

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Seventh Trumpet, Part 1

Scripture: Revelation 11:14-17

Code: 66-39

We reach a milestone really tonight in our study of Revelation as we come to chapter 11 verses 14 through 19. Revelation chapter 11 verses 14 through 19, and we reach the midway point in this tremendous, tremendous book. Let me begin reading, if I may, in verse 14 and read to the end of the eleventh chapter, you follow along as I read.

"The second woe is past; behold the third woe is coming quickly. And the seventh angel sounded and there arose 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.' And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God saying, 'We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign. And the nations were enraged and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy 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."

Now we're going to take our time kind of working through this because it's important for you to understand the transition that we're involved in here. This text marks the end of the first half of the book and the introduction of the second half. Chapters 1 through 11, and then chapters 12 through 22 are the break point.

You'll remember that in the first part of chapter 11 we studied the two witnesses. Two very unique individuals who will preach the gospel right up until the end of the time of the Tribulation. I believe their preaching is instrumental in the final conversion of the people of Israel, as noted in verse 13, where the rest of the inhabitants of Jerusalem who are not killed in the earthquake give glory to the God of heaven.

So we've been looking at the two witnesses. We remember that they were killed and their bodies were left to lie in the street for three and a half days, the street of the city of Jerusalem called Sodom and Egypt where our Lord was crucified. That resurrection marked a monumental moment as they had their own private rapture and were taken into heaven.

Now immediately after that, verse 14 says, "The second woe is past; behold the third woe is coming." Now we've been looking at the first and the second woe. Go back with me for a moment to chapter 8 verse 13, I want to get our context in mind here as we come to this very important transitional passage.

John writes in chapter 8 verse 13, "I looked and I heard an eagle flying in mid heaven saying with a loud voice, `Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.'" The three final woes constitute trumpet five, trumpet six and trumpet number seven. And you will remember back in chapter 8 verse 1 when the seventh seal is broken, there is silence for a half an hour and then seven angels take up seven trumpets. The seventh seal comes, of course, near the end of the time of Tribulation with only months to go until the return of Christ in glory. And as the seventh seal is opened, it reveals seven trumpets to be blown, each of them announcing a judgment. The first of the seven trumpets, the first four are delineated and then the final three, trumpet five, six and seven, are called woes.

Now the first woe comes in chapter 9, and we won't go over it in detail. Suffice it to say, it is the releasing of demon hordes. The fifth trumpet blows the first woe and these demons are released and sent all over the earth to torture people. They don't actually kill them but they torture them. And we talked about the unbelievable agony and pain in which people cry out for death which does not come.

And then the second woe, or the sixth trumpet, comes in chapter 9 verse 13 and releases more demons. In fact, an army according to verse 16 of two hundred million demons who have been bound at the river Euphrates, these demons come and they do bring death.

So the first woe is a demon horde, the second woe is another demon horde that overruns the earth. And now we come to chapter 11 verse 14 and we come to the third woe. And the third woe is the seventh trumpet, as verse 15 indicates. The moment now that encompasses the final completion of the whole plan of God for the present universe, this is the culmination of God's judgment.

In chapter 10, notice verse 7, "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." So the seventh trumpet marks the finishing of the mystery of God. This trumpet signals the answer to the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." This announces the action that brings the consummation.

So when the seventh trumpet is blown, what happens in the seventh trumpet extends all the way through the rest of the book of Revelation in to chapter 20...in to chapter 20, right up to the establishment of the Kingdom. So this seventh trumpet has a long tenure. In fact, incorporated in to the seventh trumpet, among other things, are the seven bowl judgments which will be described for us later in the sixteenth chapter.

