

Church of God, The Eternal

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A Survey of the Day of the Lord, Part II

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We were discussing the Day of the Lord and everything represented by this holy day—this Feast of Trumpets. Looking specifically at the book of Revelation as the prophecy that Jesus Christ revealed to John, to record—to speak of the sequence of things that were going to occur. Culminating in the Second Coming of that Christ as a conquering King. We've laid out the story to put a fabric together in a structure to help us understand how to put all those pieces together in the overall framework. Recognizing that it is a book that was handed from the Father to the Son. It was only the Son who qualified by His perfect sacrifice—being born of the flesh, living without sin, being crucified and dying, and being resurrected. He is the only one that was qualified to open the seals of the book and to reveal those things that were contained therein.

We're dealing with a book that has seven seals—seven parts to the complete story. We went through the first six seals and recognized that the first four of those seals are encompassed in the four horsemen of the apocalypse—those four plagues, represented by riders on horses, that are the beginning of the fulfilment of those last-day prophecies.

We saw that the fifth seal was the tribulation. The tribulation doesn't happen at the very, very end. That which is dubbed "the tribulation" is actually the fifth seal, with two seals that follow it.

We saw that the sixth seal was the heavenly signs—all of those things that God would bring about to shake the minds of men into understanding that there is a greater power, and there is something beyond their comprehension—and to get their attention.

We completed the six seals and then saw, as we read the account of that seventh seal, that this seventh and final seal which is the final chapter of the story, being opened, has seven parts. We found that those parts are trumpets. And it is those seven trumpets which are the fulfilment of what we're keeping today—in representation—with the Feast of Trumpets. What I didn't point out to you, but which I will now so that we have all those definitions is that the seventh

seal—which is also seven trumpets (these are synonymous)—that seventh seal is also that which encompasses the Day of the Lord. The seventh seal *is* the fulfilment of the Day of the Lord. All seven trumpets are a part of the day of the Lord.

As we've gone through, then, the first four of those trumpets we've seen that those were the first four plagues that corresponded to those four angels that each took their post in the four corners of the world—that were held back so that those who were approved of God could be sealed by the Father and protected before the final seven trumpets and those plagues under the seventh seal would begin to be poured out upon the earth, and all of the people of the earth.

First, the people of God who had been faithful and who bowed to Him and accepted Him—the true Christ—were protected and sealed before the final seven trumpet plagues began to be unleashed upon the earth. So recognize, that seventh seal is the same and synonymous with the last seven trumpets. Those seven trumpets are plagues. And that seventh seal and those seven trumpets are also synonymous with the Day of the Lord. So, if you get all of those definitions, then that also helps put it together.

What else did we find? We read the accounts of the first four trumpets sounded by the first four angels. And then we saw in Revelation 8 and verse 13,

And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound.

So, now, this paves the way for the final three trumpets of the seventh seal—which are also called woes—the first woe, the second woe, and the third woe. Therefore, the first woe is that fifth trumpet, the second woe is the sixth trumpet, and then we will find, the third woe is that seventh and final trumpet. And again, reminding you that it's still going to get more complicated, because when we get to that final seventh trumpet, you're going to find out that this trumpet also has seven parts. The final three trumpets are called the three woes.

Let's look at the fifth trumpet which is the first woe. And here we're also going to add in some time factors because we still cannot draw conclusions about when these things are going to occur. And there are lots of gaps that prevent us from being able to say how long in duration all of these seals are, and even these seven trumpets are. But there are some indications about the length of some of these things that are very fascinating when you look at them. Revelation 9, now, beginning in verse 1:

And the fifth angel sounded. And I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth. And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace. And the

sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth.

Now here we start to see the symbolism that's used by John. And what I know that I've always heard about the visions that John saw of the last days, when he was actually projected through the Spirit into the last days and saw the things that would be occurring on the earth, is that he did not have any way to describe the technology of the last days—with war machines, with airplanes, with helicopters, with all of these things. And, therefore, the speculation is that he described them in the terms that he could put them best on what he was seeing and what had appeared to him. Whether that's accurate or whether it's not, we won't draw any conclusions about what these things are. And what you're going to find out is that this fifth trumpet and sixth trumpet have to do with major war. So, we'll read through it, but take it at face value. We're not going to try and put any kind of interpretations on it that God hasn't provided the answers to.

