

The Kingdom of Our Lord and His Christ

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[0 : 00] Good morning, everyone. It's always such a joy to be able to worship with you guys on Sundays like this.

Yeah, I'm always just so blessed by the loud voices that we sing our worship in. Yeah, truly just an honor to be with you. Please turn with me to Revelation chapter 11, verse 14 to 19.

Since the fall, our church has been going through a series in Revelation. And this week we have reached, finally, the midpoint of the book. And so we find ourselves, once again, Revelation chapter 11, verse 14 to 19.

Please, I want you to pray with me for the reading and the preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, we just thank you so much for your word, which is breathed out by you, which seeks to instruct us, to guide us, to rebuke us and encourage us, and to fill us with hope of your coming kingdom.

Lord, we thank you so much for your Holy Spirit, which illuminates scripture in our lives, that guides us in how to live out the gospel faithfully, even unto death.

[1 : 34] And Lord, we thank you for your Son, Jesus, whose name is above all names, whose name is sweeter than honey on our lips, whose name is like refreshing waters to our soul.

Lord, we ask that your word speak to us this morning and remind us of your coming kingdom and all the implications behind that, both on this physical world and in terms of the eternal consequences, Lord.

Be with us. I want your Spirit to speak to our hearts. We thank you. We love you. And we pray all of us in Jesus' name. Amen. If you are willing and able, please stand for the reading of God's word.

Revelation chapter 11, verse 14 to 19. The second woe has passed. Behold, the third woe is soon to come. 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.

And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshipped God, 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.

[3 : 09] The nations raged when 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.

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.

This is God's holy and authoritative word. You may be seated. When I first read this Revelation passage, a certain scene came to my mind from the movie Avengers Endgame.

I thought of, specifically, the final battle, with that epic scene where all of the Marvel superheroes, they gather together to fight against the evil villain, Thanos.

Captain America, he holds his hand down, Thor's hair comes rushing into his hand, and he calls out, Avengers! Assemble! I remember watching this movie at the theater, and as Captain America cried out this battle cry, chills went down my spine.

[4 : 33] And I wasn't alone. The entire theater was clapping and whistling and whooping, like, yeah! The Avengers are here! They're gonna win! And how can they not lose when they have all the heroes gathered together in one battlefield?

But even with such an epic scene, there still is no guarantee that the Avengers would win. For another 30 minutes in the movie, the Avengers continue to struggle against Thanos, and we're still left in unsureness of the Avengers victory, until finally, Iron Man takes possession of the Infinity

Stones and snaps his fingers to defeat Thanos and restore the world from the destroyer. This movie is five years old. If I'm spoiling anything, I'm not sorry. Going back to our Revelation passage, in John's vision here, God's triumphant kingdom and reign has come to the world. And without delay, the destroyers of the earth are destroyed, and those who have been faithful to the Lord are rewarded. And God's temple and His ark of His covenant, His presence is revealed for all to see.

Unlike in Avengers Endgame, we have absolute confidence in the end of our story. That God will rule over the world. That He will avenge those who have been persecuted and killed in His name. [6 : 00] And that He will judge with absolute justice those who deserve eternal life and those who deserve eternal death. There's no unsureness or insecurity about this.

When the Lord's kingdom comes to earth, His victory and His reign is guaranteed. And so with this in mind, our main point of this passage is this.

We should join in the worship of the Lord, knowing that He will destroy our destroyers and reward the faithful, and that His kingdom will come with His very presence.

I'll be covering four points in this sermon. First, the third woe. Second, the worship of God and His Christ reign. Third, the wrath and reward of God.

And fourth, God with us. Before I get into these four points, I wanted to do a recap of where we are in the book of Revelation. And so we're at the end of the seven trumpet judgments, which are a series of end-time judgments from God onto our wicked and idolatrous world.

[7 : 09] The fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpet blasts have been called the three woe judgments, as we see proclaimed by the eagle in Revelation 8, verse 13. It says, Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth at the blast of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow.

Woe, woe, woe. Doom, doom, doom. These three final woes accentuate the increased intensity and severity of the judgments, leading to the climactic final judgment of God at the seventh trumpet. At the first woe, the fifth trumpet, a fallen star, presumably an evil angel or Satan, was given a key to the bottomless pit, from which demonic locusts flew out and tormented mankind for five months, to the point that men desired to die.