So we come then to a very important moment. We're in the seventh seal which comes at the end of the Tribulation time. We are at the point of the seventh trumpet. We are in the day of the Lord now and this seventh trumpet blows the final judgment which stretches all the way through and includes all the judgment to come. And that will encompass five pairs of visions, both on earth and in heaven that will lead us all the way to the end when Christ establishes His kingdom. So this is a very, very momentous point in the book of Revelation. This section then embraces everything involved in the final completion of the whole redemptive plan of God for the present universe...includes the final harvest of judgment on the earth, the final fury of the day of the Lord, the outpouring of final wrath, the seven bowls of terror dumped out on the world, the final world battle at Armageddon, the return of Jesus Christ in glory and His fierce judgment on the ungodly, the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. All of that is going to flow out of this blowing of the seventh trumpet. So from here on we move into the final phases of judgment right on through in to chapter 20 where the Kingdom is established, chapter 21 and chapter 22, the final new heavens and the new earth.

So here comes the final agony of earth as it is devastated by the fury of God. And it is all within the seventh trumpet which is within the seventh seal and which encompasses the seven bowls.

Look at chapter 15 for just a moment and verse 1. He says, "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." And then in chapter 16 verse 1, "I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, 'Go and pour out the seven bowls of wrath of God into the earth.'" So those seven bowls which are the final wrath are included in the seventh trumpet. So as I said all along, it's in a sense telescopic, you have seven seals and then out of the seventh seal come the seven trumpets, and out of the seventh trumpet come the seven bowl judgments. And so the final culmination of the seventh seal, seventh trumpet and seventh bowl all happen actually at the same time.

Now then we come, as it says, in verse 15 to the seventh trumpet. I want to point out just something that I don't want you to be confused about. This is not, though it is the last of the seven trumpets, the same as the last trump. Some people get that confused in 1 Corinthians 15:52, a very important statement is made by the Apostle Paul. He says, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed." He's talking about the Rapture of the church. That is a different event than the final judgment of the ungodly. The last trumpet in 1 Corinthians 15 is the trumpet that calls for the Rapture of the church. The seventh trumpet calls for the judgment of the ungodly and is parallel, not to the last trump of 1 Corinthians, but it is parallel to the trumpet blown back in the prophecy of Joel chapter 2 where in the first eleven verses we have the indication of a trumpet. Chapter 2 of Joel verse 1, "Blow a trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm on My holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, the day of the Lord is coming." And then it goes on to describe it. So it is the kind of trumpet of which Joel speaks in judgment, not the trumpet that calls for the gathering together of the church.

Now another thought. It is not only a judgment trumpet, but it is a coronation trumpet. It is a coronation trumpet as well. Back in the Old Testament we find that trumpets marked those great coronation events. In 2 Samuel, just a couple of passages that you can write down, 2 Samuel chapter 15 verse 10, it says, "And Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel saying, 'As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say Absalom is king in Hebron.'" First Kings 1:39 says, "Zadok the priest then took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon, then they blew the trumpet and all the people said, 'Long live King Solomon.'"

So the trumpet is associated in those passages with the coronation of a king. We could then conclude that the seventh trumpet is not only a judgment trumpet, in that it brings the final fury, but it is a coronation trumpet in that it takes us all the way to coronation of King Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom. So here at last finally after going through seven seals and six trumpets, we come to the end.

And as we move through this period and these events to the end, we will see the events from two sides...from earth and heaven. As I said, there are five pairs of visions really, looking at these events from heaven and earth. We will see judgment on the one hand and jubilation on the other; rage on the one hand and rejoicing on the other; cursing on the one hand and crowning on the other; woe on the one hand and worship on the other; threats on the one hand and thanks on the other as we look at these same events from the standpoint of humanity on earth and the standpoint of the glorified in heaven.

Now let's look then at verse 14 and get a running start into this tremendous text. "The second woe is past; behold the third woe is coming quickly." As in each case, now remember this, in each case of the series of sevens there is always an interlude between six and seven. You have the seven seals but there's an interlude between the sixth and the seventh. You have the seven trumpets but there's an interlude between the six and the seven, you have the seven bowls and there will be an interlude between the six and the seventh of those. And in each case the Spirit of God stops to comfort believers because, obviously, in the accumulated fearsomeness of these judgments, believers might find themselves greatly discouraged. And so the Lord stops with comforting words.

