

## The Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ

Revelation 11:15-19

**“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. <sup>16</sup> And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, <sup>17</sup> Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. <sup>18</sup> And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. <sup>19</sup> And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”**

The first six trumpets unveiled severe judgments upon the earth; the seventh trumpet unveils the Sovereign Judge of all the world. In all of the Bible, it would not be easy to find another small passage with such an enormous impact. Here we find the announcement of God’s final kingdom, His adoration by the saints, His judgment of the wicked and His rewards for His servants and saints. All this springs out of the glorious proclamation, **“The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.”**

### **The Seventh Trumpet: Sounded by the Seventh Angel, 15**

**“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”** (Revelation 11:15)

The well-known phrase in this verse has been popularized by productions of Handel’s Messiah with its Hallelujah Chorus.<sup>1</sup> If you haven’t listened to it recently, listen to it soon. After the initial “Hallelujahs” you will hear the words of verse 15, **“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”** Is it any wonder that so many have treasured these words across the years? These words testify to the sovereign control of the God who rules over all.

Our only hope is in Him. In Greek mythology, the poet Hesiod wrote the story of Pandora’s Box. According to the story, curious Pandora opened the box and sickness, death and evil curses escaped. She quickly closed the box, but the only thing left was hope. Of course, these mythical figures offer us no sympathy, and can only “hope for hope.” But from the Scriptures we know that the curses are the very real result of man’s rebellion in the Garden of Eden. Yet is there hope? Yes! The hope of the world is Christ Jesus. His dying for our sins and rising again reverses our curse; therefore we have hope. Our confident expectation is that the kingdoms of this world will kneel in humble submission to the only true King and His anointed Christ. And He will reverse the curse on this world and give us a new heaven and a new earth.

### **The Beginning of the End of the Mystery**

Revelation 10:6 reemphasizes that there will be no more delay – no more waiting – as God’s angel vows, “time will be no longer.” Revelation 10:7 explains, **“But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.”** A “mystery” in Scripture is something revealed in shadowy or seed form in

the Old Testament, but explained in glorious light in the New Testament. For instance, Paul explained to the congregation at Rome, **“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began”** (Romans 16:25). In Revelation 10:7, we are told that the sounding of the seventh trumpet will announce the beginning of the end of the mystery.

Why is this a mystery? The Scriptures testify that God has always ruled over all, and that He always will. Yet 2 Corinthians 4:4 speaks of “the god of this world,” Satan. Jesus described the devil as the “strong man, armed, who keeps his palace” (Luke 11:21). So if God reigns, why does He allow Satan to rule anything? This is the mystery. In God’s wisdom, He has willed it to be so, but this is not an eternal conflict. For one day, Satan’s domain will come to an end. As Paul wrote to the congregation at Rome, **“And the God of peace shall bruise [crush] Satan under your feet shortly”** (Romans 16:20).

### **The Sovereignty and Equality of the Father and the Son**

According John 5:18, on one occasion, the Jews in Jerusalem picked up large stones to stone Jesus Christ to death. Why? They sought to kill Him, **“because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God”** (John 5:18). Did Jesus claim to be God? In John 10:30, Jesus said, **“I and my Father are one.”** In John 14:1, He commanded, **“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”** When asked by the high priest whether He was **“the Christ, the Son of the Blessed”** [meaning “the Son of God”], Jesus replied, **“I am: and you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven”** (Mark 14:61-62). But as we have noted earlier in this series, easily the most remarkable indication of Christ’s deity is in the comparison of Revelation chapters 4 and 5. We have studied Revelation 4 with its acclamation of **“The Worthy Lord upon His Throne.”**<sup>ii</sup> And we have studied, **“The Lord: the Lion, the Lamb”**<sup>iii</sup> in Revelation chapter 5. The startling teaching in these chapters is that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, deserves the same worshipful adoration as God the Father! So, Revelation 11:15 speaks of the co-regency (the co-kingship) of the Lord God and the Lamb. **“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.** This is the Christ whom the Father chose to be the Savior of the world.

This kingdom of God was foretold in the beautiful image in the dream that God gave to King Nebuchadnezzar. With Babylon as the golden head, the coming kingdoms looked resplendent. But according to Daniel 2:35, the final kingdom on earth will destroy the image and grow to be a great mountain. As Daniel explained to the king, **“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever”** (Daniel 2:44). The teaching of Revelation chapter 11 agrees with the main emphasis in the Book of Daniel: **“The Most High God rules in the kingdom of men”** (Daniel 4:17, 25, and 32).

