

The Seventh Trumpet

A Series on Divine Judgment: Part 12

Discontinuous with the sequential narrative of the first six trumpets, the seventh trumpet has posed some difficulty in fully understanding what it's about because its introduction is punctuated by three intervening passages (Rev 10:1-6; Rev 10:8-11:14 and Rev 12:1-14:5).

The seventh trumpet, itself comprised of three passages (Rev 10:5-7; 11:14-19 and Rev 14:6-20), can be more easily understood by employing a study method of studying each pertinent passage in a manner that facilitates easier observation of the text.

Revelation 10:5-7

5) Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, **6)** and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will be delay no longer, **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. (Rev 10:5-7)

In this initial passage about the seventh trumpet, the strong angel that came down out of heaven with an open small scroll in his hand (Rev 10:1-2) indicates that there will be no longer any delay of God's plan. Furthermore, the sounding of the seventh trumpet will reveal the mystery of God foretold by the prophets.

Revelation 11:14-19

14) The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly. Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,

15) "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

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

19) 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. (Rev 11:14-19)

As in the fifth and sixth trumpet, the seventh trumpet heralds a woe. It is unknown at this point of what this third and final woe will be - specifically how God will dispense His wrath upon human beings. However, unique among the previous seals and the trumpets, the sounding of the seventh trumpet elicits great praise and worship among the heavenly beings.

Loud voices in heaven announce that the kingdom of the world, previously ruled by Satan, has become the kingdom of God and His Son Jesus.

Before His resurrection, Jesus identified Satan as the ruler of the world.

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Now judgment is upon this world; now the **ruler of this world** will be cast out. (John 12:31)

In like manner, the apostle Paul calls Satan a ruler as “prince of the power of the air.”

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the **prince of the power of the air**, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. (Eph 2:1-3)

The heavenly voices are rejoicing that something has happened that signifies that the kingdom of the world “has become the kingdom of God and his Son.” At this moment, all that has happened has been the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

The twenty four elders fell on their faces and worshiped God by praising Him for the following reasons:

1. The seventh trumpet heralds God’s reassertion to rule His creation earth. However, what is significant is the phrase “the Almighty, who are and who were.” Observe carefully that there is no mention of the triune God in the future tense, which can be seen in contrast with an earlier praise:

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and **who is to come.**” (Rev 4:8)

This appears to be consistent with Revelation 10:7. There will no longer be any mystery of God; the eschatological concept of God is about to be fully realized.

2. The seventh trumpet heralds the final dispensation of His wrath of judgment against the “sons of disobedience.”

3. The seventh trumpet heralds the judgment of the dead including the rewards for Believers.

The sounding of the seventh trumpet also opened the heavenly temple of God and revealed the ark of His covenant.

The open heavenly temple was later restated as “the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened” (Rev 15:5).

“The temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven” was used in the Old Testament as a reference to the portable tabernacle in the early history of Israel (Num 1:50-53).

The open temple allows the seven angels with the seven plagues to come out (Rev 15:5-6). These plagues are the last of God’s plagues, and with them, the wrath of God is finished (Rev 15:1).

Revelation 14:6-20

6) And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; **7)** and he said with a loud voice,

“Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.”

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8) And another angel, a second one, followed, saying,

“Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.”

9) Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice,

“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, **10)** he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. **11)** And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

12) Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. **13)** And I heard a voice from heaven, saying,

“Write, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!’”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.”

14) Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. **15)** And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud,

“Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

16) Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. **17)** And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. **18)** Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying,

“Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.”

19) So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. **20)** And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles. (Rev 14:6-20)

Three angels flying in midheaven make three pronouncements.

The first angel preaches to the whole world the gospel in a manner that all would understand and have no excuse (Rev 14:6-7).

The second angel, following the first, proclaims the fall of the secular worldview that denies the existence of God and sin; the lifestyle that is motivated by pride and power and attracts all cultures and people, intoxicating and pleasurable, will be judged for its immorality (Rev 14:8).

The third angel, following the previous two in speaking to all human beings of the world, condemns all those who have the mark of the beast (Rev 14:9-11).

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At the conclusion of the three angels flying in midheaven, a voice from heaven instructs the apostle John to write, "blessed is he who die in the Lord from now on" to which the Holy Spirit reiterates (Rev 14:13).

This short passage illustrates the compassion of God. At this moment in time, all pre-existing Believers died at the end of the sixth trumpet; thus, any new Believers would have been those who responded to the gospel of the first flying angel. When the bowls containing God's wrath are poured, the plagues are no longer intended to rebuke and reprimand so that non-Believers will turn to God. Instead they are intended to exact His judgment of death (Deut 28:58-61).

The final result of the seventh trumpet is the appearance of the reapers, and the reaping that occurs is in the figurative sense and reminiscent of the Parable of the Tares

Jesus Christ, sitting on the cloud wearing a golden crown, wields a sharp sickle (Rev 14:1-16).

An angel, who came out of the heavenly temple, wields a sharp sickle (Rev 14:18-19).

The sounding of the seventh trumpet signals several major transitions:

1. The "mystery of God" is finished.
2. The third woe, the last and final dispensation of God's wrath, is about to begin.
3. The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of God and of His Son.
4. The judgment of the dead and reward for Believers will occur soon.
5. The heavenly temple of God is opened.
6. Three angels flying in midheaven make three pronouncements for all on earth to hear and understand: a) the gospel, b) the illusion of the secular worldview that denies the existence of God and sin, and c) the condemnation of all with the mark of the beast.
7. Jesus arrives in the cloud and begins to gather all Believers, whether dead or alive, and the angel begins the reaping of non-Believers alive on earth.