

OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES

# REVELATION

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET

11:15-19

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## Revelation 11:15-19

### The Seventh Trumpet Judgment (3rd Woe)

The second woe is past and there is a grave call to pay attention because the third woe is coming quickly! Listen! The sounding of a loud trumpet... loud voices in heaven... The announcement of the ages is taking place!

***Then the seventh angel sounded; 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 will reign forever and ever."*** Revelation 11:15

Once again (as we saw before the seven trumpet judgments) we can see an overview or a summary of what is about to happen.

When is "then"? In the hour that the witnesses went up to heaven, that the great earthquake happened, and that a tenth of the great city fell. In that hour the seventh angel will sound.

Before we proceed, let's look quickly at what we've seen so far... John was told to write down what he sees (the unveiling of Jesus Christ). Jesus gave His last instructions to the churches. John was taken up into heaven to see the things that are about to take place. We saw the Glory of God (in His throne room) as He decides Who will unleash His judgments. Seven seals have been broken, the seventh of which is seven trumpets. The events have been increasing in intensity.

There have been a couple of parenthetical inserts along the way. The first one was *between* the sixth and the seventh seal. The second pause was *between* the sixth and the seventh trumpet. *After* the angel sounds the seventh trumpet, we will see another interlude in chapters 12 through 14 (not in the actual judgements, just in John's vision).

Back to the text at hand...

When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet there will be loud voices in heaven heralding the beginning of the eternal reign of God and His Christ. This is what all Christians everywhere are waiting for... longing for... This day will come and it will be magnificent and horrifying at the same time.

God and His Christ are finally, finally, finally going to take the Kingdom unto themselves and they will never, ever, ever let anyone or anything rule again... ever!

The kingdom of the world, which appoints mere men over itself rather than the One Who has all rights to it, will be forever subdued under the authority and power of its Creator. God owns the world, always has and always will, but someday soon He will require recognition of His ascendancy and dominion over it. He is going to take up His throne... soon.

***And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God...*** Revelation 11:16

Remember the twenty-four elders from the throne room scene? Here they are again. Look at what they do when God and His Christ take up their Kingdom. They will fall on their faces and worship God (which they have done before: Revelation 4:9-11; Revelation 5:14) but this time their worship will be concerning what God has just done—taken His power and begun to reign.

***...saying, “We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.*** Revelation 11:17

They offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to the Lord God, the Almighty, because He has taken His rightful control. Notice that His ascendancy does not happen by popular vote, but rather through His great power!

Note, too, that the familiar phrase, “Who was, Who is, and Who is to come” (Revelation 1:4, 8; 4:8) is not used. They do not say, “Who is to come”. Why not? Because they are not talking about Him coming to heaven. They are with Him and simply expressing worship stating Who He is. Also, and this is crucial, His coming is no longer in the future—it is so imminent that it is the same as if He has already come! I am always amazed at the minute and detailed intricacies of God’s Word. In Revelation 1:4, 8; 4:8 the subject includes the idea of His return to earth where, of course, He will take up His reign and rule over His Kingdom. When the seventh trumpet sounds it is as though the countdown has passed the final second and has entered a “no stopping” zone. This is the point in His story where the inevitable is recognized.

***And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.*** Revelation 11:18

While the heavenly hosts in God’s presence are thrilled with what is about to take place, the nations are not. In fact, they are enraged. Why? Simply put... they don’t want anyone to tell them what to do—even their Creator! Psalm 2 is an excellent cross-reference to this situation. The Greek words for enraged (*orgizomai*) and wrath (*orge*) are from the same root. In other words, the nations’ response to God’s authority is unrighteous rage... but God’s response to their unrighteous rage is His righteous wrath.

God's righteous wrath will come in God's perfect timing. God has appointed a just and right time in the future and when it comes He will judge the dead (those who did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved from the wrath of God). The unbelieving dead will be judged at the end (Revelation 20:12).

God has also appointed a specific time when He will reward the living (those who believed and are saved from the wrath of God)—His bond-servants the prophets, the saints, and those who fear His Name, both the small and the great.

Thirdly, God has appointed an exact time when He will destroy those who destroy the earth. It may seem to men (the unjust dwelling on the earth) like God and His horrible judgments are destroying the earth, but what is the truth? God's Word says that the judgments are the consequences of man's rebellion against God—it is the rebellious who are responsible for the destruction of the earth!

