

THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED

Text: Revelation 14.1–13

Theme: All who patiently endure by trusting Jesus will be saved from God's wrathful judgment

Introduction — Many literary depictions of Hell

- in Virgil's Aeneid, hell and the underworld are filled with the unrepentant
 - *From hence are heard the groans of ghosts, the pains,
Of sounding lashes and of dragging chains*
- John Milton's classic, Paradise Lost, is...
 - *A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames,
No light; but rather darkness visible,
Served only to discover sights of woe...*
- one of the most famous, however, is Dante's Inferno & its nine circles of Hell
- Circle #1 is Limbo filled with the unbaptized and virtuous pagans; those who never knew Christ
- Circle #2 is Lust, quite self-explanatory, filled with those who could not control theirs
- third Circle is Gluttony, populated with the overindulgent ones
- Greed is the fourth circle, filled with ordinary folk who hoarded or squandered their money
- Circle #5 is Anger, self-explanatory as well
- next is Heresy, which is for all those who utterly reject religious or political norms
- then comes Violence in the seventh circle, which actually has three rings
- in the outer ring are violent criminals, being shot with arrows for eternity
- the middle ring are those who commit violence against themselves
- and the inner ring is made up of blasphemers, violence against God and nature
- #8 is Fraud: these willingly commit fraud and falsehoods; seducers, flatterers, false prophets
- finally Circle #9 is Treachery; here Satan himself resides

Hell will be an awful place, worse than any of these fictional depictions

- those who believe in Jesus Christ will be saved from God's awful wrath there for eternity
- those who patiently endure, who persevere in faith to the end, will be saved

Before we look at 14.1–13, let's remember why John is doing what he's doing

- think of a picture on your wall
- middle of picture is Christ the King; that's Revelation 11.15–19; center of it all
- on either side of that, the first layer of matting: church persecuted thru church age
- second mat around that: John, the true prophet from 10.1–11 on one side
- false prophet, second beast, 13.11–18 on the other side
- but let's put some other pictures alongside this larger one on your wall
- on either side of main picture are two matching, smaller pictures
- these are the sealed 144,000: all the redeemed saints of God thru ages: ch. 7, and here, ch. 14
- but right alongside those are two more, places very close to the saints' picture
- these are the trumpet plagues, Rev 7, 8, 9
- and on other side, seven bowls of God's wrath, Rev 14, 15–16

But here we are, 14.1–13, given to see those who endure and are redeemed

- this text motivates us toward patient endurance
- and it warns those who don't

Let's give a listen to these saints as...

I. THEY SANG A NEW SONG, v. 1-5

- remember to whom John is writing: churches that are struggling
- and he's already told these churches that Satan is going to make war against them
- he will use powerful means, subtle and deceptive means
- but God gives John this vision—note how many times you see: “I saw, looked, beheld”
- God gives John this message to make sure they know: Satan does NOT get last word
- assurance comes here, great encouragement comes here, motivation to endure comes here

1. What did John see?

- v. 1 tells us what John saw
- v. 2 tells us what he heard
- v. 3 tells us what they were doing
- and v. 4-5 tells us what kind of people these are
- everything here is meant to motivate us, the reader, to endure patiently for Christ's coming
- those, like seven churches, and us, can see those who have already overcome
- they already possess the promises
- they are in presence of Conquering King on Mt Zion
- remember now, this scene is in heaven, so it is a spiritual reference
- not literal Mt Zion outside Jerusalem; King reigns from heaven on high
- and look who is with this Conquering King: those who have His name, His seal upon them
- you may recall what Jesus told suffering church in Philadelphia
- *The one who conquers...I will write on him the name of my God...my own new name.*
- the redeemed will altogether stand with Jesus
- this is what we look forward to, is it not?
- death on this earth is not the end; this is what awaits each of you who is in Christ

2. What did John hear?

- voice from heaven like roar of many waters...
- Rev 1:15: we've heard this voice already, haven't we?
- loud, overpowering voice, so that redeemed no longer seem outnumbered and weak
- now they roar, sounding just like Jesus, their King and Savior
- now just some cacophony of noise either: sound of harpists upon their harps
- beautiful symphony of sound, the music of salvation, justification, sanctification, glorification
- and v. 3: singing a new song
- we sing a lot of new songs here at Albion; sometimes we like them; others times no so much
- this new song we just might sing forever and ever
- and only ones who can learn it: the redeemed of God
- if you want to know the lyrics, look back at Rev 5:9
- *And they sang a new song, saying, "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,*
- only those who put faith in Jesus will sing this song
- are you already humming the tune of the redeemed?
- do you trust Jesus? Cling to Him for all your life and eternal future?

