

Revelation 11:15-19

Revelation 11:15-19 moves us into the final phase of God's judgment. This is the third and final "woe" judgment (8:13). The three final "woe" judgments are:

- 1) Trumpet judgment #5, which is "woe" judgment #1 (9:1, 11, 12);
- 2) Trumpet judgment #6, which is "woe" judgment #2 (9:13; 11:14);
- 3) Trumpet judgment #7, which is "woe" judgment #3 (**11:15**).

There are two main actions revealed in these verses concerning the seventh trumpet judgment:

ACTION #1 – The seventh angel sounds his trumpet. **11:15a**

This begins the finale of the judgment of God. **This seventh trumpet judgment contains the seven terrible bowl judgments which lead to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

The essence of this judgment is described in Zechariah 13:8-14:10. Terrible persecution will come against Israel as a prelude to the coming of Christ. In fact, only one third of Israel will survive. What we learn here is that this terrible persecution is fully sanctioned by heaven.

Dr. Charles Ryrie made an interesting observation about this when he said that "the end is near enough now that the announcement of it can be made."

ACTION #2 – When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, great worship breaks out in heaven. **11:15b-18**

There are six observations we want to make about this:

Observation #1 - The worship service features voices which are loud. **11:15b**

When the seventh seal was opened, it opens with silence (8:1); when the seventh trumpet judgment opens, it opens with loud worship.

Loud does not mean out-of-control. In fact, the word "loud" in Greek is "mega" which has to do with three things: 1) Size; 2) Intensity; 3) Rank (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 281). What this means then is that the crowd of this worship scene is large and they are crying with intense voices and this is the highest ranked worship group in existence.

Observation #2 - The worship service arises in heaven. **11:15c**

The Greek text literally reads "in the heaven" (εν τω ουρανω). This worship is taking place at the throne of God. If we keep in mind that much of what is about to happen is very wrathful, we see that at God's throne God is worshipped for everything He is and does.

(217)

Observation #3 - The worship anticipates Christ's Kingdom. **11:15b**

The noun “kingdom” (τη βασιλεια) is singular and not plural as in the King James Version. The emphasis here is that Jesus Christ is on the verge of taking control of the entire world which is presently under the power of Satan.

We may recall that Satan offered the world's kingdom to Jesus Christ if He would worship him (Matthew 4:8-9). The temptation was trying to get Jesus to bypass the cross.

This worship service anticipates the victory of Jesus Christ and His eternal reign. We know from Acts 17:31 that there is a fixed day of judgment and this praise service anticipates this. This all starts with a worship scene in heaven in which Jesus Christ is worshipped.

Observation #4 - The worship service includes the worship of twenty-four elders. **11:16-18**

The twenty-four elders are very much aware of the eschatological plan of God and they are emotionally moved by the thought that the end is near. As we examine passages pertaining to these twenty-four elders, we cannot help but be impressed with how many times they are involved in the worship of God. They worship Him as Creator (4:10), as Redeemer (5:8, 14); as the One who offers Salvation (7:11).

True Biblical leadership worships the God of the Bible and is not afraid to fall down and worship God. The specific focus of this praise is on giving thanks to God. Both Jesus Christ and God the Father are the recipients of this praise and are identified by the title “Lord God, the Almighty.”

The phrase “Lord God, the Almighty” occurs seven times in Revelation, 1:8; 4:8; **11:17**; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22. The phrase “God the Almighty” occurs two times in Revelation, 16:14; 19:15. The stress of this name is that God has all might and power as Sovereign God to do anything, specifically take over the world by destroying all that is evil and establishing His righteous Kingdom. At God's throne all recognize the sovereign might and power of God and are worshipping Him for it.

There are three specific reasons why these worshippers thank God:

(Reason #1) - Because God has begun to reign by His great power. **11:17b**

Notice at this point in the Tribulation the process of reigning is not completed, but God has begun the process and it is well under way, specifically 3½ years away. The seventh trumpet is the final trumpet judgment before Christ does reign.

(218)

(Reason #2) - Because God is pouring out His wrath on the godless nations. **11:18a**

We see the satanic and evil degeneration that has taken place on this earth, because in this one chapter the godless nations have taken God's property (11:2); they have rejoiced over the death of God's prophets (11:9); and they are totally enraged at God (**11:18**).

In heaven, God is being praised and worshipped and thanked because He has been pouring out His wrath on these godless nations.

