

**The Consummation of the Kingdom**  
(Sermon 19 – Rev. 11:15-19)  
2.23.25

Please turn with me to Revelation 11.

For a child, there are six words that strike fear more than any other. “Wait till your father gets home.”

I’ll admit, growing up I heard those words more than a few times. If I had disobeyed my mother, if I got in trouble at school, those words were the last thing I wanted to hear from my mother.

But there was one instance where that was completely different. We had been planning a trip to Disney World. And I knew when my dad got off work, that’s when we were leaving for vacation. And as an impatient boy, I would bug my mother and ask when we’re leaving. She replied, “Wait till your father gets home.” In that case, those were the best words to hear.

It’s the same for those who have trusted in Christ. To read something like the Book of Revelation, yes there are fearful and awful things. But the constant reminder is that the Lord is coming again.

And when He does, while it will be the worst thing for those who have rejected Christ, it will be the best thing for all who follow Jesus.

Today our focus lands at the end of ch. 11, where the final trumpet of God’s judgment is about to sound.

Let’s read Revelation 11:15-19, then we’ll pray and ask for God’s help...

***[15] Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” [16] And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, [17] saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. [18] The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and***

*saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”*

*[19] 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.*

*(Pray)*

**PROP: One of the greatest comforts in this life is to reflect on the joys of the life to come.**

I read a report recently that said the levels of stress for Americans has reached an all-time high. The article was even called **“Americans just broke the psychologists stress record.”** Some of the sources of that stress they pointed to were the economy, jobs, politics, mental health, and fear of the future.

And Christians are not immune to this. We can all be tempted. We all face times of fear, of doubt, of frustration, of worry, of anxiety.

But there’s a bigger question: Not, “How can I get away from anything causing me stress,” because you’ll never be able to do that in a fallen world. Instead, the real question is, “What or who am I trusting in?” “Where is my hope rooted?”

Worry is an indicator that I’m trusting in something that cannot deliver. I’m hoping in something that will fail. Whatever I’m stressed about is a gauge that points to what I’m trusting in: trusting in my own strength or my ability or my wisdom.

At its core, worry is ultimately saying one of two things: “I don’t believe God is powerful enough” or “I don’t believe God is good enough.” Now that’s not to condemn you if you’re stressed this morning. But it’s meant to help us remember what is true, so that our hearts will be encouraged to trust in Christ afresh, especially in the areas where we struggle with worry or anxiety.

And that’s one of the reasons God put these verses we just read in His Word. Now, you might say, “What does my stress and worry have to do with the Book of Revelation?” Everything. It has everything to do with this Book.

Remember, the Apostle John was writing to 7 persecuted churches, some in their congregations even being killed for their faith. So, they most assuredly had times of worry, of fear, of anxiety. Not so much about their bills or if their kids would get into that school, or if they would get that promotion. They didn't know if they would be alive tomorrow, if their Christian family or friends would live to see another day.

So they needed encouragement – the kind of encouragement that is rooted in somewhere other than this world, and in someone other than themselves. They needed to be reminded of an unshakable hope found only in the person of Jesus Christ.

That's why the Bible is not some collection of disconnected stories. There is one story line – and that is God's redemption of man through Jesus Christ. We see that story line play out in four big categories:

**-Creation** - God powerfully, lovingly created all things. And He made man different from all creation. God made man in God's own image and likeness, for us to have perfect fellowship with our Creator.

**-Fall** – Instead of walking in obedience to God, man chose sin instead. Because of this, man “fell”. Adam's sin became our sin – we are born into it, and add to it with our own sin and rejection of God, no longer desiring God or the things of God.

**-Redemption** - Since man could not rescue himself, He needed a Rescuer. So God the Father sent God the Son – Jesus Christ – to be our Redeemer, in His perfect life, His sacrificial death, and His glorious resurrection - that through faith in Christ alone, we are redeemed and reconciled to God.

Now, we usually stop there. But that's not the end. The storyline of the Bible does not end with man being saved. It ends with...

