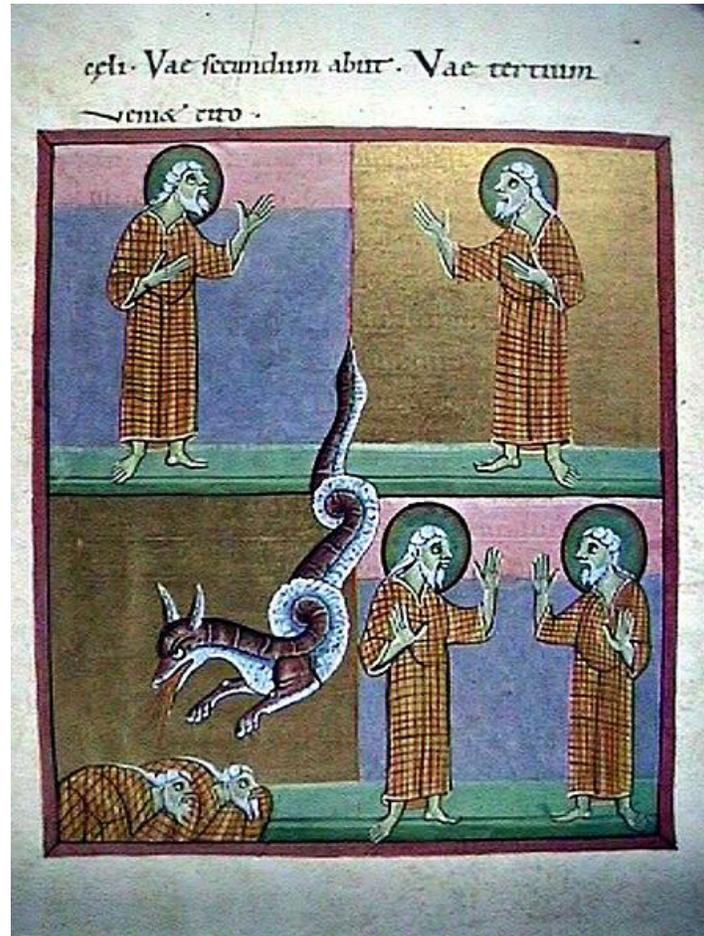


THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The Vindication of the Saints and the Consummation of the Kingdom of God (11.11-18)



Review From Last Week (Revelation 11.3-10)

1. The Two Witnesses (11.3-6)

- a. Two witnesses” – legal testimony (cf. Num 35.50; Deut 17.6; 19.15; 2 Cor 13.1; 1 Tim 5.19; Heb 10.28)
- b. “clothed in sackcloth” – prophecy, petition, and penitence (Is 20.1-2; Dan 9.3; Jonah 3.4-10)

Isaiah 66.1-2: Thus says the LORD: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? ² All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

- c. “two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth” (priests and kings called to prophetic witness, with the assurance of God’s abiding presence by his Spirit – the prophetic fire will never be extinguished; cf. Zech 4.1-13)
- d. The prophesying in the power of the Spirit (Acts 1.4-8; Joel 2.28-32)
- e. In the Order of Moses and Elijah (cf. 1 Kings 18.1ff; Ex 7.17-25; cf. Jer 5.14 re: fire)
- f. The Prophetic Calling of the Church (Luke 10.1-16; John 12.36-50; 16.7-13; cf. Mark 9.2-29 – the Transfiguration)
- g. “A torment to those who dwell on the earth” (11.10b)

John 3.16-21: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

Acts 24.24-25: After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, “Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you.”

2. The Death of the Two Witnesses (11.7-10)

- a. war with the beast (cf. Dan 7.21-22; Rev 12-13)
- b. “the great city that [spiritually] is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified” – *spiritual geography*
 - i. “great city” = kingdom of anti-Christ/God; Babylon (cf. 14.8; 16.19; 17.18; 18.10, 16, 18, 19, 21)
 - ii. “Sodom and Egypt”: signify places of wickedness, slavery, and injustice (Gen 19.1-25; Deut 29.22-23; Is 1.9-15; 3.9; Jer 23.14-15; Ex 5.1-21; Joel 3.19; see Mark 11.12-20 re: Jerusalem)
- c. the death of the witnesses (cf. John 15.16-27)

Revelation 11.11-19

But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. ¹³ And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come. ¹⁵Then 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." ¹⁶And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷saying,

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
 who is and who was,
 for you have taken your great power
 and begun to reign.

¹⁸The 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."

¹⁹Then 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.

1. **The Resurrection and Ascension of the Two Witnesses:** But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. (11.11-12)

- a. days (another broken 7)
- b. Resurrection and ascension (Christ's life and mission is the paradigm for the church's life and mission: proclamation/witness, death, resurrection, and ascension)

Ezekiel 37.1-14: The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. ² And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. ³ And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." ⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶ And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

¹¹ Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.' ¹² Therefore prophesy, and say to

them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. ¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴ And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.”

- c. “a great fear fell on those who saw them” – rejoicing turns to great fear when their enemies realize their prophetic preaching was true (given the parallels between the plagues of the six trumpets and the plagues of Egypt, we should not be surprised to find a parallel between Exodus 15 and Revelation 11, which also concludes with a song of praise for vindication)

Exodus 15.13-18 “You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. ¹⁴ The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. ¹⁵ Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. ¹⁶ Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased. ¹⁷ You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. ¹⁸ The LORD will reign forever and ever.”