I saw a star fall to the earth. And to him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace. And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth. And unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree. But only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

So whatever limitations God put on this, first we recognize that this is a power that's coming out of the bottomless pit. We're going to find as we get a few verses down, that the leader and the king of these armies—whatever these forces are, coming out of the bottomless pit—is none other than Satan, the adversary. So, these armies are being controlled by the adversary, but at the very same time, God has put limitations on them and said, I give you power to do certain things but not to do other things. In this particular case, remember, it is one of the trumpets of God, which means He's allowing and using these agents of Satan to actually fulfil His own will. It is part of the fifth trumpet, and yet they are acting out of total rebellion against God, and actually fulfilling God's will. But God put limits and said, in this particular case, this plague—which is the fifth trumpet—was not a plague that was intended to hurt the earth nor its vegetation, the same as some of the other plagues that we saw poured out specifically were against the sea, against the earth, against the waters. In this case, what we're finding out is that this was a plague that was specifically directed toward men.

And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Remember the multitude of God's people—the two companies—when were they sealed? They were already sealed by the end of that sixth seal, before those first four trumpet angels that are the beginning of the seventh seal. They were held back from unleashing the beginning of the plagues of the seventh seal until after God's people were shielded and sealed. So, that has already taken place. Which means those that are left are going to endure whatever the trials of these plagues are. They are those that are not included with those that have been sealed in the name of the Father. "And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months." Here's the first one that we actually see that has a timeline put on it. Remember, the seventh seal is all-inclusive of the Day of the Lord. Now we already had the first four trumpets of the seventh seal and we don't know exactly how much time that encompassed. But here we get to the fifth trumpet and we find out that it's a plague that lasts five months. Keep it in mind.

But that they should be tormented five months. And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he strikes a man. And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it. And shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle. And on their heads were, as it were, crowns like gold. And their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women. And their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were, breastplates of iron. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots and many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. And their power was to hurt men five months.

What is this torment at the hand of these armies, that doesn't kill, but puts men in such torment that they would desire death?

And they had a king over them which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name, Apollyon. One woe is past.

Here we find out, this was the first of three woes—the fifth trumpet. "One woe is past, and behold, there come two woes more hereafter."

Then we come to the sixth trumpet which is the second woe. We're also going to find, this sixth trumpet also has a timeline. It has a duration of one year, one month, one day, and one hour in its total length. Revelation 9 and verse 13:

And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels

were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand.

That is an army of two hundred million men, not counting all of the aircraft and all of the other parts of the support for such an army. Two hundred million men that would be involved in the destruction of one third of the people on earth. There's never been a war like that. There's never been destruction of men to that extent. And yet, we're not even to the final trumpet.

And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand. And I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and of brimstone. And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issues fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone which issued out of their mouths.

Whatever that represents—whether it's the firepower of artillery and armaments, or whatever that is, we do not know.

For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails. For their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed . . .

So here, one third of the population of the men of the earth have been killed. And what does it say, despite all that they've already seen and experienced in the first six seals and of the first six trumpets of the seventh seal? We're getting very, very close to the end and still, what is the attitude of the people of the earth?

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.

What kind of a belligerent orientation has to exist in the natural hearts of men to be that resistant to God? "Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

Then something happens—another interlude—before that seventh angel sounds that seventh trumpet. We're getting very close to the end of the story, and yet there's a lot of pieces yet to happen—to come together. Before the seventh angel sounds the seventh trumpet, something else happens—the witness of the angel and the two witnesses. Here's where we fold

in, and you find out another piece of what is occurring in the preaching of the gospel. It's not just a matter of God pouring out all of these plagues upon mankind just for the sake of putting through torture. He's doing these things to get their attention. And simultaneously, now, you will find in the story, that during this whole time, there has been a gospel being preached. And the whole world is receiving that gospel message. Those plagues are used to get the attention of man. Revelation chapter 10:

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was, as it were, the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book opened. And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. And he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth. And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

Whatever is included in those thunders, that we don't know for sure. And when the thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write . . .,"— John speaking—"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." So there was something now in this part of the prophecy that John heard in the vision. He saw it—he witnessed what was going to occur. There's something that is going to be uttered at that time by this angel and by these seven thunders, that, yet, Jesus Christ did not want recorded in this book for some reason. And it was sealed up.

