
Ignite

Please note that there will be no summary for the sermon preached on Sunday, 24 April 2022. You may watch the recording here: <https://bit.ly/3k41RDz>

Dear God, we live stuck in between two realms, the world we live in and the eternity we look forward to in heaven. In the middle chaos abounds, and less makes sense or aligns with the truth of Your Word or Your intention for creation. But through it all, You reign. Jesus sits on Your right-hand side, and death has already been defeated. We pray today that you bless our lives to honour You in everything we do. Every conversation, idle moment, and seemingly everyday task let all we do be for Your glory. Be our strength when it's hard to be Christians in this world. Embrace us with Your encouragement and fortify us with Your perfect love. In Jesus' Name. AMEN.





SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

The End #9: Vision of Perfect Judgement and Perfect Rule

Founding Senior Pastor Dato’ Dr Daniel Ho

Revelation 19:1-9

After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants." And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever."

The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!" Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!"

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!' " And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Introduction

Visions are a wondrous thing. The visions in the book of Revelation give us glimpses of what would happen to the world at the end of time, or rather the beginning of eternity. The visions in Revelation 19 and 20 speak mainly of God's perfect justice and perfect rule.

1. Perfect Justice

In the initial vision of perfect justice, there are two proclamations. One, of victory, and one of judgement.

a. Proclamation of Victory *Revelation 19:1, 6-7a, 7b-9*

With the proclamation of victory, there will be shouts of joy, blessings, and glory of God. The saints are rejoicing as Christ has defeated Babylon. Babylon represents the earthly powers and rulers which preside over social, economical and political structures and systems against God and His purposes. Babylon which is under the dominion and control of Satan will someday collapse. Satan manipulates powers to decide on how the world functions. For example, in the 18th century, seven European powers gathered together to carve out the continent of Africa. It was called the Scramble for Africa. Each country took over the control of various African colonies. Satan has done it before and would continue to influence the systems and mindset of people of this world.

On our part, we have to be prayerful and discerning of what we read or hear about in the media today. News and media agents tend to have an agenda of their own. No media is neutral. We must learn to have a mind of Christ and to line up what we think we know with Scripture.

With the proclamation of victory, an invitation to a great feast - the wedding supper of the Lamb - will be sent out to God's people.

b. Proclamation of Judgement *Revelation 19:2*

God's judgement is true and just. It is based only on the truth. We can take comfort and have the fullest assurance in God as only He knows the full and perfect truth. Every injustice, tragedy, lie and exploitation will one day be exposed. God's judgement will also be fair for all. Christians and non-Christians alike will experience peace, confidence, gratitude, security and assurance as God executes His judgement.

How will judgement be executed?

i. Through Jesus, the perfect judge *Revelation 19:11-16*

Jesus is the Righteous One. He is Faithful and True. He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. He has the eyes of blazing fire. He sees all and into every person. Nothing is out of His sight. All wrongs will be put right.

ii. On all who have corrupted the earth *Revelation 19:2b, 17- 18*

This includes those who stole, oppressed, cheated, lied, abused and mistreated the whole earth. All evil and wickedness will be so judged that there will be a multitude who will be left dying with no room for burial. Their decaying bodies will be fed to the birds of the air.

iii. On all who have killed God's servants and children *Revelation 19:2c*

Those who have been persecuted, killed and martyred for their firm faith in Christ will be vindicated.

iv. The beast and the false prophet are captured and thrown into lake of fire *Revelation 19:20*

The Beast refers to the antiChrist, a pretender of Jesus Christ while the false prophet refers to the religious leader who usually tries to perform miracles, signs and healings. The beast, the false prophet and Satan make up the Unholy Trinity. Without proper discernment, even Christian leaders will be susceptible to be fooled by the influences of this trinity.

v. The rest are killed *Revelation 19:21, 2 Peter 3:9*

After countless opportunities and chances to repent and ask God for forgiveness, there are still people who would resist against our patient and merciful God. Sadly, they will all perish at the end of time.

2. Perfect Rule *Revelation 20:1-13, 15*

Firstly, Satan is bound and cast into the abyss, the place of the departed spirit, for a thousand years. During this time, he will not be able to cause any havoc nor destruction on earth.

