



The Book of Revelation

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15)

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The Third Woe and Seventh Trumpet (11:14-19)

11:14 The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon. ¹⁵ The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." ¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. ¹⁸ The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great - and for destroying those who destroy the earth." ¹⁹ Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm. (NIV)

11:14 *The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.* (ESV)

- In Revelation 8:13, after the first **four** trumpets had blown, we were introduced to three “woes”: *“Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!”*
- From this we see that the **three woes** correspond to the **last three trumpets**.
- The *“first woe”* (which is the **fifth** trumpet) ended before the sixth trumpet sounded (9:12–13).
- And now we see here that:
 - The *“the second woe”* (which is the **sixth** trumpet) *“has passed”*
 - And *“the third woe* (which is the **seventh** trumpet) *is soon to come.”*
- We’re not told what all the *“third woe”* includes (since the text never explicitly mentions when the third woe has ended), but it **probably includes** the *“woe”* following Satan’s expulsion from heaven that we will see in 12:12: *“woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”*
- Thus, there is an increase in **intensity** between the last two woes:
 - In the *“second woe”*, the **temple** was “cast out” like a demon (11:2)
 - As a part of the *“third woe”*, **Satan himself** will be “cast out” of heaven to the earth (12:10) where, in the short time he has remaining, he will **intensify** his persecution of believers on the earth (Revelation 12:12–17).

11:15 *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."* (ESV)

- So, here we the blowing of the “*seventh... trumpet*” – the **last** of the seven trumpet judgements.
- **This** seventh (and last) “*trumpet*” is **distinct from** and should **not** be confused with, **Paul’s “last trumpet”**: “...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye... *the last trumpet...will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*” (1 Cor 15:52)
- John here in Revelation 11 is focusing on **first-century** history, things that “*must soon take place*” (1:1, 3),
- Whereas Paul looks down to “*the end*” of history (1 Cor 15:24a) at the conquering of “*the last enemy*,” that is, “*death*” itself (1 Cor 15:26; cf. Jn 6:39,40, 44,54).
- John reflects on the **beginning** of the kingdom which has now “*become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ*” (11:15b), wherein he has “*begun to reign*” (11:17b);
- Paul envisions “*the end*” of the kingdom, when “*[Christ] delivers the kingdom to God the Father*” (1Cor 15:24), and when the “*Son himself will also be subjected to*” the Father (1Cor 15:28b).

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- Here we **also** see a **remarkable** contrast between the seventh **seal** and the seventh **trumpet**.
- In the opening of the seventh **seal** we are greeted with "**silence in heaven**" (8:1)
- But **now** with the sounding of the seventh **trumpet** we hear "**loud voices in heaven**".
- John does tell us the specific **source** of these voices, except to note generally that they are "**in heaven**."
- I suspect that the twenty-four elders are the ones crying out here, because, as we will see, they are **immediately** mentioned in the next verse.
- **Whoever** these voices represent, "**heaven**" is **loudly** praising "**our Lord and... his Christ**" at the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the coming destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.

11:15 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." (ESV)

- The text here encourages the original readers (as well as later readers, like ourselves) to view the things that take place on the earth from a **heavenly** perspective.
- The saints on earth are not to understand their experiences **solely** from their **earthly** point of view.
- We must not be **dismayed**; God is in control and his plan is unfolding.
- The first-century Church was being reminded here that God “*works all things according to the counsel of his will*” (Eph 1:11).
- The destruction of Jerusalem – the birthplace and headquarters of Christianity – did **not** result in the **demise** of the Christian faith.
- Rather it **sealed** the young faith’s long-term victory as it **separated** from Judaism.
- The Jews **remaining within** Judaism, however, **wept** for Jerusalem (Lk 23:28-30)—just as they did in the Old Testament (Ne 1:1-4; Ps 137:1; Isa 30:19; 65:19; Jer 14:2).

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- “*kingdom of the world*” here is **singular** because the world’s opposition forms **one** dominion under Satan (John 14:30; Acts 26:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:13; 1 John 5:19).
- Jerusalem's fall now provides **public evidence** that the “*kingdom of the world*”, united under **Satan**, has “*become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ*”, and therefore is now under **Christ's** judicial authority.
- Christ **received** this authority through His resurrection and exaltation (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20–21).
- AD 70 visibly demonstrated His heavenly rule, fulfilling the manifestation of his kingdom’s **power** that he **promised** would come – “*Truly, I [Jesus] say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.*” (Mark 9:1).