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hands to heaven and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea, and the things that are therein, that there should be time no longer.

Every step of the way—as these things are being unfolded—God is sending a message to the people of the earth. And He's saying, It's coming, It's coming. Pay attention now, He's saying—as we culminate in the seventh trumpet, the last trump of seven trumpets of the seventh seal of seven seals. All of these things have come together and finally, this gospel message of this angel, which has been heard by all human beings on the face of the earth, has been preached. "That there should be time no longer." The message is now clear. It's imminent. It's happening. There is no more chance. "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." This tells us that this seventh trumpet is the last one. And when that seventh trumpet is completed, the story is over. Verse 8:

And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea, and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel and said unto him, Give me the

little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth, sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angels hand and ate it up. And it was in my mouth sweet as honey. And as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

Whatever is included in the symbolism of this little book, the only thing that makes sense to me is that when you're talking about the gospel of God, and you're talking about the laws and the commandments and the ways of God, to those who love them and cherish them, they are sweet as honey. But there is a penalty for breaking those laws. Along with the perfection and the beauty of that law and that way of life comes penalty for disobedience. That's the one thing I know that seems to make sense—to fit. And here John was to be a prophet and was to bring something and to proclaim it. It tastes sweet, but it's also bitter at the same time. Here you've got the revelation of this gospel in great miraculous form at the very close of the age. To the people of God that were sealed in their forehead, it was very sweet. To the rest of the world who rejected God and would have none of Him, it is very, very bitter.

Now chapter 11. These chapters, now, ten and eleven, take us away, out of the story line again. We're leaving the thread of the overall story and we're seeing some sideline things that are going on simultaneously here. Chapter 11 tells us about the ministry of the two witnesses. We also find that there's a timeline attached to this. A three and a half year period for that ministry. Revelation chapter 11:

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not. For it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

We're talking about the Temple. We're talking about the Church. So, somehow, we're talking about a prophecy that applies to those that are considered in the Church. The Church is that bride. The Church are those also who are sealed and approved of God throughout this period of time. "But the court which is without the temple, leave out." So there is a whole other group of people that are outside that which is considered the Church—outside that which is considered sacred and sealed of God.

Measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles. And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses. And they shall prophecy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

There is your three-and-a-half year ministry. I also know that it was taught in the church that this correlates directly with the completion of the three-and-a-half year ministry that Christ gave in person. The complete ministry that was ordained was seven years—the number of completion. But, remember, Christ was cut-off in the middle. We don't have time to go and look at all those scriptures, but recall, Christ was cut-off after three-and-a-half years of His own personal ministry on this earth. So the job was not completed. There was yet three-and-a-half years left to complete the ministry—the complete message of the gospel, the warning to the world—to give mankind a chance to repent. This, very likely, is the completion—that three and a half year ministry of the two witnesses is the completion of that seven year ministry.

These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. And if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

So, whoever these two witnesses are, they also have powers to utilize plagues, and all manner of power from God—not only to protect their ability to continue to preach that gospel, but to get the attention of men.

These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have powers over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city [that's Jerusalem] which spiritually, is called Sodom, and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

So the beast power ultimately overcomes these two witnesses and kills them, but not until their ministry is completed. The will of God will be accomplished. That total seven years of that ministry will be completed.

