**an overview of revelation 4-11**

(Revelation 4-11)

Jesus to the apostle John:

**Revelation 1:19**-----19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

**“the things which you have seen”** = John’s vision of Christ the judge (Rev 1)

**“the things which are”** = Christ’s judgment of the pastors of the seven churches (Rev 2-3)

**“The things which will take place after this”** = Christ’s judgment of rebellious mankind (Rev 4-19)
 = Christ’s judgment of the lost of all ages (Rev 20)
 = The aftermath of the Christ’s judgments: The new heaven and earth
 (Rev 21-22)

In Revelation 4-19, there are three major series of future judgments that God will bring upon planet earth—called the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments—and what we see is that prior to each one of the series of judgments, John sees God’s heavenly throne room:

**Before the 7 seal judgments:**

**Revelation 4:2**-----2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, **a throne set in heaven**, and *One* sat on the throne.

**Before the seven trumpet judgments:**

**Revelation 8:1–2, 3**-----1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 And I saw … 3the golden altar which was before **the throne**…

**Before the seven bowl judgments:**

**Revelation 15:1, 5**-----1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues … 5 After these things I looked, and behold, **the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven** was opened.

Why does God do this? Why does God tell us about what’s going on in heaven before He tells us what He will do on earth?

He does this to remind us that He is on the throne of the universe and that there is **no one** higher than Him. He has created all things, and He is the one who…

* declares what is right in the universe and what is wrong.
* He is also the one who determines the blessings to be given to those who honor Him and the punishments to be given to those who dishonor Him.

When rebellious mankind cries out, “We will not have this man to rule over us!” (Luke 19:14) He who sits in the heavens laughs and replies: “…bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me’” (Luke 19:27).

The word “throne” is used 42X in the book of Revelation (& 19X in chaps 4 & 5) for a reason, and it is this: God wants all of us (and all of mankind) to understand the following in no uncertain terms:

**Revelation 4:11**-----11 **“**Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

And:

**Revelation 5:13**-----“Blessing and honor and glory and power *be* to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

Revelation reminds us that:

God **alone** is the sovereign ruler of the universe…

Humans are **His** creation and are to honor and obey and worship Him…

**All** who refuse to do this (believers and unbelievers) will pay a huge price.

It’s no wonder that when the devil told Jesus that he would give Him all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would bow down and worship him that Jesus replied:

“Away with you, Satan! For it is written: ‘You shall **worship** the Lord your God and **Him only shall you serve’**” (Matt 4:10).

Him **ONLY**! Any time that you or I or any human being makes anything or anyone more important in our lives than God, we become idolaters and are inviting God’s punishment upon our lives.

In Revelation, God invites us to see Him for who He truly is!

And Revelation 4-5 tells **us** that our response as His children is to be **worship**,kneeling before Him and acknowledging that He is our Creator and worthy of our honor, respect, and obedience.

Revelation tells **unbelievers** that their response should be (1) faith in His son for everlasting life and (2) rejection of the mark of the Beast (666) and refusal to worship the statute of the Beast that all will be required to kneel before (in other words, idol worship).

Because rebellious mankind will refuse to do what God wants, Revelation tells us that they will:

**Revelation 14:10**----…drink of the wine of **the wrath of God**, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation.

The wrath of God that they will “drink” are the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments:

**Revelation 15:1**-----1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, **for in them the wrath of God is complete**.

Starting today, we are going to study how the Lord is going to deal with a world full of people He created who refuse to listen to Him.

Revelation chapters 4-11 are a single unit. In Rev 4-11, John is given a single vision that begins and ends with doors being opened in God’s throne room in heaven:

**Revelation 4:1**-----1 After these things I looked, and behold, **a door *standing* open in heaven**. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

**Revelation 11:19**-----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.

So what does Revelation 4-11 (the first 3.5 years of the 7-Year Tribulation Period) look like? Let’s do an overview (next week---Rev 4)

**Revelation 4-5**

Chapters 4-5 show us the throne room of God in heaven (what we just saw 11:19 call “the temple of God”). Rebellious mankind must be judged, (God the Father is holding a scroll with those judgments in His right hand). But who is worthy to open this scroll and to execute God’s judgments? Heaven’s answer:

**Revelation 5:5**-----5 And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

This is exactly what Jesus told His followers decades earlier:

**John 5:22, 27**-----22 …the Father judges no one, but **has committed all judgment to the Son** … 27 and **has given Him authority to execute judgment** also, because He is the Son of Man.

