

# The Seventh Trumpet: God's Temple in Heaven Was Opened

## 11: 14-19

**DIG:** What does this trumpet proclaim? How is the Second Coming of the Messiah "good news - bad news" event? For what is God worshiped? What does this tell you about His power? Who does He punish? Who does He reward?

**REFLECT:** How do you react to the Lord's power over an unbelieving world to *hurt them* (the fifth *shofar* and first woe), to *kill them* (the sixth trumpet and the second woe) and to *damn them* (the seventh trumpet and the third woe)? Why? As ADONAI displays this power in response to prayer (8:4), what is your greatest need today? Have you boldly approached Him with that need through prayer? If the doors of heaven are always open to the children of God (John 1:12), why not take hold of your birthright and enjoy unlimited access to your heavenly Father?

After a brief interlude, the unbelieving world will have a sobering warning. The last three of the trumpet judgments will be so terrible that they are referred to as woes. **The second woe will have passed, but the third woe will be coming soon (11:14). Chapters 11 through 14 are parenthetical. They add some detail about the middle of the Great Tribulation and show us why the bowl judgments will be so necessary.** The word **soon** expresses the urgency of the last woe.

That **third woe** would bring with it the final violent Bowl Judgments, the second half of the Great Tribulation and the return of **the Messiah** to set up **His Kingdom**. It sets in motion the completion of **God's** plan of redemption (see my commentary on **Exodus Bz - Redemption**). The last forty-two months will see the final fury of the Day of **the Lord** (16:1-21), the final harvest of **the earth** (11:18, 16:19), and **Jesus'** defeat of the kings of **the earth** (17:12-18), ending in the final eight-stage Campaign of Armageddon (19:19). When **the seventh trumpet** sounds, ADONAI will answer the prayer: **Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10)**. That answer echoes through **Chapters 16 through 22** as **God** finishes **His** mighty work of reclaiming **the earth** from the thief Satan. The earth that **He** created, and which **He** redeemed with **His** blood will be **His** once more, never to be lost again.<sup>339</sup>

It is important to understand this **seventh shofar** is not the Rapture to which Rabbi Sha'ul refers to in **First Corinthians 15:52**. There he says: **Listen, I tell you a mystery:**

**We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed** (this should be the motto for our nursery) – in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed (also see **First Thessalonians 4:16**). Consequently, we can see that while the last *shofar* is instantaneous, the seventh *shofar* covers forty-two months.

The seventh *shofar* will not only announce coming judgment for unbelievers, but it will also announce the coronation of Yeshua **Messiah**. In the TaNaKh, trumpets were normally sounded at the coronation of a king. During the attempted overthrow of his father David, Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel, saying: As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then think to yourself, “Absalom is king in Hebron” (**Second Samuel 15:10**). At the coronation of David's rightful successor, Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, “Long live King Solomon” (**First Kings 1:39**). Trumpets also sounded at the coronations of King Jehu (**Second Kings 9:13**) and King Joash (**Second Kings 11:14**).<sup>340</sup>

When the seventh angel sounded his *shofar* there were loud voices in heaven, which said: The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of God and of His Messiah, and He will reign forever and ever (**Revelation 11:15** also see **Exodus 15:18; Daniel 2:44-45, 7:13-14, 27**). The tense of the Greek verb translated **has become** describes an event so certain, that it is spoken of as if it has already happened. There will be unrestrained joy that the power of Satan will be broken forever, and that Yeshua will rightfully rule as **King of kings and Lord of lords** (**17:14** and **19:16**). The active reign of **God** on earth, the millennial Kingdom, promised in **1:5-8** and **6:10**, now begins to become real. Between these verses and **Chapter 19** are the various judgments and other events associated with the overthrow of the system of this world and the coronation of **Messiah's** reign. That is why essentially the same cry seen here in **11:17** is repeated later in **19:6: Hallelujah! Adonai, God of heaven's angelic armies has begun His reign!** The thousand-year messianic Kingdom will be the climax of human history (**Exodus 15:1-18; Isaiah 2:2-3; Daniel 2:44-45; Micah 4:1-3**).

As representatives of the Church in heaven, the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before the Lord, fell on their faces and worshiped Him, saying: We give thanks to you **ADONAI, God of heaven's angelic armies, the One who is and who was, because you have taken Your great power and have begun to rule** (**11:16-17 CJB**). And this **God**, of course, is none other than **Jesus Christ**. This is the same **Person**, using the same words as the glorified **Messiah**, which **John** encountered at the beginning of the book (**1:4** and **8**). He will protect us and we will have nothing to worry about.