Then what happens in verse 11? "And after three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet. And great fear fell upon them which saw them." A resurrection is going to occur. Here are the two witnesses—their bodies dead for three and a half days, laying in the street, rotting—and all of a sudden, miraculously, a resurrection occurs and they stand on their feet. "And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither." Where is it that these two witnesses—once resurrected—are going? Are they

going to heaven? We know that's not true. "And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud." Not to the third heaven where God's throne is, but up into the clouds. "And their enemies beheld them." Now does this seem familiar to you in any way? Are there any other scriptures that talk about a resurrection to occur, and individuals who will ascend up into the clouds? Could it be that this is the first resurrection? Could it be that the three-and-a-half year ministry of these two witnesses actually culminates in the return of Jesus Christ—that they are killed three-and-a-half days before the literal return of Christ in the clouds? And that they are resurrected along with all of the other dead saints at that very moment, and caught up into the clouds? We'll read the other scriptures in just a moment.

Their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city [meaning Jerusalem] fell. And in the earthquake were slain of men, seven thousand. And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past, and behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

That, then, ties right back to where we were two chapters ago with the end of the sixth trumpet, which is the second woe. And now we stand on the brink of the seventh trumpet of the seventh seal.

The seventh angel sounds and what occurs? Christ takes possession of His kingdom. That especially is the focus of the Feast of Trumpets. That seventh trump, the last trump, as we will see, is the trump that sounds when Christ actually comes. The seventh trumpet is also the third woe. So, does that make sense that the literal return of Christ is considered a woe? But it is—remember from earlier this morning when we talked about the seventh trumpet, and we saw a reference to the angel who said, "the wrath of the Lamb." And, remember, I told you to remember that. When it referred to that seventh trumpet and it talked about the wrath of the Lamb, because the seventh trumpet—the third woe—it is fulfilled in the wrath of Jesus Christ who personally, as a conquering king—comes back. And through seven final plagues at the hands of seven angels, pours out the final destruction upon the enemy that resists Him. His literal return is the third woe—the seventh trumpet—the fulfilment of the seventh part of the seventh seal. That third woe is the final wrath of God in seven final plagues. Let's stop and look at other Scriptural references that tell us what happens when that seventh trumpet sounds.

First, in 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 51: "Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." This is when that resurrection occurs. It is when that seventh and final trump sounds. "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Those who were dead—who died in Christ—shall be resurrected out of the ground and given their spiritual, immortal bodies. Those who are alive at that time—who have been sealed, and protected, and shielded—will also be changed and given that immortal body. I Thessalonians 4 and verse 16:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds [just like the two witnesses] to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

So, at the sound of that seventh trumpet, we find that Christ returns, we find the first resurrection occurs, the dead in Christ rise—including those two witnesses at the completion of their three-and-a-half year ministry—become spirit beings, and meet Christ in the air. Back to Revelation 11, and let's pick up the story in verse 15. Now we're going to get some more details.

And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, 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 moment in time when authority is taken away from Satan to rule this earth. This is the point in time—at that seventh trumpet—when the Heavenly Father takes it away from Satan, and gives it officially to Jesus Christ—as the official ruler of the earth. His kingdom now becomes established. He has the right and the authority of the kingdom—that which He's been waiting for. Remember, as He said, and as He told His disciples, no man knows the day nor the hour, not even He, but only the Father. Here, finally, is the culmination of all of those prophecies in a time when the Father delivers to Christ His kingdom.

"And he shall reign forever and ever." And here we go again. A huge demarcation in time, because, again, what do we see the twenty-four elders do at this very moment when the kingdom passes to Christ?

And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and was, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry.

Here we're going to find out, just because the Father gave that kingdom over to Christ, does that mean that everyone on the earth automatically says, okay, we give up? No. Christ has the right of authority—it is His kingdom—but now He has to take physical possession of the kingdom. "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come." Remember, we said that seventh trumpet—the third woe—is the wrath of the Lamb.

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 to them that fear thy name, small and great.

