

# THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

Revelation 11:15-19

The outline of the book of Revelation is clearly given by Jesus in Revelation 1:19.

## Revelation 1:19 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> *Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.*

John saw the vision of Jesus coming in judgment and wrote it down in chapter one of Revelation. This is the first section of Revelation. The second section pertains to *those (things) that are*. John was living in the Church Age as are we. The letters to the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3 form the second section of Revelation. The third and longest section pertains to those things that are to take place after the Church Age. The third section of Revelation deals primarily with the sequence of events that take place during the seven year Tribulation.

Just as there is a three-fold division to the book of Revelation so also there is a three-fold division to the events of the Tribulation. Tribulation events are organized around three series of judgments: the 7 Seal Judgments, the 7 Trumpet Judgments and the 7 Bowl Judgments.

But what makes it difficult to understand Revelation is that as the chronological sequence of these judgments are being revealed, they are interrupted by a number of parentheses. It becomes challenging to keep things straight. To help, I've integrated a simple timeline of the Tribulation with an outline of the three series of judgments.

The 7 Seal Judgments and first parenthesis corresponds to the first quarter of the Tribulation.

The 7 Trumpet Judgments and parentheses 2 through 5 correspond to the second quarter of the Tribulation.

The 7 Bowl Judgments correspond to the second half of the Tribulation.

We are studying Revelation 11:15-19. On the Tribulation Timeline this places us very near the midpoint of the Tribulation. It is at the midpoint of the Tribulation that the activities of the counterfeit trinity will kick in to high gear. The parentheses of chapters 12-14 explain the "why" and "what" of the counterfeit trinity's intensified campaign.

Revelation 11:1-2 reveals that a third Jewish temple will be operational at the beginning of the Tribulation. This Tribulation Temple will not be sanctioned by God and, in fact, will be censured by the Two Witnesses who's ministry during the first half of the Tribulation is revealed in 11:3-13.

As we come to Revelation 11:15-19, 6 of the 7 Trumpet Judgments have already been executed. Here, near the midpoint of the Tribulation, the 7th Trumpet is sounded.

## THE SEVENTH TRUMPET (11:15-19)

### Revelation 11:15-19 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> *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."*

<sup>16</sup> *And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God,* <sup>17</sup> *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."* <sup>18</sup> *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."* <sup>19</sup> *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.*

The sounding of the 7th Trumpet will be a significant event for several reasons.

### The 7th Trumpet Affirms the Certainty of Jesus' Victory (11:15)

Even though there are 3 ½ years to go, did you notice in verse 15 that the loud voices speak in the past tense?

#### Revelation 11:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> *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 7th Trumpet Judgment contains the 7 Bowl Judgments (10:7, 15:1). The 7 Bowl Judgments complete God's judgments on the earth. When completed, Jesus will come again, defeat Antichrist and cast Satan into the Abyss. The *kingdom of the world* will no longer be ruled by Satan, but by Jesus Christ.

The outcome of the Tribulation is never in doubt. The 7th Trumpet signals the final stretch of the Tribulation, the final judgments and the ultimate victory of Messiah. The language of past completed action reflects the certainty and joyful anticipation of Jesus' victory.

### The 7th Trumpet Anticipates the Righteous Reign of Christ (11:16-18)

In response to the 7th Trumpet the 24 elders will leave their thrones and prostrate themselves in worship before God's throne.

#### Revelation 11:16 (ESV)

<sup>16</sup> *And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God,*

The elders give thanks that God will assert His power and rule the nations.

#### Revelation 11:17 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> *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."*

Through Whom will God the Father reign? Through the Lord Jesus Christ to Whom He has given all authority (Matt. 28:18). When Jesus comes back he comes back not as the Lamb, but as the Lion. The vision John saw of Jesus was of the Lord Jesus moving out in judgment (Rev. 1:9-16).

In worshipping God, the elders anticipate the outworking of Jesus' authority.

#### Revelation 11:18 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> *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."*

The nations of the earth have never recognized or honored God's authority. Why do the nations rage? *Because they want to have their own way.* The rage of the nations against Messiah was prophesied in Psalm 2:

#### Psalms 2:1-3 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> *Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?* <sup>2</sup> *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,* <sup>3</sup> *"Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."*

God has allowed the nations to go their own way, but not forever. His wrath will come upon the nations in the form of the Tribulation judgments. The rebellion of the nations will end with the second coming of Christ. Jesus will reign over the nations with a rod of iron during His millennial kingdom.

Jesus' authority extends over all humanity. One day He will remove the ungodly and reward the godly. To this the 24 elders are referring when they speak of *the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants.*

#### Revelation 11:18 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> *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."*

The elders are referring to events that will occur upon completion of the Tribulation. They are looking beyond the next 3 ½ years to the things Jesus will do when He is enthroned as King over this world and all humanity.

**Jesus will judge the dead.** The phrase *the time for the dead to be judged* is a reference to The Great White Throne Judgment revealed in Revelation 20:11-15. Every unsaved human being, from Adam & Eve through the last person born in the Millennial Kingdom, will be on trial at this judgment. The Lake of Fire will be the final destination of all those tried at the Great White Throne Judgment. Degree of punishment is the issue that will be decided, not guilt. Exercising the authority given Him by God the Father, Jesus will preside at this judgment (John 5:19-29).