***And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.*** Revelation 11:19

This is God's temple in heaven—the true temple. This is amazing. In the earthly reproduction the temple is closed to the masses and the ark of the Covenant is hidden from view even to the High Priest. The Holy of holies is swathed in secrecy by a veil through which no one is allowed to pass (except the High Priest once a year on the Day of Atonement). But not so in the true temple when the seventh trumpet sounds—the temple will be opened and the ark of His covenant will appear in His temple! In the Greek, the word for “opened” is *anoigo*. It means to open, to unlock, to disclose. The Greek word for “appeared” is *horao* and means to see, view, or perceive. Strictly it means to stare at and by implication it means to discern clearly. Like I said, this event is amazing!

We can see a intensified repetition of an earlier event in Revelation. There was a pause, or interlude, after the sixth seal. Then we saw the seventh seal (the seventh seal *is* the seven trumpets or next set of judgments) and there was a pause which took us into the heavenly temple. Then after the sixth trumpet there was an interlude once again. And now we see the seventh trumpet (the seventh trumpet *is* the seven bowls or next set of judgments) and another pause which takes us into the temple in heaven. And then we see an interlude following the pause (and before the final set of judgments).

Before we move on, take note of the flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and the earthquake and the great hailstorm. Where have we seen this kind of a tempest so far in Revelation? We saw them in Revelation 4 right before the Lamb took the scroll and broke the seven seals of judgment. We saw them in Revelation 8 right before the trumpet judgments. We see them in Revelation 11, which is right before the bowl judgments. Do you see the pattern? Here is a peek into the continuance of the pattern—we will see them again in Revelation 16, which is, guess what? Right before the seventh bowl judgment—God's grand finale!

## **(Seals)1 2 3 4 5 6 7=(Trumpets)1 2 3 4 5 6 7=(Bowls)1 2 3 4 5 6 7**

The seventh angel is sounding and the event is taking place—the kingdom of the world is becoming the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. The final set of judgments is beginning. But there is a difference—in the other sets of judgments God is punishing, but here, while continuing to punish, He is also beginning His actual reign.

This is an incredibly important main intersection of events. God is going to let all hell loose—hell does not break loose, God lets it loose, or releases the forces of hell to come against God’s kingdom. They do exactly that, as much as they can. Hell’s evil will be manifested by going against God’s people, Israel—the Jews.

But, it is at this same intersection that all of heaven breaks loose—God will spend all of His wrath on ungodliness and unrighteousness. He is going to pour it out on mankind and even uses bowls in John’s vision to do so. This is a major, major intersection and you would do well to study it as closely as you can. I will try to navigate you through it as best as I can, but ultimately it will require a little “think” time in His Word asking God to nail it down for you.

Although the event has begun (the seventh angel is sounding), there is going to be a longer silence (more anticipation) due to the greater intensity of the judgments which are about to take place. (The trumpet judgments are greater than the seal judgments and the bowl judgments are greater than the trumpet judgments.) Once again we see the calm before the storm—a contemplation of what is about to happen.

Right before the bowl judgments begin (which we will see after this next interlude) there will be smoke, from the Glory of God and His power, and no one will be able to enter God’s temple until the seven plagues (the seven bowls) of the seven angels are finished (Revelation 15). In the meantime, the interlude will begin.

Although we have finished observing Revelation 11:15-19, we need to stop at this major intersection awhile and thoughtfully take in the view from our mountaintop position. If you need to take a break or a breath, go ahead... because you will need to be clear-headed and fresh in order to fully take in the panorama around us... Understanding this intersection and its adjoining passages are crucial to understanding God’s timeline for the future—and is an integral part of studying other key passages of eschatology such as Daniel, 2 Thessalonians, Ezekiel, Zechariah, or Matthew. Take time and ask God to open your eyes to behold wonderful things from His Word (Psalm 119:18) and then... study as hard as you can (2 Timothy 2:15)... He will answer because He has promised to do so (Ephesians 1:17).

Now... are you ready? Good. Let’s begin.

First, let's look, from our vantage point on the mountain peak we will call "Revelation 11:15", backward toward the mountain peak called "Revelation 10:7" which refers to the days of the voice of the seventh angel.

#### Revelation 10:7

*...but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel,  
when he is about to sound,  
then the mystery of God is finished,  
as He preached to His servants the prophets.*

Then look again at the mountain peak upon which we are standing, Revelation 11:15, where it says, "*Then the seventh angel sounded...*"

#### Revelation 11:15

*Then the seventh angel sounded;  
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 will reign forever and ever."*

Do you see the connection? Yes, these refer to the same point in time—the days of the seventh angel (which we already know is the same as the seventh trumpet judgment or the third woe). Read both passages a couple of times until you are sure you see it.

Now look back again toward Revelation 10:7. What happens in the days of the voice of the seventh angel (the seventh trumpet judgment or the third woe), when he is about to sound? Yes, the mystery of God is finished.