Once the seventh trumpet sounds, instead of being repentant, the Gentile nations will be angry at the thought of the Kingdom of God being established. The stubborn rebellion of mankind will continue right down to the very end.<sup>341</sup> Satan will know his day will soon end, so he will stir the anger of the nations. The Lord's wrath, however, will burn brighter, which will put Satan and Messiah on a collision course.<sup>342</sup> The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding Your servants the prophets and Your holy people and those who reverence Your name, both small and great - and for destroying those who destroy the earth with their sin (Revelation 11:18 also see Psalm 2:1-3, 46:6, 115:13). Like the coming of Messiah's Kingdom (11:15), God's timetable for judging the lost (Isaiah 24:17-23, 26:20-21, 30:27-33; Revelation 20:11-15) and rewarding His holy people (Matthew 5:12, 10:41-42; Mark 9:41; First Corinthians 3:8; Colossians 3:24; Second John 8) is certain. The verb translated has come is another example of the Greek proleptic aorist tense that describes a future event with such certainty it is as if it had already happened.

It is significant that special attention is given to those who destroy the earth. On the sixth day of creation, ADONAI commanded mankind to fill the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:28a). Mankind was to subdue the earth, but it was to be a rule of good stewardship and service - not one of exploitation and destruction. Adam and his descendants were to rule creation for the benefit of man and the glory of God. This principle was reemphasized after the Great Flood. However, mankind has all but destroyed the earth. Instead of caring for the plants and animals placed under his care, many have become extinct. Wars have devastated many forests and scorched countless lands. Human greed has polluted both the water and the air. Worst of all has been mankind's wickedness, both toward his fellow man and against the Lord. The word destroy can be translated corrupt. Mankind has destroyed the earth by corrupting the earth, using it not for God's glory, but instead to satisfy his own sinful greed. Therefore, He must finally destroy the destroyers and corrupt the corrupters. Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile (22:11a). For He is the One who can destroy both the soul and the body in hell (Matthew 10:28).<sup>343</sup>

In the beginning of Chapter 11, John was told to measure the tribulation temple on earth (11:1). At the end of the chapter, he sees a vision of God's Temple in heaven. This heavenly Temple points to unbroken fellowship with ADONAI - its doors remain open to all. Within this Temple, John saw the ark of the Covenant, a symbol of His holiness as the just basis for His wrath.

Then God's Temple in heaven was opened, and within it was seen the ark of His Covenant (11:19a). This is not the original ark of the Covenant made by Bezalel and Oholiab for the Tabernacle in the wilderness (see my commentary on Exodus Fr - The Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place: Christ at the Throne of Grace). It is not likely

that the original **ark** ever survived the Babylonian destruction of Solomon's **Temple** because it is not mentioned as having gone into captivity. If we keep in mind that the original **ark** was basically a piece of wood overlaid with gold, Nebuchadnezzar would have only been interested in the gold when the **Temple** was looted in 586BC. When the Jews returned 70 years later, there was no **ark** to put in the **Temple** they rebuilt. **Extra-biblical accounts say that the ark was hidden "in it's place" (Talmud, Yoma 53b), or elsewhere. Yoma 52b says it was King Josiah who hid it; but in the Apocrypha, Second Maccabees 2:4-8 tells us that Jeremiah rescued the ark and brought it to a cave on Mount Sinai to be preserved until God gathers His people together in the messianic Kingdom. So the mention of the ark in this present verse is in agreement with this tradition because Isra'el's national salvation is in the context here.**

If, after the Babylonian captivity, the Jewish people could not find **the ark** after 70 years, they are not likely to find it after 2,500 years. **The** heavenly **ark** seen here in **Revelation** was the original from which Moses made a copy for the earthly Tabernacle. But we should keep in mind that this is a real physical **Temple**, in a real physical city, where **Messiah** now appears in **His** real physical, glorified resurrection body. If the earthly **ark** symbolized **the LORD's** presence when guiding **His** people, the appearance of the heavenly **ark** symbolizes **ADONAI's** ability to fulfill the rest of **His** covenantal promises to **His** people.

**And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and an earthquake and a great hailstorm (11:19b).** These heavenly phenomena occur at the beginning (**4:5**), here in the middle, and finally at the end of the Great Tribulation (**16:18**). These presumably will affect the whole earth, supplementing the earthquake in Jerusalem at the resurrection of the two witnesses, who had pronounced a three-and-a-half year drought on the earth. The rebels on **the earth** had cried out for rain. But instead of rain they would get hail. The angels who had restrained the winds and rains suddenly released them, resulting in a terrible **hailstorm** that testified of **the LORD's** wrath against the rebellion of mankind.<sup>344</sup>

When **God** reveals **His** righteousness, **He** unleashes **His** wrath against those who have broken **His** Covenant. But to those of us who know Him through **His Son, Jesus Christ**, and have taken refuge in mercy and grace through **Messiah's** blood, we enjoy unhindered access to the throne of **God** when we cry out **Abba, Father (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6; Mark 14:36)**. The message of **the seventh shofar** is that **Messiah is the King of kings and Lord of lords**. One day **He** will rule **the earth** from **His Temple** in Jerusalem (see my commentary on **Isaiah Db - The Nine Missing Articles in Messiah's Coming Temple**). **Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be (Second Peter 3:11)?**