

The Seventh Trumpet

The Last Trumpet

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Today, the day of Trumpets, is a pivotal one in the grand scheme of things. It is the central holy day. We might call it the pivotal holy day among the seven. Three have preceded and three will follow.

It is interesting that the three that have passed focus on God's work with individuals in terms of redemption and salvation. The three that are to come are far broader in scope. In essence they look forward to the redemption and salvation of all humanity.

It is this day—this particular day of Trumpets, and what it means—that bridges those two groups. What is past, and what will come, hinges on this one day of Trumpets.

I have said before in other sermons, and I am sure that other ministers have said also, that Trumpets is a keystone holy day. It holds the others up just like a keystone holds up the arch made with brick or stone. Using a different metaphor, the others orbit around Trumpets. It is central to God's plan.

For us, it is the next day, or the next time, the next period, the next prophetic thing that we are looking for to be fulfilled. We anticipate it as the consummation of all that we have worked for and hoped for. And after it is fulfilled, people in the millennium, and in God's kingdom, will look back to the Day of Trumpets as the seminal event that made their salvation possible. It is a day that looks both ways.

It is known secularly—in the world—as the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah. More correctly, it begins the civil year. It is really not "New Year's Day" in terms of what we might think in terms of New Year's Day. But, it is just a delineation of when the civil year begins on the first day of the seventh month with the new moon.

The government of ancient Israel ran its calendar from this day. Kings counted the beginning of their reigns from this day. This was their reginal day. And, if the king happened to come into his reign in the spring, then that six months or so before Trumpets was counted as his father's reign. His reign really did not start to be counted until the Day of Trumpets. And, if it began slightly after Trumpets, they still came back to the Day of Trumpets to count it.

Most people who use this calendar in the ancient Near East counted their birthdays from this day. As you know, this calendar is lunar, and not very regular compared to our Roman calendar. It goes by moons, and so it is harder to count from year to year as they had extra months thrown in every now and then. You had to be on top of things to keep up with the calendar. So, it was far easier to consider the next year of your life to begin on the Day of Trumpets. It was just one of those days where everybody agreed that it was good to do.

This day, then, if we look at these things, especially the idea about it being the beginning of the year of a king's reign, can be said to commemorate the beginning of God's reign—God's government—on the earth when it is fulfilled.

We will read Leviticus 23 and we will get a running start into this day. This, of course, is just a smidgen of information that God gives about the Feast of Trumpets.

Leviticus 23:23-25 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation [which we are doing right now]. 'You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'"

With just these three verses (really only two verses) we get all of what God says about the Day of Trumpets, basically, as far as telling what it is. In this chapter, it may be the most obscure of the holy days, except maybe for the Last Great Day, which is simply passed over as the eighth day in which we are to have a holy convocation. It is hard to say, just from these verses, what it means.

Now, the only real clue we get is that God calls it "a memorial of blowing of trumpets," which is literally "a remembrance of shouting." That is all that it is. What does it remember? What was being shouted about? What was being trumpeted? It does not say.

It just says that you are to keep this day as "a remembrance of shouting." Now, that word, shouting, in the Hebrew is, *teruw'ah*.

It is a shortened form of "shout of the shofar." So, if we want to put it all back in, it is "a remembrance of the shout of the shofar."

But, this still does not tell us a great deal—the "shout of the ram's horn."

Psalm 81:3 Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon...

This does not tell us a great deal more, but it is the same sort of thing, a blowing of trumpets. This translation in Psalm 81:3 helps us to understand what a remembrance of shouting is, that it is a blowing of trumpets. And so the translation in Leviticus 23:24 is correct—it is a memorial of blowing of trumpets.

Now, *teruw'ah* has several senses, among them is shouting. You can shout about a lot of different things.

It can mean alarm. It can mean loudness. Obviously when somebody shouts, especially when a whole nation shouts, it is going to be pretty loud.

And then it can also mean joy, or jubilee. So, it runs the gamut from the shouting of alarm to the shouting of joy.

However, this shout of the shofar is most often with the noise of war. From what I have read, having never been in a war myself, obviously, the noise of war is significant. Even back in these times, people were shouting, there was ringing of weaponry; today, of course, many kinds of explosives, or gunfire are going to make a lot of noise. But, in this time, the noise of war was made by men shouting, by arms (weapons) clashing, by horses neighing, by orders being given, by just the sheer exertion of men against other men.

