When the Kingdom of this World Becomes the Kingdom of Our Lord
Revelation 11:15–19

Six of the seven trumpets have sounded and the seventh is ready to sound; “Then the seventh angel sounded...” (11:15a); this is the third and final “woe;” if you recall, the judgments in Revelation come in a series of sevens; there were seven seals on a scroll that was opened by the Lamb, Jesus; the seventh seal was the first of seven trumpets to be blown by seven angels; now we come to the seventh trumpet and it will sound throughout the last half of the Tribulation; it will produce seven different angels who will have in their hands seven bowls of wrath which they will pour out on the earth.

The last three trumpets are called “woe” judgments; they are more severe than anything up to this point because they are demonic; the first “woe” was the sounding of the fifth trumpet; the “Destroyer” opens the bottomless pit and out of that pit come demonic locusts which torment for five months all who did not have the seal of God to protect them.

The second “woe” was the sounding of the sixth trumpet; it released four angels bound at the river Euphrates; from east of the Euphrates comes an army of two-hundred million demonically possessed soldiers who make their way to the Holy Land and Jerusalem killing people along the way.

Now the seventh angel has sounded the third “woe;” however, we will not learn all that it entails until we come to chapter 16; it is so devastating that the Lord wants to give more hope and comfort to those who read this Revelation; however, this trumpet will also unveil the glory of Jesus Christ; it will bring to a culmination the forces of evil on the earth and the defeat of the Antichrist as well as the ushering in of the kingdom of God on earth; it is the cause for great praise in
heaven; all heaven is now rejoicing because time is getting close to when the
kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The Announcement of the Coming Kingdom (11:15–19)

*By the sayings of great voices in heaven...* “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!’” (11:15). The best manuscripts have the word “kingdom” as singular, rather
than plural; it best reads: “The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of
our Lord and of His Christ;” that phrase, “The kingdom of the world *has*
become...” is what is called a prophetic aorist; it means something in the future is
so sure it can be spoken of as if it has already happened.

How does this kingdom come to be?

1. **Seen in the power of Christ...** This tells us the power of Satan is broken
and that Christ will reign forever and ever; the sovereignty of the Lord is now
revealed and forever sealed! The prayer of Jesus is now being answered when He
said to His Father: “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in
heaven...” (Matthew 6:10); remember when Satan took Jesus to a high mountain
and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and said to Him: “All these things I
will give You if You will fall down and worship me” (Matthew 4:8–9)? Jesus was
not going to claim the kingdoms of the world on the devil’s terms; He will claim
them on His own terms!

2. **Seen in the performance of Satan...** This world has been and still is
under the power of Satan; he is called “the god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4) and
“the prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2); at the tower of Babel the world
was united as one kingdom under a type of Antichrist named Nimrod; God then
divided the world into individual nations to make his rule more difficult; yet Satan
is still king over the divided nations; I doubt you could ever call any nation at any
time a “Christian nation;” yes, that has been said of our nation, and while even
today the majority of Americans call themselves “Christian,” sin still reigns in our
streets; it is one thing to call yourself a Christian and quite another thing to
actually be a Christian; we have too many talkers and not enough doers to call our
nation a Christian nation; Satan is god of this nation even as he is god over every
other country in the world; the world is really one kingdom with one monarchy
under the power of Satan; the point is, his kingdom is an undivided kingdom; in
terms of location, culture, language, customs, and politics, we are a divided world, yet it is still one kingdom under the rule of Satan.

Even Jesus recognized that the world was under Satan's domain; He said “Now judgment is upon this world, now the ruler of this world shall be cast out” (John 12:31); He is talking about Satan; and He recognizes that the world has but one ruler; Jesus refers to Satan as “the ruler of the world.”

Heaven now rejoices at the blowing of the seventh trumpet because Satan’s kingdom is coming to an end; he had his rule for a time, but when the Lord comes back, “He shall reign forever and ever” and the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of our Lord.

3. Seen in the prophecies from Old Testament prophets... The prophets of the OT frequently spoke of the worldwide rule of the Messiah; Moses wrote in the book of Exodus what is called the song of Moses (Exodus 15:1–18); it is summarized in Revelation 15:3–4: “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.” That song concludes: “The LORD shall reign forever and ever” (Exodus 15:18).

The prophet Isaiah wrote: “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountains of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths” (Isaiah 2:2).

In Daniel 2, the prophet Daniel interprets a dream by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; he saw an amazing image of all the kingdoms of the world; then a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands and it struck the image on its brittle toes and it crushed the image and consumed all the kingdoms of the world; then that stone filled the whole earth (Daniel 2:31–35); Daniel gives the interpretation of what Nebuchadnezzar saw; the image represented the various kingdoms of the world, but the day will come when God will set up His kingdom which shall never be destroyed; the stone cut out of the mountain will break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms of the world, and it shall fill the earth and stand forever (Daniel 2:36–45); that stone is the Messiah, who, when He comes a second time, will crush
the kingdoms of the world and His kingdom will fill the earth and it will become an everlasting kingdom.