3. What kind of people are these redeemed singers?

- not defiled themselves with women; virgins
- what does this mean?
- it is not that they never married or ever committed sexual sin outside of marriage

- think back to Old Testament book of Deuteronomy
- people told that fighting men, soldiers must be ceremonially clean before battle
- among many things, this meant, if married, you didn't have sexual relations with wife
- you remained pure
- think back to when David & his soldiers fleeing from King Saul
- it's the Lord's Day, they're hungry, going to eat the show bread from tabernacle
- priest asks them if they are clean spiritually
- David says, "Of course we are; we're soldiers"
- these singers, the redeemed, are pure, they have been cleansed by blood of Lamb
- they remained faithful, not soiling themselves with love of world & things of world
- they, because making up part of bride of Christ, are pure, without blemish
- they have followed Christ, no matter where their Savior has led them
- they did not count their lives as more precious than Jesus; even dying for Jesus
- no lie is found and their mouths are also blameless
- the redeemed love the truth, speak the truth, hold up the truth, and sing the truth
- in midst of all the lies the second beast/false prophet tells them, they hold to truth
- are you blameless? Doesn't mean you're perfect here on earth
- but do you strive for God's truth, live for that truth, take in that truth thru Word of God?
- if you do so, you will be singing before Jesus someday
- you will endure to the end and sing this song of the redeemed
- you will be saved from God's awful wrath and judgment

John is given to see some more and it makes me ask...

II. ARE THE ANGEL'S CALLING YOUR NAME? V. 6-11

- again, John writes: "Then I saw..."
- seven times during this interlude before the bowls are poured out, John sees things
- now he sees three angels, each with a specific proclamation to make
- the first proclaims the gospel to the world
- the second announces the great judgment upon this world's evil system and culture
- the third angel warns of the everlasting torment that awaits those who reject God's Christ

1. The first angel's gospel

- this gospel isn't something temporary; it is an eternal gospel
- this message is always the same, always true, and always good news
- we sing "Tell me the old, old story" and it is indeed: from before foundation of world
- but it is also new: to those who have never heard it
- this who dwell on earth, nation, tribe, language, people: new truth to them
- not just true for you, but not for them
- this message is the only truth about the only way to the only life: Jesus Christ
- not just for America or the Western world: no, for the entire world
- no nation, no tribe, no language group, no people group gets their own version of truth
- no, it is only the One true God's truth: there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved
- Muslims don't have some other way to get there
- Hindus in India do not have some other path to get to God
- all paths do NOT lead to God; only one does; all others lead to destruction, as we'll see
- do you see now why this gospel is so special, so amazing?
- if you know this gospel, you know everlasting good news
- if you know this gospel, you know the weight of responsibility to share it as well

- oh, that we as a church would tell it to our family members, relatives, neighbors
- that we would invite friends, co-workers to come here to hear it proclaimed each Sunday
- that you students would bring your schoolmates with you to Youth Group to hear gospel
- may the Lord give us lives that proclaim this eternal gospel in everything we do and say