I have read accounts of our Civil War of when the fighting stopped how the silence was so overwhelming afterwards because the noise of the battle had been so great.

We will read Numbers 10 and pursue this idea of the trumpet a little bit. The first third of this chapter talks about the two silver trumpets that God had Moses make, and their uses. We are just going to read verses 9 and 10 because the first several verses of this section talk about the use of the trumpet in the movement of the children of Israel in the wilderness. So, it does not have as much significance to us right now as these two verses.

Numbers 10:9-10 When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the LORD your God, and you will be saved from your enemies. [That is interesting that God remembers, too, when He hears the sound of a trumpet.] Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I *am* the LORD your God.

Like I said, these are the two silver trumpets that God had Moses make. But, the shofar—a ram's horn—was used in a very similar way. It was often what was blown to call people to war. It has—depending on the size of the horn, of course—a grating, enervating sound compared to a silver (man-made) trumpet. We think of silver trumpets being played by professional musicians where they have a nice tone to them. They are musical. But, the ram's horn has this grating, foghorn type sound.

If you know anything about sound, this low, bass sound can travel a long distance—longer than a treble sound, or a higher pitch. It gets to your gut. It makes you sit up and take notice, whereas a nicer, higher pitch will please you, unless it is screeching. But this sound of a shofar is visceral. It makes you sit up, take notice, look that way, and try to figure out what is going on.

These uses here in Numbers 10:9-10 all have to do with the Day of Trumpets in one way or another: The sound to war; it is a day of gladness—it is a Feast Day as it says in the next one, "In your appointed Feasts," (this is definitely an appointed Feast), and it is also the beginning of a month. And so, the sound of the Trumpet, or the use of a trumpet is very appropriate to this particular day.

We see here, that yes, the trumpet was used in directing the camp of Israel. But maybe its main use was a call to war, and a use on a monthly basis for the new moons; and then on the annual basis, the appointed feasts, particularly this one, because in this one, the appointed feast and the new moon comes together.

We are going to focus on this call to war just for a moment.

Joel 2:1-2 Blow the trumpet [this is the shofar, the ram's horn] in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble [the visceral sound of the ram's horn that sets you to trembling]; for the day of the LORD is coming, for it is at hand: A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, the like of whom has never been; nor will there ever be any such after them, even for many successive generations.

Joel 2:10-11 The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness. The LORD gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?

So, what we see Joel prophesying about here is the ram's horn being blown to announce the coming of war. We might say the real war to end all wars. It is blowing to announce "The Dreadful Day of the Lord" as Joel calls it—a time of darkness, and gloominess; a time of destruction, a time we do not want to be involved in if possible.

Now, at the head of this army, as we see in verse 11 is God Himself, our Savior Jesus Christ returning as King in great wrath—not as benevolent ruler, but returning in great wrath—with an army at his back; in judgment executing His Word, as Joel says here.

That does not sound very good—the word "execute", "execution". He is coming to take heads, as it were. As we see in Revelation, it says that the sword comes out of His mouth. He is going to execute His Word. It is just another way of saying, execute His judgment on the earth.

So, today (this has all been an introduction!), I want to look at the sounding of this trumpet, called the last trump, or the last trumpet; also called the seventh trumpet. That is the title I have chosen, "The Seventh Trumpet." Specifically, we are going to be going through Revelation 11:15-19, because that is where the seventh trumpet is most succinctly described.

And having done that, I will have gone through all of Revelation 11 in two years time, or however long it has been.

But, before we go there, we will stay in the Old Testament and search this out a little bit. We are going to start in Psalm 47. We are going to read the whole psalm. It is nine verses. I will not be commenting very much about these. I just want you to get the flavor of the time, the trumpet blast, and what it means. We are still on this Numbers 10 theme talking about what the trumpets signify.

The title of Psalm 47 in the New King James is "Praise to God, The Ruler of the Earth."

Psalm 47:1-9 Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God [notice: Shout to God!] with the voice of triumph! For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth. He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet. He will choose our inheritance for us, the excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding. God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne. The princes of the people have gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is greatly exalted.