The mystery of God, in this context, is synonymous with the mystery of His wrath. How do I know that? Reason with me for a moment. The seventh trumpet is the seven bowl judgments, so... in the seven bowl judgments the mystery of God will be finished. Are you with me so far? Good.

Now let's look at two other mountain peaks, "Mount Revelation 15:1" and "Mount Revelation 15:7" and read them both thoughtfully. These will show us the connection of the wrath of God to the mystery of God.

#### Revelation 15:1

*Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous,  
seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last,  
because in them the wrath of God is finished.*

#### Revelation 15:7

*Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls  
full of the wrath of God,  
who lives forever and ever.*

These are the same seven angels in both verses. They have seven plagues (or seven golden bowls) which are full of the wrath of God. In these plagues, or bowls, the wrath of God is finished. Once again, stop and thoughtfully consider what you have read. Do you see Scripture interpreting Scripture? Good.

Now let's take what we have observed on Mount Revelation 15:1 and Mount Revelation 15:7 and look once again toward Mount Revelation 10:7. The seventh angel is a different one than any of the seven angels who will be given the seven bowls. (I know, I know, just take a deep breath... and more importantly, keep asking God to show you what He has said in His Word.) The seventh angel in Revelation 10:7 is the seventh angel of the trumpet judgments; the seven angels in Revelation 15:1, 7 are the bowl judgment angels, not the trumpet judgment angels. However, because the seventh trumpet *is* the seven bowls (and we know that the seventh trumpet angel signals the entrance of the seven bowl judgment angels), we can know with certainty that the seventh trumpet judgment angel encompasses the seven bowl judgment angels. He will sound, so to speak, for all seven bowl judgments.

See, now that wasn't too hard, was it? (Just so you know, I am also taking deep breaths as I tremble to handle His Word accurately. And even though I have studied Revelation many times, I am still most definitely asking God to show me exactly what He has said in His Word!) We're doing fine because we are letting God speak for Himself in His Word, letting Scripture interpret Scripture for us—so let's keep going.

Let's remember that Revelation 10:7 tells us that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God is finished. Since the days of the voice of the seventh angel is the same as the seven bowl judgments, we can know that *"the mystery of God is finished"* is the same as *"the wrath of God is finished"*.

Now that we know *"the mystery of God is finished"* (from Revelation 10:7) is synonymous with *"the wrath of God is finished"* (from Revelation 15:1) we can also understand that when the seventh angel sounds and the loud voices are heard saying *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."* (from Revelation 11:15) it is the same time period as the wrath of God being finished (from Revelation 15:1). That is one super important piece of information! Don't worry if you may not realize just how important it is yet... you will as we continue through Revelation. That, my friends, is going to be a "given" that will help us to navigate the mountain range ahead!

Another way of putting what we have just learned is this: Revelation 10:7 and Revelation 11:15 are talking about the same thing. They happen at the same time, so events that are connected to either of them may, therefore, be connected to the other in terms of an historical timeline. The importance of this given cannot be underestimated. By the way, we have not yet observed all the passages that converge at this intersection—there is another important one in Revelation 12:10. But... I think you've probably had enough for now... Don't worry though, we will tackle it in due time. By then, you will have an even greater understanding of the book of Revelation so it will be easier!

At this point I used to show my students a cartoon of a wearied teacher, who was in front of a class, holding a pointer with his shoulders slumped. There was a whiteboard behind him filled with dozens and dozens of confusing arrows pointing this way and that connecting different events in Revelation. One of his students was standing, obviously intending to ask a question. The caption read, “No questions, please. I find they tend to confuse the flow of my answers”.

So if I say things like, “The wrath of God is going to be poured out in its entirety at the seventh trumpet (or the seven bowls) or, not to confuse you on purpose, but... during the third woe (which, if you remember, is the same as the seventh trumpet)” just remember the cartoon, take a deep breath, ask God to help you understand, and move forward in faith. (That’s what I’m doing.)

Does it feel like you have taken a drink out of the fire hydrant? Are you wet? A lot of the water is going to dry off and you will probably never see it again unless you go through Revelation thoroughly another time. That’s okay, because that is how learning works—a little bit here and a little bit there, building and building until you have a firm grasp of truth.

Don’t give up! After all, if you have been reading this Observation Study Series on Revelation from the beginning, you have already learned *something* more about the book of Revelation, right? (Hopefully a lot more!) Do you see that this book, although detailed and complicated, is not *too* difficult to understand? The information in the book of Revelation is not veiled to us—it is unveiled! We just have to read it, hear it, and heed it. (Revelation 1:3) And we are only about one-half of the way through. There is so much more to see on our trek across the marvelous mountain range of Revelation!