Then, Jesus Christ comes to rule with His faithful servants. He will raise those who have been martyred for their faith and they will rule and reign with him for a thousand years. This will be the first resurrection.

When a thousand years have passed, Satan is released. He will gather his forces from all corners of the earth and wage a final battle against God. It would be a useless attempt as Satan and his army will be totally annihilated, consumed by the raining fire from God's heaven.

Finally, everyone will be raised to life and judged, including those who have died at sea. This will be the second resurrection. Those whose names are in the Book of Life will be with Christ forever.

Final Vision

In Revelation 21 and 22, we will discover that God has a change of address! We will learn more of this in next week's sermon.

Conclusion

Now that we have a glimpse of what will happen in the future, how then, should we live our lives?

Here are three suggestions:

(i) Be faithful *Revelation 20:12a, Hebrews 6:4-6*

We can lose our names in the book of life if we turn away and deny our faith towards God. We ought to remain steadfast and true in spite of hurts, painful experiences, pressure, threats or persecution.

(ii) Be fruitful *Revelation 20:12b*

While we will be judged for our faith, we will be rewarded for our works. Everything we do, God takes a record. One way of being fruitful is to serve Him.

(iii) Be fervent

Continue to be passionate in faith and faithfulness. Don't grow cold nor take your faith for granted. Rise up in strength and energy. Tap into the power, wisdom and council of the Holy Spirit. Not only will He help and give us insight and understanding, He will also bear the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives. To keep this zeal going, bear witness for Christ. Make a difference in the lives of others.



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Activity/Questions

- Divide your cell group into two groups - Group A and Group B. [For Zoom, you may use the breakout rooms.] Pose the following questions to the groups.

Group A: *What would you do if you had insiders' news that Jesus was coming back in 7 days?*

Group B: *What would you do if you missed out on the insiders' news and only have a day left before Jesus comes back?*

Give the groups 5-10 minutes to discuss. Then, gather everyone together and have them share their answers. What are the differences or similarities in their responses?

- Imagine for a minute. What does the *Book of Life* look like to you? Do you see only its front cover or is it an opened book? Is the book thick or thin? Is your name printed on it? Whose names are you hoping to find in the book?

