

# The Grace of Wrath

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*

Text  
11:15-19

Topic

At the sound of the Last Trumpet “the world’s Kingdom has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Messiah, and He will rule forever and ever.”

Title

***“One King to Rule Them All, One King to Bind Them;  
One King to Bring Them All and In His Likeness Find Them”***

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**- World domination -  
Who knew it could be so funny?**

⇒ Marvin the Martian wanted to destroy Earth because it interfered with his view of Venus. We owe Bugs Bunny an outstanding debt of gratitude.

⇒ Mad-scientist Dr. Heinz Doofenshmirtz oversees Evil, Incorporated. He is bent on dominating what he calls the Tri-State Area. Agent P, aka, Perry the Platypus, foils his ‘inators’ every time.

⇒ The most extraordinary cartoon menace is The Brain, a genius lab mouse whose genes have been spliced. One of his brilliant schemes for taking over the world was creating Brainania, a fictional island nation, in an attempt to exploit the United States for billions of dollars in foreign aid.

## **If only world domination or destruction was comical.**

Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, Attila the Hun, Charlemagne, Cyrus the Great, Napoleon, the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire, Adolf Hitler, and Khan Noonien Singh. There was nothing funny in any of their incursions.

## **One Man *will* rule the world.**

He is the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at verse fifteen: "The world's kingdom has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Messiah, and He will rule forever and ever" (ISV).

I'll organize my comments around two points: **#1 When You Hear The Seventh Trumpet Our God Reigns**, and **#2 When You Hear The Seventh Trumpet Our God Returns**.

### **#1 - When You Hear The Seventh Trumpet Our God Reigns (v15)**

*Éschatos* in the Greek language means *last*. The study of Bible prophecy is called Eschatology. Like any discipline of study, Eschatology has its vocabulary. Dispensationalism and *parousia* are terms you don't use every day.

*Proleptic* is a word common in Eschatology. It describes a future event as if it has already taken place. A character in a drama might address someone and say, "You're a dead man."

Jesus' rule over the world's kingdom is represented as already having taken place even though it remains in the future.

Rev 11:15 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!"

The apostle John was in Heaven to receive the Revelation of Jesus Christ. A call went out from Heaven to every creature for someone worthy to take a scroll out of the right hand of God the Father.

**No one was found worthy... Except one!**

Jesus took the scroll. The scroll was sealed with seven seals. As Jesus opened each seal, the Great Tribulation advanced upon Earth.

- The first five seals proceeded at a relatively slow pace bringing plagues upon the inhabitants of Earth from the natural world and supernatural creatures.
- When the sixth seal was opened, we had a preview of what was contained in the seventh seal.
- When the seventh seal was opened, we were made aware that seven angels had seven trumpets to sound.

The sounding of the seventh trumpet is still not the end. We will see seven additional angels who pour out seven bowls of the last of God's wrath upon those who inhabit Earth. Then Jesus will return.

We won't see the bowls until chapter sixteen. The chronological action is paused to reveal additional information and insight about events transpiring on Earth during the Great Tribulation. One commentator calls them "underplots."

"Loud voices... in Heaven" make the proleptic proclamation. I love the drama in all this. I envision the inhabitants of Heaven in great joy chanting, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

I'm not a big fan of over-exuberance. It's overdone. **This** chant is a once-in-a-creation declaration that ought to inspire *over* over-exuberance.

You've been paying attention and are wondering why in quoting verse fifteen I have said both "The kingdoms of this world," plural, and "The kingdom," singular. The singular is the preferred translation.

It better communicates the extent of Jesus' kingship. Nations and kingdoms (with a small 'k') will exist on Earth. Jesus rules them all from Jerusalem. To paraphrase the Brits, "The Sun never sets on the Son of God."

"Kingdom" refers to the reign and rule of the entire Earth that God intended to be under man's stewardship. Adam and Eve forfeited their stewardship for a fig. Satan became "the god of this world" (Second Corinthians 4:4) and "the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working [as a ruling king] in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2).

How did it come to this? One scholar said,

*In the Garden [of Eden], one can see a perfect kingdom state that man was intended to enjoy for all eternity, but listening to the enemy of the King, Satan, man rebelled against the King and forsook His righteous rule. The just King threw the rebels out of the Garden denouncing their citizenship with its rights and privileges. This rebellion of pseudo-independence led to mankind becoming a rogue city-state. **All of history is then the story of the King humbling Himself to reconcile this rebellious rogue faction of earth back into His Kingdom.***

Jesus humbled Himself to enter our world as a man. As the God-man, He died on the Cross. He arose from the dead, thereby defeating sin and death and the devil. It is why He uniquely can open the seals and redeem humanity, restoring creation in the process.