Now, you can see in this God's reign—God's giving the inheritance to His people—as well as God coming as King waging war to execute judgment. And, as the last verse shows He has already, at this point, taken the shields of His enemies—meaning they are defenseless before Him.

Also notice through the whole Psalm this shout of victory and praise—this idea of the shout of the shofar and the trumpets being intertwined. And we have this whole gamut of emotion, and action happening from this dread alarm and war all the way through the gladness and the joy. Now, not everybody is going the whole gamut. There are some who are alarmed because of the war, and because the judgment is coming upon them. And then on the other extreme there is hopefully those of us who will be joyful (like we have never been joyful before) that God has finally come to reign and that our reward is going to be given.

Isaiah 27:12 And it shall come to pass in that day [meaning the Day of the Lord] that the LORD will thresh...

That is a military term—actually an agricultural term—but, when you are talking about threshing people, that means they are bruised and killed.

Isaiah 27:12 ...the Lord will thresh From the channel of the River to the Brook of Egypt; and you will be gathered one by one...

Now, possibly in this section it is talking about a harvest also. It could go either way.

Isaiah 27:13 So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; they will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Now, probably, I would say that in this section it is talking more about a harvest, and gathering. But, part of that may also be a judgmental approach. Threshing does not sound pleasant.

We saw there a trumpet blowing, and the gathering happening with this idea in the background of judgment.

Zephaniah 1:14-18 The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter [Aha! Noise!]; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers. I will bring distress upon men [God speaking], and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD; their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like refuse." Neither their silver nor their gold Shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy, for He will make speedy riddance of all those who dwell in the land.

Zephaniah does not paint a pretty picture here. Again, like Joel, he emphasizes darkness, devastation, and the trumpet, the shouting, and the crying. Then, the reason for all this is God's judgment.

One thing that he does bring in, which is interesting to think about, is that twice in these five verses he mentions haste and speed—remember my "Shock, and Awe, and Speed" sermon? That is something that he adds here that is different from the rest. This judgment that comes will fall like a ton of bricks on people. They will be totally unaware. It will seem like it just popped out of the blue, which literally it does. They are going to be so shaken by it, so surprised that it comes on so fast.

Zechariah 9:14-15 Then the LORD will be seen over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and go with whirlwinds from the south. The LORD of hosts will defend them [His people]; they shall devour and subdue with slingstones. They shall drink and roar as if with wine; they shall be filled with blood like basins, like the corners of the altar.

When the sacrifices were done, the blood had to be poured at the corners of the altar, and the imagery here is of a great sacrifice.

Zechariah 9:16 The LORD their God will save them in that day, as the flock of His people. For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over His land

Again, we have this trumpet, God appearing in judgment. We also have blood in very large quantities being shed, and God's salvation as well, and His reward with Him—they will be like jewels on a crown.

Here we have seen through a good part of the Old Testament, specifically the prophetic sections this idea of trumpets being associated with the Day of the Lord, and all that the Day of the Lord means, signifies. We had the trumpet announcing the reign of the coming King, but it also calls God's people to gather, it calls to war, it is a call of judgment, and it is also a call of victory. And, as we go through a few places in the New Testament, we will see that these are echoed there too.

Matthew 24 should be pretty familiar to most of us. This helps us to get a better sense of the timing of things, and the sequence of events.

Matthew 24:29-31 Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

So we see the timing here in terms of being after the Tribulation. We see some heavenly signs. Then, everybody is very sad, because their time is up. They see Jesus coming out of Heaven on a cloud just as He went up (as it says there in Acts 1). The reason they are not happy is because He has a frown on His face.

He is coming to slay, to judge. The other reason they are sad is because all their "good times" are over. All the times that they had doing their own thing, living their way of sin, thinking that there would not be any judgment or retribution for it is up.

They know that the next little bit is not going to be fun at all. And most of them will probably lose their lives.

And then, of course, there is the trumpet being sounded, and the elect being gathered from all over the earth. So we see this gamut again of all the things that the trumpet is associated with.

In the New Testament the emphasis seems to be more on the reward of the saints—at least through Paul. We will also go to I Thessalonians 4 in a moment. You will see that that is where his mind is—comforting the brethren.