**-Consummation** – The moment of fulfillment when all of the OT, all of the NT, and all of God's plan of redemptive history comes to pass. The time when Christ's kingdom is fully realized, with the Lord Jesus ruling and reigning over all creation, and all creation finding perfect rest and peace and joy in Him forever.

It's this consummation that's in view in our text today, broken down into two sections: the consummation announced, and the consummation celebrated. First...

## **1. The Consummation Announced**

Remember, leading up to our text today, John and the heavenly hosts were waiting for the 7<sup>th</sup> and final trumpet blast. And since each time a seal is broken or a trumpet is blown, the judgment unleashed is worse than the last. So they were all likely anticipating something horrible and wonderful at the same time. V. 15 again...

***[15] Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."***

Comparing this to the pause between the seals in ch. 7, there was a vision of heaven, and all of God's redeemed singing "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the lamb!" They were saying, "It's all because of you Jesus! We are saved all because of you!"

And here in v. 15, we see a similar praise, but it goes a little further. Like the one before, it is like an announcement, proclaimed with loud voices and shouts in heaven. Like the one before, it is focused on Jesus. But unlike the one before, this heavenly praise is not limited only to the salvation of man, but of the fullness of Christ's kingdom coming to pass.

-AND notice from John's perspective that it's not pointing forward to something in the future. The wording is past tense. It has already happened. *"The kingdom of the world **has become** the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign [or He shall continue to reign] forever and ever."*

Something that has yet to happen in the future is stated as if it has already happened, because when God promises something, it's as good as done.

God is the only one who can refer to His future promises in the past tense, knowing the fulfillment of what He's promised is never a question of "if", but "when". It is never "maybe" – it's for sure. Not almost or halfway, but completely done. That means all of God's future promises for His people are as good as done.

Now, let's back up and ask, what does this announcement mean?

- ***"The kingdom of the world"*** – that's everything aligned with fallen creation, every person who has rejected Christ, every man-made power

allied against Christ and His Church, every demonic power and satanic force that has opposed God and His people from the beginning. Every sin and every unrepentant sinner are removed and destroyed.

-But the focus is not only on what is destroyed. The focus is on what takes its place. The kingdom of the world “becomes” or is replaced by “the kingdom of our Lord” – referring to God the Father, “and of his Christ”, identifying Jesus as the Messiah King, the Savior of sinners and the Ruler over all, who is given all authority and power by God Almighty.

When we talk of the kingdom of God, the simplest definition is “anywhere God’s rule is enacted”. Wherever God rules, that’s the kingdom of God.

So, in that sense, we can see aspects of the kingdom of God right now – how He saves sinners, how He answers prayers, how He performs miracles, how the Holy Spirit is with us.

But we know that what we see right now is not the fullness of God’s kingdom. In that way, it is “already”, but “not yet”. The fullness of God’s rule has not yet come to pass. We still live in a fallen world. There is still sin and disease and death – things that will all be done away with when Christ’s kingdom is fully realized. That’s what’s being communicated here.

Of all the visions in Revelation, of all the things we can’t get our heads around and imagine, this has to be at the top. That final, wonderful moment has come, that moment:

- all of creation has longed for since Adam and Eve sinned,
- the moment all the prophets pointed toward,
- the moment every one of God’s people have sung about and prayed for and waited for and looked forward to,
- the very reason Jesus came to earth:
  - leaving the glories of heaven to become a baby in Mary’s womb
  - to be born into a fallen, sinful, wicked world
  - to face temptations, to heal sickness and raise the dead
  - to teach about the kingdom of God through parables and mysteries
  - to spend 3.5 years with 12 disciples, one who betrayed him, and the rest who never seemed to get it, who never seemed to understand until the end,
  - that Jesus came and lived a life of perfect obedience to His Father since we did not
  - to endure great suffering and death on the cross for our sin

- to defeat death itself by rising on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day
- who spent 40 days on the earth in a resurrected body before finally ascending to the Father in front of 500 eyewitnesses
- who, having taken His rightful place on the throne at the right hand of God the Father, sent the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, to His Church on earth
- that we would continue to do His work, that we would continue to preach His message of forgiveness of sin and reconciling to God
- that every encouragement to endure, every promise that God would keep us through our trials, and that God would reward us in the end....