Jesus will establish His Kingdom on Earth for one thousand years. We will see the Millennial Kingdom in chapter twenty. After the thousand years are finished, He will rule over new heavens and a new Earth forever and ever.

If you are looking for a way to start a conversation about Eschatology, try this. The next time someone asks, "How are you?" *tell them you are proleptic*. It should open the door to a sympathetic follow-up question.

## #2 - When You Hear The Seventh Trumpet Our God Returns (v16-19)

Israel was familiar with trumpets. Trumpeters trumpeted for many purposes:

- To assemble people
- To give direction to people
- To alert people to coming danger or judgment
- To celebrate holy days and sacred events
- To direct troop movements
- To signal an announcement or proclamation

In his masterful chapter on the resurrection and rapture of the church, the apostle Paul writes, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at **the last trumpet...** the **trumpet** will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed" (First Corinthians 15:52).

### **We be humble Gentiles easily confused by trumpets.**

The "last trumpet" of the Church Age is *not* the seventh trumpet in the Great Tribulation. The two events are separated by at least seven years.

- The last trumpet of the Church Age resurrects and raptures the bride of Jesus before the Great Tribulation.
- The last trumpet in the Great Tribulation releases God's final wrath upon those who inhabit Earth, preparing the way for Jesus to return from Heaven with us.

Rev 11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,

Nowhere are we told the identity of the twenty-four elders. Some suggestions have more credibility than others, but they are all speculation.

The elders could be human beings who represent the church. My best guess is that they are created supernatural beings, probably an order of angels.

### **God has supernatural beings around Him.**

The Old Testament describes what some call a "Divine Council" or "Divine Assembly" of supernatural beings:

- Psalm 82:1 says that "God takes His stand in the **divine assembly**; among the **divine beings** He renders judgment" (ISV).
- Psalm 89 asks, "Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings? In the **council of the holy ones** God is greatly feared."
- One translation of Deuteronomy 32:8 reads, "When the High God gave the nations their stake, gave them their place on Earth, He put each of the peoples within boundaries under the care of **divine guardians**" (MSG).

One of the commentaries gave two solid reasons to think they are probably not human:

1. "Throughout the [Revelation] they are distinguished *from* the saints" (7:13-14; 14:3; 19:4-8).
2. "They are seated on their thrones *already*, but humans will not be so positioned until some point in the future" (20:4).

It makes more biblical sense that a Divine Council occupy these thrones. It's anyone's guess.

We're the bride of Christ and are probably in the bride's room getting ready to return with Him.

Rev 11:17 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 heartfelt criticism many have against God is that He doesn't stop bad things from happening. Far from being thanked, men revile God for His apparent lack of involvement and concern.

Just the opposite is true. We were in Adam when he sinned. God was with Adam in the Garden, promising to redeem us and restore Earth though the price for Him would be dear.

He so loved the world that He sent Jesus to suffer and die in our place. Not only has God done something about sin, death, and Satan. He conquered them in making the ultimate sacrifice and did so to save the very people who revile Him.

It is a testament to God's compassion that He has held our rebellious planet together while He providentially worked out His plan to "reign forever and ever."

Rev 11:18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come...

The Bible is its own best commentary. Psalm Two is a better commentary than I can provide.

Psa 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing?

Psa 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying,*

Psa 2:3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us."

Psa 2:4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision.

Psa 2:5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure:

Psa 2:6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."

Mankind rebelled. God responded with mercy and grace. He took His wrath against sin upon Himself for our sake. The Great Tribulation is a time when "He shall speak to [mankind] in His wrath." The plagues and the judgments are God saying, "Repent and be saved."

Rev 11:18 ...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."

The prophets and saints of the Old Testament do not receive their glorified physical I-can-live-in-Heaven bodies until the Lord returns. The rewarding here has to do with them.

Don't worry. We will be rewarded, too, and earlier than these guys. Our rewarding occurs after the resurrection and rapture of the church. We will have our rewards when we return from Heaven to Earth with Jesus.

"And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth." Jesus described His Second Coming as a time of separating who He called "sheep" or "goats," meaning believers or nonbelievers.

- Believers who survive the Great Tribulation will become the first settlers of the Millennial Kingdom. They will remain in their human bodies.
- Nonbelievers who survive the Great Tribulation will be consigned to Hades to await their final eternal judgment.

This declaration of the final judgment comes with time to repent. In wrath God remembers mercy and seeks to save. He keeps warning that a day is coming when all offers to be saved will be off the table. But until then, He is not willing that any should perish.