I Corinthians 15:50-53 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

We see here the trumpet sounding. He does not exactly say that Christ returns, but he does mention that this is when the Kingdom of God begins and of course, the reward of the saints, both the dead and the living in Christ.

I Thessalonians 4:13-17 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

So, again, we run the gamut of these things. Of course, he mentions the Lord coming back; and the rewarding of the saints; and, of course, the trumpet being right in the middle of it all.

One more in the New Testament—Revelation 1. We need to remember that the book of Revelation itself is primarily about the Day of the Lord. That is why John says what he says here:

Revelation 1:7-10 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him [sounds like Matthew 24]. Even so, Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet...

That is as far as we need to go. Now those nasty translators cause all kinds of problems in verse 10 by translating it "the Lord's Day." Really, it should be as they have translated this phrase in other places, the Day of the Lord. "I was in the spirit on the Day of the Lord. And I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet..."

That should tell you what he is talking about. The trumpet and the Day of the Lord are inseparable. This is not "Sunday." This is not even Saturday (the Sabbath). He is talking about being in a vision watching as in a movie the events of the Day of the Lord.

So, here we see here (in this introduction to this very long prophecy about the Day of the Lord) this idea of Christ's coming. And of His coming in judgment, the people in mourning, of Jesus revealing Himself, coming to reign, and of course, the loud voice and the trumpet all being put together once again.

So we see all these events from the Old Testament appear here once again in the New Testament. Some are more explicit than others, but they are all here again. They all come together in all these prophecies to give us the idea that what is prophesied to happen in the Old Testament is the same thing that is prophesied in the New Testament, and it is all going to happen one of these days.

That is why we commemorate it every year to remember as a memorial of blowing of trumpets—a memorial of a shout that God is coming, and He is coming soon.

Let's go on to Revelation 11 now, where we will see the seventh trumpet.

If you had gone back to Revelation 8, you would have seen there that the first six trumpets are blown there. And the seven trumpets are the seventh seal. And when the seventh seal is opened, the trumpets sound one by one. That goes through chapter 8, until you get to the seventh one. Then, there seems to be a break. Well, there is, because God inserts chapters 10, and the first 2/3rds of chapter 11 as an inset to let you know certain things—the seven thunders, and the two witnesses, primarily—that are necessary, at this part of the story, to understand what happens during the seventh trumpet. And then, the seventh trumpet is made up of the seven bowls of God's wrath—the seven vials of God's wrath—the seven last plagues. I will probably call them any one of these three names. I will mainly talk about the proclamation of the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11. That is where we are here.

Revelation 11:14 The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

Let me explain here: The fifth trumpet is the first woe. The sixth trumpet is the second woe. And, the seventh trumpet is the third woe. So, at this point, we are being put back onto the path about where we are in the flow of the Book of Revelation.

The two woes have past, and the third woe is about to begin.

Revelation 11:15-19 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth." Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

I have already mentioned the inset passage that is before this. Immediately after this is another very long inset passage. Some commentaries call it, "The seven signs," which follows this.

But, it runs from chapter 12:1 all the way down through the end of chapter 14—three whole chapters. And in those chapters are seven signs. Some of them start like this: Now a great sign appeared in Heaven (12:1).

And then verse 3, "Another sign appeared in Heaven..." And so this goes on through chapters 13 and 14. Chapter 13 has the beast from the land, and the beast from the sea. Those are another two signs. And then in chapter 14 you have the 144,000, three angels proclaim, reaping the harvest of the earth, and the grapes of wrath.

So, all these things are set as insets before we get into the seven last plagues in chapter 15 and 16.

We just have this little section (beginning with Revelation 11:15) titled by the New King James, "The Kingdom Proclaimed." It is a proclamation that goes forth as the seventh trumpet begins to sound.

As I said, it is placed here, it seems, so that the reader gets the understanding—is pointed back to where we are in the flow of things. But, before we get on to anything else, God has a few more insets, a few more things to explain, so that we understand just where everything fits.

At first glance, Revelation 11:14 appears to be placed in the wrong place altogether. Now to chapter 9, verse 12—this is right after the fifth trumpet is blown, and the description of that fifth trumpet.

