

Smyrna – *The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death. – 2:11*

Pergamum – *To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it. – 2:17*

Thyatira – *The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations. – 2:26*

Sardis – *The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. – 3:5*

Philadelphia – *The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. – 3:12*

Laodicea – *The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. – 3:21*

- The group John sees have conquered the beast
- They represent all those who refused the mark of the beast and were redeemed
- They are Tribulation martyrs standing before God's throne

*I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and **those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands.** They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. – Revelation 20:4 ESV*

- The Song of Moses
 - This is a song of victory and deliverance
 - It ties back into Exodus 15
 - It is a song celebrating God's deliverance

I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously – vs 1

Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously – vs 21

- The closing of the Holy of Holies in heaven
 - The judgments will come from God's throne in the Holy of Holies

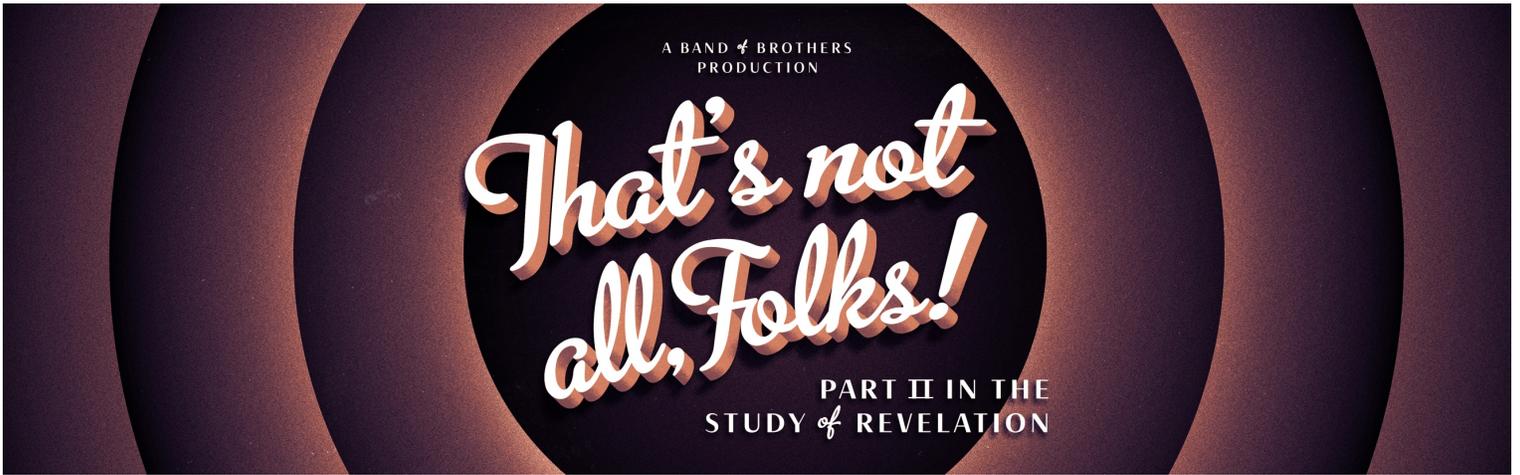
- But once they are poured out, the Holy of Holies will be closed
- Remember how chapter 11 ended:

*Then **God's temple in heaven was opened**, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail. – Revelation 11:19 ESV*

- The door to the temple is now closed
- No more access into God's presence – judgment has come

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why is it so important that we listen to what Jesus said and reap now? What are the consequences for all those who are lost if we fail to reap the harvest today?
- Read 1 John 4:2-4. In what ways are we to conquer the spirit of the Antichrist that is alive and well today? What would that look like in your life?
- Moses sang, "I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously." Take a few minutes to share with one another your own song reflecting a triumph of God in your life.



Week 16 Homework: The Seven Bowls. – Revelation 16

- Read Revelation 16. Also read pages 138-147-137 of the Devotionary™ study on Revelation.
- As you read John’s description of the pouring out of the seven bowls of God’s wrath, write down in your own words which each of them contained and why you think is the significance behind each one.

Bowl 1

Bowl 2

Bowl 3

Bowl 4

Bowl 5

Bowl 6

Bowl 7

- Read John 19:28-30 and compare it with verse 17 of Revelation 16. What significance do you see in the statement, “It is done” and the last statement of Jesus on the cross: “It is finished”?

- Look at verses 18-20. Describe what John sees. What jumps out at you in what John describes?

Now read 2 Peter 3:7-13. What does Peter say will happen to the earth in “the day of the Lord”?

How can you apply what Peter says in verses 11-12 to your own life? What would that look like on a daily basis?