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- The announcement that the “*kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ*” echoes the universal dominion promised to the Davidic king in Psalm 2:
 - *As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill... Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.* (Psalm 2:6,8)
- Psalm 2 is a coronation Psalm that says that even though the nations rebel against him now, God’s King, **especially** his **ultimate** king (the Messiah) will receive the nations as His inheritance and he will **rule** over them.
- Our passage is joyfully announcing that that the promise of Psalm 2 has now reached that **greater** fulfillment where “*Christ*”, the **ultimate** king, has “*begun his reign*” (cf. 11:17b).
- This fulfillment of Psalm 2 will be developed further when we get to verse 18.

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- Jerusalem was the ***first major enemy*** to fall in the historical advance of Christ's kingdom.
- Her fall was ***particularly*** important in that she was the first persecutor of and leading threat to the apostolic church.
- Her defeat was like Jericho's fall: an initial victory guaranteeing a larger conquest.
- With the fall of Jerusalem, the world was conquered ***in principle***, while the full historical outworking remained ahead – *Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.* (Hebrews 2:8b)
- The destruction of the temple also completed the transition from the old covenant order and confirmed the unrestricted incorporation of Gentiles into God's kingdom—the completion of the "***mystery***" announced in Revelation 10:7 (cf. Romans 11:11–12).

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- In this passage we also see a fulfillment of the **kingdom** and **dominion** promises that we saw when we studied the book of Daniel:
- *And in the days of those kings [Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and especially Rome] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel 2:44)*
- *I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (Daniel 7:13–14)*

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Daniel	Revelation 11:15
Daniel 2:44 — God sets up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed	"he shall reign forever and ever"
Daniel 2:44 — It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms	"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord"
Daniel 7:14 — To the "son of man" was given dominion and glory and a kingdom	"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ "
Daniel 7:14 — All peoples, nations, and languages should serve him	The universal scope of the kingdom declared in heaven
Daniel 7:14 — His dominion is an everlasting dominion	"he shall reign forever and ever"

11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ 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. (ESV)

- “*twenty-four elders*” – Just a brief review of what we said about the heavenly elders back in chapter 4:
- The **identity** of the “*twenty-four elders*” is one of the most debated questions in Revelation.
- Many commentators, including Schreiner, Beale, and Mounce, believe the elders are exalted heavenly beings or angelic representatives of God’s people.
- They note that the elders are consistently associated with heavenly creatures and angels, appear continually in God’s presence, and sometimes seem distinct from redeemed believers (Rev. 5:9–10; 7:9–17; 14:3).
- Other commentaries argue that the elders represent redeemed **humanity**, especially the people of God viewed in their glorified state.
- Regardless of your view, the important thing to understand about the “*twenty-four elders*” is not so much **who** they are (we’re not told!), but what they **portray**: the **destiny** of God’s faithful people: holiness, victory, and participation in Christ’s reign.

11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ 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. (ESV)

- The “*twenty-four elders... fell on their faces*” before God as they do in 4:10, 5:8, 7:11 and 19:4.
- Their posture expresses wholehearted submission.
- They are seated on “*thrones*” and participate in the heavenly praise of His judgment.
- The elders **thank** the Almighty for exercising His “*great power*”.
- “*you have taken your great power and begun to reign*” – this does not imply that God previously **lacked** power.
- Rather, the physical destruction of the temple **demonstrated** His “*reign*” in a manner that human history could plainly witness.
- This judgment directly fulfilled Jesus' warning to the Sanhedrin during His trial: “*Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.*” (Matthew 26:64 NAS).

11:18 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 [Land].” (ESV)

- Here the elders continue their recitation and praise of the works of God as he manifests Christ’s rule and power in the world by bringing justice to the Land of Isreal.
- Their language of praise, like the language we saw in verse 15, points to a fulfillment of Psalm 2: *“The nations raged, but your wrath came”*.
- In Psalm 2, the psalmist describes a **two-stage** conflict: human rage and rebellion followed by anger and judgment coming from the Lord and his Anointed (his divinely installed king):
 - Human Rage and Rebellion: *“Why are the nations in an uproar [raging/enraged], and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed...”* (Psalm 2:1–2).
 - Divine Anger and Judgment: *“Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury...”* (Psalm 2:5; cf. Psalm 2:12).