But death continued to evade them. And then we see something even more intense. At the second woe, the sixth trumpet, four angels and their armies killed one-third of mankind, while the rest of mankind continued to be unrepentant of their sins.

For 42 months, the wicked nations trampled over the courts outside of the city temple, and the two witnesses were killed for proclaiming the gospel, only to be resurrected by God three and a half days later.

[8 : 26] Then a great earthquake shook the city, killing 7,000 wicked people, and while the remaining survivors could do nothing but acknowledge God's power and be in awe of his judgment.

All these events of the fifth and sixth trumpets lead to the blowing of the seventh and final trumpet, the third and final woe. If we look at the outline of Revelation that John had shared with us before, our passage of the seventh trumpet is right at the center of Revelation.

We've reached the midpoint. John's vision in this passage will represent, as I said before, the climactic conclusion of God's judgment, in which God's kingdom comes down to earth and overtakes the kingdom of the world.

And this leads to my first point, the third woe. Verse 14, The second woe has passed. Behold, the third woe is soon to come. While the fifth and sixth trumpet judgments had verses that signaled the first two woes in Revelation 9 and Revelation 11, there is no explicit mention in Scripture of the seventh trumpet being the third woe.

Still, I think that there's strong evidence in the text that Revelation 11, chapter 14, I've heard verse 14 to 19, is indeed the third woe. For one thing, we have in verse 14, Behold, the third woe is soon to come.

[9 : 54] It's soon to come. Revelation 8 and Revelation 10 also say that the woe judgments would occur at the final three blasts of the angels' trumpets, and that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled.

The mystery of God from Revelation 10 is God's kingdom being fully established on earth. The short and brief description of the seventh trumpet and the third woe compared to the other two woes should not undermine the ultimate severity of this passage.

The seventh trumpet, which is supposed to be the most intense judgment that we have seen so far in Revelation, signifies the end of the end, the eschaton. This is the final judgment where the Lord brings his kingdom onto earth and immediately the living and the dead are judged for eternal reward or eternal death.

This is final. And so what John sees in this vision of the seventh trumpet and the third woe judgment must have been both so glorious but also so terrifying that John cannot even describe in words what happens at the final judgment.

This vision of judgment is far more intense than that of demonic locusts or the death of our two witnesses or the earthquake that killed 7,000 people. It's unspeakable.

[11:23] Church, the third woe is a reminder that we need to be considering the eternal consequences of how we live here in the present. There will come a day where we face either eternal joy and life that is beyond our ability to explain in words or eternal death and suffering that will render us speechless.

But God is so gracious to us that he shows us through scripture how to follow the way to eternal joy and life in him. And that is through believing in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

until the day that we are left awestruck and without words by God's glorious presence among us.

Let's proclaim the gospel with our voices and with our lives to those around us being cognizant of the eternal consequences of the coming Lord and of his kingdom.

This leads to my second point, the worship of God and his Christ frame. Verse 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. The loud voices in heaven are most likely the same voices that cried out in Revelation chapter 7. Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

[12:53] The heavenly voice of the declaration, it refers to the prophet Daniel vision in Daniel chapter 7. 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.

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 will not pass away and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

this one like a son of man is Jesus Christ, the son of God and the promised king. During his life and ministry, Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of God is near, is at hand.

It was Jesus who inaugurated the kingdom of God and invited us into that kingdom by dying for us on the cross and resurrecting from the grave, thereby defeating Satan, sin, and death and adopting us into his kingdom.

Now in this revelation vision, Christ has returned and the kingdom of God has been fully established here on earth just as Jesus had prophesied. The kingdom of the world which Satan had authority over for a time is now fully taken away from him.

[14:12] The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of the Lord God and his Christ. While Satan's rule was only temporary for a time, God and Christ's rule will be forever and ever, marking the end of the age.

Verse 16 and 17, And the 24 elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshipped God, 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.

The 24 elders, as we see in Revelation chapter 4, could be referring to the 12 tribes of Israel in the Old Testament and the 12 apostles in the New Testament.

Altogether, all 24 elders represent the complete people of God, his community of believers. believers. The elders, having heard the proclamation from the voices in heaven, they fall from their thrones onto their faces and worship God, thanking him for consummating the kingdom, taking his great power and beginning to reign.