In Luke 1, the angel Gabriel comes to Mary and says: “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:31–33).

By the submission of the twenty-four elders... “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 and the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth” (11:16–18).

Observe what the twenty-four elders do when they hear the sound of the seventh trumpet and realize it is time for the kingdom of Satan to be overthrown and for Christ to reign.

1. Their response of worship... They “fell on their faces and worshipped God;” they got up from their thrones and lay prostrate before God.

2. Their recognition of thanks... “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and was and who is to come...”(11:17); for what did they thank Him?

- Because Christ reigns supremely... “O Lord God Almighty... because You have taken Your great power and reigned;” there are two words which are used to describe Christ: “Almighty” which refers to His absolute sovereignty, the other is “power” which refers to His ability to take control; these elders speak of Christ’s reign as if it has already happened; literally the text reads: “You have begun to reign;” it is another prophetic aorist; yet His reign will not begin until He returns to the earth and that may be 3½ years off or until we get to chapters 19:20 to 20:1–2 when the Antichrist and the False
Prophet are cast into hell and Satan is locked up in a bottomless pit for a thousand years.

- Because Christ *rules righteously* .... “The nations were angry and Your wrath has come” (11:18a); when Christ comes as a mighty warrior in His second coming it angers the nations because His rule is one of righteousness; Psalm 2 speaks about the nations in rage against God; how the kings of the earth take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed One; they want “to break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords” (Psalm 2:1–3); the rulers of the world want nothing to do with God; the very name of God causes rage and they conspire together to get rid of Him all together; the righteousness of God and His Son are a threat to their moral relativism and sinful lifestyle; and how does God react toward their plot to destroy Him? “He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion” (Psalm 2:4–6); then the psalmist says how God will give to His Son an inheritance and it will be the nations of the world and the ends of the earth for His possession; when He comes back again in glory and power there will be those nations under the rule of the Antichrist who will attempt to make war with Christ the warrior; however, “He will break the nations with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel” (Psalm 2:7–8); when Christ returns, His enemies will be defeated and truth, justice, and righteousness shall cover the earth; that is the very thing the world hates.

One way that Christ rules righteously is to raise from the dead the unrighteous for judgment; the text reads “And the time of the dead that they should be judged” (11:18b); The text implies the dead who died in their sins; they will not be raised until Christ’s Millennial Kingdom has been completed; in Revelation 20:5 says: “The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished...”;” then John writes that he saw a great white throne in heaven and the dead small and great were standing before God and the Book of Life was opened and those whose names were not written in the Lamb’s Book of Life were cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11–15); God is a just God and everyone who has not
come to Christ for forgiveness will one day pay for their own sins; if hell has one positive benefit, it is that those who get away with evil in this life or face a liberal judge who does not punish them commensurate to their crime, they will one day face the Judge of this universe and He will see to it that true justice will prevail!

- Because Christ rewards graciously...

“...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” (11:18); the 24 elders have already received their rewards in the form of crowns and have cast them before the throne every time they worship Him who sits on the throne (4:4,10–11); here, they are excited that God’s Kingdom has come so that God’s saints on earth, who have yet to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, will receive their crowns so they too will be rewarded for their works.

We discussed the concept of rewards in heaven in Revelation 4; we stated that we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ and that each of us will receive what is due for the things done in the body whether good or bad; for our good works on earth there will be a reward spoken of as a crown; but our bad works will be burned up (see 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:15); there is a word in the Greek translated “bad” and it refers to an immoral act; the word translated “bad” in 2 Corinthians 5:10 means “worthless;” fruit can go bad, but it is not immoral; it is worthless and we throw it away; Paul says our worthless works will be burned up.

An example or two of worthless works would be doing something for the Lord with a selfish motive; that is, the primary purpose being for personal attention rather than to glorify God; or you might give to a ministry because you were told that God would give you a 100-fold return on your investment; therefore you give not to support the ministry so much as to attain personal financial gain; (by the way, the Bible never promises that God will reward you financially for investing in His kingdom work; what these so-called evangelists tell you is a lie and a way for them to become more profitable).

What are the rewards given out in heaven when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ?
1. There is the crown of life for those who persevere under trial (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10; Matthew 5:11–12).

2. There is the crown of righteousness for those who love His appearing and thus live a Christ-like righteous life because they believe that Christ can come at any time (2 Timothy 4:8).

3. There is the crown of glory for those pastors and church leaders who have been faithful in their duties of preaching and teaching the Word and overseeing the flock (1 Peter 5:4).

4. There is the victor’s crown or the crown incorruptible for those who demonstrate self-discipline while running the race for Christ (1 Corinthians 9:24–25).

5. There is the crown of rejoicing for those who have won souls for Christ (1 Thessalonians 2:19).

6. There is also reward for those who give to the poor and are charitable to those in need while doing it in secret (Matthew 6:1–4).