2. The second angel's announcement

- v. 8
- the redeemed are pure, chaste, clean
- these to whom this angel speaks have sullied themselves with all forms of impurity
- sexual impurity and immorality are what characterizes those who live in Babylon
- they follow the beast and his false prophet
- the redeemed give unmixed devotion to Jesus alone
- Babylon, as we'll see ch. 17 & 18, is the symbol of the evil world's way of thinking & living
- they reject God, they live as they please, they think no one tells them how to live
- but they are mistaken: the beast tells them and the second beast deceives them
- this world's culture will be called the great prostitute in ch 17
- spiritual adultery is the trademark here
- this angel foretells of the great fall of this world's thinking to come in 17 & 18
- what this tells us is that the fall of this old world is absolutely certain
- don't believe the lies, don't live by lies
- what lies does Babylon hold to?
- the world tells us that homosexuality is normal: "God made me this way" they say
- it puts forth the lie that being a spiritual person is kinder than being a biblical Christian
- for decades, it has sold us the lie that feminism is good for the world AND the church
- the most prominent lie now is that transgenderism is normal
- and, it tries to fool us into thinking that modesty is an outdated burden that serves male dominance and holds women back
- don't give an ear to this second beast's great deceptions
- instead, do you live as if Babylon is fallen?
- if you seek to be a friend with this world, you have been deceived
- you've bought into the lies
- this angel's announcement is a warning call to repentance
- flee Babylon: avoid giving your mind over to her wicked lies
- you cannot combine the pleasures of God and of this world together
- they do not mix, never will, and one will destroy the other

3. The third angel's grave warning

- this message is all about the punishment that awaits the unredeemed
- those who give themselves over to the beast's system of life are doomed
- true, worshiping the beast will keep Satan from persecuting you
- taking the mark of this beast will allow to have a normal, successful life in those days
- it may seem like your life is better than if you follow Jesus
- but it is a dangerous scam for these earth dwellers will drink deep of God's fury and wrath
- God will not hide the display of His judgment to come
- He will pour it out like the wine the world loves to drink, but they won't love this drink
- v. 11 tells us this torment will never end
- it will be everlasting conscious punishment
- imagine it: no rest from torture and torment
- no peace from wrath and judgment

- this punishment from God's justice and holy righteousness will never grow weary
- the infinite crime of despising God's glory calls for infinite punishment
- Hell isn't just about torment; it is about the majesty and glorious worth of Almighty God
- if you know what it means for God to be God, then you understand why Hell is this way
- are you ready to face eternity?
- have you cried out to God for mercy and salvation thru Christ Jesus?
- Jesus drank the whole cup of God's wrath, the fullness of God's justice against sin
- when you come to Jesus, that wrath is satisfied and no longer upon you...ever

Lastly, John gives a call and a promise of...

III. GRACE TO THOSE WHO PATIENTLY ENDURE

- Satan's deceptions are powerful, no doubt about that
- his beast may hold great power over the world
- the false prophet beast has such a soothing voice so as to deceive you
- but all they can do is mimic God and His grace in Christ Jesus
- all they can do is bring death and torment
- while it may not seem a pleasant thought that this ancient dragon wages war against us
- losing your life in this way will in no way compare to those who reject & compromise

1. The call to endure

- this call tells you and me that no matter how bad it gets for us as Christians...
- the reward of remaining faithful to Jesus will outweigh any suffering we endure
- remember Paul's perspective on this?
- *2 Corinthians 4:17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,*
- Jesus will reward His followers whom He has sealed
- they will sing His eternal praises
- and Jesus will punish forever those who reject Him
- for an unbeliever, Jesus' judgment will be far worse than any of Satan's attacks against us
- all that we see here in these thirteen verses are a call to patient endurance
- they are a motivation to holy living right now

2. Motivation for godly living

- do you sometimes need motivation to obey God's Word?
- do you find yourselves longing for encouragement to remain faithful?
- then read these verses, especially 14.1–5
- one writer puts it this way:
- *brand your brain with images of the redemption of the faithful & punishment of the wicked*
- when you face temptations to live like those in this world, pray
- ask God to bring images of Babylon and the wine of His wrath to mind
- when lust of this world rises up, see your Savior upon cross enduring God's wrath for you
- hate that sin more than you love your life
- think of how it will be for all the citizens of this Babylon on the day of the Lord
- thinking about just being friendly with the people & stuff of this world?
- be reminded of the torment that never rests, never grows weary, never ceases
- then think of the love of God shown to you in Christ Jesus
- start singing the song of the redeemed

Conclusion – Suffering will only last a short time

- the reward that awaits you who are in Christ is eternal
- obeying God in this life may get you marginalized
- it might get you arrested and imprisoned
- who knows, if God wills it, it may cost you your life
- but you will be shouting with that roar of many waters and loud thunder
- Jesus is King!
- God is Sovereign over all
- and His child and forever I am