- d. “and they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them”

2 Kings 2.11: And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Acts 1.1-8: In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

2. **The Last Judgment:** And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. (11.11-13)

- a. “great earthquake” – signifies the Last Judgment (cf. Rev 6.12; 16.18; 11.19; cf. Ezek 38.19 [judgment following resurrection])
- b. “a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake” – reversal of former judgments or first-fruits of final judgment?

Reversal of judgment:

- in the OT one-tenth and 7000 represent the faithful remnant; but here these figures are reversed to represent the condemned (implication: the remaining nine-tenths repent and are saved)

Isaiah 6.13: And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled.” The holy seed is its stump.

Amos 5.3: For thus says the Lord GOD: “The city that went out a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went out a hundred shall have ten left to the house of Israel.”

1 Kings 19.18: Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

- those who give glory to God in the Revelation are redeemed

Revelation 15.3-4: And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! ⁴ Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

Revelation 16.9: They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.

Revelation 19.7: Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready.

First fruits of final judgment:

- resurrection and ascension of two witnesses = eschatological vindication of the saints; onlookers who remain are identified as “enemies,” not saints (11.12)
- giving glory does not necessarily imply repentance and conversion

Daniel 4.34: At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation. (*cf. Daniel 2, 3, 5 re: Nebuchadnezzar gives glory to God, but is not converted and never abandons worship of idols*)

Jonah 1.5, 9-10, 14: Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried out to his god ... and [Jonah] said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”¹⁰ Then the men were exceedingly afraid ... Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows. (*again, sailors fear the LORD and likely add the God of Israel to the pantheon, but no indication that they are converted to the faith of Israel – cf. Ex 20.3-5; Deut 6.4-15*)

Philippians 2.9-11: Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Revelation 15.3-4: And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! ⁴ Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” (*may indicate eschatological and universal recognition of the God’s justice and righteousness; also, “all nations” means all nations are represented*)

Revelation 19.7: Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready (*NB: giving glory is accompanied by rejoicing, not terror*)

Revelation 9.20-21: The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk,²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (*NB: no explicit mention of repentance in Rev 11.13*)

3. **Consummation (the third woe and the seventh trumpet):** The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come. ¹⁵Then 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." (11.14-15)
- a. Narrative of seven trumpets is resumed (Rev 11.14 marks the end of the parenthesis from 10.1 to 11.13, which concludes with final judgment)
 - b. The consummation of the Kingdom of God (re: transfer of kingdoms and final judgment; cf. Daniel 7.13-27)

Daniel 7.13-27: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. ¹⁵ "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. ¹⁷ 'These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.' ¹⁹ "Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, ²⁰ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions. ²¹ As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom. ²³ "Thus he said: 'As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ²⁶ But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. ²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.'

4. **Judgment and Thanksgiving:** And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshipped God, ¹⁷saying,
- "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
 who is and who was,
 for you have taken your great power
 and begun to reign.
¹⁸The 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." (Rev 11.16-18)

a. “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign”

- i. “Lord God Almighty, who is and who was”: the One who is to come, has come (cf. 1.4, 8; 4.8)
- ii. “begun to reign”: note distinction God’s eternal rule (Ps 93.1; 96.10; 97.1; 99.1; Rev 4), the inauguration of the kingdom of God (Rev 1.5-6,9; 2.26-28; 3.21; 5.5-10), and the consummation of the kingdom of God (Rev 9.12; 11.15-19; 15.2-4; 19.1-8; 21.1-22.5)

Psalms 99.1: The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble! He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

Revelation 1.4-6: John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 11.15: 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.”

b. Consummation of the Kingdom of God is initiated by the Last Judgment: “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” (11.18)

- i. “the time for the dead to be judged, and for the rewarding of your servants”

Daniel 12.2: And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

1 Peter 4.3: For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.⁴ With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;⁵ but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. (cf. Acts 10.42; 2 Tim 4.1)

- ii. “your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both great and small”

- iii. Judgment/reward/judgment: the destruction of the wicked is the vindication of the saints (i.e., part of their reward; cf. Rev 6.9-11)

Jeremiah 51.24-28: “I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the evil that they have done in Zion, declares the LORD.²⁵ “Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, declares the LORD, which destroys the whole earth; I will stretch out my hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and make you a burnt mountain.²⁶ No stone shall be taken from you for a corner and no stone for a foundation, but you shall be a perpetual waste, declares the LORD.²⁷ “Set up a standard on the earth; blow the trumpet among the nations; prepare the nations for war against her; summon against her the kingdoms, Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz; appoint a marshal against her; bring up horses

like bristling locusts.²⁸ Prepare the nations for war against her, the kings of the Medes, with their governors and deputies, and every land under their dominion

Revelation 18.24-19.5: And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth.”^{19.1} After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,² for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”³ Once more they cried out, “Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.”⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!”⁵ And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great.”

iv. *Lex talionis*: “the nations raged (*orgizō*), but your wrath (*orgē*) came”;
“destroying the destroyers of the earth”

Psalm 7.14-16: Behold, the wicked man conceives evil and is pregnant with mischief and gives birth to lies.¹⁵ He makes a pit, digging it out, and falls into the hole that he has made.¹⁶ His mischief returns upon his own head, and on his own skull his violence descends. (cf. Jer 7.6; Rom 1.18-32: “God gave them up ...”)