Revelation 9:12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

And so, it is placed right at the end of the fifth trumpet, first woe. But, if we go down to verse 20, and 21, this is the end of the second woe, the sixth trumpet. Yet it does not have anything like that. It just says,

Revelation 9:21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

But, if you go to 11:14, you will find that it says, "...the second woe is past, behold the third woe comes quickly."

It is almost as though the inset was placed one verse too far forward, that it actually should have been put between verses 14, and 15, rather than 13, and 14. But it works either way. It is just interesting that we have that at the end of the fifth trumpet, but we have to wait an entire chapter and 2/3rds before we get to this next transition. But, it works well enough here.

In one way, if you read this without a lot of understanding, one might think that the things that happen at the end of chapter 9, and all the things that happen in chapter 10, and 11 up to that point, are the second woe. I think that is where there has been some confusion. There has been some confusion about just when the Two Witnesses are, just when the seven thunders are—when they prophesy, when they preach, and several other things regarding timing. But, we can work with it one way or another.

Some might even think that the Two Witnesses are the second woe. In one respect they will be a woe on the earth. They certainly will be a woe to the Beast, and a thorn in his side.

Please notice this:

Revelation 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded:...

When you think of a trumpet sounding, you think of a "fanfare." How long does that usually take? A second? Two seconds?

Maybe you think of the movies like "Quo Vadis" and some of the other ones that talked about the Roman Empire. They had different kinds of fanfares, and then the Caesar walks in, or something. Well, that might take a few more seconds longer than some others. But notice what the Bible says about the trumpet sounding:

Revelation 10:7 "...but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel..."

Did you catch that? *Days*—plural! This is not a short fanfare, and then we are done. Think back to Exodus 19 when God came down upon the Mount. Do you think God had a short fanfare of the shofar, and He was done?

Please turn back there, just to get the idea of the feeling, if we may. This was probably on the day of Pentecost, so I do not want to mix my holy days here. But, it is interesting to look at.

Exodus 19:16-21 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain [sounds very much like Trumpets, does it not?]; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up...

Hebrews 12:18-21 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. (For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow." And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.")

This gives you an idea of the trumpet blast that is going to announce Christ's coming to this earth. Like I said, this trumpet is prophesied here to sound for days.

I do not know if we will be hearing it for that whole time, but it seems likely. I do not know. I am not sure how long this announcing trumpet is going to blast.

We could look at it this way: The sounding of the seventh trumpet does not actually mean the *sounding*, but just the fulfillment of the seventh trumpet. That is a way to wiggle out of it. But, if we

are to take it literally, the sounding lasts for days. And, if it produced such an effect on the people of Israel who had some idea of what God was like through all the plagues, how is it going to feel to those people who have no idea what God is like?

They are going to think that the end of the world has come! And it has! Why do you think they call it the end of the world?

So, the sounding of the seventh trumpet lasts for at least days. How long that is, I do not know. But, whoever blows that trumpet has the best lungs I have ever heard of! It lasts for days.

If you go back to chapter 9, verse 5, we see that the fifth trumpet, the first woe, lasts at least for five months.

Revelation 9:5 And they were not given *authority* to kill them, but to torment them *for* five months...

So, if one of the trumpets lasted for five months, and it is part of the Day of the Lord, as is the seventh trumpet, how long does the seventh trumpet last? I do not know. God does not say that it lasts just one day.

As a matter of fact, the seventh angel blows for days. So, it is more than one day. And, some of the things that we find in chapter 16, could be poured out—the seven last plagues—one right after another in just a few days.

But, some of them seem to appear to last longer than that. Like the sixth vial of God's wrath, which is the Euphrates being dried up, and the armies being gathered; gathering armies takes time.

So, it is not known quite how long this seventh trumpet is going to last—how long it is going to blast. But, it could be days or weeks to get all these things done—all seven plagues poured out, plus the big battle at the end.

That will probably take a day. I have always thought it would take a day. God is pretty efficient. He will marshal His forces, and He will rout the enemy. But, it could take longer. How long did the Battle of the Bulge take? But, God is far stronger than the allies, or the Germans, ever were.