**All of that** has culminated in this moment. What everyone has been waiting on and longing for is finally here. The wickedness of the fallen world has been destroyed and replaced with the perfect, powerful, eternal reign of Jesus Christ – forever and ever! *The consummation has come. All of this has finally come to pass.*

***“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”***

That is the central statement of the entire chapter. And, it is the final point of the Book of Revelation. And it is the fulfillment of everything else in the Bible. The completion of all things, of all history, of all redemption.

Nothing else is left to be done. God is faithful, and fulfills all things for His glory and for the good of His people, just like He promised.

Now, you might say, “But this can’t be the end of Revelation. We’re only halfway through the Book!”

This placement of the consummation here is another reminder that these visions and events in Revelation are not in chronological order. And more than that, it’s another reminder of God’s kindness and mercy, that in the midst of great judgment, just before we get into the coming chapters of the beast and demonic forces and wars, God stops and flashes forward, to remind us of the glories of His kingdom that await all who trust in His Son.

Because He knows, nothing encourages us more in our present circumstances than to be reminded of the future glory to come. Nothing charges our spiritual batteries more now, than to be reminded of the wonderful things He has in store.

So, the consummation Christ's kingdom is announced. But as you can see, this is more than just an announcement. This is also something to be celebrated. And that's what we see next in heaven...

## **2. The Consummation Celebrated**

***[16] And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, [17] saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign."***

Now we can stop there and celebrate with them. We should. When we see other people praise God, whether in the Bible, or in our lives, we should join them and give God praise as well.

Isn't it amazing how God can use other people's praise to teach us? Someone gives a testimony of what the Lord did in their lives. You didn't go through it, you didn't feel the pain, but you can join in the praise! Hearing someone else tell of God's goodness to them reminds me how good God has been to me.

And notice as these 24 elders praise God for the culmination of His kingdom, they refer to Him as "Lord God Almighty, who is and who was".

Do you notice anything missing? Let me spark your memory...

-Rev. 1:4 – "who is and who was and who is to come,"

-Rev. 1:8 – "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty"

-Rev. 4:8 – "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come"

This celebration of the 24 elders left off "who is to come". Why? Because He's already come! The one who "is to come" is already there! No longer are they awaiting His arrival. No longer are they waiting for that One Day. It has come. John is witnessing the future consummation of Christ's kingdom, but in that moment of the vision, it is present, it is now to John. There is no more "what is to come". Everything just is. The full culmination of God, of the Great "I AM", and the full realization of His kingdom.

I don't know about you, but I'm ready for the "is"! Not just the "was", not just the "will be", but the "is" of Christ's kingdom. What a glorious day that will be when we won't have to look to the future, to wait for something else

to happen, to endure a little longer, but there will be a day when right now is all there is.

- All the hurts of the past are healed.
- All the questions of the future are all answered.
- All the promises fulfilled.
- And all that will remain is the eternal “right now” of the righteous rule of our Sovereign King, to be in the presence of our Lord God forever.

We’re going to need eternity to celebrate, because that’s how long it will take to give Jesus the praise He deserves!

The end of v. 17 again, “...***for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.***” What the world sees as the end is really the beginning. What is the end for sinful man and *his* kingdom is just the beginning of God’s Kingdom.

These elders continue their song...

***[18] “The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”***

Remember, the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet has sounded. The final and most intense judgment of God has been unleashed. So what we see in v. 18 is the reality of God’s full wrath poured out.

