



God's Judgment and Mercy in Revelation 8-11
P James • July 30, 2017

- I. Living in God's Story (Psalm 107:1-9, 43).
 - A. Verse 2 invites God's people to tell our story.
 - B. A close reading of Psalm 107, and especially verse 43 helps us see that our story can only make sense as part of God's story.
- II. Jesus warns us to expect his return (Luke 21:34-35).
 - A. It is too easy to live like Jesus isn't coming back.
 - B. II Peter 3:8-9 serves as a great reminder: God doesn't want anyone to perish. He is patient and waiting for all to come to repentance.
 - C. And yet the day will come when Jesus returns with both judgment and deliverance!
- III. Judgment in Revelation 8:1-5, 9:1-6, 20-21.
 - A. The judgments released in Revelation 8 are a response to the prayers of "all God's people." When we pray "your kingdom come, your will be done" we are praying for both God's mercy and judgment.
 - B. If we take the torture and carnage released after each of the first six trumpets literally, then half of the earth's population is killed.
 - C. Revelation 9:20-21 reports that those who remain will not repent of their selfishness and wickedness.
 - D. Why is it that humans would rather die (Rev 9:6) than repent?
 - E. Things begin to change in Revelation 11 after John is given a little scroll to eat and then speak (see Revelation 10:9-11).
- IV. The Ministry of Two Witnesses in Revelation 11:1-14.
 - A. John measures and protects God's people (Temple) from ultimate harm (Rev 11:1; and see Ezekiel 40, Zechariah 2, and I Peter 2:4-5).
 - B. God allows unbelievers to afflict Christians for 3.5 years (Rev 11:2; and see II Timothy 3:1-5, and 12).
 - C. God appoints two witnesses who afflict unbelievers with God's truth (Rev 11:3-6).
 1. Is this Moses and Elijah, as in Mark 9:4-5?
 2. Or is this a figurative way to speak about the whole church? Could we come in the power of Moses and Elijah?
 - D. After they finish their testimony, they are killed (Rev 11:7).
 - E. Unbelievers respond by celebrating their deaths (Rev 11:8-10).
 - F. God raises them from the dead and they strike terror in all who see them. We don't know how long they are on the earth before God takes them to heaven in a cloud (Rev 11:11-12).
 - G. This is followed by a great earthquake, by the collapse of 1/10th of the city, and the repentance of those who survive (Rev 11:13).
 - H. Will God save so many at the end of this age?
- V. The First Ending of God's Story (Revelation 11:15-19).
 - A. When the seventh trumpet sounds, we hear that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Messiah and he will reign for ever and ever" (Rev 11:15).
 - B. The twenty-four elders thank God who brings the future and their present as God begins his reign (Rev 11:16-17, and compare this to Rev 1:4, 8, and 4:8).
 - C. Using the language of Psalm 2, Rev 11:18 gives us a synopsis of the second telling of God's story in Revelation 12-20.
 - D. Our response? We can be confident in suffering because "God wins." Let us pray for one another and our world, and let us serve with glad hearts!