What I am saying here is that if we think that the seventh trumpet blows, the plagues happen, Christ returns, the saints are resurrected, and everything takes place just like that—in seconds—then we are wrong. These things take time to happen.

Remember, what we find here in Revelation 11 is a proclamation of the Kingdom coming. Christ will come at the end, most likely, of the seventh trumpet. All these things happen preceding Him—plague upon plague, upon plague—seven times.

And then the enemies of God are softened to the point where Christ comes, and He finishes it. Of course, the rest of us in the first resurrection are then rewarded at His coming.

I just want you to get an understanding here of the timing. Things take place fast. It will not be fast for those who are enduring it. It will be fast for those of us hopefully watching it from a place of safety. But, there is some time involved. God does things in order. He does things so that they are

done properly. He will do everything in the way that He has set out here so that the best results return to Him.

Now if you remember the 10 plagues of Egypt, they did not all happen in one day. They happened over a period of months. To have their biggest effect, you had to have one plague, and then a response to it. And then there was another plague, and a response. And then another plague, and a response. It went on for nine plagues, and then God finally said, "This is the last one."

If you look in Revelation 16, it says continually there that this happens, and there was no repentance, but they blasphemed God. And then there was another plague, more blasphemy.

And so we find that by the time you get to the end of the seven last plagues, there is no more repentance. People are trying to hide rather than repent. Then Christ comes and the Kingdom starts, and He takes care of business there.

The seventh trumpet announces Christ's return, and the establishment of the Kingdom. But, it sounds for an extended period while the events take place.

The loud voices in heaven that we read there in Revelation 11:15 proclaim these things as if they were already accomplished. But, this is a specific verb tense that is used in prophetic books. It is called the prophetic past tense. It is not a real Greek verb tense at all, but the prophets used the past tense for future things. Future events are certain to happen because they are part of God's plan, and they are spoken of as if they have already happened.

Romans 4:17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

This is James speaking:

Acts 15:18 Known to God from eternity are all His works.

This means that God can speak of future things as though they have already happened. He knows that they are going to come to pass, because He is the one who is going to bring them to pass. And so the prophets often speak of things in the future while using the past tense. That is what happens here. This is a proclamation of Christ's coming and reigning, but they speak of it as if it has already happened because it is sure to happen!

A minor point here on Revelation 11:15: The word there, "kingdoms"—in most texts that we have, the word is *singular*. "The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord." This gives us a little bit different viewpoint—that God sees humanity ruled by only one entity: Satan the Devil. When this transference of power takes place, again humanity will be ruled over by only one entity: Jesus Christ.

He sees us all in aggregate, and not as separate. "The kingdom of this world has become the Kingdom of our Lord..."

It is a minor point, but there is something you can get out of it. It is interesting that the singular gives us a bit more of an idea of the rulership over the earth that Satan has, and of course the ultimate sovereignty that Christ and God the Father have.

Revelation 11:16-17 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

We have these 24 elders falling down on their faces. This is a picture of abject obeisance and humility. Before, we had seen them falling down and worshiping, but this says that they fell down on their faces. It is even lower. It is showing their humility. It is also showing their subjection to Christ. It is also a picture into the necessary attitude that one who is going to come under the rule of Jesus Christ should have. They provide the example here.

In stark contrast is the way that the people of the earth at that time will be. They will be standing with their fists up in defiance. But, the 24 elders are showing that when God comes to reign, this is the proper attitude to take. The elders are saying, "Get in this position when Christ comes! If you want to save your hide, this is how you do it!"

They thank God for taking power and reigning. And this is what *we* and *they* have been looking forward to for all our lives—for as long as we have known the truth. This is the thing that we have been looking forward to. So, they are full of joy and gratitude that finally, finally it has come! God is going to intervene in world affairs. He is going to exercise His sovereignty in a major way on the earth. Is that not great? Finally, there is going to be peace! Finally, the right things are going to get done. Finally, we can start all the projects that have been there in the mind of God just waiting for His Son to come to the Earth.

And it is no wonder that the thanks that they give—the gratitude that they offer up here—is so special, so vibrant. "We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is, and who was, and who is to Come, because you have taken your great power and reigned!"

There is another minor point here. Again, the majority of the texts do not have the phrase, "and who is to come." It just says, "We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is, and who was." Now, why would that, "Who is to come?" have been left out? Because, He is here!