And the elders say, We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was. For those of us who may have grown up reading scripture, we're typically used to hearing this phrase in a threefold pattern, that God is the one who was, who is, and is to come.

[15:47] The threefold pattern describes God's sovereignty over all history, the past who was, the present who is, and the future who is to come. But in verse 17, the elders worship the Lord God Almighty, who is and who was.

Where is who is to come? Well, the phrase who is to come is replaced with a different line. For you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

If we put that entire sentence back together, the elders are thanking the Lord God Almighty, who is, who was, and has taken his great power and begun to reign. The elders worship is emphasizing that the future, the God who is to come, is now here.

God's people's hope of the future has come true because God has come down and he has begun to reign over the entire world. And because God's reign is eternal, there is no more future as we understand it in our human concept of time and history.

God will reign forevermore and nothing will change or can change or alter that final reality. The elders have realized this amazing truth and they step off their thrones to bow down before God and worship.

[17 : 12] The first thing the elders say in their worship is, we give thanks to you, God. They give thanks for God's presence in the past, in the present, and in the future.

Church, do we worship God in the same way? Do we think of God as being sovereign over the past, the present, and the future? Do we thank him for his presence in all three times?

I'm going to confess this to you guys. Lately, I myself haven't been doing well in being thankful, especially in my own private, individual time.

Outside of our Saturday community group or Wednesday night prayers, where we intentionally gathered to spend time to thank God together, I've been so lacking in posturing myself toward Thanksgiving.

I've taken God's daily grace and mercy for me, for granted, as if God owed this to me. That's so far from the case because I'm a sinner also, who's indebted to God for saving me through Christ.

[18 : 20] And so, reading this passage of the elders' worship and thanksgiving to God makes me realize that just like the elders, I need to step off of my throne in humility before God.

I want to bow down and worship, thanking God because he saved me. Back when I was 15 years old, he helped a self-destructive teenager like me encounter the great love of the Father.

I want to thank God for how he continues to sustain me, and sanctify me today that I don't go back to my old ways of sin. And I want to thank God for how he will prevail in the end and bring his people into his eternal kingdom forevermore.

God's ultimate reign has not yet come, but it's already been guaranteed to us.

There are many of us here who long for this not-yet reality, but we face struggle in our lives because of the evil in our current world. Some of us here may be feeling harassed by evildoers around us.

[19 : 31] Some of us may be weary from fighting our own sinful flesh and the devil. And some of us may be actively persecuted for our faith within our family, within our workplace, for those of us who may be overseas by the government.

To those of you who are struggling in this way, God sees, hears, and knows of our hardships. Living in this space of not-yet really is difficult.

But for this reason, God promises those who remain steadfast in him that there will be a day when that waiting is over and the long-awaited Christ is now here.

This will be the sign and seal that God's kingdom has come to full reign and our trials will be met with great reward from God. So brothers and sisters, let thanksgiving be a daily discipline of how we worship God.

Let's count it all joy when we meet trials of various kinds, clinging to Christ with thankful hearts as we wait on him to come. Psalm 107 says to give thanks to the Lord for he is good for his steadfast love endures forever.

[20 : 55] God's love for us has endured since the very beginning when he created the universe and his love stretches forward to all eternity long after this world has come to pass.

Let's give thanks alongside all the saints and elders in worship to the Lord God Almighty who is and who was and who will take his great power and reign for all eternity.

The 24 elders thank God and then they proclaim of the wrath and reward of God. Verse 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.

Verse 18 starts and ends with the judgment of God's enemies as his wrath came upon the raging nations and he destroyed the destroyers of the earth and then in the middle there is an emphasis on the rewarding of the faithful.

First I'll talk about the wrath and judgment of God's enemies. The image of the nations raging should again bring to mind the prophetic vision of Daniel chapter 7 in which the four terrible beasts each representing a tyrannical nation raged against Israel and God's people.

[22 : 21] And yet just as these four beasts were subdued by the son of man in Daniel 7 the elders in Revelation 11 proclaiming that God's wrath came upon these raging nations and he destroyed the destroyers of the earth.

One of these raging nations in the Old Testament was Babylon. Jeremiah 51 verse 25 proclaims a prophecy against Babylon similar to the elders' proclamation here in Revelation 11.