All the way back in chapter 9 we knew these woes were coming, we went through woe one, and we went through woe two in chapter 9, but then chapters 10 and 11 down through verse 13 were the interlude. And they were intended to encourage the saints. In chapter 10 we saw how that even though there was bitterness in the judgment, there was also sweetness because the Lord would reign. And John was told to write down the prophecies.

Then in chapter 11 we saw that even though there is judgment there will be two witnesses who will have a tremendous impact on the world in preaching the gospel and ultimately God will use them to

bring about a great salvation in the city of Jerusalem, as verse 13 indicates.

So there is reason to be comforted. So we have already been through six trumpets, woe one and woe two. We've been through the interlude of comfort in chapter 10 and the first part of chapter 11. And now it's time for the final woe, the third woe, the seventh trumpet, a trumpet of judgment and a trumpet of coronation.

Now as always in the book of Revelation I need to point this out to you. The goal of the text is the unveiling of the glory of Jesus Christ. You will remember all the way back at the very beginning, the first message we preached in this series months and months ago, we said the first verse says...This book is the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is always intended to reveal Christ and you will see His glory shining through the text right in front of you tonight.

Now let's look at this text and we'll break it into a couple of parts and see how far we get tonight. First of all, the text opens with what I'll call praise for sovereignty...praise for sovereignty. We'll see some other points as we go, but the first point is praise for sovereignty. As the trumpet is about to be blown, we are at heaven's viewpoint and it is obvious that heaven is exhilarated at what is about to happen. And the seventh angel sounded, verse 15, and there arose 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 for ever and ever." And then even in verses 16 and 17 we see further indication of the praise of heaven as the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God saying, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God the Almighty, who wert and...who art, I should say, and who wast because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign." So we're looking at it from heaven's perspective and what we see is praise for sovereignty.

Verse 15 then, the seventh angel sounded. All of the trumpets came, you remember, at the breaking of the seventh seal. As I said, it all started in chapter 8 verses 1 and 2. The first six released fearsome judgments on the world. They happen in the last few months of the time of the Tribulation. But this last woe and this seventh trumpet is much broader than the other two. The other two take up a portion of the ninth chapter. This one is going to extend chapter after chapter, sweeping through the great portion of the remainder of this marvelous book.

For example, the seventh trumpet is basically defined in verse 18. It says in verse 18, "Thy wrath came and the time came for the dead to be judged." Time came for judgment, the time came for wrath. The end of the verse, the time came to destroy those who destroy the earth. The seventh trumpet is a trumpet of destruction and judgment. However, it will be more explicitly described clear over in chapter 16. It says, "The great city was split in three parts, the cities of the nations fell, Babylon the great was remembered before God the giver of the cup of the wine of her fierce wrath." It is described even further in chapter 17 verses 12 and following where you see the Lamb waging war against the kings of the earth and overcoming them. It is further described in chapter 18 in the

dirge song of chapter 18. It is further described in chapter 19 in the hymns of exaltation and even further described in chapter 19 verses 11 to 16 in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful and true who comes on a white horse with eyes as a flame of fire, etc., etc.

So the seventh trumpet sweeps through the remaining events of the history in this eschatological hour. And as I said earlier, it encompasses the judgments known as the bowl judgments in chapter 16.

Now, stay with me because you must understand this. Before the actual sounding of the trumpet which will actually be done in chapter 15, before the actual sounding of the trumpet which goes from 15 on we have three chapters...chapter 12, 13 and 14...and they again are a brief respite, or a brief digression, a better way to say it. And what they do is chapter 12, 13 and 14 take us back, back in to the early part of the Tribulation. We've already come through the Tribulation in the chronology of the book of Revelation to this point. We've been through the seven seals that sweep us through. We already passed the midpoint, the abomination of desolations. We've gone all the way down the line of the trumpets which come in the last few months. We're already at the brink of the blowing of the seventh trumpet. But now in chapter 12, 13 and 14, we're going to go back to the very beginning again and we're going to have a return. We're going to go all the way back and be carried through the Tribulation again, carried through the Great Tribulation again and we're going to be brought right back to the very same point we are in chapter 11 verse 15 when the angel is about to blow. But we're not going to get back to that point until we hit chapter 15 verse 1 and the blowing is, of course, the seven bowls and what follows.