He does not need to come. He is already here. He is present. So, why do we have to call Him the One who is to come when He is already on His way? It is not a *future* event, it is a *present* event. This is it! God reigns! Here the elders announce what is on its way with Him:

Revelation 11:18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth."

Now if you noticed, they have broken things down into two major categories. The first one is punishment: "The nations were angry, and Your wrath is come," and all the things that have to do with that.

The second one is reward: "That you should reward your servants, the prophets, and the saints, and those who fear your name." So, we have a two-pronged proclamation here.

Three, if you add that Jesus is coming. But, then He is coming in judgment, and He is coming with reward. Both of those things have to do with judgment. He is coming in judgment in two different ways—one in terms of punishment and the other in terms of reward.

The nations were angry is reminiscent of Psalm 2. We will go back there for a moment. We sing this on occasion in our hymnal.

Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying...

...which sounds a lot like, "The Lord and His Christ." Remember back there in Revelation 11:15, where it says "the kingdom of this world has become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ." Notice what it says in Psalm 2: "...against the Lord, and against His Anointed." That is the word *Messiah*, which in Greek is *Christ*. So, that ties these two together nicely.

Psalm 2:3-5 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath...

Remember what it says—that He will execute His Word, and the sword shall come from His mouth?

Psalm 2:5-6 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: "Yet I have set My King...

Notice that this is in opposition to what is said in the first portion of the second verse above, where the kings of the earth set themselves. God says that He has set *His* King...

Psalm 2:6-11 Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'" Now therefore, be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear...

Sounds very similar to the position of the 24 elders.

Psalm 2:11 And rejoice with trembling.

Which is also reminiscent of the 24 elders.

Psalm 2:12 Kiss the Son...

My Bible has a little note that says that this is an act of homage and submission. You have people kissing the ring of the pope, or many people kiss the toes of the black statue of St. Peter in the Basilica in Vatican City. Now, they are told to kiss the Son. Kiss his feet, maybe? Because,

remember the position you are supposed to be in, lying down on the ground with your face down. The feet are about the only part you could get close to.

Psalm 2:12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

That is when you go ahead and submit, when His wrath is kindled just a little. You don't want to wait until the trumpet sounds, and He is coming back with great wrath.

Revelation 11:18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth."

This verse basically says that the nations, the kings of the earth failed to take the psalmist's advice to kiss the Son. And, now they have got to pay the price for their stubbornness. So, God's wrath is on the way. That is what he says. The nations were angry, the nations raged, and God's wrath is now come.

So, you have the cause, and the effect. God fulfills His Word. He gave them all they needed to repent—the warning that they needed. And because they did not heed it, He is going to do what He said He would do.

Now, this proclamation here is very similar to Daniel 7:9-14. Daniel has this dream—a vision of his head while on his bed:

Daniel 7:9-11 "I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

He is describing a court room with God presiding in judgment. And the books of the Bible, and the books that record our deeds, are opened.

Daniel 7:11 "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.

This is talking about the seventh trumpet!

Daniel 7:12-14 As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then 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 the one which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:18 But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.

Daniel 7:21-22 I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

Daniel 7:26-27 But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion [the horn], to consume and destroy it forever. Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

It is very similar to what we see in the proclamation of the seventh trumpet—specifically, verse 18 above. We have the destruction of the nations who are stubbornly against Him, and the rewarding of the saints, and giving the kingdom to them.

We have the same sort of thing happening in these two sections.

Now, a couple of points here: This phrase here, "The time of the dead", according to some early manuscripts, and the official Greek Orthodox Bible do not have, "the time of the dead," but, "the time of the nations."

The subject is certainly the nations as the first part of the verse parallels the second part of the verse. Notice, "the nations were angry, and Your wrath is come." That is the first part of the verse. The second part is, "the time of the dead that they should be judged." They are in parallel there. It is the time of the nations that they should be judged.

Now, you could look at this as the nations is the correct word there—*ethnon*. And, that is fine. That would be very good in parallel there. "The nations were angry," and, "The time of the nations." This seems to work very well.