When we talk of being “saved” we are talking about being saved from the Great White Throne Judgment. All our sin (past, present and future) was judged on the cross (Col. 2:13-15). Nobody relying on Jesus’ shed blood for the forgiveness of sin will be at the Great White Throne Judgment.

Do you think the people in your sphere of influence understand *from what they need to be saved*? Wouldn’t it be good to ask them? If they don’t know, then ask for permission to briefly explain to them the Great White Throne Judgment. I encourage you to review the sermon *The Great White Throne Judgment* taught Easter Sunday.<sup>1</sup> Download the manuscript; study it until you are confident in explaining that from which every person needs to be saved.

As King of the kingdom of this world, Jesus will judge the dead.

**Jesus will resurrect and reward Old Testament and Tribulation Saints.** The phrase *and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints* refers to the resurrection and rewarding of Old Testament and Tribulation saints.

At the Rapture, all Church Age<sup>2</sup> saints will be resurrected. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, all Church Age saints will be purified and either rewarded or rebuked. The resurrection and reward of Church Age saints will be completed before the end of the Tribulation.

The 24 elders, who represent the Church which is in heaven during the Tribulation, are referring to the resurrection and reward of saints *following* the Tribulation.

This must refer to the resurrection and reward of Old Testament and Tribulation saints. The prophet Daniel was given this prophecy concerning the resurrection and rewarding of Old Testament saints following the Tribulation:

**Daniel 12:1-3 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> *“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.”* <sup>2</sup> *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.* <sup>3</sup> *And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.*

Daniel was given a personal promise concerning his resurrection following the Tribulation.

**Daniel 12:11-13 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> *And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.* <sup>12</sup> *Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days.* <sup>13</sup> *But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.”*

That Old Testament saints are resurrected after the Tribulation and prior to the Millennial Kingdom is indicated by our Lord’s statement in Matthew 8:10-11. Jesus was marveling at the faith of the Roman centurion when He said:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gccramona.com/sermon-archives/the-great-white-throne-judgment/>

<sup>2</sup> From Pentecost 33 A.D. to the moment of the Rapture.

**Matthew 8:10–11 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> *When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. <sup>11</sup> I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,*

As King, Jesus will remove the ungodly at the Great White Throne Judgment and He will resurrect and reward both Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints in the Interval between the Tribulation and Millennial Kingdom.

The resurrection and reward of Tribulation saints is revealed in Revelation 20:4-6.

**Revelation 20:4–6 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> *Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

In sum, the 24 elders are thankful that at the end of the Tribulation, when Jesus returns and is crowned King over the *kingdom of this world* He will deal with all mankind. All of the ungodly throughout human history He will judge and remove from His kingdom to the Lake of Fire. All of the godly throughout human history He will resurrect to His kingdom and reward the faithful.

Finally, the sounding of the 7th Trumpet is accompanied by a vision of the heavenly temple.

**The 7th Trumpet Attests God's Covenant Faithfulness (11:19a)****Revelation 11:19 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> *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.*

Chapter 11 opens with the tribulation temple and closes with the heavenly temple. The tribulation temple will be a monument to Israel's covenant breaking; the heavenly temple a reminder of God's covenant keeping. The Ark of the Covenant is a reminder of God's faithfulness to Israel. The copy of the Ark which Moses made contained the tablets etched with the Ten Commandments, a jar of manna and the Rod of Aaron that budded. These all speak of God's covenant faithfulness to Israel. He delivered Israel from Egypt and sustained her for forty years in the Sinai Wilderness in faithfulness to the Abrahamic Covenant. In the Mosaic Covenant, God made Israel a kingdom of priests and gave her the Law by which to become a holy nation and a light to the nations (Exodus 19:4-6). But Israel broke covenant with God and profaned His holy name among the nations (Ezekiel 36:22-38). Even so, God promised to make a new covenant with Israel and to place both His law and His Spirit within the hearts of His chosen people. The Mercy Seat which sits atop the heavenly Ark is sprinkled with the very blood of Jesus shed for the forgiveness of sins and the inauguration of the New Covenant (Hebrews 9:11-14).

Though Israel be unfaithful to God as attested by the Tribulation Temple, God will be faithful to Israel as attested by the heavenly Temple.

Finally, the 7th Trumpet warns of an impending storm.

**The 7th Trumpet Warns of an Impending Storm (11:19b)****Revelation 11:19 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> *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.*

The impending storm is the 7 Bowl Judgments that will rock the world during the second half of the Tribulation.

**REFLECTION**

Many of us are alarmed and saddened by the increasing degradation of our society and failures of our government. With a few exceptions, the church in the west is in decline; an increasing number of churches, denominations and Christian organizations are compromising on the issues of biblical inspiration and inerrancy and are caving to pressure from the homosexual movement. We are feeling the growing hostility towards us from the media, secular universities and government.

Our hope and inspiration to remain faithful to Christ is not in the uncertain wish that things will get better here, but in the certain knowledge that when He comes He will set all things right and that He will reward our faithfulness.

Let us, then, not be discouraged or distracted.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus; serving Him faithfully until He comes!