In the Grace Age, God has been very good to the nations. He has allowed them to exist in a location. He has given provisions to people who do not know Him. He has offered eternal salvation to them all. In the Tribulation, God will pour out His wrath on these nations and instead of them being sorry, realizing they deserve it, they are enraged at the thought of God.

Most in sin hate the thought of God and they hate the thought of being controlled by God. Most want to be their own God. Sinful humanity loves to carouse and wants a life that is a carnival, and the moment you threaten sinful humanity with the coming judgment of God, it will enrage it. Most people will tolerate a minister if he lets them alone. But the moment he uses God's Word to warn of coming judgment, the attitude changes.

(Reason #3) - Because God will reward the godly. **11:18b**

Those who are the bond-servants of God will finally be rewarded when God pours out His wrath and establishes His Kingdom.

Observation #5 - The worship service features God's heavenly temple. **11:19a**

At this point in the Tribulation, the earthly temple is desecrated, but the heavenly temple is holy and involved in great worship. What is happening in the earthly temple is evil, but what is happening in the heavenly temple is sacred.

Observation #6 - The worship service features Divine cosmological signs. **11:19b**

God will send some powerful signs to this world as this seventh trumpet judgment gets underway. He will flash lightening and roar thunder all over the world. He will cause an earthquake and send a great hailstorm. Every one of these cosmological things gives a visual illustration of the pending judgment of God.

All of this says the final judgment of the Tribulation is on its way and the outcome and the victory already belong to God.

Revelation 12:1-17

In the Bible there is one nation, one group of people who have been specifically promised a land, a King and a Kingdom - they are Israel or the Jews. These are the people who are the physical descendants of Abraham.

When Jesus Christ came into this world He was born a Jew. Those who initially followed Him were Jews and when it came time for Him to select His disciples, He only chose those who were Jews. When He began His ministry on earth, He made it very clear that it was specifically aimed at Israel (Matthew 10:5-6) and He said that He was specifically sent to Israel (Matthew 15:24).

Grace Age Christianity owes a real debt to the Jews (Romans 9:1-5). In fact, Jerusalem was the center of Christianity in the early stages of the Church and had it not been for the Roman wars against the Jews, which scattered them, Jerusalem would still be the center of Christianity. The first believers of the Church Age were Jews and those who wrote the New Testament books of the Bible for the Church were Jews with the exception of Luke.

Since Israel is so critical to the whole program of God, it is only logical to assume that Satan will hate the Jews, will be in war against the Jews, and seek to destroy the Jews. Since part of the reason for the Great Tribulation is to regather Israel (Matt. 23:37-39), we may expect that during the Tribulation Satan will unleash a destructive barrage against Israel in an attempt to destroy her. Never is that point more evident than in **Revelation 12**.

Revelation 12:1-6

In these first six verses we get a panoramic overview of Satan's hatred of Jesus Christ, of God, and of Israel. **We may conclude that any hatred of Jesus Christ and any anti-Semitism, hatred of Israel, is satanic.** There are two main signs that show up in these verses:

SIGN #1 – The sign that relates to Israel. **12:1-2**

The first sign of Israel is a great sign, or literally in Greek, a mega sign. Israel is a great nation in the sight of God and there is no greater sign of God's power on this earth as the existence of the nation Israel. It is the least esteemed nation on this earth, but it is the most esteemed nation in heaven.

We may notice from **verse 1** that the sign is "a woman" who is clothed with the sun and the moon and on her head is a crown of twelve stars. This imagery takes us back to Genesis in direct connection to a dream of Joseph (Genesis 37:9-10). In that dream, the sun was Jacob, the moon was Rachel, and the eleven stars were the eleven tribes. In fact, Joseph's father, Jacob, actually gave the interpretation to this dream (Genesis 37:10). **So this imagery in Revelation is clearly connected to Israel.**

The sun, moon and stars are majestic planets created by God, which reflect His glory. Israel is a majestic nation created by God that is to reflect His glory. Even though it has not been much of a reflection of the glory of God lately, there will come a future time when Israel will reflect God's glory as a nation.

In **verse 2**, we learn that this woman was with a child, which we know from **verse 5** was a son. The Catholic Church takes the woman to be Mary. But it cannot be Mary because of what Isaiah said in Isaiah 66:7: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy." Mary had labor pains giving birth, not birth before she had labor pains.

Some Protestants say the woman is the Church. But it cannot possibly be the church because Jesus Christ came from Israel - Romans 9:4-5. This is nothing more than an offshoot of what the Catholics think.