Now why are we going back and going through this chronology again? Very simply, because we're going to track back through the Tribulation and the Great Tribulation following the career of the Antichrist. That's what's going to happen in chapters 12, 13 and 14. We went through on God's chronology. We went through flowing with the seals and the trumpets. Now we're going to go back and pick up the career of Antichrist, follow him through and ultimately by the time we come to the end of chapter 14 we'll be right back where we are, ready for the angel to sound and the bowls of wrath to be poured out. So as we come into chapter 12 we're going to look at the Tribulation not from God's side, but from Satan's side. We're going to look at it not from the side of the conquering Christ but from the side of the Antichrist. So it's a very important move back so we can collect all the data about Antichrist before we come to the final blast of the trumpet and the ultimate final judgments.

So, in verse 15 we have the angel sounding. But the sounding here, now listen carefully, the sounding here effects judgment which is not yet described to us until we get to chapter 15. All we hear here is when the angel sounded heaven starts to praise. We don't have any description of what the judgment was until we hit chapter 15. The angel sounds but the description of it is held off until we can get what is here and what is in chapters 12, 13 and 14 about the career of Antichrist. But when the angel sounds, even though we don't yet know what happens on earth, we do know what

happens in heaven. It says there arose loud voices in heaven. There is tremendous commotion in heaven from every living being there...by they angels or glorified saints. And the exuberant voices of heaven are saying this, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever and ever." What they're saying is the seventh trumpet sounds, the power of Satan is broken forever, the issue of sovereignty is revealed and forever sealed. The usurper is devastated. Christ is supreme. And as I said, what Christians have prayed as they were taught by Jesus through the centuries, "Thy Kingdom come," is now reality. You remember in Luke chapter 4 Satan took Jesus into a high mountain and showed Him the kingdoms of the world and said he'd give them to Him. Well He didn't want them on Satan's terms, and now He gets them on His own terms.

Now I want you to notice something of interest here. Verse 15 says, "The kingdom of the world," not the kingdoms, the kingdom, it is singular. That is a very important note and one that is given us with great, great precision by the Holy Spirit because the world, though it is divided into many different nations and people and languages is really one kingdom under one king, is it not? The god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the ruler of darkness...God hacked up this kingdom at the tower of Babel to make it more difficult for Satan to accomplish his purposes but Satan is still king over all the pieces of the once united kingdom. And in the end it is going to be reunited again under the power of Antichrist. The world is really one kingdom with one monarch, namely Satan himself. Jesus said, for example, in Matthew 12:26, they accused Him of casting out demons by Satan and He said if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand? The point is, his kingdom stands because it is an undivided kingdom. We look at the world and we see it divided into all kinds of nations. It is politically, it is socially, it is linguistically, it is in terms of traditions and customs and geography, but it is one kingdom under one king being ruled by Satan and his demonic hosts.

In John's gospel chapter 12, just to remind you of some Scripture so that you will be able to teach these things as well, John 12:31, it says, "Now judgment is upon this world, now the ruler of this world shall be cast out," He's talking about Satan. "And he recognizes that the world has one ruler." It is one kingdom with one ruler and that ruler being Satan. In fact, in John 14:30 he is called the ruler of the world. Again John 16 verse 11, he is called the ruler of the world for the third time.

So, heaven rejoices at the blowing of the seventh trumpet because the kingdom, the singular kingdom of the world that has been under the power of Satan has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Government though designed and ordered by God, according to Romans 13, for the well being of man is not submissive to God. God has ordained government and put it in place, but people within those governments and even the leaders are not submissive to God. His sovereignty is not recognized. Mark it, there are no Christian nations. There have never been any Christian nations. The rulers, the kings,says Acts 4:26, take their stand against Christ. They always have and they always will. The long rebellion of the world's kingdoms against God and against Christ

will end here. And Genesis 6 will come to pass again wherein God said, "My Spirit will not always strive with man."