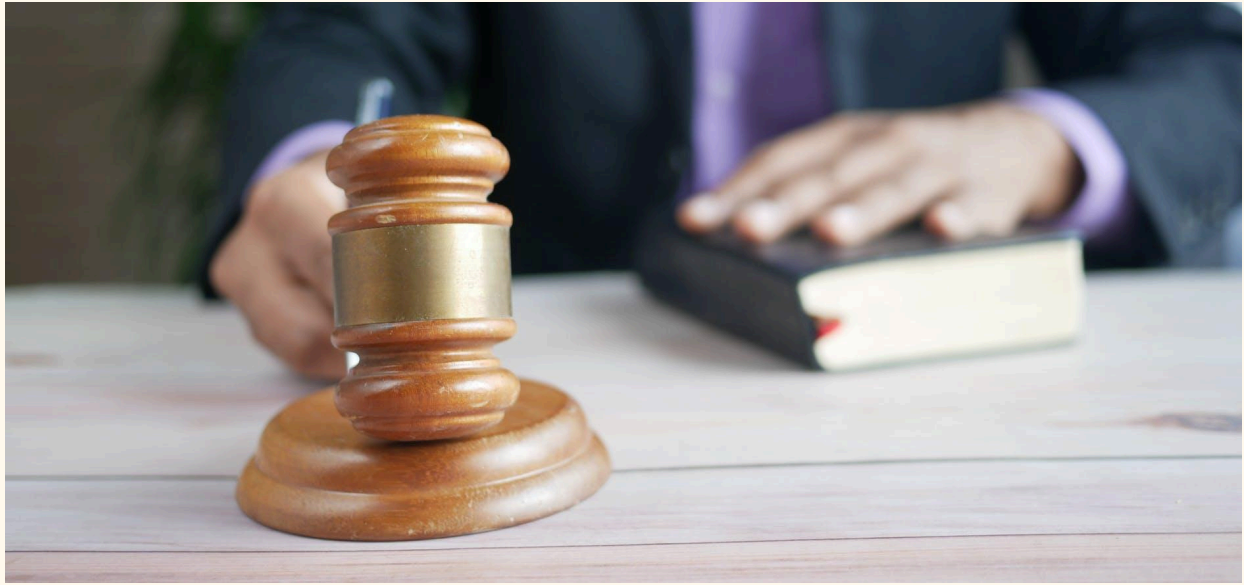


Photo by Towfiqu barbhuiya on Pexels

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- Based on Revelation 19 and 20, what are the characteristics of Jesus Christ? Which of these characteristics stand out the most for you? Why?
- How does the ultimate victory of Christ shape you to live out your life?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- How can you keep being fervent and passionate in your Christian walk? How can you make sure that you are being truly faithful and fruitful?
- There is an urgency for us to remain steadfast and faithful in these Last Days. What does that urgency feel or look like to you personally?
- Besides bearing witness to others about Christ, what are some ways that we can continue to be fervent for God?
- Are you using the gifts and talents that God has given you to be fruitful? How can you do more for your cell group or church? In what areas can you consider serving in a bigger capacity than where you are right now?

Question Bank *(Extra questions that you can use to bring your discussion further as you see fit):*

- After reading or listening to the news on social media or television, do you take it all in and make your own conclusions or do you filter them through the lens of God's Word? Do you have a channel where you are able to discuss with others on the various issues that crop up in the news?
- How do you reconcile your present life with the future as described in the book of Revelation? *[Note to facilitator: There were 3 suggestions in the sermon - be faithful, fruitful and fervent. You may expand on these or add on other ways.]*
- What encouragement does it give you to ensure that you live rightly and justly

- in view of the vision of perfect justice and perfect rule by Jesus in the Last Days? What must you go on doing more and what must you go on doing less?
- God always prepares His people on what is to come. With the book of Revelation unpacked and the last days revealed by God to us, how does it change the way you would live your life?
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SERMON REFLECTION



Photo by Jesse Mills on Unsplash

I recall the days following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. I had barely worked 4 months at the bookstore when I was swarmed by dozens of requests for a book by Nostradamus. His book had been off the shelves for years but there was a renewed interest when the media propagated that another of his predictions had come true. People wanted to know what would happen next. Eventually though, the clamouring for the forgotten book died down. Perhaps, his writings were too difficult to be deciphered by the average reader.

On recent Fridays, my cell members would ask me, *“When do you think the Russian invasion on Ukraine will end?”* I answered them, *“I don’t know. I have stopped following the news closely.”* It has only been 2 months. Meanwhile, the Syrian civil war

has been ongoing for more than a decade, and the Taliban is still wielding power in Afghanistan since August last year. And then, there's the global scale battle with the Covid-19 virus. Tragedy after tragedy. There will be no end to it till the end of time.
Should I not be concerned anyway?

The past week, the memory of a dream that I had when I was 12 came to mind. There was a tall and large-sized man, though I did not see His face. He wore a white robe and he stood in front of a wooden stand. He was turning the pages of a huge leather-bound book which shone in brightness. There were names written on it. When I woke up from my slumber, I realised that I had dreamt of the *Book of Life*.

Why did God show me that dream at that age, and why remind me of it now?

Perhaps as it was so vivid, I would think of its existence as and when I come across the passage about it in the book of Revelation or when I hear the mere mention of its name in a sermon. Perhaps the dream was a warning to me not to end up with my name blotted out of the Book. So no matter how far I have strayed from God and back-slided on my faith, I would never dare to deny my belief in Him.

As I reflected on this memory, the fresh insight that I received from God is that the pages are still turning but it is already more than half-way through. There is a sense of urgency to have names recorded into the Book before He turns to its final page. The tragedies in the Last Days do matter. People's lives matter.