Mary Baker Eddy the founder of Christian Science claimed she was the woman and gave birth to her cult. All of these interpretations are bizarre, because **only one is legitimate and it is Israel. Isaiah said that a Son would be born "to us," that is to Israel (Isaiah 9:6).**

The image of this verse is that the prelude to the birth of this Son was a long, painful and difficult pregnancy and labor. The prophet Isaiah predicted that to give birth to this Son for Israel would be a long painful process.

There were many hard years of satanic struggle and opposition and persecution before Jesus Christ was finally born to Israel. However, the birth of Jesus Christ long preceded the greatest time of satanic opposition and persecution that will come in the Great Tribulation.

SIGN #2 – The sign that relates to Satan. **12:3-6**

In **verse 3**, John saw "another" (αλλος) sign, which means he saw another of the same kind of sign. What this means is that John saw another sign that was related to Israel, just as the first sign was related to Israel. John, himself, informs us that this is another symbolic sign.

The sign was of a "great red dragon." Now we are not left to guess who this dragon is because he is clearly identified in **verse 9**. The dragon is Satan. He is called "great" (μεγας) because of his level of power and rank. There are seven facts we learn from these verses:

Fact #1 - He is "red." **12:3a**

This speaks of the fact that he is murderous and out for blood. He is a destroyer. Jesus said that the devil was a "murderer" from the beginning (John 8:44). Those connected to Satan are often death-oriented. There is no question that Satan is behind many killers, suicide, drugs, alcohol, abortion, aids. Satan has no regard for human life. It is no coincidence that many of those connected to him dress in dark, mourning-type clothing.

Fact #2 - He has seven heads . **12:3b**

These seven heads are seven major political leaders and powers who are controlled by Satan who will dominate Israel (Rev. 17:9-10).

Fact #3 - He has ten horns . **12:3c**

The ten horns are ten world leaders who give their allegiance to Satan in the final division of the Roman Empire (Rev. 17:12-13). Satan will personally empower these leaders during the Tribulation to become powerful world leaders for a very short period of time.

Fact #4 - He has seven diadems . **12:3d**

What this tells us is that Satan has complete control of seven major powers of the world who have dominated Israel and will dominate Israel. If we consider the fact that there are seven continents: Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Australia and Antarctica it is possible that this means Satan at this point in the Tribulation will control the whole world.

It is no small coincidence that so far there have been six major empires who dominated Israel: Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. There is one major power yet to arise and this seventh power will be like the first six in that it will be controlled by Satan.

Fact #5 - He controls one third of the angels . **12:4a** (Ezekiel 28:13-17; Isaiah 14:12-14)

One third of the angelic beings defected with Satan when he led a revolt against God. According to Jude 6, angels abandoned their original state. Apparently for them, it was a one time decision, either you stayed with God or you followed Satan. We know from Daniel's account that these fallen angels target Israel (Daniel 8:9-12) and prosper during the Tribulation.

Fact #6 - He has a specific objective . **12:4b**

One of the major plans of Satan and his forces was to destroy Jesus Christ as soon as He was born into this world. As soon as Israel produced the Messiah and Savior, Satan was right there using his power and his forces of evil in an attempt to destroy Him.

It started in Genesis by killing Abel (Genesis 4), then it polluted the line of Seth (Genesis 6), then it produced Ishmael (Genesis 16), and then Satan tried to kill all Israeli babies in Egypt (Exodus 1:9, 16).

When Jesus Christ was finally born, Satan wanted to kill Him. The episode is revealed in Matthew 2:1-13. Herod, with full satanic authority, tried to destroy Jesus Christ. Satan was behind this plot and he was leading it.

All throughout history Satan has made major attempts to annihilate Israel. During the Tribulation, Satan will use the final 3½ years to try to utterly destroy Israel.

Fact #7 - He will fail. **12:5-6**

Make no mistake about this fact, Satan cannot ever beat God. His plan to destroy Jesus Christ and Israel will never succeed.

Verse 6 is extremely important for it proves that even though Satan will try to rid the world of the Jews for 1260 days or 3½ years, he will not succeed. We may notice that the same number appears in **verse 14**, time, times, and half a time, which is 3½ years.

We learn that God will provide a means of escape for many Jews into what is called the “wilderness.” We believe this has reference to a couple of things. There will be some Jews who literally will flee to surrounding wilderness areas to hide, and also many Jews will flee to wilderness Gentile nations to hide from the terrible satanic attack. This is referred to in Matthew 25:31-40.

Satan will try to destroy Israel, but God will not let him do it.