In reality then, dominion over the world does not become Christ's and God's until after the final judgments, the blowing of the trumpet, the pouring out of the bowl judgments. The great triumph and victory at Armageddon, that's when Christ takes over and becomes King of the world. Behind the diverse kingdoms that have existed in history is this single power of Satan pulling it all together. And, believe me, he's not going to relinquish these kingdoms without a struggle. I mean, just look at what's going to happen at the end of the Tribulation, just in the fifth trumpet and the sixth trumpet. You've got the Antichrist already in power and we'll see his career flow in chapters 13 and 14. You've got the demons that have been bound in the pit all belched out of the pit and overrunning the earth and maiming everybody. You've got two hundred million demons that have been bound at the Euphrates River released and they're moving across the earth killing everybody. You've got the people who are following the Antichrist, a whole world of them, and they're all combining to assist Satan in keeping his world. It is not going to be easy. Only Christ, obviously, with His great sovereign power could conquer this formidable army under the control of Satan, but it's going to happen and because it's going to happen you see the praises of heaven there in verse 15.

Now I want to get you in to this verse a little bit because it's such a very, very important moment in redemptive history. This is the culmination, dear friends, of all the promise of God throughout Old and New Testaments. The Kingdom is finally Christ's. This is the apex of redemptive history.

Now I want you to notice how it is formulated in the Greek language. "The kingdom of the world HAS become." Now that is a very important way to express something. It is what has been called proleptic aorist, that's sort of a technical term. But it means something in the future is so sure that it can be spoken of as if it has already happened...as if it has already happened.

In other words, we know the kingdom of the world is not yet Christ's in chapter 11. It's not going to happen till chapter 20 verse 5 and following when He sets up His kingdom. But when the trumpet blows, even though there is still some time and there are still perhaps a few weeks, or we don't know the exact time frame, days, weeks, until the final kingdom is established it's as good as done. And that's a wonderful capability the Greek has to use the verb that speaks of something as so certain that it can be spoken of as if it has already happened. So when the trumpet blows, immediately heaven rejoices as if all that's going to come out of that trumpet has already been completed. Although then we could say it doesn't take place at this point, it is only initiated and anticipated, it is as good as done. And that is why that particular form is used.

Going back to Luke 1 for a moment, just to show you what a culminating moment this is, the angel comes to Mary and says in verse 31, "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son and you'll call His name Jesus. He'll be great. He'll be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God

will give Him the throne of His father David and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and His kingdom will have no end." From the very outset the prophecy by the angel given to Mary indicated that this one who came would ultimately be the great King...the great King. So the anticipated moment at the birth of Christ, the anticipated prophecies of the Old Testament which spoke of a Messiah who would come and establish the kingdom, the promises of Jesus that He would come in glory, promises which were dramatically illustrated in...for example...the transfiguration as well as in His miracles while He was in the world...all of that comes to pass. All the covenant promise to the nation Israel, all the promise to believers that they will reign with Christ comes to pass. The promise to the disciples that they would sit on twelve thrones reigning over the twelve tribes of Israel in the Kingdom of Messiah, the promise of the times of restitution, the times of restoration, the promise that the Davidic kingdom would come in its full glory with Messiah on His throne, all of it is now come to pass. And it is so imminent and so near that it can be spoken of as if it has already taken place.

Now, verse 15 through 18 have very strong similarities to Psalm 2, and I'm not going to take the time to take you into that, but very, very similar language to Psalm 2. And you remember Psalm 2 is the promise of the Messiah's Kingdom. He says, "Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee, ask of Me and I'll give Thee the nations as Thine inheritance and the very ends of the earth as Thy possession and Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron and shatter them like earthenware." That which was promised then in Psalm 2 is now anticipated as imminent.

