

REVELATION – SERMON 46

JESUS SHALL REIGN

Revelation 11:14-19

INTRODUCTION

- There are very few certainties in this life
- But there is one future event that we can be 100% certain will take place, and that is the return and reign of Jesus Christ
- The seventh trumpet pronounces and initiates the consummation of God's entire redemptive plan (cf. 10:7)
- According to v.14, the second woe (sixth trumpet) has just passed, and the third woe (seventh trumpet) comes quickly (cf. 8:13)
- The seventh and final trumpet pronounces and initiates many events: the seven vials of God's wrath, Mystery Babylon's fall, the battle of Armageddon, etc
- And as monumental as these events are, there is one event that takes pre-eminence over every other: the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and his reign
- This is one of the major themes in the book of the Revelation
- The believer "looks for and hastens unto" this event (2 Peter 3:12)

- The three words, “Jesus Shall Reign”, serve as the answer to every problem the believer will ever face
- Just as the seventh seal contained the seven trumpets, so the seventh trumpet contains the seven vials
- However, the vial judgments are not poured out until chapter 16
- The intervening chapters (12-15) contain information pertaining to the judgments of the seventh trumpet
- What we have here in these closing verses of chapter 11 is a prolepsis of Christ’s return, judgment and eternal reign.
- Note that in the chronology of the book of Revelation, Christ does not return to earth and establish his kingdom until chapter 19, but it is announced at this point showing the absolute certainty of it coming to pass.

I. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE COMING SOVEREIGN (15)

A. The seventh trumpet

1. The previous six trumpets pronounced God’s wrath
2. This trumpet too pronounces wrath, but also heralds the arrival of the King (cf. 1 Kings 1:39)
3. It should not be confused with the “last trump” of 1 Corinthians 15:52
 - a. The trumpet at the rapture is called the “last trump” in the sense of the end certain time period, rather than the final of a series

- b. It will be a trumpet of *summoning* rather than of *judgment*
- c. It is also called “the trump of God”, again distinguishing it from the seventh trumpet (1 Thessalonians 4:16)
- d. The seventh trumpet is never called the “last”, and there is yet another trumpet that will follow it at the very end of the tribulation when Christ appears in glory (Matthew 24:31)

B. Great voices in heaven

- 1. These voices are not identified, but may include the voices of angels, saints, “great multitudes”, and God himself (14:2,6-7; 18:1-2; 16:1; 18:4; 19:1-2)

C. The joyous announcement

- 1. The devil, who is the prince (John 12:31) and god (2 Corinthians 4:4) of this world, presently has power over the kingdoms of this world (Matthew 4:8-9)
- 2. The prophet Daniel wrote of Christ’s kingdom that would “break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms” (Daniel 2:44-45)
 - a. Christ’s kingdom is represented by a stone out of the mountain “without hands”, refuting Post-millennialism which teaches that the church will build the kingdom prior to Christ’s return
- 3. The kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ

- a. "Lord" refers to God the Father
 - b. "Christ" (Greek) is the same as "Messiah" (Hebrew) and means "anointed"
 - c. Jesus is God's Christ, meaning he is anointed and consecrated to his great redemptive work as Prophet, Priest, and King of his people (Psalm 2:2; Acts 4:26; Revelation 12:10)
 - d. This shows to us something of the relationship between the Father and Son; just as the Father created the world *by* the Son (Ephesians 3:9; Hebrews 1:2), so he will judge and rule the world *by* the Son (Acts 17:31)
4. Christ shall reign for ever and ever
- a. This does not distinguish between Christ's millennial reign (Revelation 20:4), and his eternal reign (Psalm 145:13; 146:10; Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 7:13-14; Micah 4:7; Luke 1:33)
 - b. At the conclusion of his 1000 year earthly reign, Christ will "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father", that "God may be all in all", then will commence Christ's everlasting kingdom in which all things celestial, terrestrial and infernal will be subject unto him (1 Corinthians 15:24-28)

II. THE PRAISE OF CHRIST'S SAINTS (16-18)

A. The four and twenty elders

1. These elders are representative of glorified believers after the rapture (4:4)
2. These elders repeatedly leave their thrones to fall down on their faces and worship God (4:10; 5:8,14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4)
3. While there is rebellion against God on earth, there is worship of God in heaven

B. The song of the elders

1. A song of thanksgiving (cf. Hebrews 13:15)
2. God is worshipped as almighty and eternal
 - a. "Almighty" is used 9 times in the New Testament, and 8 of those are found in Revelation
 - b. Note that "and art to come" is omitted from modern versions (cf. 1:4,8; 16:5)
3. He is worshipped for his great power and reign
4. He is worshipped for his judgments and rewards
 - a. Note that the themes of our songs should not only include God's grace and mercy, but his wrath and judgment
 - b. The nations rage in anger against the Lord
 - c. This is man's ungrateful rebellion towards God's continual blessings and provisions (Acts 14:17)

- d. Psalm 2 describes the rage of the heathen against God and Christ, and the Lord's wrath upon them in response
- e. God will judge and destroy them
- f. As in the days of Noah, man is destroying (corrupting) the earth with wickedness (Genesis 6)
- g. The judgment of the dead (Hebrews 9:27), both for reward and judgment, does not refer to one particular time, but to a series of resurrections and judgments
 - i. The Rapture and the Judgment Seat of Christ
 - ii. The resurrection of the Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints at the Second Advent (Revelation 20:4,6)
 - iii. The resurrection of the wicked dead and the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the millennium (Revelation 20:11-15)

III. THE PROSPECT OF THE CELESTIAL SANCTUARY (19)

A. The heavenly temple

1. This chapter opens with the temple in Jerusalem, and closes with the temple in heaven
2. The earthly tabernacle/temple was patterned after this "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2-5 9:11,23-24)

B. The temple opened

1. In light of the previous verses, this vision may also be proleptic, anticipating the coming kingdom when believers will enjoy perfect communion with God (cf. 21:3)
2. Another view is that this verse is more closely linked to chapter 12, and the opening of the temple is the prelude to the vision about to be presented to John
3. More generally, the opened temple indicates the access to God enjoyed by every believer through Christ, the mediator and forerunner (Matthew 27:51; Hebrews 6:20)

C. The ark of his testament

1. In the Old Testament, the ark was given different names which each revealed something its nature
 - a. The ark of the covenant (Numbers 10:33)
 - b. The ark of the testimony (Exodus 25:22)
 - c. The ark of God (1 Samuel 3:3)
 - d. The ark of thy strength (Psalm 132:8)
 - e. The holy ark (2 Chronicles 35:3)
2. Note that this is not the ark that was once in the earthly temple, as some believe, but its heavenly counterpart

3. The ark is a representation on the one hand of God's holy law that judges and condemns sinful man
 4. But it is also a reminder of the God who keeps his covenants, and shows mercy to those whom he loves
- D. Lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail
1. These signs are a foreboding of the judgments yet to come upon the earth (cf. 8:5)
 2. Similar manifestations appeared when God's presence descended on Sinai at the giving of the law (Exodus 19:16; 20:18)

CONCLUSION

1. The return of Jesus Christ is the joy and hope of all believers
2. The constant thought of his coming should thrill our hearts and motivate us to duty
3. To prepare for his coming we must ensure we are reconciled to God (Psalm 2:10-12)
4. To prepare for his coming we must purify ourselves (1 John 3:3)
5. To prepare for his coming we must labour diligently to be rewarded on that day (Matthew 24:45-46; Mark 9:41; 1 Corinthians 3:8)