

50. The Book of Revelation—11:18-19

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(8-11-21)

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In our study in Revelation, we have been looking at Chapter 11—last week we got as far as verse 18 but let's back up to and start reading from verse 15:

Revelation 11:15-18a (NKJV)

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" ¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. ¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged..."

Now, don't let verse 18 confuse you.

What I believe is in view here is the entire Millennial Kingdom from the return of Christ to reign all the way through the 1000 years up to and including the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) where all *unbelievers* will be resurrected to stand before Jesus and be judged.

This entire period of time is all condensed into a single verse—which is not uncommon when studying prophetic passages:

John 5:28-29 (NKJV)

²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice ²⁹ and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life [*Rapture*], and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation [*which takes place at least 1007 years later at the Great White Throne Judgment*].

Isaiah 61:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ "The Spirit of the Lord God *is* upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to *those who are bound*; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord [*all of this is referring to the First Coming of Jesus*], And the day of vengeance of our God [*speaking of the Tribulation Period*]..."

These two events are separated by 2000 years and yet what separates them in this passage—is a single comma!

Revelation 11:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, **And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great...**

First of all, the “**rewards**” mentioned here for God’s “**servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great...**”—is *not* referring to the rewards given to Christians who lived during the Church Age (Church saints).

We receive our rewards at the time of the Rapture—

Revelation 22:12 (NKJV)

¹² "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to everyone according to his work.

This is speaking of the Rapture of the Church which as we have said takes place at the beginning of Chapter 4—before the 70th week of Daniel begins.

The Rapture will affect all the saints (true believers in Christ) who have lived and died during the Church Age (Pentecost to the Rapture). They will be resurrected and along with those who are still alive on the earth at the time of the Rapture—they together they will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air!

We are taken to heaven where we receive our rewards (at the Bema Seat of Christ—1 Corinthians 3) and sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. While we are in heaven there will be seven years of judgment on the earth where God destroys many (very many!) who refuse to repent of their sins and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

At the end of the seven years of judgment Jesus will return to the earth with His Bride the Church and finish the job of removing all remaining unbelievers (who will be cast into Hades—the Antichrist and False Prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire) and then Jesus will take possession of the earth and establish His Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 19)

Now at that time many, including Hal Lindsay, believe that all the Old Testament prophets and saints along with all of the Tribulation saints that have been martyred by the Antichrist and his followers will be resurrected to receive their rewards and enter into Christ's Kingdom. (Daniel 12:1-3)

And I believe these are the ones in view in Revelation 11:18—

Revelation 11:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ **...And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great...."**

This will be followed 1000 years later by the last, great resurrection of the unbelieving dead who will stand before Jesus at the Great White Throne Judgment where they will be judged and cast into hell (Lake of Fire) forever. (Revelation 20)

Again, all of this is condensed into a single verse, verse 18.

Revelation 11:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ **The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."**

Radical environmentalists who hate Christians but love to quote the Bible to us when it seems to be on their 'side'—have picked up on this verse and have used it against us.

They say, *"For all you Christians who believe you have dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26) and can pollute it by throwing gum wrappers on the ground and driving your big gas guzzling SUV's—God says He will destroy those who destroy the earth—you Christians are in big trouble!"*

Look, when God promised to **"destroy those who destroy the earth"**—understand, *that is not an environmental statement but a moral and spiritual statement.*

The second word for **'destroy'** in verse 18 is really *'corrupt.'*

The angel is saying that the time has come for God to destroy those who corrupted the earth—both morally and spiritually. It's interesting that all these radical environmentalists who are fighting to save condors and polar bears are most often 'leftists' who don't abide by the morality and spirituality found in the Bible—but they're not alone:

Romans 1:18-25 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. ²⁴ Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

All those who worship the earth but are living morally and spiritually in rebellion against God are 'polluting' the earth and will be judged and destroyed by God—along with the earth they worship!

Revelation 11:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ **Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.**

This Chapter opened with a Temple on earth, but now we see it end with the Temple in heaven.

The focus of attention is on the **"Ark of His covenant."**

In the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant symbolized God's presence with His people—but it also held within it the terms of the covenant (Ten Commandments) that God made with His people. In that regard it was a reminder of His promise to be faithful to them.

**He is the *holy* God
and must deal righteously with sin—
but He is also the *faithful* God
Who keeps His promises to His people.**

It was the Ark of God (the earthly replicate) that led Israel through the Jordan River and into their inheritance (Joshua 3:11–17).

This vision of the Ark would greatly encourage God's suffering people to whom John sent this book (scroll)—
"God will fulfill His promises!" John was saying to them—"He will reveal His glory! Trust Him!"

Sometimes I am asked if the *"Ark of His Testimony,"* or the *"Ark of the Covenant,"* will be found—I'm not sure.

Many orthodox Jews living in Israel today say they *have* found the Ark and are waiting for the right moment to bring it out for the world to see—possibly to hasten the building of the new Temple (Revelation 11).

However, if I was a betting man (which I am not!) I am inclined to say it is gone and will never be found.

➤ Why do I believe that?

I believe it because in Jeremiah Chapter 3, it says that in the Millennial Kingdom the Ark will not be mentioned—nor in fact will anyone even remember it existed:

Jeremiah 3:16-18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days," says the LORD, "that they will say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit *it*, nor shall it be made anymore. ¹⁷ At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. ¹⁸ In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers.

But as the Temple on earth is merely a shadow of the true Temple in heaven—the true Ark is in heaven and will someday be seen—

Revelation 11:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple...

Once again, John saw and heard what signaled a coming storm (of judgment)—

Revelation 11:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. **And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.**

We have been introduced to the language of coming storms of judgment before in this book—

Revelation 4:5 (NKJV)

⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 8:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw *it* to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

Now once again John relates the language of a storm of judgment coming upon the people of the world—but this time it signals a judgment that will be unlike any that has come before it!

One author said—

"Greater judgment is about to fall on the rebellious people of earth! But God's people need not fear the storms for He is in control. The ark reminds them of His presence and the faithfulness of His promises. And on that ark was the mercy seat on which the blood was sprinkled each Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:15–17). Even in wrath, God remembers His mercy. (Habakkuk 3:2)."

The stage is now set for the dramatic appearance of **"the beast,"** Satan's masterpiece—the false Christ who will control the world.

Remember, **"the beast"** (mentioned in Chapter 13 known as the Antichrist) made his appearance on the world scene at the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel with the opening of the first seal in Chapter 6:1-2.

But as we have said before, Chapters 10 through 14 are a flashback—mostly of the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation Period.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

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