So the time has come for everything to happen. And by the way, John is not distinguishing here between say the Millennial Kingdom and the eternal kingdom, as 1 Corinthians 15:24 to 28. He's just saying the kingdom, both in its Millennial sense, and its eternal new heaven and new earth has come. He doesn't make a break. He's not just talking about the Millennium, we know that because he says He will reign forever and ever. He's not just talking about the eternal kingdom, he must also include the Millennial Kingdom which is the very imminent part of it. You understand what I mean? When Christ returns He sets up an earthly kingdom for a thousand years, at the end of which there is a new heaven and a new earth which becomes the eternal state going on forever and ever. So the end of Satan's power has come. The establishment of the sovereign kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in all the universe...we'll read more about it, we'll see it in chapter 12, we'll see it in 17, 19, chapter 20 and His final dominion will take place there as we noted in the twentieth chapter when He establishes His millennial kingdom and binds Satan for the thousand years of the duration of the kingdom...at the end of which He casts him into the bottomless pit to burn forever and sets up the new heaven and the new earth.

Now let me just take you back, I don't know how to give you the sense of what a momentous time we're looking at in redemptive history without going back and having you understand that all of God's people throughout all of history have anticipated this. In fact, go over to chapter 15 for a moment, maybe this is the best way to approach it. In chapter 15 as the last of the seven bowls is about to be dumped in the last days and few weeks of the Tribulation, the day of the Lord, at that very time John

in verse 2 says, "I saw a sea of glass mixed with fire and those who had come off victorious from the beast and his image and the number of his name," those who had conquered, as it were, the Antichrist.

And they were all singing. And what were they singing? Amazing...they were singing the song of Moses, the bondservant of God. They were singing a very old song, very old, a song out of the Pentateuch, the original books of the Old Testament, the law, an old, old song, the song of Moses. It goes all the way back to the fifteenth chapter of the book of Exodus. They are singing it at the pouring out of the final bowls of judgment at the end of human history. What does the song say? "Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty, righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou king of the nations, who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name for Thou alone art holy, for all the nations will come and worship before Thee for Thy righteous acts have been revealed." The very song of Moses in Exodus 15 anticipated the moment when the Lord Jesus Christ became King of the world.

Go with me back to the Old Testament to say the book of Isaiah...a number of places we could go, but look at Isaiah chapter 2. The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem." Verse 2, "Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains and will be raised above the hills and all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the god of Jacob, that He may teach us concerning His ways and that we may walk in His paths.' For the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Isaiah is anticipating the time when the Lord Himself establishes His sovereign rule and His mountain is higher than the mountain, that is to say His authority and His kingdom is higher than the authority and the kingdom of any other nation or monarch in human history. And so even Isaiah anticipated his great time when the Lord became King.

Daniel, Daniel chapter 2, and the very amazing image of chapter 2 verse 34, this great image showing the kingdoms of the world, and he says, "You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands," that is a reference to the Messiah, the Lord, "and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them." The final form of human world power represented by the image, its legs and feet, "And it will be smashed by the stone cut out without hands, the virgin-born Messiah. And it will be crushed, the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, the gold, all the components of human power, all at the same time come crashing down and they become like chaff or dust on a summer threshing floor and the wind blows them away and not a trace of them was found." All the great empires of the history of the world are shattered and turned to dust and blown away and the stone that struck the statue becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth. That is to say the Messiah establishes His universal Kingdom.

Down in verse 44 of Daniel chapter 2, "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed and that kingdom will not be left for another people, it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms but it will itself endure forever. Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out the mountain without hands, and it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future so the dream is true in its interpretation is trustworthy." This was a message, by the way, to King Nebuchadnezzar and to all of us about the fact that in the end Jesus Christ is going to smash all human power and establish His own Kingdom. And that was the hope of Isaiah, that was the hope of Daniel, that was even the hope of Moses.

Go over to Daniel chapter 7 for a moment. And it's worth looking at Daniel 7 verse 13. Daniel again seeing prophecies of the future says, "I kept looking in the night visions...Daniel 7:13...and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him, and to Him was given dominion, glory and the kingdom." What kind of kingdom? "That all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed." And so there Daniel sees the image of the great glorious final kingdom of Christ.