And didn't we see that? Because at this very moment when Christ descends, is also when that first resurrection occurs. Which means the judgement happens right then. The judgement has taken place by the time this occurs, because those that are part of the first resurrection, receive their reward right then, and become spirit, immortal beings. Christ doesn't return and then set up this long, expansive court system to have people march up one at a time to determine whether they pass or fail. The parables indicate that those are the things that happen—at least philosophically, that we each go through that judgement, and Christ will judge us—but those things are determined in a judgement so that we are either proven at that time to have gained eternal life or to have failed. Because those who are resurrected—either out of the ground or are changed in the twinkling of an eye—receive their reward then, which means that their judgement has occurred. All of the plagues that we've seen through the first six seals, and through the first six of the last seven trumpets of the seventh seal, all are a warning, giving God's people an opportunity to come back to Him before it's too late. But by the time this seventh trumpet sounds, and Christ returns, what is done is done. For those that were called, and for those that were given that opportunity, the time is over.

And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshiped 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. 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 to them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.

We know that the ark of the covenant is going to come back into play as a witness again, against this world. "And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

Chapter 12 and chapter 13 of Revelation are also inset stories. These are chapters we're going to skip. Chapter 12 is the story—which you are all familiar with—of Christ, the Church, and of Satan's wrath. It also contains that information about the beginning of the Church, God's protection of the Church against the adversary who seeks to destroy it. It speaks of the protection in a place of safety—all of those things that are also going to happen in the midst of the seals and of these trumpets. Chapter 13 is a description of the two beasts that make up Satan's Babylonian system. These things you are also familiar with. We won't spend time on those chapters because they're not a part of the direct story thread of the seven seals.

Chapter 14, then. We come to chapter 14 of Revelation—the three messages of the angels and Christ standing in Zion to take His kingdom. Beginning in verse number 1 of Revelation 14:

"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Zion." We've also already seen that Christ would stand on the Mount of Olives. So, He comes back, and those who are found faithful are changed, are caught up together with Him in the clouds, and then they descend and stand upon the Mount of Olives. We're going to see that occur. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with him, a hundred and forty four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." So those that were a part of that hundred and forty four thousand of Israel—whether that's physical Israel that also qualified as spiritual Israel, we don't know. It doesn't mention the innumerable multitude, and yet, you know they're there too. Because they made their robes white, they were covered and sealed by the very same Spirit, through the blood of the Lamb. So more than likely, they're there as well.

And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder. And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders. And no man could learn the song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

Remember, these have already been changed into immortal spirit beings. They're standing on Mount Zion in Jerusalem with the Lamb. He has taken possession of His kingdom and they are there—now with immortal bodies, eternal beings in the God family. And this host, this incredible army with Christ, is now standing in Jerusalem.

These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. These were redeemed from among men being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile. For they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.

Yet the gospel continues to be preached by these angelic hosts. Through all of these plagues and all of these incredible, miraculous events, God is still trying to get the attention of the world.

. . . and unto every nation, and kindred and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come. And worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without

mixture into the cup of his indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commands of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.

So, at this point, we've already had the first resurrection. Those that were called, given a chance to understand, who accepted it, who passed the test, have already been united with Christ and are standing on the Mount of Olives. And here yet is another angel—these three angels that are flying—speaking and admonishing the rest of the population of the world to bow before God.

"And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." Now if the dead in the Lord—who are already a part of the first resurrection—are already with God, then who is it that he's speaking of that will die henceforth? It can't be those same people or so it doesn't seem. It appears that this is still the gospel being preached to try and convert those who are left on the earth to still turn and accept that Christ, now, who has come back to take possession of His kingdom. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." Those that turn to God even through these final plagues.

Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them. And I looked, and behold, a white cloud. And upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap.

Now is this the harvest of the firstfruits? Is that what this sickle is going to reap? We've already had the harvest of the firstfruits haven't we? That's already taken place. They're with Christ now. What are we going to see happen with this sickle? Remember what we said about the wrath of the Lamb and the final fulfilment of that seventh trumpet, which is the third woe? Here it is:

Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap. For the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle, and another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry unto him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth,

and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress even unto the horses bridles by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

This harvest is the destruction. How many people would it take in this kind of a slaughter in order to have the blood flow as a high as the horses bridle for a thousand and six hundred furlongs? This is the final element of the wrath of God—the penalties upon those who would not bend to their King.