There is nothing worse for the unbeliever than to have to face the final judgment for his own sin. No more chances to repent, no more opportunity to trust in Christ. Rejecting Christ means no other remedy, no redemption for your sin. That’s worse than earthquakes or hail or war or famine or anything that came before – because you are not only facing temporary death, now you are facing eternal punishment.

From sinful man’s perspective, this is awful. But from the perspective of heaven, even this is worth celebrating – because it’s God’s righteous justice coming to pass, every wrong being made right, just as He promised.

So, that’s what these heavenly beings are doing – praising God for His faithfulness and holiness. And they do this by comparing the sinful,



uncontrolled raging of the nations against God, with God's controlled, holy, righteous wrath on the wicked, and his rewarding of the faithful.

That's the group they identify next – ***“the prophets, saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great”*** meaning everyone in history – the famous and the infamous, the well-known and the unknown, all who have trusted in Christ and have been redeemed by His blood, we are all welcomed into His kingdom forever.

And v. 18 ends assuring us that at the Consummation, ***“the destroyers of the earth will be destroyed”***. Meaning, those who have rebelled against God, those who have rejected Christ and opposed His Church, they will meet their end.

No more mixing of the wheat and tares, of the sheep and goats. Now, all of humanity will be clearly seen for who we are, and more accurately, *whose* we are: Those who follow Christ, and those who don't. And for those who have trusted in Christ, we have much to celebrate, for all eternity.

***[19] 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.***

As a result of this celebration and praise in heaven, John is now shown what is called “God's temple in heaven”. (Later at the end of the Book, John sees no temple, but for now, God shows him one.)

Also, remember in the first part of ch. 11, we saw the measuring of the temple, which is a metaphor for God's people, the Church.

God no longer dwells in a tent, or a tabernacle, like in the OT. Because of Christ, all of the Law has been fulfilled, all of the animal sacrifices have ended, and the covenant we have with God is the New Covenant in Christ's blood.

Regarding the temple God is showing John here, notice first, that it was “opened”. Just as the scroll, the symbol of God's redemptive will, has been opened by Jesus, we see now the temple of God being “opened”.

Remember back in the OT, inside the physical temple were two areas – ***the Holy Place***, where you had several pieces of furniture, like the candlestick, the table of show-bread, and the altar of incense.

But then, divided off from that section was a room called the ***Holy of Holies***. This room was divided off by a large, thick curtain, or a veil. This is where the Ark of the Covenant was kept, and where the very presence of God dwelled. Only the high priest was allowed to go behind the veil, and only once a year, on the Day of Atonement.

Fast forward, when Jesus was hanging on the cross. At the moment of His death, when He breathed His last breath, the Bible says...

*And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. (Matthew 27:50-51)*

When Jesus died and the temple veil supernaturally ripped in two, it was to show that the presence of God was no longer closed off and restricted from God's people. No longer would the blood of an animal be required to come before God. Now the blood of His Son Jesus has paid for the sins – once and for all, fully and completely, for every one of God's people, for every person who would ever trust in Christ for salvation.

What was once closed off in the Old Covenant has been opened up in the New Covenant. We now have full access to God through the blood of Christ.

The temple is wide open. The Ark of the Covenant visible for all to see. No more divisions between God and His people. No more veils to keep us from God's presence. No more law to fulfill. No more sin to atone for. No more types and shadows and symbols. All things are fulfilled, all of God's people are welcomed into His presence, never again to be apart.

And it's all because of Jesus.

### **Conclusion**

And why does God want us to know all of that now? Because knowing what is to come affects how we live now. We will have greater endurance, deeper worship, and stronger faith in this life, when we remember the joys that await us in the life to come.

Seeing this glimpse of the coming Kingdom of Christ being fully realized, and knowing that all who trust in Him have this promise that will soon come, we can be encouraged...

- even in the midst of our pain,
- in the midst of sickness,
- in the midst of persecution and suffering and doubt and fear,
- even in facing death itself

...our hearts can sing and our gaze be lifted through eyes of faith, knowing this One Day is soon coming, when *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."*

**(Let's Pray)**