Verse 18, "The saints who are associated with the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever for all ages to come." Down in verse 22, "The Ancient of Days came, judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest ONE and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom." Daniel is given a vision far into the future to see the glorious events described under the seventh trumpet when the kingdoms of this world become...when the kingdom, I should say, of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

Then verse 27, I think it is, "The sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One, His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and all the dominions will serve and obey Him." My, what an incredible promise and yet this is the repeated promise that the Messiah will rule the whole world...the whole world.

Malachi chapter 4 talks about it. "A day coming like a furnace and the destruction of the ungodly and here comes the Son of Righteousness rising with healing in its beams." Of course, establishing a kingdom of righteousness. Zechariah talked about it. Zechariah over and over again predicted the coming glory of the kingdom. We don't have time to look at all of it but maybe the fourteenth chapter and the ninth verse, "The Lord will be King over all the earth, in that day the Lord will be the only one and His name the only one."

Well, suffice it to say that as chapter 8 indicated, the prophets predicted it, the trumpet blows and it comes to pass. Go back to Revelation chapter 11 and we'll try to pull a few thoughts together and

then we'll stop for tonight.

The kingdom of the world, verse 15, has become...it can be spoken of as if it's already happened because it is immediately anticipated and certain...had become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. This is the final righteous government of Christ. I can't help but think about back in John 18, having all kinds of thoughts, when Jesus was being tried in the mock trial before Pilate. In verse 35...36, Jesus answers Pilate and said, "My kingdom is not of this world, if My kingdom were of this world then My servants would be fighting that I might not be delivered up to the Jews but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." Well, the final kingdom is. The kingdom that He came to bring the first time was a spiritual kingdom, the final one will be a sovereign political social worldwide rulership. And as I said, this very closely parallels Psalm 2, you will find reference to Psalm 2 in chapter 12, chapter 14, chapter 16, 17, and even in chapter 19. The flavor of Psalm 2 finds its way into the remainder of this part of the book of Revelation. And it will have its final fulfillment, Psalm 2 will, at the battle of Armageddon when the King triumphs over all wicked hosts who have gathered against Him to fight.

Now the prophets repeatedly in the Old Testament said that all rule will finally go to God, not only to Christ the Messiah but to God. And you'll notice in verse 15, "The kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ," we don't want to exclude God because God is also going to be involved. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 15 Paul says ultimately God will be all in all and even the kingdom of Christ He will give to God so that God can be all in all. God will be exalted in the end time. Ezekiel said it, Daniel said it repeatedly, Daniel 4:3, 6:26, 7:14, 26:27 that God will also be exalted.

Now, pulling all that together. We are at a crossroads here in the revelation of the book of Revelation in its disclosure, its unveiling and its apocalypse of Christ. We are at the point of transference where the universe is to be rested out of the control of Satan and handed over to the control of the Lord Himself. This is a monumental moment in redemptive history. At that point, of course, when He takes the kingdom, as I noted earlier, He will hand it over the Father, and both of them will share in its glory.

Now one more note of response here. The twenty-four elders in verse 16 also respond. We have noted all the way through that the twenty-four elders in my judgment are best understood as representative of the glorified church. We saw that in chapter 4 and chapter 5 and gave you a number of reasons why. The twenty-four elders representing the glorified church already raptured and glorified in heaven, sitting on their thrones. And I will remind you again that never in any of Scripture do we find angels on thrones seated. So here we find the twenty-four elders seemingly representative of the glorified church. They fell on their faces and worshiped God. Something they did a lot of. In fact, back in chapter 4...chapter 5 verse 14 we see them falling on their faces there as well. But here they fall on their faces. They worship God. This is the moment they have waited for. We'll see them do it again in chapter 19 verse 4, falling down again and worshiping God saying, "Amen, hallelujah." But the reason they're so exhilarated is as I said because this is their moment for the fulfillment of the prayer "Thy kingdom come." And so in verse 17 they say, "We give Thee thanks,

O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign." It is a time of thanksgiving. It is a time for them to express their gratitude for God answering the prayers of the saints. All the prophecies predicting this event are now fulfilled. All the anticipations and hopes of God's people are to be fulfilled and thanks is the proper response.