“Those who destroy the Earth” are the main antagonists in the Great Tribulation, e.g., the devil, the beast, the false prophet, etc.

Rev 11:19 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.

The earthly Tabernacle, and later the Jerusalem Temples, were designed to illustrate God’s great salvation. The penalty for sin is death. In the Temple, a sacrificed lamb could die in your stead. After the lamb was slain, it was up to the priest to perform what was necessary as your mediator.

It illustrated that Jesus is the Lamb, sacrificed in your stead. He is also the Priest, your Mediator in your relationship with God.

The Tabernacle and Temples were copies of a Temple in Heaven. It served to illustrate God’s great salvation to the inhabitants of Heaven.

There will be a Temple on Earth during the Millennial Kingdom. It, too, will illustrate God’s great salvation for the generations born during the Kingdom Age.

Thomas Ice is a commentator we heartily recommend. He said:

*The purpose for a Temple throughout Scripture has been to establish a location upon Earth for the presence of God that reveals through its ritual God’s great holiness. God’s plan for Israel, His earthly people, includes a relation to them through a Temple. Currently the church is God’s spiritual Temple made of living stones until the rapture. The Millennium will return history to a focus upon Israel and will continue to be a time in which sin will be present upon the earth. Thus, God will include a new Temple, a new priesthood, a new Law, etc., at this future time because He will be present in Israel and still desires to teach that holiness is required to approach Him. **This is contrasted with the fact that no Temple will exist in eternity (Revelation 21:22) because God and the Lamb are its Temple and there will be no sin in Heaven, thus no need for Temple ritual.***

We think of the Temple as a massive complex. Its essence was a 675sq.ft. Sanctuary that was initially a portable tent. It consists of two chambers, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, separated by a thick curtain.

With its separate lid called the Mercy Seat, the Ark of the Covenant was the only article of furniture in the Holy of Holies. It was the place on Earth God met with Israel through the representation of the High Priest.

The Ark disappeared from history by the time of the Babylonian Captivity in the sixth century BC. The Holy of Holies in the Second Temple was an empty chamber. When Roman General Pompey conquered Jerusalem around 63BC, he demanded the privilege of entering the Holy of Holies. When he did, he came out saying that he could not understand what all the interest was about the sanctuary when it was only an empty room.

Where is the lost Ark?

1. Jeremiah may have hidden the Ark in a cave in Mt. Nebo before the Babylonians looted the Temple.
2. Others suggest the Ark is hidden in a cave near the Dead Sea Scrolls.
3. The Temple Institute in Jerusalem's Old City is an Ultra-Orthodox organization dedicated to rebuilding the Jewish Temple. The last time I checked, they say the Ark is under the Temple Mount and will be found when the Temple is rebuilt.
4. Another theory is that the Ark was taken from ancient Jerusalem in the days of King Solomon. While there are numerous variations of the story, the common thread centers on Menelik, a son fathered by King Solomon born to the Queen of Sheba. Ancient Sheba corresponds to Ethiopia. While this union is not mentioned in the biblical account of the meeting between these two, it has a long tradition in Ethiopia. In an entry preserved in the Ethiopian royal chronicles, Menelik brought the Ark to his country for safekeeping.

The Ethiopians insist they have the Ark and will bring it to the Messiah when He sets up His Kingdom. Interestingly we read in Zephaniah 3:10, "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, The daughter of My dispersed ones, Shall bring My offering" [i.e., the Ark].

We may never find the Ark:

Jeremiah 3:16 "Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days," says the LORD, "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.' "

The Second Temple stood for over 500 years without the Ark. Building the Tribulation Temple is not dependent upon discovering the lost Ark.

The main import of seeing the Ark of the Covenant in Heaven is the word "covenant." Its revealed presence reminds Israel that God is keeping His covenants with them. God made unconditional promises to Abraham, Moses, and David. He has not, will not, can not abandon them. All Israel is saved through the Great Tribulation.

Meanwhile, on Earth "there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail." It is the prelude to the finale.

Summarizing these verses, one commentator wrote,

*Apart from the outpourings of the bowls, which occur in rapid succession, there is little chronological movement from this point until chapter nineteen and the Second Coming of Christ. Events and situations are now introduced which are concurrent with the seals and the trumpets. These serve to emphasize the dramatic climax of this period in the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

**W**e are proleptic. We live in the present, knowing God's prophecies and promises of God are a certainty.

- You are sitting in the mortgage-free building of Calvary Hanford.
- The apostle Paul said, "[God] raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6).

We are to represent in the present what we will be in the future. It is impossible to do that, apart from yielding to the indwelling Holy Spirit. With him, you can do all things through Christ Who strengthens you.