7. There are also those words from our Lord, “Well done, good and faithful servant... enter into the joy of your lord” (Matthew 25:21).

The announcement of the coming kingdom is: by the sounding of the seventh trumpet; by the sayings of loud voices in heaven, “The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever!” by the submission of the twenty-four elders who fall on their faces and worship God in thanksgiving; they are grateful that Christ will reign supremely, rule righteously, and reward graciously.

The Appearance of the Temple and the Ark of the Covenant in Heaven (11:19)

The site of the temple... “Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of the covenant was seen in His temple...” (11:19a); there is a temple in the present heaven; however, when the New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven at the end of Christ’s millennial reign, there will be no actual temple; Revelation
21:22 says: “I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty are its temple.” So there is a temple in the present heaven, but once eternity begins, there is no temple.

The temple is the sanctuary where God dwells and the door to the temple is open; the four living creatures, the myriads of angels, and the 24 elders see the Ark of the Covenant inside the temple which speaks of God’s eternal communion with His covenant people.

1. The making of the ark in the days of Moses... The earthly Ark which was in the Holy of Holies of the temple was made of acacia wood overlaid in gold; it was 2½ cubits long (about 3½ feet long) and 1½ cubits wide (about 2 feet wide); on it rested the mercy seat and on top of the mercy seat rested two cherubim with overarching wings that covered the face of the mercy seat; four golden rings were on each corner where wooden poles were placed for the purpose of carrying the ark (Exodus 25:10–22.)

Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat from the sacrificed animals; he would do this three times; once to make atonement for his own sins, then for the sins of the Levitical priests, and finally for the sins of the nation of Israel.

It was said that the glory of God glowed from between the wings of the cherubim, for God said, “I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony” (Exodus 25:22); so the Ark was a symbol of God’s presence.

The book of Hebrews implies that the earthly tabernacle and its furnishings were a copy or pattern of what is in heaven (Hebrews 9:23); therefore the earthly Ark was a copy of the ark in heaven.

2. The mystery of the Ark... The location of Ark of the Covenant has been a mystery; what happened to it? It was not part of the Second Temple and is last mentioned in 2 Chronicles 35:3 where it was placed back in Solomon’s Temple by King Josiah in 639 BC during his repairing of the temple which resulted in a spiritual reform.

Jeremiah tells us once Israel repents and is in her land during the Millennial reign of Christ, “that they will say no more. ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall
it be made anymore. At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts” (Jeremiah 3:16–17). During Christ’s Millennial Kingdom there will be no Ark of the Covenant, nor will it even be a subject of conversation; the Lord Himself will be present with His people.

Yet today, especially among orthodox Jews, there is great interest in the Ark; some believe that before their Messiah comes that the third temple must be built and the Ark of the Covenant must be in that temple; so it has to be found.

There are three theories were the Ark is located:

1. It was hidden by Jeremiah in Mount Nebo prior to the Babylonians looting the temple and carrying off its treasures into Babylon (2 Kings 24:10–13); according to 2 Maccabees 2:1–8, it was to be hidden until “the gathering of the congregation of His people.” Could that refer to the scattering of the Jews returning to their homeland of Israel? They were not a scattered people until 70 AD while the Maccabees was first century BC (we do not recognize 2 Maccabees as inspired writing).

2. Jewish tradition has the Ark hidden by Levites beneath the Holy of Holies of Solomon’s Temple before its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC; excavation work is currently being done under that temple and there is a spot where orthodox Jews will stop and pray believing that that the Ark is on the other side of the wall before which they pray.

3. According to Ethiopian history, the Queen of Sheba married King Solomon and they had a son, Menelik I; when he was 19, he took the Ark with him to Ethiopia where the Ark rests in a church near Axum, Ethiopia; this most likely is a replica of the Ark since the Ark existed in the days of King Josiah long after the time of the supposed son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

The sounds from the temple... “And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail” (11:19b); historically the Ark corresponds with the place where atonement for sin was made and was a symbol of God’s presence and communion with His covenant people Israel; but the Ark in heaven is one which will also pour out God’s wrath on the earth; the sounds that come from the Ark
speak of the terrible events that are to come on the earth during the second half of the Tribulation once the seven bowls of wrath are poured out from the seventh trumpet.

Let us end this message in a positive way; in heaven the door of the temple is open and the Ark of the Covenant is visible to all in heaven; originally, the Ark was a sign that God only had a covenant with the people of Israel; but with the coming of the new covenant through Jesus Christ, everyone who loves Him and believes in Him is part of His covenant—Jews and Gentiles alike; this means all in Christ will see the full display of God’s glory; even though from the heavenly temple comes the sounds of the destruction of God’s enemies, God will remember His covenant people and He will be true to His own; whatever the terror and destruction to come, God will not break the covenant that He made with His people through Jesus Christ; the temple of God is open for all to enter; His mercy and His presence, as represented by the Ark of the Covenant, is as much for you and for me as it is for the believing Jew.

The kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever! Amen!