11:18 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 [Land].” (ESV)

- The **initial** fulfillment of Psalm 2:1–2 occurred during the trial and crucifixion of Jesus.
- In Acts 4:25–28, the early church **explicitly** quoted this same Psalm, identifying both Gentile rulers and Jewish leaders as the “*the kings... and the rulers*” who “*gathered together*” against Jesus:
 - *'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'-- for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.*
- At the crucifixion, the Jewish leadership allied themselves with the Roman authorities (“*the kings of the earth*”) to execute Lord’s anointed Messiah.
- They explicitly declared their allegiance to Rome over God’s Anointed when they cried out to Pilate, “*We have no king but Caesar!*” (John 19:15) and “*His blood shall be on us and on our children!*” (Matthew 27:25).

11:18 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 [Land].” (ESV)

- Because apostate Israel killed the prophets, crucified the Messiah, and continuously persecuted the apostles and early saints, **Israel herself** became the **chief** opponent of God and His Anointed.
- By rejecting the Messiah, Jerusalem placed herself in the position of the rebellious "*nations*" in Psalm 2 who fought against God's true King.
- Because Israel joined in rebellion against the Anointed, God turned the very "*kings of the earth*" (the Roman Empire and its client Gentile nations) into the instrument of His divine judgment against **them**.
- In our text, "*The nations raged*" would apply to the Roman legions—drawn from various Gentile nations across the empire—marching on Judea.
- Jesus explicitly foretold this event in Matthew 22:7: "*The king [the Lord] was enraged, and he sent his armies [the Romans] and destroyed those murderers [the Jews] and set their city [Jerusalem] on fire.*"
- Although the Roman armies were driven by their own fierce rage and hatred for the Jews, they were operating under God's sovereign command as the "*rod of My anger*" (echoing what God says about Assyria in Isaiah 10:5–6).

11:18 *The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged [vindicated], 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 [Land].” (ESV)*

- During this “*time*” of God’s “*wrath*” when the “*nations*” (serving in the Roman army) “*raged*” against Jerusalem we are told that it was a “*time for*” three things:
 - “*for the dead to be [vindicated]*”
 - “*for rewarding [God’s] ... prophets and saints*”
 - “*for destroying the destroyers of the [Land]* (of Israel)”
- “*for the dead to be [vindicated]*”:
 - The “*dead*” here are first-century martyrs.
- The Greek word (*krino*), translated here as “*judged*” can (and in this context I believe **should**) be translated “*vindicated*” (e.g. see the ESV translation of Deut 32:36; Psalm 43:1)
 - As we have seen (and will continue to see) Israel's judgment is tied in large part to their persecution of the saints (Rev 6:10; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24).
 - Therefore, as the Romans “*raged*” against Jerusalem, the **martyrs** who had **died** at the hands of the Jews (i.e. “*the dead*”) were “*vindicated*”, because God was using the Roman army to punish the Jews for murdering Christ and his martyrs (cf. Mat 23:35)

11:18 *The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged [vindicated], 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 [Land].” (ESV)*

- *“for rewarding [God’s] ... prophets and saints”:*
 - The word translated “*rewarding*” refers to a recompense or wage based on what one deserves.
 - God rewards His Old Testament prophets and saints by ***publicly vindicating*** their message.
 - In the Bible, a primary aspect of “*reward*” for the righteous is God executing vengeance upon their unrepentant oppressors (Psalm 58:10–11; Revelation 18:20)
- *“for destroying the destroyers of the [Land] (of Israel)”:*
 - John employs a striking wordplay: God will physically destroy (*diaphtheirai*) those who morally destroyed (*diaphtheirontas*) “*the Land*” (of Israel).
 - The Jews brought this physical devastation upon themselves through fanatical rebellion, moral apostasy, and violent internal civil wars.
 - As Josephus documented, the internal madness and tyranny of the Jewish factions were the true cause of Jerusalem's ruin.
 - Their destruction fulfilled the legal self-curse uttered at Christ's trial: “*His blood shall be on us and on our children!*” (Matthew 27:25).