### **The End of the Worldwide Rebellion**

The rebel kingdoms will come under the dominion of God’s royal King. As believers, how should we respond to this? Every knee will bow; every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Romans 14:11). The 24 elders show us how we ought to respond to the glorious announcement in verse 15.

## **The Response: The Worship from the Twenty-Four Elders, 16-18**

**“And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats [thrones], fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.”** (Revelation 11:16-17)

### **Thanksgiving and Worship to the Lord God Almighty, 16-17**

Leaving their thrones of authority, the 24 elders fall upon their faces and worship God. When was the last time you did that? When was the last time you got on your knees and worshiped God with thanksgiving? Why did they express their thanks? They expressed their gratitude to the Lord God Almighty – the Eternal God – who would defeat the devil and finally, ultimately reign over the kingdoms of this world. This gives us a confident expectation about the future. We have hope, and we give thanks to our God who shall reign.

### **The Truth about the Nations and the Judgments of the Lord God Almighty, 18**

**And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.** (Revelation 11:18).

How do the nations respond to this proclamation of our Lord’s kingship? **“And the nations were angry...”** Why? Because the time will be up for the unruly and defiant kingdoms of this world. Recent articles have been filled with news of angry protests by Antifa, white supremacists, and rogue, aggressor nations. But this passage reads like the beginning of the end of the rebellion. Chapter 11 of Revelation reveals the ultimate bankruptcy of mankind. The lives that are on loan will be called in, and this earthly existence will be over.

The nations and their kings, who have tried so desperately to maintain their control, will recognize that their end is near. As expressed in the psalm: **“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us”** (Psalm 2:2-3). Against whom are they speaking? **“Against the Lord, and against His Anointed [the Christ].”** And what will the loud voices in heaven say? **“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever”** (Revelation 11:15). Instead of showing more affection, the nations only grow more angry. Each one of us should pause to carefully consider his responses. Does the Lord’s sovereign reign fill you with affection for your King? Or do you merely grow angry because things are out of your control? It would be easy to miss the truth of verse 18 in the context of this heavenly proclamation and the elders’ adoration. But when you stop to ponder it, you will see that verse 18 is full of all-encompassing applications of the Lord’s sovereign reign. Verse 18 is a brief summary of the rest of the Book of the Revelation

### **The Lord’s wrath will break out upon the nations**

The mystery will be ended; the rebellion will be quelled with God’s wrath upon the nations, Satan’s kingdom will be felled. John the Baptist who preached, “flee from the wrath to come” spoke fervently about Jesus Christ. John said that Jesus will **“gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff, He will burn with unquenchable fire”** (Luke 3:17). This is an important reminder. Are you a child of God? If so,

the Lord will gather you in with His people. But the chaff – the lost who do not belong to Him – will be burned with unquenchable fire.

#### **The Lord will judge the dead**

No one should deceive himself with the vague wish that death will “end it all.” No, the Scriptures testify that the time will come when the Sovereign Judge will judge the dead. As we shall see in Revelation 20:13, **“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”** Our prayer is that you will never have to hear the words that God never wants anyone to hear: **“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:”** (Matthew 25:41).

#### **The Lord will reward His servants and saints**

But the coming judgments are not merely about punishments. No indeed! The Lord will reward His servants! He will give His prized treasures to His prophets, and saints and those who fear His name – both small and great. Look with the eyes of faith, and you will see God’s promised rewards. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

#### **The Lord will destroy the destroyers of the earth (see Revelation 13:10)**

The angry autocrats of this world have slain God’s saints. Men and women have defiled and destroyed churches. Sneaky adulterers have destroyed marriages. Abortionists have slain innocent infants in the womb. What is to be done? When will God take revenge? Be patient. He will destroy the destroyers of this world, including the Antichrist, the False Prophet and the Devil himself.

### **The Opening: The Temple of God in Heaven, 19**

**“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”** (Revelation 11:19)

#### **The Ark of the Covenants**

The ark symbolized the promises of God given to His people, including the promise of the forgiveness of sins. The ark was the place of atonement so that the Holy God could dwell with sinful, repentant men.

#### **The Awesome Wonders**

And once again, the awesome wonders in heaven flash out as they did in Revelation 4 and 5. These are like the royal fireworks that proclaim, **“The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.”**

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<sup>1</sup> See Royal Choral Society: Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah, accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUZEtVbJT5c>

<sup>2</sup> The Worthy Lord upon His Throne, accessed at <https://www.cbfindlay.org/the-worthy-lord-upon-his-throne/>

<sup>3</sup> The Lord, the Lion, the Lamb, accessed at <https://www.cbfindlay.org/the-lord-the-lion-the-lamb/>