Then we see, as we get into chapter 15 and 16, what is involved with this final harvest, where the sickle is being thrust in. Now we get the details. Because that seventh trumpet—when Christ returns—is seven final plagues. You thought it was over didn't you? Aren't we coming to the end? But here we have seven final plagues that are a part of the seventh plague of seven trumpet plagues of seven seals in the story. So, if you've still kept your papers separated out, the column listing seven seals, and then of the seventh seal, you have seven trumpets, and then of the seventh trumpet you now have seven final plagues that make up sub-divisions of the seventh trumpet. Does everybody have that?

And here we see the detail beginning in Revelation 15. This is the third woe. So synonymous with the third woe is the seventh trumpet and also equal—the same as—the seven final plagues. Revelation 15:

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: Seven angels having the seven last plagues. For in them is filled up the wrath of God [that's that third woe]. And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgements are made manifest. And after that, I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues [not to be confused with the seven trumpet plagues].

These final seven plagues are all a part of the seventh trumpet.

... clothed in pure white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts [or the living creatures] gave unto the seven angels,

seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth forever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power. And no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

Then Revelation chapter 16: "And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your way and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." Remember the time element. When did Christ return? At the seventh trump. So the very moment in time when the kingdom was given over to Christ was when that seventh trumpet sounded. So Christ Himself returns, the first resurrection occurs, and the army of all of the saints join with Him. But at the very same time are these seven angels with the seven final plagues. Christ is coming now, and with these angels and these plagues, personally pouring out that wrath. Up until now, all of the first seals and the other trumpet plagues happened with Christ sitting on the right hand of His Father in heaven. Now, these final seven plagues are actually occurring at the very time Christ is physically on the earth taking possession of His kingdom which is the fulfilment of the Feast of Trumpets. Is there any wonder now why it is called a great and terrible Day of the Lord? Here's the first plague of the final seven plagues:

And the first went and poured out his vile upon the earth and their fell a noisome a grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast and upon them which worshiped his image.

Whatever that mark is and whatever determines those that accepted it, we don't know, but here the saints have already been made eternal and are with Christ. The ones that are left are those that did not accept Christ and would not, even after all of these signs.

Also recognize that unlike the other seals and the trumpet plagues which appear to have a time sequence of extended days and even months and years, all of these last seven plagues come one after another—probably on the same day—because Christ takes possession of His kingdom at that final trump. Now whether that is more than a twenty-four hour period, it doesn't say for sure. But it appears that these final seven plagues—unlike the others that came over a more protracted time are coming almost simultaneously. And you're going to see that it shows that at in at least two of them the people are enduring the penalty of these plagues simultaneously, so you know that they're happening together.

"And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul die in the sea." Remember, in an earlier seal, we had some meteor or something that was thrown into the sea and killed one third of the life in the sea, and a third of the ships. Now, we have something—that Christ brings with Him in person in this final wrath—that kills every living creature in the ocean.

Verse number 4: "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters." Remember, before, only a third of the rivers and the fresh water were made bitter by that wormwood. Now what's taking place?

. . .and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus, for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements.

Interesting that there's an angel that's still saying, in spite of how terrible it seems—of what Christ is singlehandedly, personally, doing through these final seven plagues—and yet that gospel says, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are they judgments." This is an affirmation that they brought it on themselves. Don't feel sorry for those that are paying the penalties at this point—that are giving their lives and enduring all of this pain and this agony. They brought it on themselves.

Verse number 8: "And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun." Remember, we had one plague already where a third of the sun was darkened.

What happens now?

The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God.

No, they didn't repent. They didn't finally turn to God and say, okay, God, I give up. In spite of it all:

And blasphemed the name of God which had power over these plagues. And they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast [wherever that is and whatever that refers to]. And his kingdom was full of darkness.

Now that is interesting to me. At the same time you have the sun scorching men, and simultaneous with this next final plague, you have the seat of the kingdom of the beast in darkness. It will be interesting to see how that unfolds.