So first, the sovereign God identifies the One worthy to execute His judgment of mankind.

**Revelation 6**

Then we see in Revelation 6, the Lamb begins to open the seals of God’s judgments:

**Revelation 6:1**-----1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.”

Later, chapter 6 tells us that:

**Revelation 6:17**-----17 …**the great day of His wrath has come**, and who is able to stand?”

**Revelation 7**

Then in Revelation 7, John stops writing about the judgments falling on planet earth to tell us that, in spite of the fact that most people will not listen to God, **many will**, both Jews and Gentiles. The painful judgments that are falling will wake many people up to the fact that God is indeed real and that what He says is true. And many will believe through the ministry of the 144,000.

**Revelation 8-9**

Revelation 8 & 9 revolve around the next series of seven judgments called the trumpet judgments. As difficult as the seals judgments were, the trumpets are even worse. God uses pain as a megaphone to wake people up who refuse to listen to Him. Unfortunately, since most people continue to resist God, each of the three sets of judgments are more painful and intense. The seal and trumpet judgments occur in the first 3.5 years, and the bowl judgments occur in the last 3.5 years.

**Revelation 10**

In Revelation 10, John stops writing about the judgments and an extremely powerful angel comes on the scene. He tells John that God will no longer delay bringing His plans for mankind to a close (as He has for the past 2000 years as He has waited for people to come to Son). Chap 10 tells us that the “mystery of God will be finished”—that God’s purposes and plans for humanity will be completed.

**Revelation 11**

In the last chapter in Revelation dealing with the first 3.5 years of the Tribulation Period, John see the Two Witnesses who will preach both eternal life and God’s judgment every day of the first 3.5 years. Like Moses of old, they will tell mankind that God is going to bring a certain punishment on them, and then it happens. They are absolutely hated by most people, but they do succeed in bring 144,000 Jewish men to faith in Christ who will, in the last 3.5 years, spread all over the earth in God’s final call to mankind to come to His Son for eternal life. And as I mentioned earlier, chapter 11 ends right where chapter 4 began---in God’s throne room in heaven.

Next Sunday, we will look at Revelation 4 verse by verse. There are three passages that I would encourage you to read this week: Revelation 4, Isaiah 6, and Ezekiel 1. All three of these passages let you peek into the throne room of God and learn what God is truly like (as opposed to how He is portrayed in the world in which we live, even by well-meaning believers!

Several years ago in Britain, researchers went door-to-door asking persons about their belief in God. One of their questions: "Do you believe in a God who intervenes in human history, who changes the course of affairs, who performs miracles, etc.?" When published, their study took its title from the response of one man who was seen as rather typical of those who responded. He answered, "No, I don't believe in that God; I believe in the ordinary God."

British Bible scholar N. T. Wright said the following:

The word *judgment* carries negative overtones for a good many people in our liberal and postliberal world. We need to remind ourselves that throughout the Bible God's coming judgment is a good thing, something to be celebrated, longed for, yearned over. It causes people to shout for joy and the trees of the field to clap their hands. In a world of systematic injustice, bullying, violence, arrogance, and oppression, the thought that there might come a day when the wicked are firmly put in their place and the poor and weak are given their due is the best news there can be. Faced with a world in rebellion, a world full of exploitation and wickedness, a good God must be a God of judgment.

(Invitation)

**John 4:23**

23But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

**John 4:24**

24God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

**Revelation 11:16**

16And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones **fell on their faces and worshiped God,**

(They did this in chap 4:10; 5:8, 7:11; 11:16, 19:4). Note: 11:19 is the end of the inclusio RE 4:1-11:19.

**4:2**

**Psalm 47:8**-----8 God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.

**Ezekiel 1** (entire chapter---see chart by Swindoll)

**Isaiah 6:1–8**-----1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy *is* the Lord of hosts; The whole earth *is* full of His glory!” 4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 So I said: “Woe *is* me, for I am undone! Because I *am* a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts.” 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal *which* he had taken with the tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth *with it,* and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.” 8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here *am* I! Send me.”

(Note: God’s throne will be in the temple in the millennial kingdom 11:17 as well.)