But, "the dead" also could work, because does not Jesus call the people of this world, who do not know him, the spiritually dead? "Let the dead bury their dead..." (Matthew 8:42)

So, it can go either way. It is not a problem. But, it is interesting that the early manuscripts, and the Greek Bible have *ethnon*, not *nekron*.

So, it does not matter either way. But, I thought you might like to know that the church's saying that it should be "nations," instead of "dead" has some support to it.

This judgment then is not a judgment to salvation, but a judgment to punishment. It says that the time of the dead (or nations) that they should be judged. It is not going to be that they will be totally cut off from God forever—most of them. But, we know that the Beast and False Prophet will be. For most of them, this is just a punishment for their sins in this life. The judgment to the first death, we might say.

The second part (referring to Revelation 11:18) about the rewards to the saints—there has been some confusion why it is divided up between "the prophets, the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great." There obviously has got to be some overlap there—prophets, saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great—could all talk about the same group of people. But, there is a way that you can divide it up a little bit.

The prophets may stand for those who either were in the Old Testament, or those God called to preach. They were given a special reward. In Matthew 10:41, Jesus talks about a righteous man's reward, and a prophet's reward. Maybe, this is showing that the rewards are different because the activities were different during their lives, and what they were able to do with what God had given them.

The saints may be New Testament Christians as opposed to prophets which were Old Testament Christians. Or, they could simply be believers in general.

We might also say that prophets were ministers, and saints were lay-members. I don't know. But, it is a possibility.

The last group—those who fear Your name, small and great—may be a reference to Gentiles. This is because the Jews called Jewish proselytes, "God Fearers."

And so, this might have been carried on into this particular proclamation to mean all the Gentiles who have become Christians. It is just a possibility. I don't know for sure why it is put in three different ways, but these are some possibilities about who it may mean.

These distinctions may also be referring to the quality of the reward. Remember what Paul says in I Corinthians 3:12-15 that if we build on what we have been given with precious stones, or wood, or hay, we will have different rewards based on how we have built. That may be something along that line also. It is difficult to say for sure.

Finally, "destroy those who destroy the earth."

Destroy is the correct translation. But, it is interesting to see what it can also be. "Destroy" is rather general. We have often used it to refer to those who pollute the earth, because that is what you do when you destroy the earth.

Well, the word can also mean, "corrupt," or "spoil," or "ruin." This opens up that God's judgment is not just on those who harm the physical earth, but also those who corrupted its people through lies, false teachings, perverse entertainment, or whatever the sin happens to be.

What he is saying here in this last phrase is that God's judgment is an all encompassing punishment of those who inflict harm through sin. It does not leave anybody out. There are no loop-holes. Everybody who is sinning, practicing sin, living in sin in one way or another, is harming the earth. God's punishment is going to encompass all of them, unless they repent.

Finally in Revelation 11:19—I just want to take a moment with this because some commentators feel that this verse actually functions as an introduction for the next section, all those seven signs in chapters 12, 13, and 14, and is not part of the seventh trumpet.

Again, it can work either way. It could be the end of the seventh trumpet proclamation, or the beginning of the seven signs.

Now, the ark of the covenant appearing seems to signal one of two things: 1) The opening of access to God, because in the Old Testament system no one could look upon the ark. It was covered, and always stored within the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle, or Temple. The only one who actually got to go in and see it was the High Priest once a year.

And so the opening of the Temple, and seeing the ark there could mean that access to God has begun to open up generally—more fully. The second thing that it could mean is the opposite extreme.

What was on top of the ark? The Mercy Seat! And it was from the Mercy Seat that God made his judgments.

And so, the view of the ark at this point could mean that now God's time has come to judge. It could go either way. It could be positive. Or, it could be negative. My own thought is that it is both. For those who have repented, who are believers, it is a good thing. But, for those who are apostate, or those who are rebels, it is a bad thing. It could work either way.

The idea of judgment goes very well with the lightning, the noises, the thunders, the earthquakes, and the great hail—they all seem to be rather dire things, rather than nice things. Possibly the weight of it all goes toward the idea of judgment.

Let us conclude in Revelation 19, and just read these verses. For us, if we remain faithful, this last trumpet has a far more glorious, and joyous meaning than this dire, dark, gloomy judgment.

Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."