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(Revelation 11:15-19)

**Intro.** When you think about some of the popular songs of the Christian faith, we come across several which deal with the subject of Christ’s return. Songs like “How Great Thou Art,” “Days of Elijah,” “Glorious Day,” “When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder,” “The King Is Coming,” “I’ll Fly Away,” “Midnight Cry” & more. That theme plays itself out in Scripture many times, including the final portion of Revelation 11. As we conclude our series on “Battle Trumpets,” today we consider “The Final Trumpet Call.”

Theme: Christ’s coming & final judgment

Background: While the Apostle John was in exile for his faith, Jesus Christ revealed end-times events to him through a series of visions. The vision containing the 7 trumpets are during the Tribulation period.

### **Explanation of the Text:**

#### **I. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet is the final trumpet when Christ returns (11:15)**

- For other uses of the trumpet at the time of Christ’s coming, see the following:
  - 1) Matthew 24:31 (loud trumpet after the Tribulation, gathering the elect from the 4 winds—rapture/resurrection);
  - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:52 (last trumpet, resurrection);
  - 3) 1 Thessalonians 4:16 (trumpet of God at the resurrection & rapture)
- I believe these references to trumpets are one & the same at the time of the resurrection/rapture & return of Christ
- The “kingdom of the world” is that which has been under Satan’s control, for he offered it to Jesus in the temptation (Matthew 4:8-9; Luke 4:5-6)
- The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord & of His Christ—it is finalized at the coming of Christ & all is placed under the reign of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 15:23-28)
- His reign shall be “forever & ever”

Illus: We’ve probably all heard Handel’s Messiah at Christmas & heard this part of the chorus, “And He shall reign forever and ever”

#### **II. Representatives of both the old & new covenant people of God worship God who reigns (11:16-18)**

- The 24 elders, first introduced to us in chapter 4, represents the 12 tribes of Israel & the 12 apostles, or the old & new covenant people of God
- They have been seated on their thrones, but they get off their thrones to fall on their faces before God & worship Him in praise & thanksgiving

Illus: The way we build our worship centers today don’t lend themselves to kneeling or laying prostrate on the floor, but biblical worship makes nothing of ourselves & everything about the Lord

- “who is and who was” (11:17)—it doesn’t add “who is to come” because He has come here in this passage with the coming of the kingdom
- “You have taken”—perfect tense; no one will ever take God’s authority & reign away from Him

#### **III. Both believers & unbelievers will be judged in the end (11:18)**

Illus: The nations raged—think about the nations which have raged against Israel & against Christians—the Muslims have always targeted the Jews; Hitler’s Nazi party aimed at destroying the Jews; ISIS today is massacring Christian leaders & families—these groups rage against the one True & Living God

- Though the nations rage, God’s wrath is greater against them in judgment—the more they commit & fail to repent, the more wrath they are storing up for themselves in the day of wrath (see Romans 2:4-5)
- God’s people will be rewarded—whether the servants (also called prophets) or the saints (those who fear the name of the Lord), both small (insignificant in the world’s eyes) & great
- The rewarding of believers may refer to the Judgment Seat of Christ mentioned by the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- The unbelievers’ judgment is described as “destroying the destroyers of the earth”

#### **IV. Natural, earth-shaking events represent God’s power, justice & holiness (11:19)**

- God’s temple was opened, revealing the ark of His covenant—we aren’t sure if the ark still exists on earth, for it may have been destroyed under Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC or hidden away to be revealed in the latter days, but here we catch a glimpse of it in heaven as a sign of God’s faithfulness & promise to dwell with His people in holiness
- The lightning, thunder, earthquake & heavy hail are expressions of nature’s way of announcing the greatness of God

Illus: If you’ve ever been through a natural disaster, you know how devastating it can be—earthquake, wildfire, volcanic eruption, flood, tornado, hurricane & such—often times we think, “God, how could You let this happen?” But do we ever stop to think, “God, what are You telling us?”—is He getting our attention for a greater judgment to come?

#### **Application of the Text:**

##### **I. Join the multitudes throughout the ages in worshiping God through Jesus Christ (11:16)**

- When you gather with other believers and call on the name of the Lord in worship, you join yourself with billions of others throughout history who have done the same thing
- In fact, the only appropriate response to the work of Christ is to worship Him, for He gave His life for us

##### **II. Be ready for judgment (11:18)**

Illus: How many of you knew when you were growing up that if you did something wrong, you were going to get punished for it? How many of you went ahead & did it anyway, because you thought you’d like it or wouldn’t get caught for it?

- Every single one of us has sinned & sin deserves judgment—either your sin will be judged in Christ or you will have to pay the penalty of your sin through eternal death

##### **III. Come to Jesus as the only access to heaven (11:19)**

- The picture of the temple in heaven opened with the ark of the covenant reminds us of the curtain which has been torn in two, once separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place, but because of Christ’s perfect sacrifice, He has opened the way. He is the only door into heaven.

**Conc.** If you were to commit a crime & an alarm sounded or a police car’s siren sounded, that would serve as a warning of you being caught. Now, you may be thinking, “That’s for criminals, but I’m no criminal.” Jesus says if you have lusted in your heart for another, you have committed adultery. Moreover, you’ve lied at some point in your life. When you fail to tithe, God says you are stealing from Him. So in the matter of a few seconds, your own heart has condemned you as a lustful, lying thief. So you are a criminal & your crimes have been committed against the Most High God. But the same God who is holy & just is also gracious & merciful & will forgive you if you come to Him through repentance from sin & faith in Christ & His work on the cross. Then, at “The Final Trumpet Call,” you will be rewarded rather than destroyed.