11:15 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..." 18 The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be [vindicated], 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 [Land of Israel]."
(ESV)

Psalm 2	Revelation 11	Theme
v. 1 — "Why do the nations rage"	11:18 — "The nations raged"	The same rebellion continues
v. 2 — "against the Lord and against his Anointed"	11:15 — "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ"	The Anointed One is the center of the conflict
v. 8 — "Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage"	11:15 — "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ"	The promise of universal dominion is fulfilled
v. 9 — "You shall break them with a rod of iron"	2:26–27; 12:5; 19:15 — ruling with a rod of iron	The Messiah's unyielding authority
v. 12 — "Kiss the Son... for his <i>wrath</i> is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take <i>refuge</i> in him"	11:18 — vindication and reward versus destruction	The choice between wrath and refuge

11:19 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. (ESV)

- Here the vision ***ends*** where it ***began*** (11:1-2): with the “*temple*”.
- The temple on ***earth*** has fallen, but the “*temple in heaven*” is now “*opened*”.
- The earthly temple was a ***patterned after*** the heavenly temple (Hebrews 8:5).
- Furthermore, we’re told that “*the ark of his covenant*” can be “*seen*” in the heavenly temple.
- The ***earthly*** ark of the covenant was destroyed during the Babylonian siege in 586 BC and was completely absent from the Second Temple (as recorded by Tacitus and Josephus).
- Its sudden appearance now “*in heaven*” proves that God maintains His covenant with His true spiritual people, while His holy Law stands as an indictment against apostate Israel.

11:19 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. (ESV)

- Next, we're told that the vision closes with "*flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail*".
- These manifestations remind us of the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:16–19) as well as the Seventh Plague of Egypt (Exodus 9:22–26).
- The divine phenomena that accompanied the inauguration of the Old Covenant at Sinai now reappear at its permanent dissolution.
- When Jesus died, the temple veil was torn in two (Matthew 27:51), showing that the earthly temple system was redemptively obsolete (Hebrews 8:13; 9:8).
- In AD 70, the physical structure was razed to the ground, making access to the Old Covenant ritual system permanently impossible.
- The fall of old Israel was ***not*** the "beginning of the end."
- ***Instead***, it was the definitive sign that Christ's worldwide kingdom had truly begun, that the Lord was ruling the nations from His heavenly throne, and that the Old Covenant age had reached its final end.

Class Discussion Time

- In our lesson today, we saw that Rev 11:15 encourages the original readers (as well as later readers, like ourselves) to view the things that take place on the earth from a ***heavenly*** perspective.
- We are not to understand their experiences ***solely*** from our ***earthly*** point of view.
- We are reminded here that God “***works all things according to the counsel of his will***” (Eph 1:11).
- Can you think of something right now that, from an earthly perspective ***seems*** (and maybe in one sense ***is***) tragic, that from God’s perspective is, no doubt, serving his good and holy purposes?

Class Discussion Time

- In our lesson today, we saw the **beginning** of Christ's earthly kingdom (Rev 11:17b) where he was given "*All authority in heaven and on earth*" (Mat 28:18) "*not only in this age but also in the age to come*" (Eph 1:21) – when he was "*presented before*" the "*Ancient of Days*" after he ascended through "*the clouds of heaven*" (Dan 7:13-14) where he is now "*seated... at [God's] right hand*" (Ephesians 1:20) while God makes his enemies his footstool (Ps 110:1).
- This **beginning** was marked visibly, historically, and "*with power*" by the prophesied destruction of the temple (Matthew 24:2 cf. 26:64) which solidified the final completion of the Old Covenant age, bringing in the New Covenant age and "*the mystery*" of the full inclusion of the Gentiles Revelation 10:7 (cf. Romans 11:11–12).
- We also alluded briefly to the **full completion** of the conquest that takes place at the **end of the age** when the "*last trumpet...will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*" (1 Cor 15:52) and when Christ "*delivers the kingdom to God the Father*" (1Cor 15:24), and when the "*Son himself will also be subjected to*" the Father (1Cor 15:28b).
- What is happening now **between** those two events, and where do **you** fit into all of this?