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 crabs and make you a burnt mountain.

God will destroy the destroying mountain that's destroyed up to earth Babylon and all the raging nations. And that's because God is infinitely fair and just.

He will exact his judgment on the nations and the destroyers in an eye for an eye better. In last week's sermon, right before the seventh trumpet, a great earthquake killed 7,000 wicked people who have killed the two witnesses of the gospel.

[23 : 35] The 7,000 who were killed by the earthquake are equivalent to the 7,000 faithful people who God had preserved in 2 Kings chapter 19 in the days of Elijah when they refused to bow down to the Babylonian idol.

Here in verse 18, God's lex talionis, eye for an eye, judgment is again evident. In the original Greek, the words for rage and wrath come from the same root.

And so God punished the raging nations with his own righteous rage. He punished the wrathful nations with his own wrath. The same goes for the word destroyers.

God dealt with the destroyers of the earth by destroying them. He gave them a punishment worthy of their crimes. In a way, this is actually a pretty funny and ironic way for God's enemies to be finished off.

The raging nations are ended by God's rage. The destroyers of the earth are destroyed. They had one job, and they got it back to them.

[24 : 47] They were beaten at their own game. It's like watching a pickpocket thief get pickpocketed himself. Or, you guys know of these YouTube videos where the YouTuber scam calls the scam callers?

The panic and frustration on the scam callers' faces as they realize, oh my gosh, I'm about to lose \$10,000 or whatever. they've been bamboozled at their own expertise, and they've received punishment equal to their crimes.

Psalms 2 asks, why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed.

He who sits in the heavens laughs. the Lord holds them in duration. Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury.

It's like watching a colony of ants trying to topple over the empire state building. It's not going to happen. The wicked nations and the destroyers of the earth are doomed to fail.

[26 : 00] God will punish them accordingly. We too, then, can be reassured and endure when we are wronged, when we are defrauded, when we are unfairly treated by our destroyers because we know that God's justice will come.

Verse 18 also speaks of the time for the dead to be judged, which arrives as God's wrath comes. Daniel 12 and Revelation 20 attest to the final judgment in which the dead are judged according to what they have done when they were alive.

The destroyers of God's people and the unbelievers of Jesus Christ will be judged in front of the great white throne where the dead, great and small, stood before the throne and books were opened.

Then another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20 anyone who is not in Christ, who does not believe in Christ, is an enemy of God and will not find their name written in the book of life and will be cast into the lake of fire.

[27 : 21] This is the eternal suffering that God's enemies will experience because they were idolatrous against God and his people and they did not believe in Christ according to the books that testified of their action.

On the other hand, Revelation 11 verse 18 also speaks of the time in which the faithful are reborned, servants, prophets, and saints, and those who fear God's name, both small and brave. I believe that all of these categories, the servants, prophets, saints, and those who fear God's name, are referring to the entire church of God, all believers. believers. As Christians, we are called to be servants to God and his will.

Just like the two witnesses who are killed, the whole church is called to bear prophetic witness of the gospel to the world, even if the world should kill us for our testimony.

And by God's grace, we have been counted as saints or holy ones through Christ's death and resurrection. resurrection. And as followers of Christ, we fear and worship God's name and his name only.

[28 : 35] There is no other name. Jesus. If we are indeed a church and community of believers, of servants, prophets, saints, and those who fear God's name, we will be rewarded with the eternal rewards of heaven and the eternal fellowship with the Lord God Almighty.

And also, as we see here in verse 18, surrounding the promise of rewarding the faithful, we'll also receive and witness great vindication for the tribulation and persecution we endured through our witness of the gospel.

In Revelation 6, during the fifth seal, the souls of those who were killed for their witness of the gospel cried out, O sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth.

And the Lord responded by clothing them in white robes and assuring them to wait a little longer. God's final judgment on the dead here is the climactic answer to these martyrs' prayers.

We as Christians won't simply be taken away by God from the evil things of the world, but we will witness God vanquishing evil through his judgment and firmly establishing his kingdom on earth so that no evil thing can or may remain.

[30 : 00] And this is my favorite part over here. God will reward the entire community of God, those who fear God's name, both small and great. We have been saved through Jesus Christ, who in obedience to God, bore the weight of our sins on the cross, died and was resurrected from the dead, freeing us from our debt to sin.