And his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

So here, the fifth angel poured out this darkness, and yet, these are the same men who are also in torment of the sores, remember, that came from the first angel that poured out the first of the seven final plagues. So that tells you all of these things are happening one after another in very quick succession.

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

They're not giving up. After all of this, they're coming together to fight God. He's already here. He's already returned to take possession of His kingdom. And He's surrounded by the armies of the saints who have already been given eternal life. That is the time, and this is the moment in time when the people of God fight. This is the holy war. This is when Christ comes as a conquering King to take possession of His kingdom—with the aid of all of those who have been found worthy, and are now a part of that God family from the first resurrection.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial.

Here it is. We've had seven seals that picture the completion of the entire book. In the seventh seal we had seven trumpets that made up that seal that were seven plagues. Those seven plagues represent the Day of the Lord. The seventh trumpet is the return of Jesus Christ and that seventh trump also represents the seven last plagues that are a part of that seventh trump.

And here, we're down to the seventh and final plague of the seventh trumpet. "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air, and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." It is done. "And there were voices and thunders and lightnings. And there was a great earthquake." Up until now there have been some great earthquakes. But now we're talking about an earthquake of which there has never been the like on the face of this earth.

And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts. And the city of the nations fell. And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Where else do we read in the Scripture about a great earthquake in the city of Jerusalem at the very end? Turn with me to Zechariah 14 and verse 3: "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations." Here we're talking about that final battle of Armageddon.

Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east. And the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west.

How does the mountain cleave in two, except by a great earthquake? It is another description of this final seventh plague of the seventh trumpet. "And there shall be a very great valley. And half of the mountain shall remove toward the north and half of it toward the south."

Back to Revelation 16 and verse 20: "And every island fled away. And the mountains were not found." What kind of an earthquake could it be that could level every high mountain upon the face of the earth?

And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent. And men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

Chapter 17 and chapter 18 of the book of Revelation go into great detail to describe the false church and Babylon, its condemnation by God, and its ultimate ruin. It also, then, is a parallel story that tracks simultaneously with everything that we have seen in the thread of the story of the seals. You can read those yourselves.

Chapter 19—the final chapter that we'll cover today—is a further description of the Second Coming of Christ and that final battle of Armageddon. All of the seven final plagues of that seventh trumpet have been poured out. And here we stand to see what occurs when Christ returns. Revelation 19:

And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgements. For he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever, and the four and twenty elders and the four beasts, fell down and worshiped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluia.

Another monumental point in the story—in the culmination of all of these events, now, beginning with the very first seal. And again to mark it as a benchmark, the twenty-four elders fall down and worship God.

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and you that fear him, both small and great. And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him [John speaking]. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant.

This has been an angel that's been speaking with John throughout this vision. And John bows down, and he says, don't bow down and worship me, I'm just one of your fellow servants. ". . .and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse."

This is not the counterfeit that we saw at the very beginning. This is the real white horse—the true. "And he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." We've already seen a description of that war that Christ actually brings personally to the earth.

And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Who are those armies that followed Him? It is the bride. It is the wife. It is the resurrected saints who did qualify and receive their reward.

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations." Remember that sickle that's thrust in?

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

After such a great slaughter, it appears that this is the method that God uses to actually clean the dead bodies—a whole legion of birds that actually eat and devour those dead bodies. How many thousands and how many millions are a part of the slaughter at that final battle?

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

That Christ takes possession of His kingdom. He becomes the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. The earth is now His—it is His dominion at this point in time. Thus, the battle is over and it is finished.

Chapter 20, then, goes into the description of the restoration, the establishment of that kingdom in Christ's Millennial rule.

Chapter 21, then, goes through a detailed description of the new heavens and the new earth, of new Jerusalem. These things, though, are a representation of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day.

The final conquest of Christ over His dominion is the culmination of everything represented by the Feast of Trumpets that we celebrate today and to which we look forward and hope for. The next, then—the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day will complete the final pieces of the entire story. And we'll see those when we gather together on those Holy Days.