Certainly though, life is not all roses. They may look beautiful to behold, but their thorns could prick. Words can heal and words can wound. I have found myself in recent weeks, tearing from hurts hurled at me. There is only so much that I can bear and tolerate. I rather break friendships off than be a likeable hypocrite. The pressure to appear fine and well stifled my walk with God, and that added to the ruins of a tormented mind and heart. Good Friday came, and Easter went. I also had to endure studying for an examination with notes as thick as a rim of A4-sized papers.

Yet, God is ever *Faithful and True* (Revelation 19:11). The same God that saw me through a week of Omicron infection, revealed what was troubling me and why I was reacting in a non-Christlike manner. It boiled down to trusting Him wholeheartedly. Rather than being shaken and in doubt, I ought to remain steadfast on God's Word and Promises. I should be fervently faithful towards Him. The fruit of following after Him is His shalom; *a peace that surpasses all understanding* (Philippians 4:6)

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Oh, Father! I have been careless. Forgive me for focusing on things that do not matter as much as the world that needs my prayer and Your love. While You have been patient with me, the clock continues to tick away. The pages in the Book of Life are being filled and I wish I could do my part in contributing some names towards it. I admit that I am afraid of the lions you are nudging me to chase. I am torn between being passionate for you and leaving my comfort zone, but I desire to live and leave my life with a legacy that would glorify your Name. So, where do I go from here, and what would you have me do?

Wherever, or whatever is it, may Your presence go with me, and grant me help and discernment to make the right decisions in my life. Thank you for your unfailing love towards me. This I pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Contributed by Wendy ML Tan



PRAYER

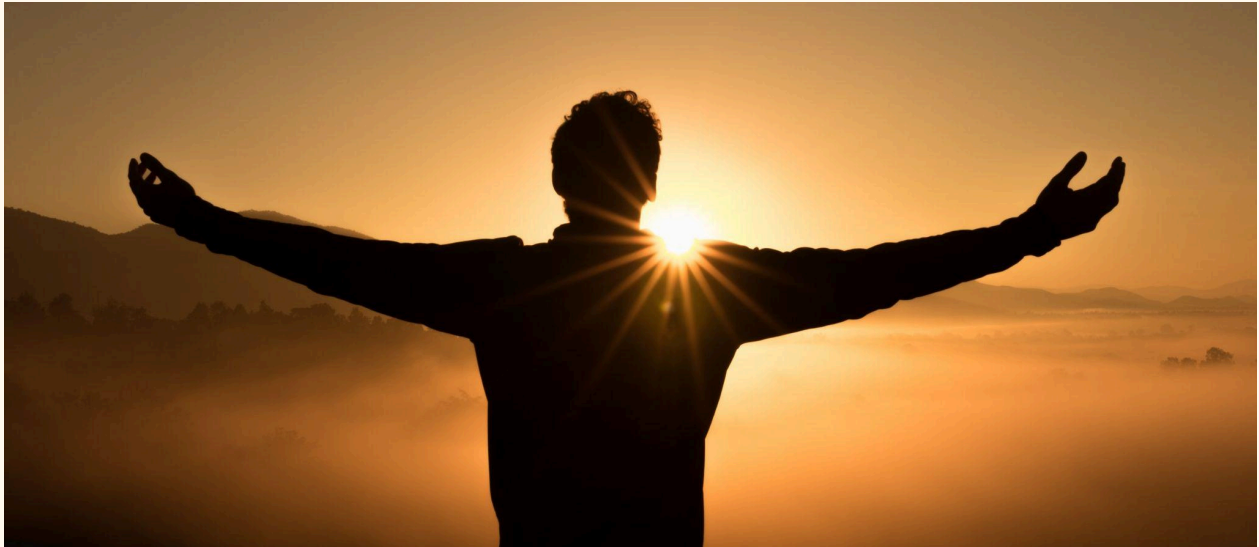


Photo by Zac Durant on Unsplash

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM)

Pray for:

- God's protection on all PDRM personnel in their duties and blessings upon them and their families.
- The fear of God to rule in their hearts, keeping them away from undesirable activities like corruption, misuse of power, etc.
- High moral standards of righteousness, integrity, honesty, compassionate hearts and willingness to serve.
- The Christian Police Officers and personnel to be the torch bearers of Christ in the Royal Malaysia Police Force.