And whether king or servant, anyone who believes in Jesus is in union with him, and he will receive every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, including the rewards of eternity that Jesus himself merited.

The faithful will be rewarded both small and great. faith. We tend to be in awe of the heroes of the faith throughout the history of the church.

The twelve apostles, Paul, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Billy Graham, Tim Keller, and so on.

And rightfully so, all these people deserve to be honored to a degree because they all played a significant role in faithfully bringing the gospel to the world.

[31 : 14] But God rewards even the least and the smallest among us for being faithful to him. Personally, I don't think I've done anything spectacular or earth-shattering or world-changing as a Christian.

I'm part of the small squad. But even the smallest of us will be rewarded, and not one of our small acts of faith will go unrewarded.

Jesus says in Matthew 10, verse 42, and whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple. Truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

Whether it's Apostle Paul, whether it's Tim Keller, whether it's Sean, Ed, Kathy, me, or you guys, if we believe in Jesus and his death and resurrection, God has sealed the promise that we will prevail and receive his reward at the very end of the age.

So let's continue to cling to Christ in the face of persecution and temptation until that time comes. to those of us who are joining this morning who do not believe in Jesus Christ and the gospel, we as a church really do believe in all these things that are said in the book of Revelation and in the Bible.

[32 : 44] We believe that there will be a final day of judgment, whether we're dead or alive, in which the Lord God Almighty will judge us because he's an infinitely holy and righteous God.

There was a time when all of humanity, us included, were doomed to eternal death because no one is perfect and no one has been fully righteous in the eyes of the holy God.

But just as God is holy and righteous, he's also gracious and merciful. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son Jesus to die for our sins, to give those who believe in him another chance to be redeemed and share an eternal life with him.

Those who believe in Jesus will gain the eternal rewards of heaven. But those who do not will suffer the eternal death and the lake of fire. I don't say all this to condemn, but to plead with you, to consider the eternal consequences beyond our physical life in the now, to turn to Christ and to accept him as your Lord and Savior.

After our Sunday services, we usually have people up front praying for those who want prayer. For those of you who feel convicted or even curious, please feel free to come up to talk with us or talk with any of our church members if you'd like to hear more about Jesus or hear more about how you can be saved and be in right relationship with our God because he's so worth living for.

[34 : 18] This leads to my final point, God with us. Once the elders finished their worship, verse 19, 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. After the judgment of the wicked and the rewarding of the faithful, John sees in his vision, God's temple in heaven opened and the ark of his covenant was seen inside of the temple.

In the Old Testament of the Bible, the ark of the covenant was a core part of the Israelites' identity and relationship with their God, Yahweh. The ark was a golden chest located in the innermost room of the great Jerusalem temple, the holy of holies, and it was only accessible to the high priest of Israel.

And even the high priest of Israel himself could only enter the holy of holies once a year to offer sacrifice in front of the ark on behalf of the atonement and forgiveness of Israel's sins.

In Exodus chapter 25, when God instructs Moses to construct the ark of the covenant, he says that he will meet with Moses on the mercy seat of the ark between the two terebinth trees constructed on the top.

[35 : 47] This is where God promises his presence will be, where he will grant mercy over his people. The ark, therefore, is a representation of God's presence with his people.

In the Old Testament, God's people could only view a representation of God, because as God explains later in Exodus 33, you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.

God is an infinitely holy God, that any sinful human in his direct presence cannot be able to stand even a second in front of him without being wiped out by his holiness.

But here in Revelation, the ark of God's covenant, and therefore God's actual presence, is on full display.

The temple is opened, and the holy of holies, and the ark, which no one could enter into and stand before, is visible for all to see. Church, this is so significant, because it symbolizes God's merciful and gracious presence among his people.

[37 : 02] The community of believers at the Eschaton, its presence will be enjoyed fully by all the believers for a time infinitely greater than what was possible in the Old Testament.

It's no longer that the priest will go and stand before God once a year on behalf of the entire congregation. God has come down from heaven, from his temple and the ark, to live among his entire people as their God.

Once the temple is opened, the preceding flashes of lightning, the rumblings, the peals of thunder, the earthquake, and the heavy hail further highlight God's presence on earth.