But notice the wonderful truth in what they say. "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, Almighty." I wish we could just stop and study that word but we don't have the time. The word "almighty," pantokrator, a very important word. It means the ultimately powerful one, the absolutely sovereign one. And that is what they say because that is why He can take over. We thank You, O Lord God, because You're able to do this, You are the all powerful one, You are the one who is able to fulfill the promises of the prophets because Your power surpasses the power of Satan, the power of anybody else. It has the sense of God exercising His all-encompassing, all-embracing will by His unbelievably mighty power against which no one can stand.

They also identify God not only as the pantokrator, or the one with almighty power, but please notice very carefully, they identify Him as the one who art and who wast...who art and who wast. That's very important. Go back to chapter 1 verse 8 for just a moment, let me tell you why. Chapter 1 verse 8, this is really a tremendous truth. The Holy Spirit is so precise. Chapter 1 verse 8, it says, "The Lord God is the Alpha and Omega who is and who was and who is to come...who is, who was, who is to come," present, past, future. Go to chapter 4 verse 8, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty...again, the pantokrator, the all sovereign one...who was, who is, who is to come." Present, past, future.

But when you get to this text in chapter 11, the who is to come is dropped because it is time for His arrival. So when you go to chapter 16 and you look at verse 7, it says, "O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous," again you have the Almighty referred to there, but it also notes back in verse 5, "The one who art and who wast." Again it drops "who is to come." Why? Because it's not any longer in the future. He is here. He has arrived. By the way, you see it again in chapter 1 verse 4, all three are used. Now the third aspect is dropped because Christ has arrived.

By the way, can I show you an interesting verse? Look at chapter 17 verse 8 and just draw out the point about Satan counterfeiting. Would you notice verse 8, very interesting? The beast, this is the Antichrist, notice what it says. "The beast that you saw was and is not and is about to come." Isn't that interesting that Satan when he counterfeits the beast wants to make him like God or like Christ who was and is and is to come. And so the beast is a fake...was and is and is to come...Satan's counterfeit. He tries to concoct a poor imitation of the king who is and was and is to come.

Well back to verse 17, we'll close. The twenty-four elders join in all the rest of the voices in heaven, another indication that they are different than the angels who are described in verse 15. And they are praising God. Why? At the end of verse 17, "Because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast

begun to reign." Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign.

It's that time. Literally the reign has begun. Again it's the same kind of usage of the verb to say something is about to happen that is so sure we can speak of it as if it has already taken place. And Psalm 24:1 is now true and realized. The earth is the Lord's and all it contains, the world and all who dwell in it." Christ begins to reign, not just in redemption through grace over an invisible kingdom, but now in power and authority over the visible kingdom of the world. Heaven rejoices.

So, we see the praise for sovereignty in this great moment of future redemptive history.

Father, we thank You for our time in Your Word tonight, it's been so refreshing and we've covered so much and yet so little in terms of verses. We've swept all the way from Exodus to the end of human history. And how we thank You, O God, that You have revealed it all to us, hidden it from the wise and the prudent. We not only know how history began, we know how it's going to end and we rejoice that the King is coming. We thank You that You've given us this tremendous book that can carry us to the very moment of His arrival and give us the same kind of anticipation that will exist in the glories of heaven as all of heaven praises the sovereign coming King. Father, help us to live in the light of this tremendous event, this cataclysmic event, this glorious event. Help us to live lives that honor the coming King. Help us to be divorced in every sense from the system which He will crush from the king of this world, the one who rules over the kingdom of men, help us to stay away from him and his minions and all of his enterprises, for we indeed are citizens of Your kingdom. Our king is King Jesus. Help us to submit our lives in every sense to Him.

Father, as we live in the light of these coming events, help us to hold lightly to the things of this world which will perish and to hold firmly to those things which can never die, those things which are eternal...truth, spiritual service, eternal souls, and help us to live in the light of eternity and indeed as children of the coming King. In His name and for His sake and His glory we ask. Amen.

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