Throughout the Old Testament, these cosmic phenomena were seen as theophanies, symbols of God's presence. In Exodus 19, God's presence at Mount Sinai was signaled by thunder and lightning flashing.

In Psalm 18 and Isaiah 30, God is said to bring his judgment with a great storm and hailstones raining down. In Revelation, these cosmic signs consistently appear at the end of the seven seal judgments, the seven trumpet judgments, and the seven bowl judgments, each signifying the very end of the age.

[38 : 20] While these signs themselves are part of the final judgments, they also signify the presence of God. God is here, and his kingdom is here on earth, no longer hidden within the temple or the ark of the covenant.

In fact, in John's vision of New Jerusalem, the new city in Revelation 21, there is no longer a great temple present in the city.

New Jerusalem no longer has a temple, for its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb. The temple is not needed anymore at the Eschaton, the end of the age, because God has come down himself, and he himself is present with his people.

God is with us. God is with us.

God is with us. God is with us. Good point. All these seemingly artificial and incomplete interactions while being masked with friends and family, it was incredibly difficult and frustrating for me.

[40 : 01] But I also remember when COVID started to be more under control, when masks regulations were lifting and social gatherings were starting to be allowed again. This was right when I started to attend Trinity Cambridge Church.

To be able to take off the masks, to be able to see individual faces, to be able to see unique smiles, and share in direct fellowship with one another in person, even with a new church community for me, was so freeing, was so liberating, and was so joy-giving.

Church, the difficulties of seeing each other's face in the age of COVID lasted for a few years. How much greater, how much more joy-giving, and how much more glorious will it be then for us to finally see God face-to-face and dwell with Him forever at the end of the age?

1 John 3, verse 2 says this, Beloved, we are God's children. We are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared.

But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. All our lives, we can't see God's face, and yet we pray to Him.

[41 : 27] We sing songs of worship to Him. We talk to Him, and we tell Him how much we love Him and trust Him. And we share so many powerful testimonies of God at work in the Bible and in our own lives.

Many of us spend so much time, if not the majority of our lives, committing ourselves to someone who we cannot see. How amazing, then, is the glorious reward of meeting with God and finally taking the mask off and seeing God face-to-face and being glorified with Him forever and ever. That's an ending to a story far better than any Avengers movie, far better than any fairy tale, far better than anything this life has to offer for us.

Seeing God's face and dwelling with Him forever is the happily ever after worth living and dying for. Church, the seventh trumpet as the third woe is the climax of God's salvation plan for us.

Once God's kingdom comes to earth, both great judgment and great vindication will be carried out. As enemies of God are destroyed, evil is undone, and those who are faithful to God are eternally rewarded.

[42 : 51] And finally, the temple of heaven will be opened. The ark of His covenant will be revealed, and God will reveal His full presence to His people, and He will dwell with them forever and ever.

We're not quite at that final day yet. But as God's people, we're called to live, we're called to prepare for His return, and we're called to worship Him with thanksgiving and reality of this future. So let's continue to live for the name of Jesus, proclaiming the good news of the gospel, and clinging to Christ in the midst of trials and tribulation, knowing that when that final day comes, God's kingdom will be established on earth.

His victory will be immediate and eternal, and we will see Him face to face and reign with Him in resurrection power for all eternity.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we worship You, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come with Your kingdom on earth.

[44 : 24] Lord, we confess that many of the visions that we see in Revelation are terrifying and glorious at the same time.

Some of the judgments past are beyond our imagination and leave us speechless and awestruck at our power. Lord, amidst all these fearful visions, amidst all these powerful judgments that You pass over the earth, we ask that You give us hope, that You fill our hearts with thanksgiving, and we're able to come before You and bow down in worship, realizing the great reward and the eternal

reward that we have in You on that final day.

Lord Jesus, we wait Your coming in glory. Lord, we ask for You to fill us with hope, to help us to persevere, to give us the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, that continues to sanctify us, that continues to guide us, that continues to illuminate Scripture right in front of us.

that we're able to live in this physical realm, faithfully stewarding the Gospel unto death. Won't You continue to be with us, Lord?

Speak to us and remind us of Your great love for us in the coming of Your Kingdom. We thank You, Lord. We love You. And we pray all of us in Jesus' name.

[46 : 05] Amen.